

Middlewestern Prairie Region
(Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio)

BIRDS: VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT RECORD.

1. Species Peregrine Falcon 2. Number: one

3. Location along Skunk River east side of Ames, Story County, Iowa

4. Date: 6 November 5. Time Bird seen: 9:30 am to for abt 20 sec's(?)

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):

It was dark & foggy. First impression was a very dark pigeon somewhat lighter ~~below~~ below - this was as it flew across the road quite a way ahead of the car abt 6-8 ft off the ground. However the wing beats were very deep, and the flight very direct for a pigeon and the tail seemed too long. By the time I drove down the road to where it had crossed, it was flying away to the south a little below line of sight over a field - (field lower than the road.) It was obvious that it was a fair amount bigger than a pigeon and that the tail was longer even from that angle. appearance from top uniformly dark - definitely no light rump patch. Wings narrow. Wing beats very deep. Flight

7. Description of voice, if heard: very direct. (was driving about 45 m/hr when first saw the bird.)

8. Description of behavior: see above

9. Habitat - general: river bottom land
specific: over open field

10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated by questions 6, 7 & 8, Explain:

Pigeon(dark) smaller - white rump patch; wings wider; tail shorter; Usually doesn't fly rapidly any distance in a straight line.

Merlin - smaller

Prairie Falcon - I think even in the past it would have looked brownish if it had been a Prairie Falcon. This bird looked nearly black from above.

11. Distance (how measured)? guess 500-600 ft when first crossed road; closer than that when first got to where it crossed road

12. Optical equipment: none
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and you):
dark- overcast; some fog.

14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species:
saw one over Ames several weeks earlier. Also in spring of 1982

15. Other observers:

16. Did the others agree with your identification?

17. Other observers who independently identified this bird:

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

A Field Guide to the Birds Peterson
Birds of North America Golden Press

Did not get as good a look as I'd have liked and observing conditions rather bad.

I wasn't even going to send this in, but decided to type notes and send anyway.

19. How long after observing this bird did you first write this description? notes 1 minute

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Address: 1120 Marston

Date: 9 Nov 1983

City, State: Ames, Iowa 50010