

CBC RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM

Submitted as documentation of (check all that apply):

Unusual Species Unusual Date Unusual Habitat

1. **MOST IMPORTANT:** On back of form give complete details of this observation. Use additional sheets as needed. Include information on the bird's plumage, shape, size, vocalizations, habitat, behavior, etc. Describe exactly what you saw; include photocopies of your original notes and sketches. Name the species that you considered ID contenders; explain how you eliminated them.

2. Count Name: 50 LANCASTER CO. CBC Count Code: AREA # 6

3. Species THAYER'S GULL (LARUS THAYERI) Age JUV Sex # 1

4. Date (s) of Observation 12-18-11 Time 9:30 AM 10:00 AM
Earlier/Later dates by others, if known _____

5. Place MUDDY RUN BOAT LAUNCH, APPROX 3/4 MILE SOUTH OF RT 372 ON RIVER RD
Nearest Town BOECKEL LANDING County YORK (SOUTHEASTERN)

6. Observer RANDY PHILLIPS
Address 4146 SHAFER CHURCH RD. GLEN ROCK PA 17327
Telephone/E-mail 717-679-4822

7. Observation Details:

Other Observers DR. RICHARD CLARK

Optics Used 10 X42 BUISCH & LOMB GLITES 20 X60 B&L SCOPE

Distance From Bird 20 YDS IN FLIGHT Viewing Conditions EXCELLENT - VERY GOOD LIGHT
20 YDS SITTING

Weather, sky cover 40° CALM 75% CLOUD COVER VERY CLEAR SKY GOOD VISIBILITY

Photo Taken? _____ Video? _____ Sound Recording? _____ Specimen? _____

Are these available to the CBC Regional Editor? _____ Where are they? _____

8. Past Experience: With this or similar species? NONE - LIFE BIRD

9. References or Advice Consulted: SIBLEY'S AND PETERSON AT SITE
GULL'S BY P.J. GRAND AT HOME

10. Was this report done from notes made during or after observation or from memory? NOTES AT TIME OF SIGHTING

Signature Randy Phillips Date 12-20-11

Observers please give this form to your compiler. Compilers please send all rare bird forms directly to your regional editor. Contact information for regional editors can be found at:

<http://birds.audubon.org/programs/cbc/regional-editors>

or in the latest CBC issue of *American Birds* under Regional Summaries.

UPLOAD your CBC PHOTOS to the website at http://web1.audubon.org/imagePublic/cbc_form.php

Any questions e-mail us at: cbcadmin@audubon.org

12-20-11

BEGAN CHUMMING FOR GULLS AT APPROX 8:45 AM. AFTER ABOUT 1/2 HOUR, WE HAD 250-300 RING-BILLED GULLS AT CLOSE RANGE. WHILE SCANNING THROUGH THE GULLS, MY PARTNER NOTICED A MUCH DIFFERENT GULL FLYING DOWNSTREAM APPROX 25 YDS AWAY. THE BIRD HAD NO DARK MARKINGS, EXCEPT FOR THE BILL AND EYE. BIRD APPEARED TO BE ALMOST UNIFORMLY PALE CINNAMON COLOR. UNDERSIDE OF WING LININGS DARKER THAN UNDERSIDE OF PRIMARIES. UPSIDE OF WINGS AND BACK UNIFORMLY PATTERNED FROM WINGTIP TO WINGTIP. BIRD LANDED ON A LOG IN THE WATER ABOUT 70 YDS AWAY. ESTIMATED IT TO BE ABOUT 20-25% LARGER THAN THE RING-BILLS IT HAD LANDED AMONGST. THIS BIRD WAS A YUV. ICELAND GULL THAT WAS PROBABLY THE SAME BIRD SEEN BY 2 OTHER GROUPS EARLIER IN THE MORNING ON THE LANCASTER CO SIDE OF THE RIVER.

WHILE OBSERVING THE ICELAND THROUGH THE SCOPE, A SECOND GULL OF VERY SIMILAR SIZE AND SHAPE BUT WITH SOME NOTICABLE DIFFERENCES WAS FOUND. GULL WAS SITTING ON THE SAME LOG AND SPENT THE NEXT 20 MINUTES OR SO ALTERNATELY SITTING AT VARIOUS ANGLES TO US AND JUMPING INTO THE WATER. (BOTH BIRDS WERE DOING THIS - NEITHER SEEMED TO BE CONTENT TO JUST SIT LIKE THE MAJORITY OF THE RING-BILLS WHEN NO NEW BREAD WAS BEING FLUNG). SIZE WAS VERY SIMILAR, SIBLEY AND GRANT BOTH SAY THAYER'S IS INTERMEDIATE BETWEEN ICELAND AND HERRING, BUT IN THE FIELD APPEARED TO ME TO BE ABOUT THE SAME SIZE AS THE ICELAND. BILL WAS ALL DARK AND SLENDER - MUCH LIKE THE ICELAND'S, NOT NEAR AS BULKY AS YUV. HERRING GULL WHICH WE OBSERVED ABOUT 1 HOUR

