

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? MERLIN How many? 1 MALELocation? 10 MILES NORTH OF BURLINGTONType of habitat? BOTTOMLAND - FARM FIELDSWhen? date(s): 19 FEB, 1988 time: 10:15 to 10:18 AMWho? your name and address: JIM FULLER, 6 LONGVIEW KNOLL, RR#6, IOWA CITY, IA, 52240others with you: CAL KNIGHT

others before or after you: _____

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.

THE BIRD WAS FALCON SHAPED WITH POINTED WINGS. IT WAS ABOUT THE SIZE OF A KESTREL, BUT ~~WAS~~ HAD A LONGER & THINNER BODY AND A LONGER TAIL WITH A SQUARED END. THE BACK AND WINGS WERE A BLUE-GRAY COLOR AND THE TAIL HAD DARK BARRING ON UPPERSIDE BUT VERY SUBTLE ON UNDERSIDE. THE BAND TOWARD END OF TAIL WAS THE BIGGEST & MOST PROMINENT. THE BREAST AND BELLY WERE STREAKED WITH DARK BROWN OVER THE UNDERLYING "WARM" BRIGHT BROWN COLOR. A SIDEBURN BELOW EYE IS QUITE NOTICEABLE. THE BIRD FLEW FAST AND DIRECT, NEVER MORE THAN 50-10 FEET OFF THE GROUND. IT PERCHED ON FENCE POSTS AND SAPLINGS AT THE ROAD EDGE.

Similar species and how eliminated: KESTREL - THINNER SHAPE OF MERLIN AND ABSOLUTELY NO RED VISIBLE ON BACK & TAIL

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: SUNSHINE - SUN IN SE - MOSTLY VIEWING BIRD TOWARD SW. 9X36 BINOCULARS. DISTANCE 30-100 YARDS.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: SEEN SEVERAL TIMES / YEAR IN IOWA - NEVER HAD A BETTER, LONGER LOOK THAN THIS.

References and persons consulted before writing description: NONE

How long before field notes made? IMMEDIATE this form completed? 10 HOURS

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