

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species golden eagle 2. Number 1
3. Location farm country between Rt. 6 and the Coralville Reservoir, Johnson Co IA
4. Date: 2-11-19 5. Time Bird Seen: 11:10 to 11:11 AM

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):

Very large, heavy hawk, much larger than the redtails and roughlegs we had been observing all morning, and with a much slower, heavier wingbeat. Bird appeared to be uniformly dark in color with a white flash in the base of the primaries, easily seen at each wingstroke. The bird was in level flight, so the tail pattern could not be seen.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard to call.

8. Description of behavior: flying along crest of hill, then soaring up to an altitude of a few hundred feet, then disappeared off to east.

9. Habitat - general: An area of mixed cropland and timber south of the Iowa River; just to the north is an extensive area of public land, with mixed fields and woods;
specific: to the south are farms on flatter land, with much less timber.

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain: large size and slow wingbeat rule out buteos, as do the dark primaries and secondaries (melanistic redtails and roughlegs have ~~at least some~~ white in the flight feathers).

11. Distance (how measured)?

1/4 mile (est)

12. Optical equipment:

8x40 binocs, 25x60 scope

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

dull grey day with no shadows; bird between observers and sun, not ideal observing conditions

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

Have seen numerous bald and golden eagles, as well as red-tailed and rough-legged hawks.

15. Other observers: Rick Hollis, Carl Bendorf.

16. Did the others agree with your identification? They did not get as good a look at the

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: bird as I had, and were unsure that they saw it well enough to identify it conclusively.

none

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?

Signature: 1 day Mike Nadon Address: 408 Wales St.

Date: 12 Feb 1979 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240