

Great Black-backed Gull
13 Dec 1989
Davenport, Scott Co., IA
T. Kent, J. Fuller
IBL 60:52, 61:85

Record Number: 89-56
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Thomas H. Kent
Jim Fuller

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 60:52
Records Committee: IBL 61:85

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D: Acceptable document. Longer size and good details makes for good document.

A-D: Size, bill and head shape and mantel color are conclusive.

A-D: Good descriptions by both observers.

A-D: The size, black back and wingtips, and pinkish legs eliminates all other gulls.

A-D: Descriptions are well done and convincing for Great Black-backed Gull. Was distance really only 10 yards (according to Kent) or is this an error; did they get closer than 300 yards (Fuller)?

A-D: Good documentations and details by both observers.

A-D: Clearly a Great Black-backed based on size and unicolor upperwing-no difference in shade between primaries and rest of upperwing. Both observers made the same adequate observations. Western and Slaty-backed clearly eliminated.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

89-56

What species? Great Black-backed Gull How many? 1 ad
Location? Davenport, Scott Co., Iowa
Type of Habitat? Mississippi River north of Credit Is.
When? date(s): 13 Dec 1989 time: 140 to 155
Who? your name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246
Others with you: Jim Fuller
Others before or after you: _____

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.

" Obviously bigger than Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, describing the Ring-bills (twice as big) and bigger than 1st winter Herring Gulls (by 10% or more). All white head except for slight flecking on back of neck, yellow bill with prominent red mark. Bill was very long and slightly down turned. The head was elongated. The back and wings were black and the protruding primaries were black. The legs were off-pink, color not seen real well. We watched the bird preen and move around. It flew, came back and landed, and flew again. In flight, the bird was bigger than any of the other gulls - easy to pick out, perhaps 25% greater wingspan than any of the Herring. The entire upper wing and back were black without any hint of difference between the wing tip and mantle. There was a thin white trailing edge to the wing. Tip of wing not seen well - could not pick up white marks. The tail was white. Flight heavy, slightly. Similar species; how eliminated: Slower than Herring Gulls."

Size, all black upper wing and back, large head and bill, pale legs eliminate all other black-backed gulls.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? ?

If yes, explain: Others reported a Western Gull from above location on 15 yesterday. About 10 yards. 20x scope - sitting + flying.

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

Heavy overcast with snow flurries. Light, however was more than adequate to see the bird well.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen many in East.

References and persons consulted before writing description: No guide consulted during viewing.

How long before field notes made? immediate - dictated or quoted this form completed? 3 1/2 hours

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

What species? GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL How many? 1 ^{WINTER} ADULT 89-56

Location? DAVENPORT - SLITT COUNTY - NEAR TUXEDO'S RESTAURANT

Type of habitat? MISSISSIPPI RIVER

When? date(s): 13 DECEMBER 1989 time: 1:45 PM to 1:55 PM

Who? your name and address: JIM FULLER, 6 LONGVIEW KNOLL, RR#6, IOWA CITY

others with you: TOM KENT

others before or after you: _____

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.

THE BIRD WAS PICKED OUT OF A GROUP OF STANDING HERRING GULLS ABOUT 300 YARDS AWAY. IT APPEARED SLIGHTLY LARGER THAN THE HERRINGS, AND WHEN IT FLEW IT WAS LARGER, AND HAD A WIDER WINGSPAN THAN THE HERRINGS. THE MANTLE AND FOLDED WING ON THE STANDING BIRD WERE BLACK - NOT DARK GRAY. THE BILL WAS MASSIVE, YELLOW, AND HAD A SUB-TERMINAL RED SPOT ON THE LOWER MANDIBLE. THERE WAS VERY LIMITED STREAKING ON THE NAPE. OTHERWISE HEAD, NECK AND UNDERPARTS WERE WHITE. EYE COLOR COULD NOT BE DETERMINED. LEGS WERE A GRAY-PINK COLOR. ON FLYING BIRD, THERE WAS A WHITE TRAILING EDGE TO AN UPPERWING THAT WAS THE SAME SHADE OF BLACK ALL THE WAY ACROSS. TAIL WAS ENTIRELY WHITE. I COULD NOT SEE WING TIP PATTERN.

Similar species and how eliminated: SIZE AND ENTIRELY BLACK MANTLE AND UPPERWINGS ELIMINATE OTHER DARK MANTLED GULLS

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

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

MOSTLY OVERCAST - SNOW FLURRIES - LOOKING NORTH WITH KOWA TSN-4 SCOPE (20-60X)

Previous experience with species and similar ones: YES - HERE AND ON EAST COAST

References and persons consulted before writing description: NAT'L GEOG.

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATE this form completed? 6 HOURS

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240