

Iceland Gull

5 Jan 1996

Lock and Dam 15, Scott Co., IA

\*J. Fuller, \*C. Edwards

IBL 66:57, 67:82

Record Number: 96-01

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Jim Fuller (5 Jan), 6 Longview Knoll NE, Iowa City 52240

Chris Edwards (7 Jan)

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 66:57

Records Committee: IBL 67:82

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, This sighting is a strong record with everything I like to see in a sighting. 1) They got a good close look for a length of time. 2) The species with which it could be confused was present for direct comparison. 3) The bird was sitting and flying. 4) Good details.

A-D, All black bill, size of Thayer's, coloration, faint tail band good for Iceland.

A-D, Size, light primaries, and faint tail band convincing.

A-D, Comparison with "Thayer's" helpful. This bird apparently pale enough for ID as "Iceland." Seems certain birds seen were the same.

96-01

## DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD

SPECIES: Iceland Gull (First-winter)

LOCATION: Lock & Dam #15, Davenport (Scott County)

DATE & TIME: 5 January, 1996 (8:45-9:20 AM)

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

OTHERS: Seen two days later by Chris Edwards, Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, and Pam and Reid Allen.

DESCRIPTION: This bird was seen flying below the lock and dam in downtown Davenport, and at the same time there was an adult Lesser Black-backed and a first-winter Thayer's Gull. Good comparisons between the Iceland and Thayer's were possible. When the Iceland disappeared above the dam, I walked the bike path around the dam, and found it sitting on the ice only about fifty yards away. I could not determine that the Thayer's and Iceland were any different in size, but the Thayer's was an obviously darker bird in general. The Iceland was a very light tannish-white overall, but there was a very faint tan subterminal tail band. The back and head were finely streaked with tan, and the upperwing also was light tan, except for the primaries, which appeared to be a silver-white color. The Thayer's, however had silver-white primaries and secondaries on the underwing only, and otherwise was a darker brownish-tan. The Thayer's also had a relatively wide brown tail band. Both birds had all black bills and a dark eye. The Iceland had a grayish-pink leg color. I could not see the legs of the Thayer's.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Comparisons to Thayer's Gull have been made in the description. First-year Glaucous Gull is larger, and has a two-tone black-tipped bill.

OPTICS & CONDITIONS: The birds were observed for the majority of the time with Swift Audubon (8.5 X 44) binoculars, but I did watch the Iceland flying briefly and sitting on the ice with a KOWA TSN-4 (20 X) telescope. Distances were 60-300 feet for the flying birds, and about 150 feet for the sitting Iceland. Viewing directions were east to southeast and the sky was clear.

REFERENCES and FIELD NOTES: Field notes were made in the car after the viewing, and National Geographic Field Guide, and Harrison's Seabird Guide were viewed that evening. This form was typed on 8 January.

96-01

**DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR IOWA BIRD SIGHTINGS**

Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Avenue, North Liberty, IA 52317

**What Species?** Iceland Gull

**How many?** 1

**Location?** Mississippi River, Davenport, Scott Co.

**Type of Habitat?** River.

**When?** January 7, 1996, 1:15 p.m. for approximately one minute.

**Who?** Chris Edwards, 85 Whitman Ave., North Liberty, IA 52317.

**Others with you:** Kurt Nelson, Mason City.

**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.**

Slightly smaller than nearby Herring Gulls. Bill entirely black. Eye dark. First winter plumage; whitish overall; upperside of primary tips whiter than remainder of wing; no secondary bar; very light brown subterminal tail band.

The bird was seen flying and briefly sitting on the water.

**Similar species; how eliminated:** Glaucous Gull is much larger and has a large, bicolored bill. Thayer's Gull has a broken secondary bar and brown primary tips on the upperside of the wing.

**Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification?** No.

**Viewing conditions:** Full sunlight, 50 yards away. Viewed with 8 x 40 binoculars and 15x - 45x telescope.

**Previous experience with species and similar ones:** No experience with Iceland Gull; very familiar with Herring and Ring-billed Gulls.

**References and persons consulted before writing description:** None.

**How long before field notes made?** Ninety minutes.

**How long before this form completed?** Six hours.