

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Great Horned Owl, subarctic form 2. Number 1
3. Location Northeast Marshall County, north east of Green Mountain
4. Date: March 2, 1983 5. Time Bird Seen: 9:45 AM to 11:30 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):
Bird was ~~Great~~ Horned Owl size & shape, but white, looking at first glance like a Snowy Owl (only in wrong habitat.) However this owl had dark "horns", pale gray facial discs, black bill and very white breast & white feathered legs & feet. Its back was lightly barred, giving it a grayish look, the gray extending to the crown & forehead. In flight, faint beige barring under the wings showed, & the barring on back was more visible.
7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
8. Description of behavior: Alert and watchful, occasionally flushing to another spot in grove, & also to grove at next farm south - but usually calm, allowing us good observing.
9. Habitat - general: open farmland
specific: deciduous grove around farmstead
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Snowy owl - this owl had ear tufts & facial discs making it a Great Horned Owl
11. Distance (how measured)? 100', 275', 400' - measured by distance-finder on camera 12. Optical equipment: Binoculars & Scope
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
mostly clear, bit of haze, sun behind us as we observed owl good light.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
Never have I seen so light an owl, but once I have seen a Snowy Owl and once an arctic Great Horned Owl
15. Other observers: Carl Kurtz, Judy Leving, Ramona Sommerlot, Carol McMillan
16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird: John King, Mark Proescholdt, Phyllis Harris
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
Birds of N. America, Robbins et al; Field Guide to the Birds, Roger Tory Peterson (2nd & 4th editions); Audubon Guides, Richard Pough - description guides only verified it
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? As we were observing bird
- Signature: Beth Proescholdt Address: █
- Date: March 7, 1983 City, State: Liscomb, Iowa 50148