

Mississippi Kite

9 May 1987

Hickory Hill P., Iowa City, Johnson Co., IA

\*Jim Fuller

IBL 57:81, 58:75

Record Number: 87-09

Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Jim Fuller

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 57:81

Records Committee: IBL 58:75

VOTE: 1-IV, 5-V, 1-VI

V. Possibly correct, but observer points out (and I agree) that the details are too sketchy from very brief observation to pass judgement. Several years ago, I was in the same place at the same time of year and thought I'd seen two Mississippi Kites. Within five minutes I realized they were Common Nighthawks very high up, but I was momentarily and absolutely convinced they were kites.

VI. See IBL 56:41-42 where some other amateur birders also thought a nighthawk was a Mississippi Kite (at the same location and nearly the same date!). Power of suggestion?

V. Details in documentation too sketchy and incomplete to make a determination as to what this bird might have been.

V. The observation period was very brief and the description does not eliminate other species such as a male harrier.

IV. If the observer feels the sighting should be rejected, I can only take his advice.

V. Nothing except shape and "pointed wings" to indicate Miss. Kite. Several possibilities, as suggested (obliquely) by observer.

## Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation

by the Records Committee  
of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

SPECIES: *Mississippi Kite*

DATE SEEN: *5-9-87*

SITE OF OBSERVATION: *Hickory Hill P. - Iowa City*

OBSERVERS: *Jim Fuller*

DATE OF REVIEW: *9-26-87*

METHOD OF REVIEW: *Vote by mail*

CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: *V*

COMMENTS: *Committee members agreed that the details given were not complete enough to confirm this identification.*

The opinions expressed here are based on the information available to the Committee and should not necessarily preclude an alternate interpretation by those who observed the bird firsthand.

Any action may be re-reviewed upon submission of additional evidence.

Explanation of Classification:

- I = labeled, diagnostic specimen, photograph, or recording available for review by the Committee
- II = acceptable sight record documented independently by 3 or more observers
- III = acceptable sight record documented by 1 or 2 observers
- IV = probably correct record, but not beyond doubt
- V = record with insufficient evidence to judge
- VI = probably incorrect identification, escapee, or otherwise unacceptable record

Classification is based on the highest category agreed upon by six of seven committee members.

What species? MISSISSIPPI KITE How many? 1Location? HICKORY HILL PARK - IOWA CITYType of habitat? WOODLANDWhen? date(s): 9 MAY 1987 time: 7:30AM to \_\_\_\_\_Who? your name and address: JIM FULLER, 1 LONGVIEW KNOLL, IOWA CITY

others with you: \_\_\_\_\_

others before or after you: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, under tail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

WHILE BIRDING IN HICKORY HILL PARK, THIS BIRD FLEW OVER AND CIRCLED ONCE, NEVER FLAPPING ITS WINGS. IT WAS IN VIEW FOR 10 SECONDS OR LESS. THE LIGHT WAS GOOD. THE FOLLOWING FEATURES WERE NOTICED:

- (1) SIZE OF LOOPER'S HAWK
- (2) ENTIRE UNDERPARTS GRAY
- (3) LONG THIN TAIL WITH SQUARE END
- (4) POINTED WINGS LIKE A FALCON.

EVEN THOUGH I THINK THIS BIRD WAS A MISSISSIPPI KITE, IF I WERE ON RECORD COMMITTEE, I WOULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH A BRIEF & INCOMPLETE SIGHTING SUCH AS THIS. THE REASON FOR SUBMITTING IS TO ALERT OTHER BIRDERS THAT THIS BIRD WAS PROBABLY SEEN, AND SHOULD BE LOOKED FOR IN FUTURE.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

75-100 YARDS 9X36 BINOCULARS. CLEAR SKY.  
LOOKING NW WITH SUN IN EAST

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

SEEN SEVERAL TIMES IN COLORADO & KANSAS  
References and persons consulted before writing description: NONE

How long before field notes made? IMMED this form completed? 8-10 HOURS

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