

## DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Peregrine Falcon How many? 1Location? Ames, Story CountyType of habitat? flying over townWhen? date(s): 18 Sep. 1985 time: 7:00 A.M. toWho? your name and address: Steve Dinsmore 4024 Arkansas Dr. Ames, IA 50010

others with you: \_\_\_\_\_

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 fairly large - it appeared to be about crow-sized. The bird was obviously several times larger than the blackbirds it was chasing. The long, pointed wings and long, narrow tail were obvious as the bird flew along with rapid, uneven wingbeats. The back, both of wings, and tail were all dark, almost appearing black at a distance. The underwings and belly were lighter in color in contrast to the darker back. When the bird flapped its wings, no black axillaries were seen.

I observed the bird chasing a flock of Red-winged Blackbirds. The bird dove on the flock and managed to ~~catch~~ catch one. The blackbird appeared quite small in its talons. It (the blackbird) did not seem quite as large as compared to the bird as I would have suspected, had the bird been a Merlin or Am. Kestrel.

Similar species and how eliminated: Am. Kestrel was eliminated by the lack of evident rufous color on tail or back.  
Both Am. Kestrel and Merlin were eliminated by size. The bird appeared to be the size of a crow, which is too large for either of these.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? Yes

If yes, explain: They questioned my ability to identify the bird without optical equipment. The question was also raised as to the possibility of a Merlin.

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Light was o.k. Sun was at 90°. Estimated distance of 30 yards. No optical equipment used.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: I have seen Peregrine Falcons and Merlins in Iowa.

References and persons consulted before writing description: \_\_\_\_\_

How long before field notes made? \_\_\_\_\_ this form completed? 24 hours

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