

Mississippi Kite 1
24 Jun 1990
Hickory Hill P., Johnson Co., IA
T. Schulein
IBL 60:101, 102, 62:22

Record Number: 90-07
Classification: NA

DOCUMENTATION

Thomas M. Schulein

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 60: 101, 102
Records Committee: IBL 62:22

VOTE: 3 A-D, 4 NA

A-D: A few more details would help. A possibility that this bird might be the same bird seen earlier by Kent. Not that far apart and near the same lake.

NA: This observer is commended for taking the time to document an unusual bird. While very suggestive, it is probably not safe to conclude with certainty that this was a Mississippi Kite. For example, both the head and breast were described as light. This might better fit Black-shouldered Kite. More details would have helped me to evaluate this observation.

NA: Description sketchy. If it were not for the "long-pointed wings", and "crow-sized", this could be a description of a shrike. This may indeed be a Mississippi Kite but I cannot accept this without a more detailed description of key field marks.

NA: While much less likely, Black-shouldered Kite not eliminated by description. Evidently, upper wing surface was seen at relatively close range, yet were described as dark gray to blackish. White wing patch (secondaries) should have been evident at this range. Dark eye patches on pale head could apply to either species.

A-D: Black-shouldered Kite is eliminated because of the dark gray to blackish tail. Non-streak breast and head with horizontal eye patch seem to eliminate all other raptors, but kites. The 15 minute view from 50 feet also indicated the observer would have had a chance to recheck all field mark which further substantiates this record.

A-D: The documentation adequately eliminates any other species by marks and color of head, back and tail. More detail on the upper and lower wing surface would certainly help this description but as it is I think it describes Mississippi Kite beyond reasonable doubt.

NA: This is an interesting documentation but more details are needed for me to consider. This possible Miss. Kite sighting needs some more specifics (body shape, more body coloration details, color of underside of the tail) to help eliminate other possibilities. The dark, horizontal eye patches on the light, non-streaked head were intriguing. Please continue to send in more documentations!

What species? Mississippi Kite How many? OneLocation? Hickory Hill Park, Iowa CityType of habitat? Woodland edge, on a dead branch at the top of a tree next to a trailWhen? date(s): Sunday, June 24, 1990 time: 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.Who? your name and address: Thomas M. Schulein, 21 Hawthorne St., Iowa City, Iowa 52245others with you: Noneothers before or after you: None

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.

The bird was crow-sized or a little smaller. It was obviously hawk-like, with a hooked bill. The most outstanding thing about this bird was the presence of dark, horizontal eye patches that were in contrast to the light, non-streaked head. The breast was light and non-streaked. The top of the wings and the top of the tail were dark gray to blackish in the observed light. Long, pointed wings were noted when I saw the bird fly about 100 feet.

Similar species and how eliminated: 1. Cooper's Hawk, but this bird has a barred breast and no eye patches and a dark and light head pattern. 2. White-tailed Kite, but this bird has dark wing patches. 3. Osprey, but this bird is larger and is brown and white, even though it has dark eye patches.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

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

Looking into or across the sun. The distance was an estimated 50 to 75 feet as figured from the base of the tree. Binoculars used were 10 x 50 Minolta.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have only observed the Osprey.References and persons consulted before writing description: James L. Fuller, Iowa CityHow long before field notes made? One hour this form completed? 15 days (July 10, 1990)

MAIL TO: T.H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240