

Black-headed Gull

23 Jun 1996

Jemerson Slough, Dickinson Co., IA
*Schoenewe, *Fuller, *Proescholdt
ad. alt.; IBL 66:133, 67:82, P-0515

Record Number: 96-34

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Lee A. Schoenewe (23 June), 518 W. 4th St., Spencer 51301
[4/6/97]

Jim Fuller (26 June), 6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City 52240

Mark Proescholdt (8-9 July), Box 65, Liscomb 50148

PHOTOGRAPH

Jim Fuller, P-0515

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:133

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

VOTE: 7 A-P

A-P, Red bill and legs, dark brown hood, light gray mantle,
and black primary tips clearly visible.

A-P, Shape and color of hood, red bill are diagnostic
supported by light mantle.

A-P, Photo shows diagnostic features, including reddish bill
and brown hood.



Black-headed Gull P-0515
Dickinson, IA
26 Jun 1996 Jim Fuller 96-34

< >001 21401 24PMN-1190 405

96-34

DOCUMENTATION FORM

Species How many? BLACK-HEADED GULL 1 ADULT ALTERNATE PLUMAGE
 Location? JEMERSON SLOUGH, DICKINSON COUNTY
 Type of habitat? NEWLY RESTORED WETLAND WITH MUDFLATS AND RAISED ISLAND
 When? date(s): 6/23/96 Time: . 4:15 - 5:00 PM

Who? your name and address

LEE A. SCHOENEWE 518 W. 4th ST. SPENCER, IA 51301

Others with you HAROLD WHITE

Others before and after you

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also describe voice and behavior. I WAS SURVEYING A FLOCK OF FRANKLIN'S GULLS WHEN I NOTICED A BIRD WITH A CHOCOLATE BROWN HEAD. THE DARK BROWN CURVED DOWN FROM THE BACK OF THE CROWN TO WELL UNDER THE CHIN. THE EYE HAD THIN WHITE CRESCENTS ABOVE AND BELOW. THE BILL WAS RED. AS THE BIRD FLEW I SAW THE PALE GRAY MANTLE WITH WHITE OUTER PRIMARIES AND BLACK TIPS ON THE PRIMARIES. IT FLEW DIRECTLY OVERHEAD AND CIRCLED ME. THE UNDERWING WAS DUSKY GRAY EXTENDING FROM THE PRIMARIES INTO THE SECONDARIES.

Similar species and how eliminated:

FRANKLIN'S GULLS BY CLOSE COMPARISON; BONAPARTE'S BY HEAD COLOR + DARK UNDERWING

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: AFTERNOON SUN; 30 to 100 YARDS; 8X40 BINOCULARS
20-60X SCOPE

Previous experience with this species and similar ones:

SAW ADULT AND IMMATURE 8/9~~4~~ AT HOGSBACK WPA IN DICKINSON CO.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

PETERSON FIELD GUIDE

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATELY

this form completed? 3 HOURS

Mail original form to field editor for this season.

DOCUMENTATION OF UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTING

SPECIES: Common Black-headed Gull (Adult)

LOCATION: DNR wetland along 140th-145th Street just north of Jemerson Slough (Dickinson County)

DATE & TIME: 26 June, 1996 (Most of time from 9:43-10:42 AM)

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, NE, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: Reported by Lee Schoenewe. Others who saw it before were Ed Thelen and Tom Stone.

BACKGROUND: Lee Schoenewe reported a bird of this species to the Iowa Birdline on Sunday evening, June 23. I arrived at the location at mid-morning, and one bird was standing in shallow water on a pond close to the road, and it was the Black-headed Gull. I watched it there (as close as 60-70 feet), until it eventually flew around, and then over the hill out of sight. As I wrote my field notes, it returned and started hunting the same pond. It caught a large tadpole or small bullhead, ate it, and preened. It then flew to a pond farther north and sat with other gulls (27 Franklin's Gulls and 4 Ring-billed Gulls) and terns (Black, Forster's, Caspian).

