

DOCUMENTATION OF EXTRAORDINARY BIRD SIGHTING

Species: Prairie Falcon; **Number:** 1

Location: East of Lost Island Lake, Clay County, Iowa

Date: 3 April 1993; **Time:** 5:45 to 6:00 p.m.

Name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246.

Others before/with/after: Bob Cecil and Lee Schoenewe on 2 April; Lee and Harold White with me.

Habitat and circumstances: farmland near glacial lakes

Description of bird: We flushed this large falcon off of a telephone pole and watched it fly about 1 mile to a grove.

We drove to the grove and found the bird perched in a tall tree. We had seen its long pointed wings, long narrow tail, and continuous straight, falcon-like flight. It was a pale off-white below, somewhat darker on the upper parts. The head was light with pale brown mark behind the eye. The primaries were darker and tail light brown without marks that I could see. It raised its wings twice to expose the elongated black area from the axilla to the underwing coverts. In a few minutes the bird flew directly toward us and over the car about 30 feet above us. It was so close that I lowered my binoculars to get a better view with the naked eye. It landed down the road in a lone tree and we drove up for another good look before it flew again.

Voice: Not heard.

Similar species: This was the best view I have ever had at the underwing of a Prairie Falcon.

Any one have reservations?: No.

Light: Clear sky with late evening light from varying directions; **Distance:** As close as 30 feet, 50-100 yards when perched; **Optics:** 10x binocular, 20x scope, naked eye.

Previous experience: 2 in Iowa, several in the west.

References before/after viewing: none.

Time of notes: 1.5 hours; **Final typing:** 4 days (copied verbatim)