

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Peregrine Falcon How many? 1Location? McFarland Park, Story Co.Type of habitat? flying south with other hawks over woods near a riverWhen? date(s): Sept. 15, 1984 time: approx. 10:00 AM toWho? your name and address: Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames IA 50010others with you: Hank Zaletel, Colo Eric Munsen, Amesothers 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.

fairly large sized hawk; slimmer and slightly smaller than nearby Red-tailed Hawks. wings very definitely pointed and held back at an angle to the body while flying. Underparts considerably lighter in color than the very dark back and top of wings. Breast and belly appeared to be pale in color. The birds crown was very black with the black color extending down to cover the cheek area on the side of the head. The head had so much black that it almost appeared solid black in color. The tail was fairly long as compared to other hawks. Color of tail not well seen, although it was darker underneath than the belly.

When the bird was first spotted it was flying in a straight line at a good pace. The bird then veered off at about a 90° angle and went into a dive with wings folded way back. The bird was certainly travelling at around 150 mph when it pulled out of the dive and continued along south.

Similar species and how eliminated:

Merlin was eliminated because of smaller size and lack of black hood.
Accipiter sp. eliminated because of wing shape and lack of dark color on head or a hood.
Prairie Falcon eliminated because of overall brown rather than black appearance and lack of black hood.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? yesIf yes, explain: I saw bird first and before it dove I noticed the black hood and lack of dark color on underwings. The other people present all agreed that the bird was probably a Peregrine, but none one was able to get a long enough look at it.Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: excellent lighting, clear to partly cloudy sky. Estimated distance 75 yards maximum and 20 yards at closest view. Used B+L 7x35 binocularsPrevious experience with species and similar ones: Have seen twice in central Iowa.

References and persons consulted before writing description:

National Geographic Society Field Guide to Birds of North AmericaHow long before field notes made? 10 hours this form completed? 10 hours

MAIL TO: T. H. Kent, Field Reports Editor, 211 Richards Street, Iowa City IA 52240