

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Golden Eagle (Aquila chrysaetos) How many? 2Location? Along county road A26 in Allamakee CountyType of habitat? Limestone bluffs and hills topped with hardwood and ^{conifer} treesWhen? date(s): November 14, 1981 time: 10:00 to 10:30
approx.Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 264 Western Ave., Waterloo, IA 50701others with you: Bob Myers, Darwin Koenigothers 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. The three of us were riding along county road A26 in Allamakee County with Bob Myers driving. We were headed in a general Easterly direction when we noticed a large bird up ahead near the top of one of the limestone bluffs. We drove until we thought we could get a good view by getting out of the vehicle. As we stepped from the vehicle we noticed it was an eagle. As the bird glided and banked a large white area was noticable on its upper retrices. Some white was also noticed in the under wing linings but did not show up as much as what the field guide suggested. The bird was not mottled in appearance as an immature Bald Eagle would be but was a rather uniform dark brown overall except for the white in the upper retrices and wing linings which was noted before. As we watched the bird through our binoculars and a 20x telescope another large bird appeared from the East and this too was another eagle. The second bird was an overall dark brown except for a very small amount of white to whitish color at the base of the retrices. This bird had a lighter brown color to the back of the head and on the nape. There was no mottled effect as would be shown in an immature Bald Eagle. We watched the two birds for some time before they flew out of sight over the bluff. With the over all dark brown coloration and the white on the retrices on the immature bird and the lighter brown coloration on the nape of the adult bird I concluded that they were Golden Eagles.

Similar species and how eliminated: Bald Eagle as described above.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NoIf yes, explain: N/AViewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Bright overcast to partly sunny; Approx. 100 to 300 yards; using 7x35mm B+L Roof Prism Binoculars and 20x Bushnell Spacemaster telescope.Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen many Bald Eagles both adult and immature but have only observed one adult Golden Eagle on March 15, 1980 at Backbone S.P.References and persons consulted before writing description: A Guide to Field Identification by Robbins, Bruun, Eim and SingerHow long before field notes made? 10 hours this form completed? 1 dayMAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240