

Gyr falcon

ILLINOIS

DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS
SUBMITTED TO ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE (I.O.R.C.)

I.O.R.C. RECORD NUMBER

This form submitted as supporting documentation of (check all that apply):

- Unusual species; Unusual date; Unusual number;
- Unusual plumage; Unusual breeding record; Christmas Count record; Spring Count record;
- Breeding Census record; Other: _____

1. Species: Gyr falcon

2. Number of birds: 1 Age/sex/plumage: Imm.

3. Date(s): Dec. 22, 1996

4. Location (incl. County): Mississippi River Between Davenport and Rock Island between Big Island & Credit Island
Scott Co. IA. Rock Island Co. Ill. ~~Franklin Co. Ill.~~

5. Observers: Lewis D. Blevins
Corey T. Blevins
Your name: Brian L. Blevins Phone: (319) 324-7326

Mailing address: 2003 East 12th St. Davenport, Iowa, 52803

Others agreeing with identification: All in Party agreed

Observers NOT agreeing with identification: _____

6. Physical description (size, shape, proportions; details of both color and pattern on the head, back, breast, undertail, wings, and tail; coloration of bill, eye, legs and feet) of details **actually seen in the field**:

This was an extremely large bulky falcon. Size ~~was~~ was further registered or confirmed when the bird strafed two Bald eagles. The bird was completely light gray, much lighter than ~~what we see~~ what we see in the gray/brown phase of the Peregrine. There was no cap as seen in the peregrine and it did not have a dark mantle as in the adult peregrine. ~~It was~~

Species: Gyr Falcon Date seen: 12-22-96 Observer: Brian Blevins

7. Description of behavior: Typical falcon Flight working up river with a quick straffing of two eagles sitting on the ice.
8. Description of vocalizations: None
9. Description of immediate and surrounding habitat(s): Directly on Mississippi River Channal - with most of the river frozen over.
10. Viewing conditions:
Optical equipment (type, power): Overcast But fairly good light 10 X 50 Binocs
Distance / how measured? 250 yards - By Eye
Time(s) of observation: 10:26 - 10:29 AM. Total time of observation: 3 min.
Weather (including larger weather patterns where relevant) / sky conditions / relative position of sun:
Overcast at the tail End of many extremely cold days - Below 0°F. (The River Had been frozen over for several days. Wind East 5-15mph
11. Previous experience with this and similar species: This is the fourth Gyr that I have seen and the 2nd that Corey has seen. For me, two previous birds were also on the Mississippi River; one in Davenport and the other at the Lock & Dam #3 near Clinton, IA. The other bird was seen by both (Corey and I) of us along with a large group of birders at the LaSalle nuclear power station near LaSalle, Ill.
12. Reasons for eliminating other similar species and/or hybrids: The only bird close or similar is the peregrine. It was easily eliminated by the lack of a dark cap, sheer bulk and size and the total light grayness.
13. Were photos obtained? No By whom? _____ Attached? _____
14. Books & illustrations consulted, and advice received. How did these influence this description?
None
15. How long after observation were field notes recorded? 2 min.
16. How long after observation was this form completed? 12 days
17. Additional remarks:

Signed

Brian L. Blevins

Date

Jan 3, 1997