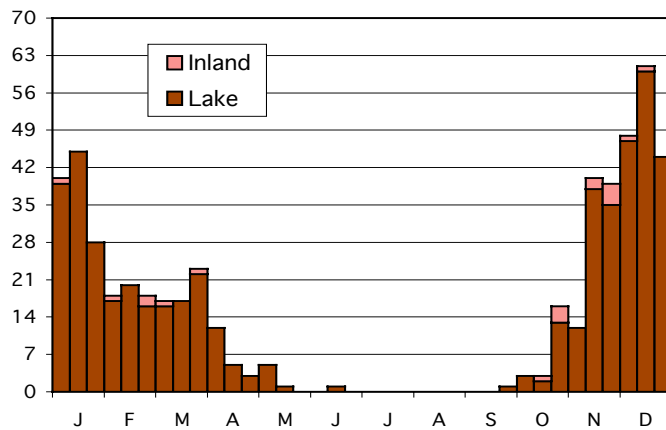


Thayer's Gull

Larus thayeri

Historical

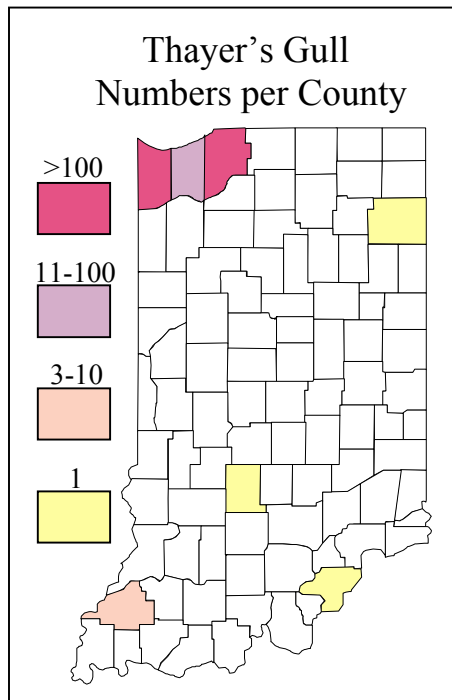
First Published Record: This gull, formerly a Herring Gull subspecies, was awarded species status in the 1960s, but its taxonomy remains controversial. Although not yet designated a full species, Raymond Grow et al. recognized this form and identified several in the 1950s (Raymond Grow pers. comm.). The apparent first published Thayer's Gull record involved a first-year bird seen by T.C. Keller and A.W. Bruner at the Falls of the Ohio, Clark County, 26 February 1978 (Keller et al. 1979).



Keller et al. (1979) described the status of this "new species" as uncertain. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed it a casual migrant and winter resident about Lake Michigan and accidental elsewhere.

Status

Physical Evidence: There are no known specimens (S.F. Jackson unpublished list), but a number of identifiable photographs exist (see Keller, 1994 for published pictures).



STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
No known specimens				0
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	6	7	n	6
Central Tier	n	n	n	n
Southern Tier	9	10	n	8
Entire State	6	7	n	6

Current Status

Thayer's Gulls are Uncommon (6) winter residents along Lake Michigan's shores and at nearby landfills. It is Very Rare (8) outside the lake-district counties (see table of inland records).

Occurrence

This Arctic breeding gull occurs primarily in the vicinity of Lake Michigan; the greatest numbers have occurred in LaPorte County where more than 300 Thayer's Gulls have been reported. Over the past 20 years an average of about 23.6 birds are recorded annually. This species frequents the

garbage dumps and often rests on beaches among the other large gulls. It has been reported in only four inland counties (see distribution map) where it is most often seen on reservoirs.



Adult Thayer's Gull at Michigan City Harbor, December 2002. Photo by J.K. Cassady.

Plumage

The most frequently reported plumages are adult and juvenile/first-year (see adjacent plumages table). Many (perhaps most) Thayer's Gulls recorded on the Indiana lakefront show the characteristics of intergradation (hybridization) with Iceland Gulls. Otherwise normal appearing adult Thayer's Gulls, for example, often show dark charcoal, rather than black, primaries.

Percent of Aged Plumages				
Adult	Win.	2nd-year	1st-year or juv.	Imm
50%	4%	8%	37%	1%

Extreme Record

The mid-June record involved a second-year bird observed by K.J. Brock at Michigan City Harbor on 20 June 1978 (Brock notes).

Thayer's Gull Data

Thayer's Gull Records				
Inland Records				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
1-1 st -yr	26-Feb-1978	Clark Co	A.W. Bruner	KKK
1	23-Mar-1980	Hurshstown Res.	J.A. Haw	IAQ
1-1 st -yr	27-Nov to 17-Dec -1987	Lake Gibson	Denny Jones	IAQ
1	15-Oct to 25-Nov -1989	Lake Gibson	G. & L. Bowman	IQM
1	11-Nov-1990	Gibson Co	J.H. Campbell	IAQ
1	31-Oct-1991	Lake Gibson	M.R. Brown	IAQ
1	02-Feb-1992	Lake Gibson	J.H. Campbell	IAQ
1-1 st -yr	28-Nov-1992	Lake Gibson	D.R. Whitehead	IAQ
1	24-Oct to 21-Nov 1993	Gibson Co	G. & L. Bowman	NNB
1-adu	13-Nov-2000	Lake Gibson	C.L. Wood	INB
1-juv	23-Feb-2001	Lake Monroe	C.L. Wood	INB

Maximum Single Party Counts

Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
5	23-Mar-2002	Lakefront	J.J. McCoy	KJB
3	14-Mar-1998	Lakefront	J.K. Cassady	KJB
3	16-Mar-2002	Lakefront	K.J. Brock	KJB
Fall/Winter				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
12	21-Dec-1996	*See below	J.K. Cassady	KJB
9	20-Dec-1997	Lakefront	J.J. McCoy	KJB
9	16-Dec-2000	Lakefront	K.J. Brock	KJB

* Includes (8) at Mich. City Harbor and (4) at the LaPorte Dump

Migration Envelopes						
Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Winter	28-Sep-1980	3-Nov	Win. Res.	3-Apr	17-May-1985	446

References Cited

Brock notes: personal field notes and seasonal summaries beginning in 1972.

Keller, C.E., S.A. Keller, and T.C. Keller (1979) *Indiana Birds and Their Haunts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 214 pp.

Keller, T.C. (1994) Index of Published Photographic Documentation of the Birds of Indiana, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 72:119-130.

Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1984) *The Birds of Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 376 pp.