

Thayer's Gull

3 Dec 1986

Red Rock Res., Marion Co., IA

\*T. Kent (2 birds)

IBL 57:77

Record Number: 86-24

Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Thomas H. Kent

REFERENCES

Records Committee: IBL 57:77

VOTE: 1-II, 5-III, 1-abstain

III, Two birds are described but only second one (P.M.) is convincing.

III, Good description. Second bird seems awfully small, should be closer in size to Herring Gull and quite a bit larger than Ring-billed, though there could be quite a bit of size variation in some Gull species.

III, Uniform color, underwing coloration, and head and bill shape are good marks.

III, This description is by far the most convincing of 86-22 through 86-24. Description of upper and under primaries is detailed and convincing, along with detailed and direct comparison with Herring Gull. Again, however, elimination of Kumlein's is sketchy (Tail band was seen, however).

## DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Thayer's Gull, 3 Dec 1986, Red Rock Reservoir (2 first-year birds)

Observer: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52240

Other observers: I saw the first bird alone in the morning and the other in the afternoon with Jim Fuller and Cal and Bernie Knight.

Time: 9:10 a.m. for several minutes and 3:55 p.m. for many minutes.

Habitat: reservoir with ice and open water.

Description: at 9:15 a.m., "1 mile above the highway 14 bridge on the south side looking over the upper part of the reservoir which is fairly shallow. There are thousands of gulls here. A first-year Thayer's Gull seen flying with uniform wing color and watched it for some time through the scope at 200 yards. From underneath the flight feathers are silvery all the way to the tip. The upper surface is uniform brown with slight darkening on the leading edge of the outer primaries and a faint carpal bar. It has a tail band. Otherwise all uniform color. Dark bill. Didn't get a good comparison of size."

at 3:55 p.m., "I am looking at another Thayer's Gull. This bird is quite brown on body with a definite smudge through the head and a slim all-black bill. It does have some white showing on the nape and rather delicate feathering. The bird is not any larger than some of the ring-bills--some of the ring-bills are smaller. The larger ring-bills are almost as big as this bird, and it is distinctly smaller than a number of Herring Gulls in the same field. The bill is much smaller and thinner; the head is small. The wing coverts are fairly delicately edged with white, whereas the throat, breast and underparts are a very uniformly brownish color. This is a fairly dark Thayer's. When it lifted its wings they were fairly uniform all the way out with some darkening at the outer edge of the primaries. The underwings were silvery. The striking thing about this bird is the size, bill shape and head shape compared to the nearby herrings and very distinct smudge through the eye."

Conditions: light behind in a.m. and p.m.; Used 20x scope and binocs; p.m. bird at 100 yards or less--excellent view of sitting bird, also seen in flight.

Similar species: Herring Gull--see above.

Agreement: yes

Previous experience: have seen several, one this fall and one last fall in Iowa.

References/time used: not used.

Time of notes/typed: dictated while watching birds or just after. Typed Dec 30.