DESCRIPTION: General size was compared to Franklin' Gull, as it stood beside several, was noticeably larger, and appeared to be about a head taller. The bird was much bigger than Forster's Tern, and at least twice as big as the Black Tern. It was noticeably smaller than the Caspian Tern and the Ring-billed Gulls. The most notable feature of the bird was a dark brown hood, which did not end on the neck, but ended by vertically going to the back of the top of the head, thus leaving the nape and back of the neck white. The small rounded head had a dark eye, and there was a partial eye ring, which was only on the distal half of the eye, and also had a break in it at the distal. At the front of the eye, there appeared to be reddish skin where an eye ring would be located. The bill was thin and a dull red color, and the upper mandible curved downward at the tip.

The mantle and most of the folded wing were a light gray (noticeably lighter than the Franklin's Gull), but the folded wing tip was black. The folded wings were more than an inch longer than the tail. Otherwise, the underparts, head, neck, and upper back, and tail were all white. The legs were a very red, but dull (not shiny) color.

In flight, the upperwing was light gray, except for the outer primaries, which were white. These outer primaries also had black tips, which produced a dark trailing edge.

96-34

The underwing was also mostly gray, but continued to get darker toward the wing tip, which was black, except for the outermost primary which was white, producing a white leading edge. The tail was entirely white, and was slightly rounded.

No vocalization was heard.

SIMILAR SPECIES: No other small adult gull has the combination of a light gray mantle, dark brown hood, red bill and legs, partial eye ring, and wing markings.

OPTICS & CONDITIONS: I watched the bird through a KOWA TSN-4 telescope (20 X 60 zoom) at distances of 60-200 feet. I also used Swift Audubon (8.5 X 44) binoculars to watch the bird in flight at distances of 30-300 feet. It was mid-morning on a sunny day, and all of the viewing was toward the southwest, west, and northwest.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have seen two adult birds at Attu, Alaska in May, 1993, and I saw an adult and a juvenile bird very near this location in August, 1994.

REFERENCES & FIELD NOTES: Field notes were made immediately, and the National Geographic guide was looked at later at the car. This form was typed on 27 June.

What species? Common Black-headed Gull How many? 1Location? Jemerson Slough area - Dickinson CountyType of habitat? Small pond area with lots of mud edges - loafing area for gullsWhen? date(s): July 8 and 9, 1996 time: 7:10 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - July 8
9:33 a.m. to 9:39 a.m. - July 9Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Box 65, Liscomb, Iowa 50148others with you: noneothers before or after you: before - Harold White, Lee Schoenewe, others?

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, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

This adult gull had a light brown hood on its head, bright red legs, and a red bill that was not as noticeably red as the Franklin's gulls. It had a light gray mantle and an all white tail. The upper primaries had a large white slab with a bit of black on the primary tips. The underwings had a big amount of blackish on the primary area. It had red color inside its mouth. Its hood was a different shape than Franklin's Gulls hood - almost chopped off at the vertical level. It was larger than the Franklin's Gulls it was with both in flight and on the ground. The eye appeared dark with no white eye crescents that were showing for me at this distance. It had white breast and belly. The mantle was lighter gray the Franklin's gulls dark mantles. It did lots of flying and was quite noticeable in flight. It flew low usually with bright red feet and a larger size gull and big wedges of white on upper wing. ~~Great looks!~~

Similar species and how eliminated:

A Bonaparte's Gull is much smaller, has a black hood, and lacks the blackish area on the primaries of the underwings.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? _____

If yes, explain: _____

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

Good viewing. Sunny - good sunlight at my side. 120-140 yards away estimated. 8x30 Binocs and 22x Scope.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

This is second time I've seen one - last year in this area was the first.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic guide

How long before field notes made? white viewing this form completed? July 15, 1996