

PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE
210 Welcome Ave. Norwood, PA 19074

8 February 2001

Ward Dasey
29 Ark Rd.
Medford, NJ 08055

Dear Ward,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the California Gull at Florence on 12 March 1997 and the Thayer's Gull on the Delaware River on 28 April 1997. Committee members had differing views about the reports, and balloting went two rounds on both. Ultimately, after careful review, the committee decided that it cannot accept the records.

On the California, a majority believed that the details submitted were not conclusive to add this rarity to the Pennsylvania list. Various features including its distinctive shape and jizz make a California likely, but most members felt that acceptance would require more precise information about various characters such as the outer primary pattern from above and below in flight, and the shade of the mantle indicating which race was involved. Because identifying this species outside its usual range is seldom if ever obvious, a series of photographs may be necessary before it can be added to the state list.

On the Thayer's, three members approved the record and four did not. Though most details were appropriate for Thayer's including your illustration of the upper primaries, those voting no were troubled by several items: 1. The extent of black described on the under-primaries appeared to be too great for Thayer's. 2. In flight Thayer's generally appears longer-winged than shorter-winged in flight than Herring (relative to body length and wing width). 3. At rest Thayer's typically has a primary extension equal to or slightly longer, not shorter, than a Herring (relative to tail length). One member felt that the distinction from a small female Herring was not conclusive.

The committee emphasizes that non-acceptance does not mean that the bird was not the species reported, but rather that the committee believes the documentation submitted does not support the identification conclusively.

We hope that this will not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rarities you may find in the future.

Finally, the committee apologizes for the unacceptably long delay before all members were able to vote on the record. Circumstances beyond our control caused the problem, and we believe that we are back on a timely track.

Sincerely,

For the Committee:
Paul Hess, Chairman

P.S. Beginning this year observers will receive postcards acknowledging that the committee has received their documentation. In addition, whereas observers formerly were notified only when reports were not accepted (in disappointing or irritating letters like this one), they will now receive cards announcing that their records *have* been accepted.

Records #346-01-1997, #348-01-1997

This bird eventually flew over to the dump
in Buck County

348-01-1997

NEW JERSEY RARE BIRD COMMITTEE

Atten: Laurie Larson

OBSERVER - Ward W. Dasey
29 Ark Rd
Medford, NJ 08055
H-609-953-1685
W-215-886-2220

SPECIES - Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)
DATE - April 28, 1997 about 3:15PM to about 3:40
LOCATION - Florence, NJ and Bucks Co.
OPTICS - Kowa TSN-4, 30 wide
DISTANCE FROM BIRD - pretty close, not close enough to get the
exact orbital color, if that helps.

NOTES TAKEN ON SITE ARE WITH THIS REPORT.

THE BIRD

AGE - adult in alternate plumage

BIRD AT REST ON WATER

BILL - shorter and thinner than Herring Gull. Light yellow with red gonys spot. In some light bill hinted toward greenish.

HEAD - bright white, rounded and small when compared to the Herring Gulls.

EYE - all dark. Orbital looked dark, but I couldn't see the color.

MANTLE - about the same gray as Herrings, in some light a bit darker. It never looked lighter than a Herring.

SECONDARIES, TERCIALS, AND COVERTS - same as mantle. Some white at bottom edge of tercials and secondaries.

PRIMARIES - black, same as Herring Gulls. White windows slightly larger than Herrings. Black on the outside primary went under the secondaries as it does in a Herring. Less primary extension than Herrings. (I've compared this individual with about 10 different adult Iceland Gulls that have been present from time to time. Only one even approached the primary pattern on this bird. That Iceland or intergrade had a dark eye and the primaries were charcoal, not black. The charcoal on the outer primary did not reach under the secondaries. Another factor was the mantle color, which was lighter than a Herring.

UNDERPARTS, CHEST, AND TAIL - bright white.

LEGS AND FEET - very deep pink toward purple.

BIRD WITH RAISED WINGS AND IN FLIGHT - it raised its wings a bunch of times and flew around a bit before traveling to the dump.

PRIMARIES FROM "OUT TO IN" ON UPPERWING - I can't get my mind around numbering them in the other direction.