(over)

To: Whom it May Concern

19 December 2011

From: Richard J. Clark

Re: Gull Sightings along the Susquehanna River on ~~18~~ December 2011

On ~~Sunday~~ ~~18~~ December I had the distinct pleasure of accompanying Randy Philips in participation of the Lancaster County Audubon Christmas Bird Count. We were covering the crescent of territory of that clubs coverage area in York County. We arrived at Lock 15 along the Susquehanna River and parked in the parking lot by the boat ramp. The sky was generally overcast but there were patches of blue showing. The wind was calm. The humidity was high and the temperature was seasonally cool. The river was remarkably empty of waterfowl and only a couple gulls were seen. Randy had come prepared with plenty of day old bread and rolls for chumming for gulls. In order to try and draw in some gulls we began casting bread upon the waters. The numbers of gulls showing up to feed upon the bread and rolls began to build slowly at first but then began to grow more rapidly. At first the gull species was monotonous being made up of Ring-bills but then a stranger showed up. It was flying downstream and landed on log laying in the water. I called out to Randy there is a different gull and he quickly picked it up in his telescope that he had mounted on a tripod. The bird was quite accommodating alternately perching on the log and disappearing behind it into the water behind it. I would estimate that it was about 70 yards from us and in very good light. We switched the zoom eyepiece from 20 to 30X and it stayed there for about 20 minutes (only a guesstimate as I had no watch) and we both checked David Sibley's *The Sibley Guide to Birds* a checking out the various features and came to a tentative conclusion that it was, based on the all dark bill, and dark eyes, smallish and roundish head, noticeably pinkish legs, lacking of any darkness in the primaries, mottling of the upper back and changing into barring further back and a sub-terminal dark band on the tail with a terminal light tip (very narrow) either an Iceland or Thayer's Gull. We were watching that bird, which was noticeably (but not greatly) larger than the Ring-billed Gulls of which there were perhaps 250-300 in number by then. At this point Randy noticed that there was another bird with some similar characteristics but with some notable differences. Its coloration pattern was similar but it was obviously darker in all of the colors except its eye and bill color were black in appearance. The both of them stayed in the same general area for some time and at times were close enough that both could be seen in the same field of view of the scope at the same time. Its head and neck were rather a uniform gray-brown color and did not show any markings. Its back reminded me of the coloration of a hen pheasant although it appeared to be barred. We had both birds in nearly constant view for perhaps half and hour and saw them both in flight and perched. They did not actively

participate in the feeding frenzies that the Ring-bills did but were active alternating between perching on rocks or logs and dropping down into the water. After arriving home I checked also with Ted Floyd's book (*Smithsonian Field Guide to the Birds of North America*) and he says of Thayer's Gull, "Juvenile. Pale brown all over. At rest, primaries appear darker than body, but not as dark as Herring Gull. Variable; some are nearly as pale as Iceland Gull." He says of the Iceland Gull, "Juvenile. Dirty white all over. Separated from Glaucous Gull by smaller size, smaller head, smaller and darker bill, and relatively longer wings. Most are paler than Thayer's." Unfortunately I did not take my camera along for the day and Randy's was not working so that is all that I can offer on the subject. It was a great day!

Richard Kluck

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation – Round One

Species: Thayer's Gull Larus thayeri

Date of Sighting: 18 December 2011 to 18 December 2011

County : LANCASTER/YORK

Location : MUDDY RUN BOAT LAUNCH

Observer(s): Randy Phillips, Richard Clark

Date of Submission: 2011

Submitted by: Randy Phillips, Richard Clark

Written Description: Yes

Photo: No

Specimen: No

Recording: No

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV-A	Class IV-B	Class IV-C	Class V	
D. DeReamus				X				
A. Guarente				X				
T. Johnson					X			
B. Coulter					X			
C. Rutt					X			
D. Weber					X			
G. Malosh					X			
TOTALS				2	5			
DECISION					X			

Comments: 0/7

Signature (Secretary) Nick Pulcinella

Date: 7/12/12