

348-03-1995

THAYER'S GULL

Larus thayeri

Location: Presque Isle Bay from Presque Isle State Park

Date: April 8, 1995

Time: Approximately 12:30 PM

Weather: Cloudy, viewing conditions good.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at variable power and Zeiss 10 X 40 Binocular

Viewing distance: 150 to 250 yards

Details of sighting and description: There was a large concentration of about 40 to 50,000 gulls feeding at the head of the bay. Most of the gulls were adult Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*), but there were also thousands of Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) in all plumages. While scanning through the gulls I found at least five Iceland Gulls (*L. glaucoides*), one Glaucous Gull (*L. hyperboreus*) and three Lesser-black-backed Gulls (*L. fuscus*). I also spotted an adult gull showing grayish ventral primary tips. When it banked showing the dorsal surface I could see blackish primary tips with the black being more reduced than the nearby Herring Gulls. The gray across the dorsal surfaces appeared to be equal in tone to the gray dorsal surfaces of Herring Gull. This characteristic eliminated the very similar Iceland Gull which is always a paler gray across the dorsal surfaces than the latter species. The nape and head was heavily streaked a rusty brown, it was especially dark around the eyes. When I was within about 150 yards, the details became clearer. The ventral surface of the primary tips were grayish with a large white mirror showing through near the tips of the outermost primaries. The only black visible was at the very tips of the outermost primaries and along the outer web of the outermost primary. On the dorsal surface of the primaries, black was limited to the outer webs of the outer five primaries with the very tips being white. There were two large mirrors about 2/3 way up on the outer two primaries. The Thayer's Gull landed on the water a few times next to Herring Gulls in the same plumage. The mantle of the Thayer's Gull was clearly as dark as the Herring Gulls and the overall size was similar, but the Thayer's Gull had a slightly smaller and more rounded head than the Herring Gulls. I watched the Thayer's Gull for about 30 minutes before turning my attention away from it.

There was another gull that may have been a two year old Thayer's Gull, but it I did not have enough time to thoroughly study it before I lost it in the mass of gulls.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: **Thayer's Gull (Larus thayeri)**

Date of Sighting: **8 April 1995 to 8 April 1995**

Location: **PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK**

County: **ERIE**

Observer(s): **Jerry McWilliams**

Date of Submission: **1995**

Submitted by: **Jerry McWilliams**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **NO** Specimen: **NO**

Recording: **NONE**

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas			X					
N. Pulcinella			X					
E. Kwater			X					
R. Ickes			X					
G. McWilliams			X					
P. Schwalbe			X					
S. Feldstein			X					
TOTALS			7					
DECISION			X					

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

5-1-96