

DOCUMENTATION FOR RARE BIRD

SPECIES: Prarie Falcon

OBSERVER: Jim Fuller, 6 Longview Knoll, RR#6, Iowa City, Iowa, 52240

OTHERS: None

LOCATION: Three-quarters of a mile northeast of Clio, Wayne County.

WHEN: 13 January about 3:30PM for 30 seconds, or less.

HABITAT: Open farming area, with a few scattered trees. Mostly grassy fields in surrounding area.

COMMENTS: I was looking for a Snowy Owl that had been reported in the area. A good many raptors of several species had been seen. I was watching a red-tailed hawk, which flew into a large lone cottonwood in the middle of a grassy field. As that bird landed in the tree, the prarie falcon flew out. I watched it fly and glide until it disappeared over a ridge, a total viewing time of about 30 seconds, or less.

DESCRIPTION: The bird was pretty close to the same size as the red tail that flew into the tree....the only size comparison there was. It had the pointed wings of a falcon. The general color was light brown. The black areas under the inner wing were looked for and were prominently displayed

SIMILAR SPECIES: Other large falcons are not generally this light in color, and do not display the black underwing areas this bird had.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: I have observed this species at least a dozen times, mostly in the west, but on five occasions in Iowa since 1988.

VIEWING CONDITIONS and OPTICS: The bird was first about 125-150 yards away, but continued to get farther away until it was out of sight approximately a quarter mile distance. The day was cloudless, and I was looking east to southeast in the late afternoon. Optics were Swift Audubon binoculars (8.5 x 44).

REFERENCES: Notes were made at time of sighting in the car, and this form was typed on computer the next day. No other references were consulted.