

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Peregrine Falcon 2. Number 1
 3. Location Coo Falls
 4. Date: April 29 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: _____ to _____
 6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):
 A very light fronted (breast to throat) crow sized bird was seen perched vertically near the top of a dead tree. I took a short look and noted a dark head and ~~dark~~ neck and a dark ~~beak~~ beak. I also noted dark "sideburns" in the ear area. I quickly got my scope, however, before I could set it on the bird some crows flew near it and the last crow put the bird into flight.
 The bird simply circled back out of view and then back in and passed directly over us. When the bird put up it was obviously in the same size range as the crows near it. When it passed over us the long very pointed wings were observed. The dark head and "sideburns" were seen clearly and contrasted with the white throat and upper breast. The rest of the breast and belly were light, blending ^{rather} into the long narrow tail.
 7. Description of voice, if heard: Not heard
 8. Description of behavior: In flight the bird continually flapped its wings in an almost casual fashion but still traveled quite fast.
 9. Habitat - general: woods were perched, with a great deal of open hawkeye wildlife area near
 specific: Coo Falls bridge, 1st spotted south of the bridge on the creek and then it flew over us as we stood on the bridge
 10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
 1 Merlin eliminated by size and strong facial pattern 3 Harrier eliminated by flight and lack of white rump.
 2 Hawk and accipiters eliminated by shape of wings.
 11. Distance (how measured)? 100 yds. estimated 12. Optical equipment: 7x binoculars
 13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
sky was clear providing good light on the bird, which as noted was perched in the open we were looking south at the bird, the sun was to the east of both the bird and the observer.
 14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
other side
 15. Other observers: James Huntington
John Cordell
 16. Did the others agree with your identification? YES
 17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: James Huntington
 18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Peterson's 1980 ed. Birds East of the Rockies
 19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? about 4 days, ^{out}
- Signature: Thomas J. Streett Address: 931 N. Summit
 Date: MAY 3, 1981 City, State: Jowett City, Ia.

④ very little previous experience, I had only seen one Peregrine before this.

On that bird I did get a good view of the facial pattern, dark cap and sideburns in ear area, light (white) throat, light patch behind the ear that continued below the sideburn and into the throat.

On the day after this sighting Tom Kent and I observed another Peregrine. The most notable features on this bird were its size and its long pointed wings.

The features on both these birds were consistent with the bird seen on the 29th.

⑧

I wasn't initially aware that this bird needed documentation. I took notes about the sighting one day afterwards but this description wasn't written for another three days. The new Peterson guide was used within minutes after the sighting to point out ~~the~~ and compare the markings we had observed on the bird.

The Peterson Guide also supplied the term "sideburns" which I used in my description.