

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

5 February 2002

Jerry Stanley
Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary
170 Keith Lane
Franklin, PA 16323

Dear Jerry,

Thank you for submitting documentation with Russ on the Thayer's Gull at Kahle Lake on 17 April 1999. After careful review, the Committee regrets that it has voted not to accept the record.

The vote was one in favor (Hess); two placing it in Class IV-A as probably but not certainly a Thayer's (Ickes, Sharp); four placing it in Class IV-B as having insufficient evidence for evaluation (Armistead, Couchman, Reid, Rodewald).

The members not favoring acceptance had a variety of concerns, for example that Herring and Iceland were not eliminated conclusively; that details of the tail pattern/color were not given and were insufficient to pin down the color/pattern of the flight feathers; that the bill shape appeared to be too thick at the base for a Thayer's; that the underprimaries seemed too dark; and that the bird gave the impression rather of a pale, worn Herring.

The Committee emphasizes that non-acceptance does not mean that the gull was not actually a Thayer's, but rather that in this case a majority of members felt they could not accept it with certainty.

We hope this does not discourage you from submitting reports of rarities in the future.

Sincerely,



For the Committee:
Paul Hess, Chairman

P.S. I'm sending this to both of you, since you submitted independent descriptions.

Record No. 348-03-1999

*Jerry -
This is
my
standard
statement*

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

5 February 2002

Russ States
24 East Fifth St.
Oil City, PA 16301

Dear Russ,

Thank you for submitting documentation with Jerry on the Thayer's Gull at Kahle Lake on 17 April 1999. After careful review, the Committee regrets that it has voted not to accept the record.

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Paul Hess, Chairman

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348-03-1999

RARE BIRD REPORT

Species: THAYER'S GULL Date of this Observation: 4/17/99

Date Found: 4/17/99 Last Date Seen: _____

Location: FARM FIELD JUST NORTH OF KATLE LAKE

Township/City: RICHLAND / SALEM County: VENANGO / CLARION

Person Writing this report: RUSS STATES

Address: 24 EAST FIFTH ST
OIL CITY PA 16301 Phone: 814-676-6320

Other Observers: JERRY STANLEY, KATHIE GOODBLOOD, GARY EDWARDS

Who found the bird first: R. STATES, J. STANLEY, K. GOODBLOOD

Other documentation Included: (Circle all appropriate items)(Make sure all attached items are fully labeled)

- Photograph
- Audio Recording
- Video Recording

If a Specimen, where is it stored? _____

Description: (Attach additional pages as needed —Please do not write on back of this form)



348-03-1999

We were driving past some farm fields on the way to Kahle Lake when we spotted a flock of gulls in one of the fields. One of the gulls immediately stood out as a large pale bird. We approached in the car and were able to get fairly close to the birds, eventually being able to get out and use a scope. At times the bird was probably less than 50 feet away. Initial observers were Russ States, Jerry Stanley and Kathie Goodblood. We were able to call Gary Edwards on a car phone and he met us within 35 minutes, and was able to observe and photograph the gull. Everyone had 8 or 10 power binoculars and we had a Nikon Field Scope with 20-45X. Sky conditions were overcast with periods of light rain.

The bird initially seemed to be a large gull, perhaps Great Black-backed size, but after comparing it to the other birds present (Bonaparte's and Ring-billed Gulls and Caspian Tern), we determined that it was about Herring Gull size. Unfortunately Herring Gull is uncommon in our area and we did not have one with which to compare it.

The bird in question showed no black anywhere. All dark markings were brown. The head and neck were whitish; the mantle whitish with brown flecking throughout and a few very pale gray feathers. There was brown on the belly and a whitish breast. The bill had a dark tip with a paler whitish base and mottling underneath (see drawing). The wing had medium brown primaries, the underside was a uniform brown and the trailing edge of the upperwing secondaries was a darker brown (see drawing). The legs were pale pink and the eye was dark.

We were concerned with the head and bill shape and proportions, which did not seem right for a Thayer's, but this seemed to vary somewhat with distance and without a Herring Gull for comparison has to remain up in the air.

We believe this to be a 1st year Thayer's Gull possibly acquiring some of its 2nd year feathering (gray on mantle). We have effectively no experience with this gull. It would be a life bird for three of us and only the second observation for myself. We do have varying amounts of experience (from lots to some) with Herring, Glaucous, Iceland, etc. Gulls.

Observation time was over one hour. The gull flew off as we started photographing it, allowing us to observe the bird in flight. The bird was observed again on 4/23 by J. Stanley, and a similar bird at a greater distance over the lake on 4/24 by R. States.

348-03-1999

Thayer's Gull: An unusual pale gull was seen 4/17 & 4/23 at Kahle Lake by J. Stanley, R. States, K. Goodblood & G. Edwards. This was seen both standing and in flight as close as 30 feet away over a period greater than an hour. Lighting was overcast but ample. It was viewed through 8 or 10 power binoculars and a telescope to 40 power. The head, neck and chest were clear white. The belly and mantle background was white but heavily flecked/mottled with pale brown. There were occasional pale gray mantle feathers. The legs were pink. The bill was tipped dark with the remainder mottled pale (bone or flesh colored) and dark. The eye was darkish with brown or even reddish brown tint. The flight feathers were medium brown. The upper wing coverts appeared worn and white. In flight there was no prominent black patch to the underside of the primaries. We believe this to represent a 1st winter Thayer's Gull beginning molt to 2nd year. We have limited prior experience (lifer for 3 & 2nd sighting for R. States) and we acknowledge difficulties and subtleties involved in immature gull I.D. This bird was clearly bigger than ring-billed gulls. Unfortunately there were no Herring Gulls to compare size and head to bill proportion (we see very few gulls, being as we are quite inland from Lake Erie).

Thanks,

*Jerry Stanley
814-432-4496*

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Ballot - Round One

Species: Thayer's Gull (Larus thayeri)

Date of Sighting: 17 April 1999 to 17 April 1999

Location: VENANGO

County: NEAR KAHLE LAKE

Observer(s): Russ States, Jerry Stanley, Kathie Goodblood, Gary Edwards

Date of Submission: 1999

Submitted by: Russ States, Gary Edwards

Written Description: Yes

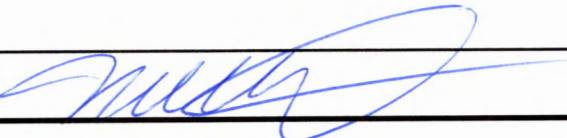
Photo: Yes

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Specimen: No			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		1		2	4			
DECISION					X			

Comments: 1/6

Signature (Secretary): 

Date: 5/6/01