

Mississippi Kite  
12 Apr 1979  
George Wyth State Park, Black Hawk Co., IA  
\*Tom Stone Jr./Tom Stone  
IBL 49:58

Record Number: 81-MM  
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Tom Stone Jr.

REFERENCE

Field Reports: IBL 49:58.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Tom Kent to Records Committee, 13 Sep 1993

VOTE (1981): 1-III, 5-IV, 1-V

V, Vernon Kleen says date is impossible.

IV, no independent verification.

IV, Documentation shows only 2 observers. Description not convincing?

IV, Problems -- (1) very early date (2) light may have caused problems with colors of bird (3) behavior of bird not as striking as 10 or 12. Possibly Broad-winged Hawk?

REVOTE (1993): 4 A-D, 3 NA

NA, I see no reason to change.

A-D, Since I did not know the observer, I may be somewhat more unbiased than the original committee. I have known some teenage observers who were consistently wrong, and I have known some whose word I would accept for any sighting. Both of these documentations seem adequate to me, although I must agree that they seem almost "too good." The April date is unusually early, but I would not agree with Vernon Kleen that it is "impossible." The bird at Waubonsie is quite likely. However, I could be persuaded to reverse my decision if people who knew the observer really doubt his credibility.

NA, I have reviewed all of Tom Stone re-reviews, and have concluded that most of the rejections of his records stemmed more from prejudice than an objective analysis of his documentations. In this case, however, I am troubled by what appears to be heavy influence of the Robbins guide -- his estimates of the bird's length and wingspan are perfect and probably come from the book. This makes me wonder how much additional influence the book had in his description.

NA, Possible but description should be more complete for early date.

81-MM

13 September 1993

To: IOU Records Committee  
From: Tom Kent  
Re: Request for reconsideration of record

**Record:** 81-MM Mississippi Kite (see 80-04)

**Reason for request:** On its own, 80-04 seems like an acceptable record, and 81-MM is not as unusual for date as I had previously thought.

**Comment:** Tom Stone, Jr. was a teenager who made a few mistakes, but also had some good records. A Mississippi Kite on 12 April (81-MM) would seem to be early; however, there are two March records for Missouri (Robbins and Easterla 1992) and one from Kansas (Thompson and Ely 1989). Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri birds begin arriving in early April. The Waubonsie record on 14 May (80-04) seems quite reasonable, even in 1980 when the species was being recorded across the river in Nebraska. I bring this record up as one of several by young observers who may well have been correct.

81-mm

Halmi, N. S., 1979, Field reports. Iowa Bird Life 49:58

**Diurnal Raptors.** As last year, the Stones again saw a Mississippi Kite, this time at GWSP on April 12. Documentation for a N. Goshawk in Ames on the unlikely date of May 9 was forwarded with misgivings (JD); I was not convinced either. The usual number of reports of +Sharp-shinned Hawks was received, but

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(11)

## Birds: Verifying Documentation

1. Species - Mississippi Kite 2. Number - 1
  3. Location: George Wyth State Park
  4. Date: Apr. 12 5. Time bird seen: 4:20 PM to 4:35 PM
  6. Description - Body Small ~~Wings~~ ~~short~~ about 14 inches long Wingspread about 40" Body Grayish with Black Primaries and Black Tail band - a silvery gray color tail ~~is~~ notched
  7. Voice - ~~~~~
  8. Behavior - ~~It~~ Was diving and swooping like a swallow along cedar River. Lifted head in air and catching insects
  9. Habitat - Lowland river bottoms with deciduous Woodland.
  10. Similar appearing species - Pale Marsh Hawk which has a ~~all~~ white rump patch
  11. Distance - an estimated 40 feet at the closest
  12. Optical equipment - 10x50 binoculars wide angle
  13. Light - Good to Poor Sunny then Poor when first watching bird sun was behind ~~me~~ <sup>me</sup> while watching bird and then clouds moved in.
  14. Previous experience with species - I seen at Osasco by many observers.
  15. Observers - Tom Stone Jr and Tom Stone
  16. Agreement on identification - I My father agreed on the ident.
  17. Books - Birds of North America by Robinson Singer gives good ~~simple~~ description
  18. How long after seeing bird did you first write this description - soon as I got home.
- Signed - Tom Stone Jr. Tom Stone  
Address - 1632 Woodmeys Dr. Waterloo, Iowa  
Date - June 5. 50703