

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Peregrine Falcon How many? 1

Location? NE Boone Co. wet area

Type of habitat? A wet meadow and marshy area with a small pond

When? date(s): April 23, 1986 time: 2:25 p.m. to 2:26 p.m.

Who? your name and address: Mark Proescholdt, Liscomb, Iowa

others with you: Beth Proescholdt, Carol McMillen, Ramona Sommerlot

others 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 were watching shorebirds when we noticed many of the shorebirds were flying rapidly around in circles. Just then someone spotted a large hawk about 30 yards away over the water turning in the wind. The bird then flew right over our car about 20 feet above our car. It was larger than a crow with definite pointed falcon wings, flew very fast, and had a dark helmet and sideburns. I yelled "Peregrine" as it flew right over the front windshield of the car and all four of us bailed out of the car to watch it quickly fly north over a ridge and disappear. The bird had a dark back and was light underneath.

Similar species and how eliminated: A Merlin is considerably smaller and lacks the heavy black sideburns. A Prairie Falcon shows distinctive black axillaries which we did not see and narrower facial markings.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Sunny and clear with strong south winds. Sun was at our side and then at our backs. Distances estimated. 8x30 Binoculars.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have had good looks at all three falcons.

References and persons consulted before writing description: R.T. Peterson's A Field Guide to the Birds; Natl. Geog. Birds of N. America.

How long before field notes made? Right after viewing this form completed? May 25, 1986

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