

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What Species? MERLIN How many? 1Location? 2 MILES N. OF FARRAGUT, FREMONT CO., IAType of Habitat? MIXED CEDAR & DECIDUOUS WOODED HILLSIDEWhen? date(s)? DEC 28, 1984 time: 4.10 to 4.15 PMWho? your name and address: ROSS SILCOCK

others with you: _____

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, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

PALE OR LIGHT BROWN MEDIUM-SIZED (LARGER THAN KESTREL; LOOKED TO BE ABOUT MOURNING DOVE SIZE) FALCON SITTING ON DEAD LETTOWOOD STUB. FAINT, BUT VISIBLE, MARK ON SIDE OF FACE, — ONLY FEATURES SEEN WHILE PERCHED. WHEN FLUSHED, UNDERPARTS AND UNDERWINGS TOTALLY STREAKED BROWN ON WHITE, NO BLACK AXILLARS. TAIL BARRED, MORE THAN 2-3 BARS, WITH WHITE TIP. FLIGHT FALCONLIKE, WINGS POINTED. ~~AT FIRST, WHEN SEEN PER~~ APPEARED TO BE ♀ DUE TO BROWN COLORATION.

Similar species and how eliminated:

AT FIRST, WHEN SEEN PERCHED, POSSIBILITY OF PRAIRIE FALCON, BUT LACK OF AXILLARS ELIMINATES THIS. FACIAL MARK & FLIGHT CHARACTERISTICS (POINTED WINGS, RAPID WING BEATS) ELIMINATE COPPER'S OR ♀ SHARP-SHIN IMMATURES.

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about the identification?

NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: OVERCAST; GOOD LIGHT

Previous experience with this and similar species:

SEEN SEVERAL TIMES THIS & SIMILAR SPECIES

References and persons consulted before writing description:

NONE

How long before field notes made?

AT TIME OF OBSERVATION

How long before this form completed?

1 WEEK; FROM FIELD NOTES