

348-02-1999

THAYER'S GULL

Larus thayeri

Location: Presque Isle Bay

Date: February 13, 1999

Time: 11:00 to 11:30 AM

Weather: Viewing conditions good.

Observer: Jerry McWilliams

Optics: Kowa TSN 4 at variable power

Viewing distance: about 200 yards

Details of sighting and description: About 25,000 gulls were concentrated at the head of the bay. About 95% were Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) in basic definitive plumage. The remaining 5% were Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) with a mix of ages. Upon closer inspection of what looked like a pale Herring Gull in basic I plumage sitting on the water, I discovered that it was a Thayer's Gull. It was slightly smaller than a Herring Gull with a somewhat more delicate or lighter jizz. The overall plumage was dirty white with light brown scalloping evenly spaced across the mantle and wing coverts. The head, neck and upper breast were lightly streaked with buff. The bill was entirely black and was about as long as a Herring Gull, but was not as thick at the gony. The iris was dark. The tertials were medium brown with some white mottling along the outer edges. The folded primaries were slightly darker than the tertials, but were still not as brown as in Herring Gulls of this age. Each primary was tipped with diagnostic whitish chevrons. When it preened it showed its tail. The outer two thirds of the tail was solid brown, the same shade of brown as its primaries, with a narrow white terminal band. The base of the tail was mottled with white.

This is the first basic I Thayer's Gull I have seen on Presque Isle in many years. Nearly all Thayer's Gulls on Presque Isle in recent years have been adults. 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.



Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Thayer's Gull (Larus thayeri)

Date of Sighting: 13 February 1999 to 13 February 1999

Location: ERIE

County: PRESQUE ISLE BAY

Observer(s): Jerry McWilliams

Date of Submission: 1999

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	
G. Armistead			X					
D. Couchman			X					
P. Hess			X					
R. Ickes			X					
B. Reid				X				
P. Rodewald			X					
M. Sharp			X					
TOTALS			6	1				
DECISION			X					

Comments: 6/1/0

Signature (Secretary): 

Date 5/6/01