

DOCUMENTATION FORM
Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

Species: Black-legged Kittiwake - first winter

Location: below dam, Red Rock Reservoir, Marion Co., IA

Habitat: Open water

Date: 24 December 1990

Time: 3:00 to 3:15 pm

Name and Address: Ann Johnson, 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, Iowa 50211

Other observers: None at the time

Description of bird: This medium sized gull was floating in the water below the dam. It was approximately the size of Ring-billed gulls but seemed slimmer with a "softer" look. It was primarily white with a gray mantle. Notable characteristics included a black collar on the back of the neck, dark eye with a black crescent behind the eye, small and relatively thin black bill, and dark carpal bar crossing the wing. In flight the black outer primaries and carpal bar crossing the wing coverts created a black "M" on the bird. The white tail also had an extensive black tailband.

Similar species and how eliminated: Red-legged Kittiwake would be the only other gull with a semblance of collar at this time of year. It is eliminated by the black bar on the wings and back and the black tailband.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about identification? NA; others saw the bird later, however, and there was no disagreement on identification

Viewing conditions (lighting, distance, optics): Bird was observed at about 150 feet with sun to back. Optics included 7X26 binoculars and scope at 25X.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Third straight winter with a first winter kittiwake here. Several have been seen this fall in central Iowa.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? during observation How long before this form completed? 2 days