

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Peregrine Falcon How many? 1Location? 3/4 mile N. of Luther Bridge along Des Moines River, Boone Co.Type of habitat? migrating down large river valleyWhen? date(s): Sept. 23, 1984 time: 2:35 P.M. to 2:37 P.M.Who? your name and address: Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames IA 50010others with you: Gary Downs, Ames

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.

Fairly large falcon; roughly the size of a nearby Cooper's Hawk. The wings were definitely pointed like a falcon. The bird alternately flapped its wings rapidly and then glided for a distance. The underparts were white except for the underside of the tail which was dark with some white barring. The tail was fairly long as compared to other migrating ~~buteos~~ buteos nearby.

The bird was mostly viewed from underneath as it was flying directly overhead about 50' feet in the air. When the bird changed its course after flying over us its back, back of wings, ~~back~~ back of tail and head were seen to be very dark and uniform in color.

The bird was seen in direct comparison to a Merlin. The bird was distinctly larger, the body being several inches longer and the wings were definitely longer. The bird did not have as distinct barring under the tail as the Merlin.

Similar species and how eliminated: merlin eliminated by smaller size, stronger black and white barring on the undertail and by the lack of dark face markings.
Accipiters sp. eliminated by broad rather than pointed wings and lack of dark face markings.
Prairie falcon eliminated by lack of dark face markings, browner appearance and black axillaries.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain: _____

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Lighting was quite good, even though it was partly overcast. The estimated viewing distance was 50'. I used Bausch and Lomb 7x35 binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen three times previously in Iowa.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic Society Field Guide to Birds of N. AmericaHow long before field notes made? 24 hours this form completed? 24 hours

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