

IOWA BREEDING BIRD ATLAS DOCUMENTATION FORM

What species? Northern Harrier adult male How many? one

Location: County Fayette Block 155 Auburn Township

Location in detail Section 20 NW, Two miles south of St Lucas.

EO acer wet prairie pasture, west of WI4 blacktop.

Habitat? Open pasture, long grass, wet boggy areas. Open fields

When? date? 1 June 1986 Time: 10:06 AM to 10:10 AM

Observer? Name: Mark A. Dietzenbach

Address: RR #1 P.O. Box 72 Fort Atkinson IA 52144

Telephone: (319) 534-7775

Description of bird(s): include size, shape, detailed description of all parts including bill, eye, head, neck, back, wings, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet; also voice and behavior. Use additional sheets if necessary.

Large slim hawk, pale gray first observed on ground, then as it flew I took note of long slender wings, long tail and white rump patch. Bird gained altitude and turned revealing white underside with black wing-tips, barred tail and dark terminal tail band. Bird flew to a height of about 50 feet and then returned close to the ground, gliding and tilting buoyantly over the ground. After a few minutes it disappeared over a small hole into the next field.

Similar species and how eliminated:

No other hawk species is pale gray and display a similar flight pattern or markings.

Did anyone have reservations about identification? If so, explain:

I did not have reservations.

Viewing conditions: lighting, distance and how measured, optical equipment used. Viewing conditions good, sun behind me, distance 150 - 300 yards, optical equipment ; Bushnell Spacemaster scope 22xpower wide angle lens.

Previous experience with this species and other similar ones: Common spring and fall migrant, I have observed many birds passing low over hay fields while working in the fields on my farm.

BREEDING BEHAVIOR: Give all details observed that indicate that the species breeds on the block. If nest, eggs, young, or courtship display were observed, describe in detail.

I am not sure of the breeding period for Northern Harriers.

This bird may have been in suitable nesting habitat during breeding season. No other nesting evidence has been found at this time.

If books or other birders were consulted before writing up the documentation, please list them here:

A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies; Roger Tory Peterson

Iowa Birds; Dinsmore, Kent, Koenig, Peterson, Roosa

How long after observation were field notes made?

On location

How long after observation was this form completed?

Same day