















PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

2469 Hammertown Road

Narvon, PA 17555

September 24, 1997

Gary Freed
1132 Walters Road
Pennsburg, PA 18073-1933

Dear Gary,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Thayer's Gull you saw at Green Lane Reservoir on 3 April 1996 to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. The committee was concerned that the photographs and written descriptions did not entirely rule out the possibility of the bird being a pre-alternate 1 Herring Gull. Two of the photos show what appears to be dark centers of the tertials typical of a Herring Gull at this date. There was also some question as to the lack of pale edges to the primary tips which should be noticeable on a standing fresh plumaged first year Thayer's Gull. The bill was also thought to have too much pink for a first year Thayer's. Immature Herring/Iceland/Thayer's type birds are often in heavy molt at this time of year and old feathers are faded and severely worn making the identification difficult.

This of course, does not mean the bird was not a Thayer's Gull, merely, that the record is not beyond reasonable doubt for acceptance

We hope that this does not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rare birds you find in the future. Please be encouraged to send as much detail as possible when submitting a report.

Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 348-01-1996

cc. Arlene Koch
Jason Horn

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

2469 Hammertown Road

Narvon, PA 17555

September 24, 1997

Arlene Koch
1375 Raubsville Road
Easton, PA 18042-9503

Dear Arlene,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Thayer's Gull you saw at Green Lane Reservoir on 3 April 1996 to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. The committee was concerned that the photographs and written descriptions did not entirely rule out the possibility of the bird being a pre-alternate 1 Herring Gull. Two of the photos show what appears to be dark centers of the tertials typical of a Herring Gull at this date. There was also some question as to the lack of pale edges to the primary tips which should be noticeable on a standing fresh plumaged first year Thayer's Gull. The bill was also thought to have too much pink for a first year Thayer's. Immature Herring/Iceland/Thayer's type birds are often in heavy molt at this time of year and old feathers are faded and severely worn making the identification difficult.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 348-01-1996

cc. Gary Freed
Jason Horn

October 8, 1997

Jason Horn
RR 2 Box 64C
Emmaus, PA 18049

Dear Jason,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Thayer's Gull you saw at Green Lane Reservoir on 3 April 1996 to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we regret that we are unable to accept this record. The committee was concerned that the photographs and written descriptions did not entirely rule out the possibility of the bird being a pre-alternate 1 Herring Gull. Two of the photos show what appears to be dark centers of the tertials typical of a Herring Gull at this date. There was also some question as to the lack of pale edges to the primary tips which should be noticeable on a standing fresh plumaged first year Thayer's Gull. The bill was also thought to have too much pink for a first year Thayer's. Immature Herring/Iceland/Thayer's type birds are often in heavy molt at this time of year and old feathers are faded and severely worn making the identification difficult.

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Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 348-01-1996

cc. Gary Freed
Arlene Koch

348-01-1996

Thayer's Gull Larus thayeriLocation Date & Time

Church Road, Green Lane Res. Montgomery Co. PA

4/3/96 from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm at distance of 75-100 yds

Observers

Jason Horn, Arlene Koch, Gacy L. Freed & others

Description

The bird size was mid-way between a Ring-billed & Herring Gull. The head was noticeably smaller than Herring Gull and appeared to be more rounded. The bird had dark eyes - its bill was overall pale with a smudge of dark about half way out the lower mandible - this mark extended onto the tip of the upper mandible.

The bird's legs were pale pink. The bird was a pale gray-brown overall - head and nape were lighter than rest of body. Primary tips appear dark when wings were closed. In flight upper surface of primary feathers appeared dark brown - secondaries appeared a lighter shade. The bird also showed a second dark bar above the secondaries. On the underwing, the flight feather appeared very pale gray while the rest of underwing appeared to be a shade of light brown-gray.

