

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Common Barn-Owl How many? 2Location? Shenandoah, Fremont Co., IAType of habitat? City edge, open farmlandWhen? date(s): April 24, 1983 time: 4:55 am to \_\_\_\_\_Who? your name and address: JOE Schaufenbuel, 924 Pammel Ct, Ames 50101others with you: Tom Kent (heard only)

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.

Two owls flying in tight circles (one apparently pursuing the other - courtship?), low, 35 to 40 feet, above city lights. Birds had a moth-like, deep, slow flap, reminiscent of a Short-eared owl. I could not detect any markings on the underparts, which were light-colored in the partial light.

Call was unlike any owl call I have heard except possibly fledging Great Horned Owl. A short rasping "Heep."

The birds were heard before being observed and when observed circled several times then moved back to the original direction.

The owls were medium-sized, too small for Great Horned, too large for Screech Owl. The birds called frequently for the duration. Tom Kent heard the call. I am familiar with the call from records.

Similar species and how eliminated: Call, and size separated birds from Screech Owl. Size, flight style, and lack of under part markings was distinctly different than Great Horned. Short-eared Owl would have some markings and call differently.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain: N/A.

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Light was weak yet with unaided eyes and having well-adjusted to the dimness was sufficient for a good view. Birds flew ~~unusually~~ low and came within 160 feet (estimated)

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Familiar with common species have seen this species in life only in captivity.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 8 hours this form completed? 8 hours

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Joe Schaufenbuel