

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Lesser Blackbacked Gull How many? 1

Location? Plowed field just east of Landfill

Type of Habitat? Farmland with landfill and sloughs nearby

When? date(s): Nov. 8 - 1998 time: 10:30 to 10:50

Who? your name and address: Ed Thelen 15362 250th Ave Spirit Lake

Others with you: Lee Schoneewe

Others before or after you: _____

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

After scanning a large mixed flock of Herring, franklins and ring-billed gulls for about 5 min. Lee S. said "There it is" As my scope focused in on the bird I noticed the following characteristics:

Large gull somewhat smaller than nearby herring gulls with a mantle that was as dark as the mantle of nearby franklin gulls. When at rest I could see that its wing-tips were much darker than the mantle. Its head was white and streaked with brown.

Its yellow bill was large but smaller than the herring's bill. There was a noticeable red ~~tip~~ spot toward the tip of the bill. I could not discern any color in the legs due to snow cover. We considered it an adult in winter plumage.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Herring Gull

Much lighter Mantle

Greater Blackbacked - much larger

Gull - has unstreaked head and not much contrast between wing tips and mantle

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. GOOD - snow cover made leg color unviewable.

200-300 yds (est)
B&C Discover Scope

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

None

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Lee Schoneewe - Master Guide to Birding

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? 2 weeks

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).