

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

First Attempted Nesting of Ring-billed Gull and Possible Nesting of Herring Gull in Chemung County: While checking one of my favorite spots on 8 May 1993, during the Migratory Bird Census, I discovered 209 Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) and a pair of Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) in an abandoned gravel pit along Newtown Creek and Route 13 in Horseheads, Chemung Co. While counting the birds, I noted that many of the birds were sitting on nests. A return trip on 15 May found the birds still there and on nests. The majority of the nests were on rocky islands, while the rest were on the sand piles along the shore. Photographs of the birds, nests, and eggs were taken on 28 May (Fig. 1, 2), and have been deposited with the New York State Avian Records Committee. However, on this date, the Herring Gull were present but not near a nest. A total of 49 possible nests were found, but only half of them seemed to be active. The majority of those on the sand piles were abandoned and those on the islands could not be checked. By early June, all nests on the sand piles were abandoned and only shell fragments were left. I hope these nests were victims of raccoons and not man. At the same time the nests on the islands still appeared active. However, no further activity was noted on the island nests, either. This report does, however, document the first known nesting attempt for Ring-billed Gull, and is the first suggestion of nesting by Herring Gull in Chemung County. The closest prior known nesting colonies of either species are on Oneida Lake to the north and along the Niagara River to the west.

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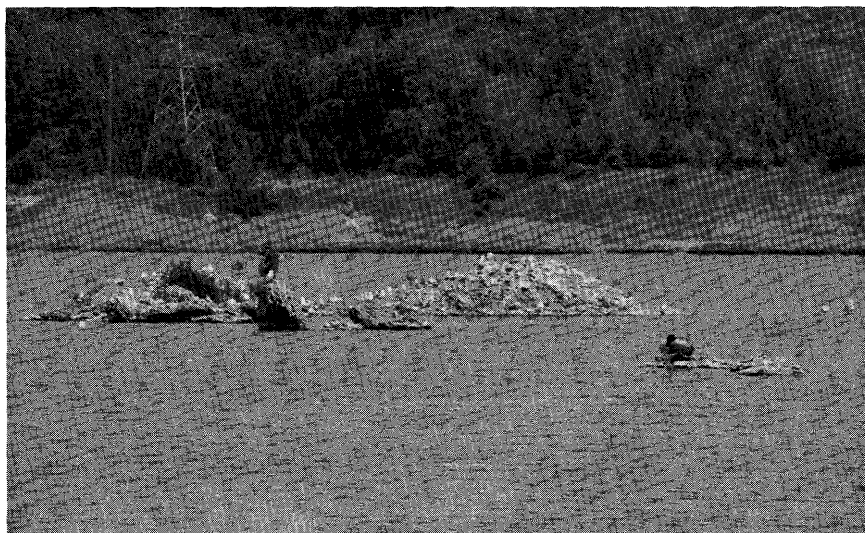


Figure 1. Ring-billed Gull nesting colony near Horseheads, Chemung Co., New York, on 28 May 1993. Photograph by David Russell.



Figure 2. Nesting Ring-billed Gull near Horseheads, Chemung Co., New York, on 28 May 1993. Eggs are just visible in both nests. Photograph by David Russell.