

348-02-1997

THAYER'S GULL

Larus thayeri

Location: Sunset Point, Presque Isle State Park, Erie County, PA

Date: October 31, 1997

Time: 9:10 to 9:15 AM

Weather: Viewing conditions very good.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at variable power

Viewing distance: about 200 yards

Details of sighting and description:

I was conducting the waterbird count at Sunset Point when a single gull flew past that I identified as a Thayer's Gull in pre-basic definitive plumage. It was similar to an adult Herring Gull showing light grayish rather than black ventral outer primaries. When it banked showing the dorsal surface I could see blackish outer primaries with the black being more reduced than any of the numerous Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*). I had seen that morning. The gray across the mantle and forewings of this bird appeared to be equal in tone to the gray across the mantle and forewings of Herring Gulls. This characteristic eliminated the very similar Iceland Gull (*L. glaucoides kumlieni*) which is always a paler gray across the mantle and forewings than Herring Gull. The nape and head were mostly white with some brown streaking. As I studied the gull, I was able to obtain additional field characteristics. The ventral surface of the primary tips were grayish with a large white mirror showing through near the tips of the outer two most primaries. The only black visible was near the very tips (the tips of the primaries were white) of the outermost primaries forming a thin dark submarginal line 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 primaries (appearing as black fingers) except where the black narrowly crossed over the inner web bordering the white primary tips. There were two large mirrors about 2/3 way up on the outer two primaries.

Even though the bird was in molt, the primaries appeared fresh and new with only one or two secondaries missing on each wing.

I am quite familiar with Thayer's Gull, since I have seen many along the Niagara River in Canada and many in Presque Isle Bay. Until the last few years, all Thayer's Gull sightings were of immatures, now they have been replaced with all adults.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round One

Species: Thayer's Gull (Larus thayeri)

Date of Sighting: 31 October 1997 to 31 October 1997

Location: PRESQUE ISLE STATE PARK

County: ERIE

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

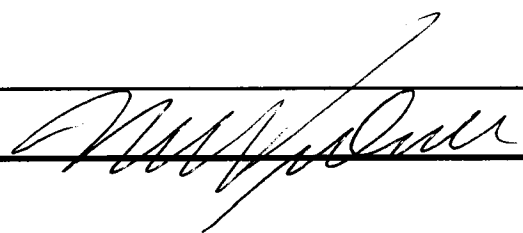
Date of Submission: 1997

Submitted by: Jerry McWilliams

WRITTEN DESCRIPTION YES PHOTO NO SPECIMEN NO RECORDING NO

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A				Abstain
					Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
D. Couchman				X				
T. Floyd								X
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
J. McWilliams			X			X		
B. Reid			X					X
P. Rodewald			X					
TOTALS			5	1				1
DECISION			X					

Comments: 9/1/97

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 9/28/97