

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus) How many? 1 ad.

Location? Flying over Saylorville Dam, Polk Co., IA

Type of habitat? Flying down river after going over the dam

When? date(s): September 21, 1985 time: 11:00 am to 11:01 am approx.

Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703

others with you: Robert Myers, Perry

others before or after you: None that I know of

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.

Bob and I were saying goodbye after birding the area when I looked up at the dam and saw a dark falcon-like bird fly over the spillway and start down river. The bird was a bluish-black color on the upper surfaces and was whitish below. It was a very large falcon shaped bird with very fast direct flight. The head was striking, black on top with a black mustache coming down on the side of the head into the cheek area. The throat and breast were a clear white color. The bill was black. The lower breast and belly were spotted with black. The tail was long and wedge shaped. The bird flew with the typical falcon-like flight and had a slow sweeping motion in its wing beats.

Similar species and how eliminated: No other bird has the dark helmeted look that this bird showed. Merlin is smaller. This bird was probably a fairly large female.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Sunny, seen from approx. 75 to 100 yards at closest using Leitz 10X40 binoculars

Previous experience with species and similar ones: Have seen several Peregrine Falcons and several Merlins.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? None made this form completed? 4 hrs.

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