

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species?Black-legged Kittiwake

How Many?1 first-winter

Location?Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co.-off Jester Park

Habitat?large reservoir

Date?1-15 Dec 1987

Time?seen most regularly in late afternoon

Observers Name and address:Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50010

Others who saw bird:Bart Ballard, Mark and Beth Proescholdt, m.ob.

Description of bird:I was looking over some Bonaparte's Gulls near Jester Park when I saw a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake. The bird lacked a dark half collar and was presumably the same bird I found on 29 Nov. I continued looking over more Bonaparte's Gulls and was quite surprised to find another kittiwake. At first, I thought I was looking at the same bird, but closer examination revealed that this bird had a very obvious black collar across the back of the head. I watched both of the birds as they fed with Bonaparte's Gulls over the next hour or so. Other than the differences in the half-collar, both birds were pretty much identical.

Similar species and how eliminated:The size, wing pattern, forked tail, and dark tail band eliminate all other gulls.

Viewing conditions and equipment:Viewing conditions were good with the sun behind me. Estimated viewing distance was as close as 50 yards. I used a Bushnell 20-45x spotting scope.

Previous experience with species:I have seen hundreds of Black-legged Kittiwakes off Massachusetts, plus about three other individuals in Iowa, including two this fall.

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

How long before field notes were made?field notes made after initial sighting

How long before this form was completed?written on 18 Dec 1987