

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Golden Eagle 2. Number 3 or 4
3. Location Upper Iowa River Valley inland from New Albin IA
4. Date: 11-24-79 5. Time Bird Seen: ~ 10 AM to ~ 10³⁰ 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):
- Two immatures soaring over bluffs: eagle size, continually soaring, done on each other, white at base of tail from above and below (rather narrow and distinct), thin white line at base of primaries and secondaries from below, overall dark color with head slightly lighter (golden?). One bird had distinct white at base of primaries when seen from above. We saw these birds 3 times as we followed them up river. Two more eagles seen soaring ~~over~~ a bluff closer to New Albin. One seen well was all dark with same behavior as two seen earlier. All were "tom" birds with narrow tail, thin wings and pointed head compared to bald eagle.
7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard
8. Description of behavior: Soaring with rare beating of wings. Diving.
9. Habitat - general: High bluffs with rock outcroppings
specific: Upper Iowa River on County Road #26 west and east of Iowa #76
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:
Bald Eagle - A mature (perched) and immature (flying) bald eagle were seen in same area for comparison. The immature bald eagle was larger, broader in wings and tail and had
11. Distance (how measured)? 50 - sev. 1000 yards (est)
12. Optical equipment: 20x B+L scope, 8x40 Leitz towards more massive head. White was blotchy in wings and body.
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you): Light overcast to sunny, birds seen in variable positions
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
Seen in Colorado several times
15. Other observers:
Joe Shaufenbuel, Dorwin Koenig, Carl Bendorf, Mike Mulier
16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes
17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:
—
18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:
none
19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? 24 hours
- Signature: Thomas H Kent Address: 211 Richards St
- Date: 11-25-79 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240