



IOS IORC <iorcommittee@gmail.com>

Fwd: Re: Herring Gull x Kelp Gull

1 message

Geoffrey Williamson [REDACTED]
To: iorcommittee@gmail.com

Sat, Jul 16, 2016 at 6:06 AM

Geoff Williamson
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Kirk Roth" <[REDACTED]>
Date: Jul 11, 2016 9:53 AM
Subject: Re: Herring Gull x Kelp Gull
To: "Geoffrey Williamson" <[REDACTED]>
Cc:

Good to hear from you Geoff,

Despite our state hosting a multitude of interesting hybrids and their potential contributions to ornithology, the Indiana Bird Records Committee does not review reports of hybrids. The issue was brought up again as recently as February and the committee showed very little interest. So the short answer is that our committee has expressed no official opinion on the bird.

However, the conventional wisdom in Indiana is that this bird is indeed a Kelp x Herring hybrid which has been returning for a number of years. From personal experience, I know that it had been seen in the area since 2005 (I think) and regularly in Michigan City starting at least in December of 2010 - a review of IN-Bird may recover earlier sightings. Indiana birders tend to focus on the intermediate mantle color and leg color as supporting evidence, along with head shape and smudging, although the less often mentioned p10 pattern should be looked at as well. I have not heard it mentioned much, but I personally have observed this bird to have an interesting bicolored pattern the the main bill color - that is it seems to have a pale greenish yellow toward the base and a more "yellowish yellow" toward the tip or bulb, and a somewhat clear demarcation between the two. This shows up on the closer photos of the bird.

To my knowledge, any "gull experts" who have weighed in have agreed with the hybrid diagnosis or at least not discouraged it - including Amar Ayash who may also have other helpful information for you.

Generally, this bird seems to show up in September in Michigan City and to be seen irregularly throughout the winter. I am unaware of mid-summer records but would be unsurprised if it

were to follow the Great Lakes Herring Gulls around. Clearly, my assumption here is that this is a single bird which shows up repeatedly - I have seen no evidence to the contrary.

I'm sorry that I don't have anything "official" that can be helpful, and I'm also sorry if you've already gathered the information I mention above.

Thanks, and let me know if you need more information from me,

Kirk Roth

[REDACTED]

From: Geoffrey Williamson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2016 12:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Herring Gull x Kelp Gull

Dear Kirk:

I am the current secretary (chair) of the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee (IORC). IORC has received documentation of an occurrence of "the" present Herring Gull x Kelp Gull in Illinois. I looked over the materials on the Indiana bird records committee web site, but I could not find there any evidence that this individual (or prior hybrids of this type) has been reviewed by your committee.

Would you bring me up to date on whether or not this bird has been considered by your committee, and if it has what the result was?

Sincerely,
Geoff

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Geoff Williamson
[REDACTED]