

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

What species? Bonaparte's Gull (Larus Philadelphia) How many? 1 adult

Location? Miss. River at Keokuk, Lee County, Iowa

Type of Habitat? Lock and Dam 19 Tailwaters

When? date(s): Dec. 31, 1987 time: 2:05 PM to 2:10 PM

Who? your name and address: Robert Cecil, 327 S. 6th, Keokuk, Iowa 52632

Others with you: Nope

Others before or after you: Nope

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.

While watching gulls behind the dam at Keokuk, I noted a much smaller gull that was immediately evident as a winter plumaged, adult Bonaparte's Gull. Features noted included light gray mantle with narrow leading wing edge, and white narrow wedge on forewing. Underparts white, tail white, head whitish. Bill dark. Underwings similar in coloration to upper surface--not darker. Overall size, perhaps 2/3 the size of accompanying Ring-bills.

No sounds were noted, nor did I note feet/leg color

Similar species; how eliminated: Common Black-headed has dark underwings. I would have noticed this.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? N.A.
If yes, explain:

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

Viewing conditions excellent--sun to left 90°. Partly cloudy. Optics: 20x Nikon Scope.
Distance, perhaps 100 to 200 yards.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen lots of Bonaparte's in all plumages. Have not seen Common Black-headed.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None.

How long before field notes made? At the time this form completed? 2 weeks

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