

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Burrowing Owl - *Athene cunicularia* 2. Number 1
3. Location 1 1/2 miles south of Rolland, Iowa
4. Date: Sept. 7, 1981 5. Time Bird Seen: 12:40 P.M. to 1:00 P.M.

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):

1. Size ^{+slope} - The small owl was about size of screechowl, maybe a little larger, and trimmer looking. - The long legs were set way back on the body. Head was large + rounded with no tufts. Very short tail

2. Color was med. brown covered by white spots + bars. A larger white bar formed a chin strap under bird's bill. Bird also had white eyebrows coming together over the bill in a V

3. Eyes were yellow



7. Description of voice, if heard: —

8. Description of behavior: Perched on wood fence post - then flew to steel post

9. Habitat - general: open area (bean fields all around) - few trees in sight
specific: grassy ditch next to soybean field

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:

I really can't imagine what it would be confused with

11. Distance (how measured)?

closest about 25-30 ft.

12. Optical equipment: B+L 7X35 roof prisms

Bushnell 80X scope - Nikon F2 with 300mm.

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): for pictures

Bright day - sun high causing no problems

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

No experience with burrowing owl

15. Other observers: Francis Moore + Russell Hays

Hank Zalatel found bird + phoned us

16. Did the others agree with your identification? Yes

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Hank Zalatel

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

We checked Robbins - *Birds of North America* + Peterson - *Field Guide to Birds* but didn't need to for ID

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? about 1 week

Signature: Robert K. Myers Address: 1236 Sylvia Ave.

Date: 9-20-81 City, State: Waterloo, Iowa 50701