

Thayer's Gull
28 Dec 1991
Lock and Dam 13, Clinton Co., IA
*Brian Blevins
IBL 62:49, 55, 71

Record Number: 91-45
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION: Brian Blevins

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 62:55
Christmas Bird Count: IBL 62:49
Records Committee: IBL 62:71

VOTE: 2 A-D, 5 NA

NA, Possibly Thayer's Gull but mantle color is not best characteristic to use to separate Thayer's and Herring Gulls. Thayer's Gull do have dark wing tips, not as extensive as in Herring but still present. In Gulls, Grant states Beware adult Herring Gulls in October to December with still-growing outer three primaries; such birds show much less black on underwing-tip, suggesting Thayer's-like pattern. More detail is needed to distinguish between Thayer's, Herring and possible Iceland Gull.

NA, While the details provided are suggestive of 1st winter Thayer's, more detail should be provided before accepting this rare and difficult to identify species in Iowa.

NA, Insufficient details to identify from this description.

NA, Not enough detail given to conclude Thayer's Gull. No description of underwing, tail pattern and color, contrasts, if any, of wings and mantle. Too much is missing to say that these were Thayer's Gulls.

NA, More details are needed to evaluate a Thayer's Gull than just reliance on light brown mantle through the wing tips. This may be a good field mark for spotting them in flight but more details are needed to conclusively determine this as a Thayer's and eliminate other possibilities. Please send in more with more details.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

91-45

What species? Thayers Gull How many? 2

Location? Lock & Dam 13 on Mississippi River

Type of Habitat? Mississippi River Flyway just Below the Dam

When? date(s): Dec. 28, 1991 time: 2:30 PM to 2:50 PM

Who? your name and address: Brian Blevins - 2003 E. 12th St. ; Davenport, Iowa

Others with you: Corey Blevins, Lewis Blevins, Jennifer Anderson

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.

Two Herring size immature gulls were quickly picked out of about 400 Gulls working below the rollers as being Thayers as well as a large white 2nd year Glaucous. These birds showed that distinct continuous (lighter than Herring brown mantle) all the way into the primaries without the darker brown seen in Herring and many others.

Similar species; how eliminated: Herring Gull -> eliminated by the light brown color continuous all the way throughout the wingtips, thus there was not a darkening towards the wing tips. The Mantle was also lighter than those of the nearby Herring Gulls.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? NO
If yes, explain:

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

Overcast - Closest (50 meters) 7x35 binocs 15 to 45X scope
10x50 binocs
8x40 binocs

Previous experience with species and similar ones: We usually see a couple over the duration of the winter here along the river.

References and persons consulted before writing description: National Geographic Guide to Shore
Jennifer Anderson distinguishing marks to look for.

How long before field notes made? _____ this form completed? 2 days

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