1. not black near tip but white well down the shaft, then black it

NEW ZEALAND BIRD COMMISSION

Field No. 10000

RESERVED: Date of Receipt
12 Aug 51
Museum No. (NZ) 10000
R-507-10000
W-100-10000

SPECIES - *Thalassidroma leucorhoa*
DATE - April 20, 1951 - about 8 years to 10 years
LOCATION - Stewart Island, NZ and Cook
OPTIC - Fovea 1.5-2.0 wide
DISTANCE FROM BIRD - pretty close, not close to the
exact optical center of lens of eye

NOTES TAKEN ON THE BIRD WITH THIS PHOTO

THE BIRD

AGE - adult in alternate plumage

BIRD AT REST IN WATER

BILL - shorter and stouter than in alternate plumage with
red gonyx space in base light bilinated toward a weakly
HEAD - bright white in adult and in 1st year plumage in the morning
Gullies.

EYE - all dark, orbital looked dark, but I was in the shadow
MANTLE - about the same grey as in alternate plumage but a bit
darker. It never took a lighter tone as in alternate
SECONDARIES - TERTIARIES AND COVERTS - same as in alternate
at bottom edge of tertiaries and secondaries.

PRIMARIES - black, same as in alternate plumage, which shows slightly
layer than in alternate plumage. Black on the inner edge of the
secondaries as in alternate plumage. Black on the inner edge of the
Herringbones. I've compared this individual with an adult male
adult female which have been present since the first year. I
one even approached the primary pattern of this individual. I
or intergrade had a dark eye and the primaries were dark and not
black. The character on the outer primary did not reach under the
secondaries. Another factor was the mantle color, which was
lighter than in alternate plumage.

UNDERPARTS, CHIN AND TAIL - bright white.
LEGS AND FEET - very deep pink toward purple.

BIRD WITH RAISED WINGS AND IN FLIGHT - its raised wings a bunch
of times and then spread a bit before it started to fly again.

PRIMARIES FROM OUT TO IN ON UNDERWING - from 1st to 10th
numbered from the outer direction.
I got black on the bill with white on the tip.

2. the black approached the coverts on the forward half of the feather. Black crossed the whole feather near the tip. The tip was white.

3. similar to #2. Wider black across the feather near the tip. Black on the forward part of the feather extended less for the #2

4. similar to #3 but again less for up the wing.

5 & 6. white tipped with some black. Couldn't see them very well.

GENERAL JIZZ OF PRIMARIES - fairly extensive black in primaries, but not as much as a Herring Gull. Again, as black as a herring.

UNDERERWING - much the same pattern as underwing. Not as solid black on the out two or three primaries as a Herring.

JIZZ IN FLIGHT - shorter winged than Herring. Again showed black in primaries much greater than even the darkest Iceland I've seen.

VOICE - single calls, between calls it closed its mouth.

THE HISTORY OF THIS INDIVIDUAL OR AT LEAST ONE LIKE IT. I've been seeing this bird for upwards of 2 months on and off. Several times I've tried to show it to other observers but it tends to blend so well with Herring Gulls that they couldn't pick it out. The other problem was the number of gulls on the river earlier in the season; thousands floating by. It was so easy to lose I never did get a complete look at it until Monday.

The bird was initially picked out Monday by its slightly smaller size, short primary extension, round head, dark eye, and smaller blunt light yellow bill. Among several Herring Gulls it was floating slowly downriver. Frankly I was not 100% sure it was not a very small strange Herring until it raised its wings and rolled on its side to reveal leg color. I was able to stay with the bird for nearly a half hour by moving down the walkway in the park. Eventually it took wing and flew around the river in front of me for a minute or so, and then retired to the dump.

I've now examined thousands of Herring Gulls and dozens of Iceland Gulls at Florence since January. Frankly there have been several good candidates for first and 2nd winter Thayer's Gulls at Florence: these birds had the dark tertials. This is the only adult bird I've seen in New Jersey that I couldn't pass off as a dark Iceland or an intergrade. Even the darkest Iceland don't pass on a quick look as a Herring Gull. It's easy to see why Thayer's was once lumped with Herring Gull. The tendency is to go from the other direction, making an Iceland into a Thayer's. Another problem can be first winter Herring Gulls going into first summer; many have translucent primaries from underneath. I guess you don't need to hear all this.

