

DETAILS FOR RARE BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: Lesser Black-backed Gull

LOCATION: Mississippi River (Lock & Dam #14 and Moline riverfront). Flying for 5 minutes at distances of 30-200 yards at L&D#14, and flying and sitting on water at distances of 20-100 yards at Moline riverfront. Midday and weather overcast.

DATE: January 5, 1992 (About 11:30-35AM) and 12:30-45PM)

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE. Iowa City, Iowa, 52240. Others: Jane Fuller and Carol Thompson

DETAILS: This bird was compared in size to both Ring-billeds and Herrings, and it seemed to be larger than any Ring-billed, and smaller than the Herring gulls. The most striking feature of this gull was the upperwing, which was a dark gray and dark brown mixture. The back was a uniform dark gray, and the ends of the wings were darker than the rest of the wing. There was a black tail band of about one-third the tail width, which was broken by white areas. However, the black of the band, (where it was present) was very sharply demarcated from the white of the tail. The head and breast and belly were basically white, but there was dark streaking on the head, and a dark smudge around the dark eye, especially beneath it. There were dark brown streaks on the sides of the breast and beneath the wings, which were visible from both front and side.