

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? PRAIRIE FALCON How many? 1Location? South of Yale IaType of habitat? Ben FieldWhen? date(s): Easter Sun 4/16/95 time: 3:00 PM to \_\_\_\_\_Who? your name and address: Russ Widmer Morshantown Ia 50657others with you: Norm Larsen Mesa Ar

others before or after you: \_\_\_\_\_

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.

See attached notes

Tom

I'll let one doctor decipher another doctor's handwriting! I could make out most of it!

Mark

Similar species and how eliminated:

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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

see notes

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

References and persons consulted before writing description: none

How long before ~~field~~ notes made? 4/16/95 this form completed? about 2 weeks

PM at my computer

While driving N on P 30 from Lakin's slough <sup>we</sup> ~~all~~  
drove past the turn off to "Big Form Pond - Long  
hole" & went ~~to~~ the P 30 - 141 junction &  
did a U-turn. As I accelerated back ~~to~~  
south on the P-30 hwy I noticed a  
~~light brown~~ light-brown (milk chocolate)  
colored crow-sized bird traveling south  
parallel to my car perhaps 20 yards west of the  
fence on the west (right) ditch over a  
picketed bean field. The bird is about  
8-10 feet higher than the field above & the  
bird was just <sup>below</sup> ~~above~~ my eye level. It  
had a faint light supercilious stripe; a faint  
brown "mustache" & other faint markings  
of light brown to cream coloration. The under  
parts appeared cream colored & spotted with  
brown. The ~~entire~~ dorsal surface was  
chocolate brown. The wings were long ~~and~~  
and pointed. The tail was medium long &  
narrow. The bird ~~flew~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~road~~  
The wingbeats were strong, <sup>fore</sup> regular & pattern  
at a rate of about 1/sec, but not particularly  
deep. As the bird accelerated past my car  
& turned <sup>SW</sup> ~~to~~ it maintained the same strong  
steep path & remained low over the  
bean field. ~~When~~ a brief view of the <sup>lt</sup> ~~top~~  
axillaries gave the impression of dark coloration.  
Good view of the tail revealed no

evidence of a white rump-patch & only very faint horizontal barring. <sup>Wanted</sup> At the next cross-roads we turned west to chase the bird ~~to the sea~~ but we did ~~not~~ not get another view.

The size, manner of fly, <sup>facial</sup> coloration eliminate ~~all~~ even a large female kestrel. The size, facial pattern, probable osprey, pigmentation & lack of strong tail bar eliminate merula.

The head <sup>shape</sup> pattern ~~and~~ <sup>of</sup> back <sup>of</sup> broad side than a helmet ~~shape~~, coloration & somewhat shallower wing base rule <sup>against</sup> peregrine

The face pattern, wing shape, ~~Wing~~ manner of fly & lack of a white rump patch eliminate Horned

I'll put my confidence level of the identification at about 90-95%. Although the bird was close by & appeared "crow-sized" there was not a crow handy for immediate comparison, & the view of the osprey was fleeting.