

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Peregrine Falcon 2. Number: one
 3. Location south of Lake Rathbun, Appanoose County, Iowa
 4. Date: 5 October 1985 5. Time Bird seen: about 8 AM? didn't write to down the time
seen about one minute
 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):
large falcon being mobbed by a big flock of blackbirds (while flying). Double the length of the average mobbing blackbirds. dark above; head black above and white below with a very irregular juncture between with a point of ~~black~~ black coming well down below the eye; breast tannish;- white bottom of head and throat fading into the tannish of breast; bottom of wings darkish; tail slightly banded. bird rather far away to get a detailed look, so concentrated on getting a good look at the head.
 7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
 8. Description of behavior: At times flew in circles while being mobbed by flock of blackbirds.
 9. Habitat - general: fields & pastures on rolling ground
specific:
 10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:
Merlin - too small
Prairie Falcon - tannish all over & has easy to see black "armpit" or wing "pit".
 11. Distance (how measured)? 1/8 plus mile???? guess 12. Optical equipment:
7 X 35 binoculars
 13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
Sun east of us; bird first West, then South, then Southeast.
 14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
Have seen Peregrine a few times; have seen Prairie Falcon twice in South Dakota.
 15. Other observers: Steve Dinsmore & Eric Munson
 16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes
 17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
 18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
none
 19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? ~~minutes~~
notes immediately, but forgot to write down the time.
- Signature Paul Martzsch Address: 1120 Marston
Date: November City, State: Ames, Iowa 50010
3 October 1985