

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF  
AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD

1. Species Saw whet owl 2. Number 1

3. Location under bridge on Swan lake rd between Swan lake & Bobcock lake rd

4. Date: 12/16/78 5. Time Bird Seen: 12<sup>15</sup> to 12<sup>20</sup>

6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern (describe in great detail all parts of the plumage, and beak and feet coloration, in addition, to the diagnostic characteristics, but include only what actually was seen in the field):

small reddish brown owl - no head tufts, yellow eyes, row of spots down wing, streaked on breast, no evidence of black mark around facial discs. <sup>Top of</sup> Head was not seen well enough to look for white spots vs streaks.

7. Description of voice, if heard: not heard

8. Description of behavior: very strange - was flushed from high grass along creek where we were watching swamp sparrows - flew a short distance and when flushed again flew up

9. Habitat - general: under bridge about next. there were numerous small rodents  
specific: in the grass & it may have been hunting. There was a pine grove across the road

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8. Explain:  
a screech owl would have had ear tufts, a boreal would certainly not have been expected here and would have had black rims around the facial discs.

11. Distance (how measured)?

15 feet - estimate

12. Optical equipment:

Leitz 8x40B trinorials

13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):

light good - sky clear - seen in south - looking to north at bird.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:

I have seen saw whets every winter for the past 30+ years - have seen screech owls both here & in Mass. - have never seen a boreal.

15. Other observers:

T. Staudt, R. Williams, N. M. Brown

16. Did the others agree with your identification? yes.

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

T. Staudt

18. Books, illustrations and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

none

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? ~30'

Signature: Carol S. Newton Address: 408 Wales St

Date: 12/19/78 City, State: Iowa City IA 52240