

349-01-1991

Second Berks County Record of ICELAND GULL
Larus glaucooides
Berks County
Rudy Keller

On the evening of 28 February 1991 I got a call from Ernest Schiefer saying that he had seen a first-winter Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*) late that afternoon at Lake Ontelaunee. I went to look for the bird 2 March 1991 and found it at the dam breast around midday in sunny, calm weather.

It flew in with Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*), circling and banking repeatedly. I watched it through Nikon 7X35E binoculars and a 60 mm zoom scope for about 40 minutes at distances of about 70 feet to 500 yds. At close range, the bird was easy to tell from Herring Gulls by its paler back, whiter wings without black tips and slightly smaller size. Its primaries looked translucent from below.

The Iceland's back, nape, rump and tail were lightly and uniformly barred or speckled buffy brown. The tail had no dark band. The brown wash was most visible in direct light at close range; farther away or in poorer light, the bird looked white. It looked even whiter underneath than above, especially the primaries. The bill was dark except for a barely visible pinkish area at the base where the mandi-

bles join. The eyes were dark. I did not see the legs.

While I watched the Iceland Gull, only Herring Gulls were present for direct comparison. The Iceland was smaller overall and had a smaller, thinner, darker bill. Resting on the water at a distance, the pale Iceland could be distinguished from the grayer adult and much darker brown immature Herring Gulls. Schiefer noted that when the bird was resting on the water, the wings extended beyond the tail. When I saw the bird at rest, it was too far away to see this field mark.

My impression is that the National Geographic Guide contains a much better picture of the first-winter Iceland Gull than either the Peterson or Robbins guides.

This is the second county record of Iceland Gull. The first was also a first-winter bird seen at Lake Ontelaunee 19 February 1989 by Matthew J. Spence (*Pa. Birds* 3:25).

References:

National Geographic Society. 1983. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. Washington, D.C.

Harrison, P. 1983. *Seabirds. An identifica-*

tion guide. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # of

Species: **Iceland Gull**

Date of Sighting: **February 28 - March 2, 1991**

Observer(s): **Rudy Keller, Ernest Schiefer**

Date of Submission: **1991**

Submitted by: **Rudy Keller**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V		
					A	B	C
E. Kwater			X				
B. Haas			X				
F. Haas			X				
R. Leberman			X				
G. McWilliams			X				
S. Santner			X				
P. Schwalbe			X				
TOTALS			7				
DECISION			X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

Bm Haas

Date:

11-6-91