

Iceland Gull
21 Dec 1997
Red Rock Reservoir, Marion Co., IA
*Matt Kenne
1st yr; IBL 68:60, 86

Record Number: 97-57
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Matt Kenne, 709 N. Phillips, Algona 50511 [*4/19/98]

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 68:60
Records Committee: IBL 68:86

VOTE: 6 A-D, 1 NA

A-D, Coloration of primaries, lack of tail band, and lack of secondary bar indicative of first winter Iceland Gull.

A-D, This one is a struggle, but after reviewing Zimmer's article again, I will somewhat reluctantly vote for it. Lack of any tail band puts this bird in a fairly small sector of the population of 1st winter Icelands, a fact I find troublesome for a vagrant bird. I have difficulty interpreting the description of the primaries. Were just the tips white? Some of the best identifiers for Iceland--bill size and shape, wing-extension, and tertial pattern--are not described, probably because the bird was seen only in flight. However, the bird is obviously not a Glaucous or a Thayer's. The probability of it actually being an Iceland as opposed to an aberrant something else is fairly high.

A-D, With all the possible variation, lack of secondary bar may be the only rock-solid mark for separating Kumlien's from Thayer's.

A-D, Lack of tail band unusual, but strongly favors Iceland over Thayer's. Faint tail bands are sometimes difficult to see. All dark bill excludes Glaucous.

NA, The only feature suggestive of Kumlien's not Thayer's is 'absence of a tail band'. No details on primary pattern noted other than general coloration. Pale Thayer's Gull not conclusively eliminated. Bill shape and size not described--critical for questionable birds.

RE-VOTE (at meeting 4/19/98): 6 A-D, 1 NA

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

97-57

What species? Iceland Gull How many? 1
Location? Red Rock Res, Marion Co.
Type of Habitat? spillway below Red Rock Res.
When? date(s): Dec. 21, 1997 time: 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Who? your name and address: Matt Kenne 709 N. Phillips, Algona, Ia 5051
Others with you: the Armstrongs arrived about 9:30 AM
Others before or after you: after?

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.

Pale tan Thayer's Gull-size 1st year gull seen in flight below dam several times throughout morning. No obvious tail band. Flight feathers paler than coverts, primaries palest. Tips of primaries whitish above and below. ^(off-white, not white-white) Solid dark bill. Never found the bird perched.

I hadn't considered ~~the~~ Iceland Gull for this bird, I was studying Thayer's and thought this a really pale individual. When Eugene + Eloise showed up, they asked me if I'd seen the Similar species; how eliminated: Iceland Gull and then it clicked.

Glaucous Gull larger with bicolored bill. Thayer's has noticeable tail band, overall color usually darker, and upper side of primaries darker, especially the tips. Secondary bar not present.

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

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

cloudy, viewed with 8X binocs + 20X spotting scope
various distances from both shores

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

NONE, compared with ~~Thayer's~~ Thayer's + Herring. First Iceland

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Nat. Geographe, Kaufmann, Harrison (photo + ray), Tom Kent's IBL article, ^{along with first Thayer's (3 1st winter)}

How long before field notes made? while this form completed? 11 hours
_{watching birds}

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