

Sabine's Gull
25 Sep 1970
Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo Co., IA
Pearl Knoop
IBL 41:27, letters

Record Number: 93-ET
Classification: NA

REFERENCE

Field Reports: IBL 41:27

LETTER

[Tom Kent] to Pearl Knoop, 14 Nov 1983

Pearl Knoop to Tom [Kent], 16 Nov 1983.

VOTE: 5 NA

NA, I believe that this record is probably correct based on date and striking black and white pattern. I suspect Pearl meant upper parts rather than back. Although she says the tail did not have a black tip, this mark could have easily been missed as the bird flew by. Unfortunately, the notes are not detailed enough to go beyond probable. /thk

Brown, W. H. 1971.
Field notes-Iowa Bird Life 41:27

FIELD REPORTS

27

(DH). A good case is made for a Sabine's Gull seen at Clear Lake (PK). There are reports of Caspian Terns: Sandy Beach on 19 September (LS), from 2 to 16 seen for 2 weeks at Rock Creek (MS), 2 at Cardinal Marsh on 27 September (DK), 40 on 26 September and 2 on 9 October (GB).

14 Nov 1983

Dear Pearl,

Last week Eugene and Eloise Armstrong identified a juvenile Sabine's Gull at Saylorville Reservoir, and many of us got to see it. This prompted me to review again the Iowa records of this species. There are three specimens from the 1800s, a reference in Iowa Bird Life to your seeing one at Clear Lake in 1970, and a reference to one in western Iowa which Jim Dinsmore just found in the Nebraska Bird Review.

My research shows 2 to 8 reports of this species, mostly juveniles, from midcontinent (Canada to Texas) each fall since 1960 with equal numbers in September and October and a few in November and December. Thus I had been expecting another Iowa report sooner or later, but not from mid-November.

Woody Brown's comment on your sighting in the Field Reports of Iowa Bird Life (volume 41, page 47) reads as follows: "A good case is made for a Sabine's Gull seen at Clear Lake (PK)."

I thought I might have your original report when I recently acquired some old files, but they only go back to 1971.

At any rate, I was wondering if you still have notes on this sighting and/or can provide additional information. Particularly useful would be the date, exact location, whether a juvenile or adult, and any description of the bird that remains in your notes or mind.

I'm hoping all of the information on this species in Iowa can be pulled together so that it can be included in the December issue of Iowa Bird Life.

It is good to get reports from you from time to time. Tom Staudt tells me of your helping him with the Christmas Bird Count at Marble Rock.

Sincerely,

Pearl Knapp
Box 215
Marble Rock IA 50653

93-ET

Marble Rock, Iowa

November 16, 1983

Dear Tom

Received your letter today. Concerning the Sabine Gull seen on September 25, 1970. I was walking on the game reserve area along the south side of the marsh west of the grade at the Venturers end of Clear Lake. The gull flew along over the water just beyond the edge and was going west (flying low enough for good observation. This is what I have written in my notes. Saw a gull with such a definite black and white pattern on its back that I wondered and ~~later~~ study of the bird books proved it to be a Sabine Gull. When studying the bird books I recall wishing I could go back for another look at the tail. If tail ^{of young} markings are as distinct as Peterson shows them - it was an adult.

It was
a rainy
afternoon

Sincerely

Paul Knopf.