

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Black-legged Kittiwake How many? 1Location? Below Red Rock Reservoir dam - (Marion Co.)Type of habitat? River channel just below damWhen? date(s): Dec. 14, 1988 time: 11:50 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowaothers with you: Noneothers before or after you: Beth Brown, Ann Johnson, Armstrongs

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

This beautiful gull was the only gull swimming with ducks below the dam. It was about the size of Common Goldeneyes which were swimming with it. The gull was smaller than Mallards. The gull had a white head and a long black line - (1" long) - behind a dark eye. It had a very distinctive black bar or line across the nape of the neck. This pretty gull had a small black bill, black tail tips, and black "lines" contrasting with gray on its back going to the tail tips. It had a gray back. This 1st-year gull was swimming all the time and didn't want to fly.

Similar species and how eliminated:

No gull quite looks like this. A first-year Little Gull has a black bar over its nape also, but has a dark cap on its head.
Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

cloudy, 30-40 yards away - estimated, 22x scope, 8x30 Binocs,
very strong - (35-40 mph) - NW winds.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

I've seen a couple of other 1st-year Kittiwakes.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

R. T. Peterson guide, Robbins' Birds of N. America

How long before field notes made? while viewing this form completed? Dec. 25, 1988

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