

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Least Tern

How Many?1

Location?Saylorville Reservoir-near marina

Habitat?resting on sandy beach

Date?21 Aug 1986

Time?3:10-3:20 P.M.

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore, Ames

Others who saw bird:none

Description of bird:A small, white tern, almost 2 inches shorter than a nearby Forster's Tern. The underparts were a snowy white. The back and wings were light gray. In flight, the bird showed dark outer primaries. The crown and nape were black. The forehead was white. The bill and legs were yellow.

Similar species and how eliminated:No other tern shows the combination of yellow bill and legs, small size, white forehead, and dark outer primaries.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were excellent-sun behind me and sky clear. Estimated viewing distance was 30-60 ft. I used a Bausch and Lomb 20x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I have seen hundreds of Least Terns on the gulf coast plus the usual birds in SW Iowa.

References consulted:NGS Field Guide to the Birds of North America

How long before field notes were made?none made

How long before this form was completed?2 days