

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Golden Eagle (immature) How many? 1Location? W. Ctr. Section 20, Booth Township (T94N, R34W) Palo Alto Co., IowaType of habitat? Open Field (snow blown clear) near frozen marshWhen? date(s): Weds., Feb. 3, 1988 time: 10:00 AM toWho? your name and address: Calvin A. Knight, 425 Lee St., Iowa City, Ia, 52240others with you: Bernie Knight + Ron Reese (owner of the land)others before or after you: none

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.

We all saw this bird on the ground and because of large size agreed that it had to be an eagle; as soon as the car stopped the bird flew; the bird was predominantly dark with mottled back, wings were long and wide with large white window at base of primaries + inner secondaries; base of tail was white. The bird disappeared behind some low trees within 30 seconds and was not seen again.

Similar species and how eliminated: Bald Eagle (immature)
Under-wing markings + tail eliminated bald eagle

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? Yes!

If yes, explain: Because a Golden Eagle is rare in this area - but nothing else would fit this description. Another immature golden eagle was found, injured, a couple of years ago, was taken to the Vet. Clinic at Ames where it died.

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

Overcast but clear; 200 yds; 8x40 + 10x40 Leica Binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen in N.E. Iowa, Texas, Arizona, California, Colorado + WashingtonReferences and persons consulted before writing description: Peterson: A Field Guide to HawksHow long before field notes made? — this form completed? 24 hrs

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