

approximately 7500 pairs of Ring-billed Gulls, 250 pairs of Herring Gulls, and one pair of Great Black-backed Gulls.

We were banding young Herring Gulls on "Island B," the southeast island, while the adults circled overhead when Rosenband called our attention to an unusual gull, similar in size to the Herring Gulls, but lacking the black wing tips. As the bird passed over repeatedly, often harassing a Herring Gull or immature Black-crowned Night Heron in flight, it was easily recognized by the lighter color of the underwing. As it wheeled above, the mantle was lighter than the other gulls. Seen in good light with 10 x 40 and 8.5 x 44 binoculars for over 15 minutes of study, the bird showed touches of dark gray on the ends of the outer primaries and white tip on the tenth primary. The iris appeared light to two observers. Several 35 mm. color slides, taken with a 135 mm. lens and 2x extender, verify the light mantle and lack of intensity to the gray wing spots, eliminating Thayer's Gull.

The bird is identified as an adult Iceland Gull of the subspecies known as "Kumlien's" Gull (*Larus glaucoides kumlieni*), breeding in low-arctic eastern Canada. An immature Iceland Gull at the Lake Placid dump, Essex County, May 28-31, 1975, probably represented the same subspecies, but the present report is apparently the first record verified with photographs for inland New York State between 22 May and 16 August; even in coastal regions of the state it is very rare in summer (Bull, 1974, *Birds of New York State*, p. 269). For additional information see: Godfrey, W. E. 1966. *The Birds of Canada*. Nat. Mus. Canada Bull. 203, p. 176; and Gosselin, M. and David, N. 1975. Field identification of Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) in eastern North America (*American Birds*, vol. 29, no. 6 (Dec.), pp. 1059-1066).

The slides were examined by Geoffrey Carleton, who concurs in the identification.

John M. C. Peterson, P. O. Box 300, Essex, New York 12936

Common Loon breeding in the St. Lawrence River Valley: The breeding status of the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) in the St. Lawrence River area is poorly documented. Eaton (1910, *N.Y. State Museum Memoirs*, no. 12, Pt. 1, p. 100), stated that this species had previously nested near Lake Ontario but was by then restricted to the Adirondacks. Hyde's report (1939, *Roosevelt Wildlife Bull.*, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 99) indicated that the St. Lawrence region was "unsafe as breeding grounds for the loon." He went on to relate a local resident's account of a pair nesting on an island in the river near Chippewa Bay. In his thorough review of the literature of New York bird distribution Bull (1974, *Birds of New York State*, Doubleday, N.Y., pp. 49-51) did not present any evidence of the species' breeding in the St. Lawrence region. Since this area is used a great deal

for recreation, and since the Great Lakes watershed receives a variety of industrial pollutants, it is essential that we have accurate breeding information on loons and other water birds in the region.

Our experience in the St. Lawrence-Thousand Islands region is that the Common Loon is a regular breeding resident there. One of us (ADH) has visited the area and recorded bird sightings since 1957. In the ensuing years, loons have been observed regularly during the summer months. While these may occasionally be non-breeding transients, less frequent observations of loons with young and one sighting of a loon on a nest confirm their breeding there. The following records will document the species' breeding status:

Aug. 29, 1959—Two adults and two immatures seen swimming and feeding near Sugar Islands Flats

May 28, 1961—One adult observed sitting on a nest on a rocky islet in Lake of the Isles, Wellesley Island

May 19, 1963—One adult and (downy?) young seen swimming near Grindstone Island

July 4, 1969—Adult pair and two young observed swimming near Picton Island

July 3, 1976—Adult pair and downy young observed swimming in inlet on north side of Lake of the Isles, Wellesley Island

These records are only representative observations of loons, selected as documentary evidence. Similar sightings of loons with non-flying young have been made in other years.

Over the past twenty years, Common Loons have been seen regularly in three specific areas near Clayton, New York. These are: Eel Bay on Wellesley Island, the waters near the northern tip of Grindstone Island, and the area between Howe and Black Ant Islands, Canada. The nearly annual sightings of adult loons with young in these areas indicate that these are probably regular nesting locations. No effort has been made to locate the actual nests. Since loons have extended life spans (McIntyre, J. M., 1976, *Loon* 48 (3): 126-127), it is conceivable that these might be the same birds nesting at habitual sites.

These observations should not be interpreted as evidence of a recent expansion of the loon's breeding range into the region. Undocumented sightings indicate that this species has nested regularly in the St. Lawrence Valley for several decades. Thus it appears that Common Loons, never densely distributed in any of their breeding areas, have been overlooked as regular breeders in the St. Lawrence region.

Edward C. Waltz, Zoology Dept., S.U.N.Y. College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, New York 13210;

Andrew D. Heineman, 300 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10022