Ward Dasey
4/29/97

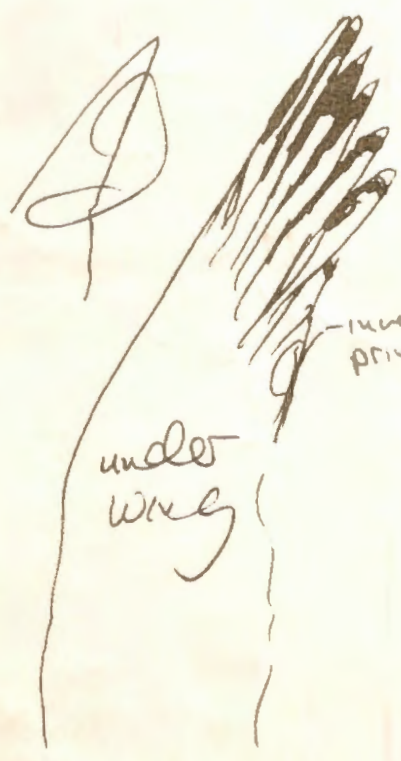
Thayer's Gull - adult
4-28-97

Florence NJ
Gull at rest on water

small blunt light yellow bill touch toward yellow eye
red gonyx mouth
head round small white. not as high rounded as Iceland
eye dark - orbital dark - no black feathering around eye
Mantle - about same gray as Herring - slightly darker
primaries - black, as black as Herring Gull. The black on
The outside primary goes under the secondaries
white windows in primaries - a bit larger than Herring
less primary extension than the Herring Gull
legs - ~~so~~ very dark pink toward purple

Tail white as was undersides belly chest etc

Wings raised and in flight

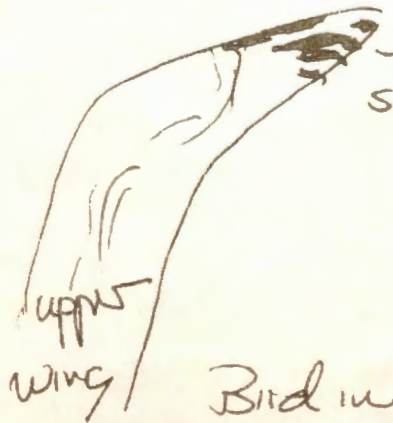


under wing

Black come alot further down
The front of primaries than I've
seen in ~~any~~ ^{any} of the darkest
cherry Iceland

Gull raised wing a bunch
of times

inner
primaries white



upper
wing

- Black not dark gray
same as Herring

Bird in view 3:15 to about
3:40 cloudy, but sometimes

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or header, including the word "Call" and some numbers.

Main body of handwritten text, appearing to be a list or series of notes, with some words like "about" and "very" visible.

A line of handwritten text, possibly a sub-header or a separator line.

Handwritten text, possibly a section title or a specific note.

Handwritten text, possibly describing a process or a set of instructions.

Handwritten text, possibly a list of items or a continuation of notes.

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Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

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

Date of Sighting: 28 April 1997 to 28 April 1997

Location: DELAWARE RIVER

County: BUCKS

Observer(s): Ward Dasey

Date of Submission: 1997

Submitted by: Ward Dasey

Written Description: YES

Photo: NO

Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

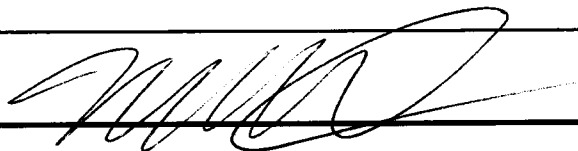
Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas								X
P. Schwalbe			X					
K. Parkes								X
R. Ickes			X					
P. Hess							X	
J. McWilliams			X					
T. Floyd				X				
TOTALS			3	1			1	2
DECISION								

Comments:

3/ 2/ 2

2nd round

Signature (Secretary):



Date:

8/24/00

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round Two

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

Date of Sighting: 28 April 1997 to 28 April 1997

Location: DELAWARE RIVER

County: BUCKS

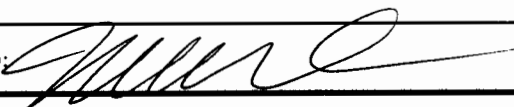
Observer(s): Ward Dasey

Date of Submission: 1997

Submitted by: Ward Dasey

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
G. Armistead			X					
F. Haas								X
R. Ickes			X					
P. Hess						X		
D. Couchman				X				
J. McWilliams			X					
P. Schwalbe			X					
TOTALS			4	1		1		1
DECISION				X				

Comments: 4/2/1

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 1/19/01