

Lesser Black-backed Gull            1  
17 Feb 1990  
Bettendorf and LD # 15, Scott Co., IA  
P. Petersen, J. Fuller  
through 19 Feb.; IBL 60:49, 52, 62:22

Record Number: 90-14  
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATIONS

Peter C. Petersen, 17, 19 Feb  
Jim Fuller, 18 Feb

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 60:49, 52  
Records Committee: IBL 62:22

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D: Both documents seem to make a good case for accepting the bird as a Lesser Black-backed Gull.

A-D: A reasonable identification; 2 observations by Petersen supported well by more detail in Fuller's documentation is convincing.

A-D: I accept the bird as a Lesser Black-backed Gull but whether or not it was in Iowa I leave to those who are more familiar with the Mississippi River area!

A-D: Extreme detail understandably lacking from this distance, but yellow leg color eliminates the other possible gulls.

A-D: Very good descriptions. Yellow legs and dark gray back eliminates any other species.

A-D: Good details and documentations.

DOCUMENTATION FORM  
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

90-14

What species? Lesser Black-backed Gull  
Location? 2/17 - on ice over Miss. River Channel between Mottucci I. & Beffendout I., 2/19 at Lock & Dam 15 from E side - again in center of river How many? 1  
Type of Habitat? Miss. River ice  
When? date(s): Feb. 17 + 19, 1990 2/17 9:25 AM to 9:40 AM, time: 2/19 9:40 AM to 9:45 AM.  
Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd, Davey, Iowa  
Others with you: 2/17 Walt Zuurdeeg, Ann Barker 2/19 - none  
Others before or after you: none to my knowledge

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.

Adult plumage gull, a bit smaller than nearby Herring Gulls but larger than Ring-bills, head, underparts & tail, white except for tan flecks on head. Mantle dark gray but not black. Wing tips black with one window of white. Trailing white edge on wing, narrow legs & bill yellow.

Similar species; how eliminated:

Slaty-backed Gull - legs not pink, size  
Great Black-backed Gull - legs not pink, size, back not dark enough  
Western Gull - legs not pink, size  
Yellow-footed Gull - size

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

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

2/17 - Full sunlight - sun behind obs. - 400 m. est. - 10X40 Zeiss Binocs, Swift scope below 30-40X  
2/19 " " " sun at 90° angle - 600 m. est. " " 40-60X

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Have seen on several previous occasions in Ia, Il. + In. - many times in Europ

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Checked Geo after obs. to rule out all other species

How long before field notes made? 2/17 3 hrs this form completed? 2/17 - 3 hrs  
2/19 - 15 min 2/19 - 15 min

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

What species? LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL How many? 1 ADULT

Location? MISSISSIPPI RIVER - BETWEEN BETENDORF & MOLINE

Type of habitat? RIVER

When? date(s): 18 FEB 1990 time: 8:15 AM to 8:45 AM

Who? your name and address: TIM FULLER, 6 LONGVIEW KNOLL, IOWA CITY

others with you: TIM SCHEIB

others before or after you: PETE PETERSEN, ANN BARKER

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 SEEN ABOUT MID RIVER STANDING ON ICE WITH A GROUP OF HERRING AND RING-BILLED GULLS. IT COULD NOT BE DETERMINED IF BIRD WAS IN IOWA OR ILLINOIS - BUT IT WAS ABOUT MID-RIVER. MOST OF TIME THE BIRD WAS LYING DOWN ON THE ICE. WHEN IT DID STAND, IT WAS NOTICEABLY SMALLER THAN THE TWO HERRING GULLS BESIDE IT AND LARGER THAN ANY OF THE RING-BILLED GULLS NEARBY. THE BACK WAS DARK GRAY - NOT JET BLACK. THE FOLDED WING TIPS WERE VERY DARK. BILL WAS YELLOW WITH A RED SPOT SUB-TERMINALLY ON LOWER MANDIBLE. THERE WAS SOME STREAKING ON THE WHITE HEAD, NECK AND NAPE, AND ESPECIALLY A DARK SMUDGE AROUND THE EYE. LEGS WERE YELLOW. IT NEVER FLEW OR STRETCHED ITS WINGS DURING THE VIEWING TIME.

Similar species and how eliminated: GREAT BLACK BACKED IS MUCH LARGER WITH PINK LEGS AND JET BLACK BACK AND WINGS. SLATH-BACKED AND WESTERN GULLS ARE LARGER WITH PINK LEGS

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: EXCELLENT VIEWING CONDITIONS. CLEAR MORNING WITH SUN AT BACK LOOKING NW. DISTANCE WAS ESTIMATED 700-800 YARDS. KOWA TSN 4 SCOPE.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: SEEN SEVERAL TIMES IN IOWA

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

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATE this form completed? 12 HOURS

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