348-01-1996

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

SUPPORTING DETAILS: UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES/HIGH NUMBERS

CBC Name _____ Date _____ Compiler _____
Observer writing this account & date Gary L. Freed 4-3-96

SPECIES Thayer's Gull NUMBER, AGE, SEX 1-first winter-2nd yr
Distance from bird(s) 100+ yds Relative size of bird smaller than Herring Gull
larger than Ring billed Gull

HEAD & NECK (Describe forehead, crown, auricular, malar region, median line, etc.)
Head noticeably smaller & rounder than Herring Gull - Neck
shorter, thinner, smaller than Herring Gull

EYE & LORES (Describe supercilium, ring, stripe, color, etc.) eye positioned
more in center of head than towards bill

UPPER & LOWER MANDIBLES light with dark smudge on lower mandible
LEGS & FEET pinkish - shorter than Herring Gull

UPPERPARTS (Describe nape, back, rump, upper tail coverts, etc.)
brownish, but head and breast lighter - no white in rump area

UNDERPARTS (Describe throat, belly, side, flanks, crissum, etc.)
brownish - lighter on breast

RECTRICES (Describe inner, middle, outer tail feathers, color pattern, shape, etc.)
blackish tail with no white toward rump

WING (Describe color, length, shape, linings, bars, coverts, leading & trailing edges, etc.)
upper - dark terminal band - second band above not as dark
darker primaries; under - brownish with primaries lighter brown

VOCALIZATION

BEHAVIOR sitting on log - mostly swimming in shallow water
with Herring Gulls and Ring-billed gulls

Date of observation 4-3-96 Time 5:30 pm Weather clear Sky mostly cloud-free

Duration of observation 45 min Bird - Sun orientation sun low to my back

Exact location Church Rd, Green Lane Reservoir, Montgomery Co, PA

Habitat shallow lake Other observers Jason Horn, Arlene Koch
Optical equipment Kowa scope, 25X

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS Jason found it and photographed it
Head and bill rule out larger gulls

plumage rules out Ring-billed Gull - the only other possibility

AN ACCOMPANYING SKETCH OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN BE MOST HELPFUL
seems to be California Gull - but bill and under-wing
are not right.

348-01-1996

Gull Sighting, Green Lane Reservoir
April 3, 1996 - Arlene Koch

On Wednesday afternoon, April 3, 1996, I was in my car just about to leave Gary Freed's house in Pennsburg when he got a call about a good bird being at the Church Road site of Green Lane Reservoir. Less than 5 minutes later, with Gary right behind me, I pulled into the parking area and saw Jason Horn there with his scope on a bunch of gulls standing at the other side of the reservoir, a distance of 400-500 yards? (I'm not sure).

As of that moment I didn't know what the bird in question was but had figured it to be a gull of some sort. I quickly looked through Jason's scope and saw immediately that one of the gulls was different from the others, although I openly admit that I am not an expert on this group of birds.

The first thing I noticed about the bird was that it was smaller than the herring gulls but bigger than the ring-billeds and its head had a more round appearance to it than the heads of the other gulls. The light was very good at the time, with the sun being to our backs and I was looking through a TSN-2 Kowa scope. The eye placement was more toward the middle than the front of the the light-colored head and there appeared to be a smudge of some sort on its lower mandible.

Both the upperparts and underparts appeared brownish to me, but the chest area was definitely lighter in color. The legs were relatively short and appeared to be light, although I couldn't say positively if they were pale yellow or pink. The bird's upper wing had a darkish terminal band on it and there was another, less noticeable band next to that one. The underwing just looked brownish to me but seemed to get lighter out at the end by the primaries and its tail appeared to be either dark brown or black.

I looked at this gull for almost 30 minutes before leaving Jason and Gary behind. I would be less than honest if I said I knew for sure that this was a Thayer's gull going into its second year as I am not very familiar with the species. However, after checking my notes with the various bird books I have and subsequently talking with Jason and Gary, I have come to the conclusion that the bird I saw does fit that description, except for the dark spot on the lower bill.

All of my observations were made while the bird was on the ground. At no time did I see it fly.

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

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

Date of Sighting: **3 April 1996 to 3 April 1996**

Location: **GREEN LANE RESERVOIR**

County: **MONTGOMERY**

Observer(s): **Jason Horn**

Gary Freed; Arlene Koch

Date of Submission: **1996**

Submitted by: **Jason Horn**

Written Description: **YES** Photo: **YES** 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			X				
E. Kwater							X	
R. Ickes								X
G. McWilliams							X	
P. Schwalbe	X							
S. Feldstein	X							
TOTALS	2			1			2	2
DECISION				X				

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

F. Haas

Date:

2-22-97