

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

1986
176What species? Golden Eagle How many? 1Location? 2 mi South Ames - gravel roadType of habitat? Open pasture on top of dead treeWhen? date(s): 10/19 time: 12:00 to 12:05 apr.Who? your name and address: Scott Gritters 2101 Oakwood Rd. Ames, Ia 50010others with you: Kevin Timmer - Same addressothers 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 came upon the Eagle we could see it was a large black bird. Apr 3 feet high. It sat on a lone dead tree in a grazed pasture. It sat near the top of the tree. Its head could be seen moving back and forth as it scanned the pasture. The head appeared to be black when we came upon the bird, but as it turned its head toward us we could obviously see a iridescent golden head. It became "nervous" as we continued to watch it. As it flew from the perch some white could be seen on the undersides - not too much and it veered quickly so we did not note what ^{the} parts were b/c we had already identified it. The size again was spectacular and wing appeared to be much larger than body. It flew in a slow pulsed rhythm.

Similar species and how eliminated: Upon sighting of the bird in the tree we eliminated hawks by large size and black over whole body. At first his head appeared to be black headed - so I thought it was an immature Bald eagle. This also cleared it from being a turkey vulture. Finally the bird turned its head toward us as it was getting "nervous" - this revealed a golden crown.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

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

Clear, bright daylight. seen w/ eyes - 35 yardsPrevious experience with species and similar ones: Seen Golden Eagle in Captivity - Seen both immature and mature Bald Eagles at Lake Red Rock - in groups up to 30.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

Dr. J. J. DinsmoreHow long before field notes made? 1 this form completed? 1

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240