

Prairie Falcon  
28 Jul 1987  
3 e, 1 s of Larabee, Cherokee Co., IA  
\*Marion M. Brewer  
IBL 57:120, 58:75

Record Number: 87-14  
Classification: NA

## DOCUMENTATION

Marion M. Brewer

## REFERENCE

Field Reports: IBL 57:120

Records Committee: IBL 58:75

VOTE: 1-III, 2-IV, 4-V

IV. This one is a little fuzzy. The description is not inconsistent with Prairie Falcon and the location is ok. I hesitate because there are two birds at such an unusual date probably should be described in more detail. The description does not do much toward establishing that these are even falcons and there were no notes taken for 24 hours. This was after observer looked at four different field guides.

V. Two birds in mid-summer seems very improbable to me. I have no idea what else they could have been. I saw several in Colorado this summer and made ID without always seeing black axillars. But, in Iowa, I am inclined to stick with axillars as a essential mark, especially when out of season or in E. Iowa.

V. The description is pretty good but the key field mark (black axillaries) was not seen. Other records have been voted down on this extremely important diagnostic field mark. I am not sure what species these birds were, they could be Prairie Falcons though it seems too early for them to show up in Iowa. With what is given I can not be entirely sure that these birds were Prairie Falcons.

IV. Very possibly a correct identification at a most unusual time of the year. I would need to see the dark axillars before being convinced.

V. Not sure why these birds were falcons. Why not flushed if observer only 100 yards away? No recent summer records.

V. Date is severe problem, alleviated somewhat by presence of two birds. Description is not clear whether birds seen in flight, although wings are described as pointed. Perching Prairie Falcons could be easily mistaken for other raptors, e.g. Swainson's Hawk, which would be most likely at this date, locality, and habitiat. I am not convinced by the sketchy details that these 2 birds were not in fact Swainson's. Only optical equipment used was window mount scope, so observr apparently didn't even flush the birds.

What species? Prairie Falcon How many? 2Location? # 3 east, 1 south of Larabee, IowaType of habitat? Rough rolling pastureland (bluff of the Little Sioux River)When? date(s): 7-28-87 time: 2-15pm to 2-25pmWho? your name and address: Marion M Brewer Cherokee, Iowa, 51012

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.

Large falcon, crow sized, with pointed wings. they were perched on two 30ft. poles that were located at the top of a pasture land hill, this a very large pasture of more than 160 acres. A med brown colored bird, with buffy feather edges. Buffy streaked breast. ~~\*barred tail~~ A banded tail ending in B Buffy edge. A narrow whisker of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  ~~$\frac{1}{3}$~~   $\frac{3}{8}$  inch wide. I didn't see the dark wing linings. It was too large to be a merlin. It didn't have the wide wisker of a Peregrine falcon. If the picture ~~the~~ in the Audubon Master Guide is accurate these were a exact duplicate.

Similar species and how eliminated: Merlin &amp; Peregrine (see above)

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:  
Sunny day, using a 15X45 spotting scope (window mount) at distance of a estimated 100 yards.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

References and persons consulted before writing description: Audubon master guide Golden &amp; Peterson &amp; National Geographic.

How long before field notes made? none this form completed? 2 1/2 hrs

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