

Northern Hawk Owl

25 Dec 1981

Waterloo, Black Hawk Co., IA

*Myers,*Moore,*Kent,*Petersen

through 25 Feb 1982; Myers 1982, IBL 52:25, 27, 42, AB 36:300

Record Number: 81-22

Classification: A-P

DOCUMENTATIONS

Robert K. Myers, 25 Dec

Francis L. Moore, 25 Dec

Thomas H. Kent, 26 Dec

Peter c. Pertsen, 29 Dec

PHOTOGRAPHS

T. H. Kent, 26 Dec, P-0167 (P-IBL 52:31, Am. Birds 36:300)

Fred Leshner, 3 Jan 1982, P-0035

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 52:25, 27

Myers, B. 1982. Iowa's first Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulua*). IBL 52:31-32.

Photographs: IBL 52:31 (P-0167), Am. Birds 36:300 (P-0167)

Records Committee: IBL 52:42

VOTE: 7 I-P

III, Saw and photographed bird and file doc.

Loren Padelford (TB); Mary Lou Petersen (PP); Mark Proescholdt (BPr); Johanna K. Sandrock (JPS); Garnita Seward (BPr); Ramona Sommerlot (BPr); Marie Spears (RP); Linda Zaletel (JR).

COMMENTS

The response to my request for help with the weather was gratifying. Most contributors gave weather information and Jim Sandrock not only offered to write the weather section, but did. In the following two paragraphs he summarizes the weather for 1981 and acknowledges the source of the information. In the future, contributors should continue to mention noteworthy weather events and, especially, habitat conditions. Personal field observations are a valuable source of information which, when incorporated with data from official records, will insure a more valid, comprehensive report of these important factors.

The year 1981 was the warmest calendar year in Iowa since 1954, primarily because the first four months of the year averaged 5.2 degrees warmer than normal. The warm, windy, dry days during early 1981 resulted in many dust storms, particularly in western and central Iowa where rainfall had been short since December 1979. The warm first four months closed out the 1980-81 snowfall season in which a total of only 15.2 inches fell — less than half the normal 32.5. Only two seasons in 89 years recorded less snowfall. The last eight months of 1981 reversed the 13-month long warm pattern to average nearly one-half degree subnormal. June 1981 reversed an 18-month dry pattern which was particularly intense over western and central Iowa. Also noteworthy in 1981 were the record hail on 23 June and the record rains, primarily over south central Iowa, on the night of 3-4 July.

Weather information for IBL is now being furnished by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and by the State Climatologist's Office. Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) — National Weather Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce are included in this information. Special thanks are due Mrs. Jane W. Weideman for her gracious assistance. In this and subsequent weather information included in the Field Reports, departures from normal are based on the mean for 1941-1970.

Not only was the weather favorable in 1981, but the birds responded by being seen in record numbers. According to my calculations 300 species were authenticated in Iowa in 1981, up from 287 in 1980 (IBL 51:34) and 291 in 1979 (IBL 50:28).

Of the 275 species on the current Field Checklist only the Sharp-tailed Sparrow was not definitely substantiated. It was reported but not considered unequivocal by the Records Committee. See next issue for a late report of a Barn Owl. There were 13 Casual (some soon to be reclassified as Regular) species recorder: Red-necked Grebe, Ross' Goose, White-winged Scoter, Sandhill Crane, Glaucous Gull, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Say's Phoebe, Varied Thrush, Townsend's Solitaire, Yellow-throated Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Pine Grosbeak, and Lark Bunting. There were also 13 Accidental species found: Arctic Loon, White-necked Ibis, Prairie Falcon, Black Rail, Thayer's Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Hawk Owl, Burrowing Owl, Curve-billed Thrasher, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Hoary Redpoll, and Smith's Longspur. Whimbrel, currently on the Field Checklist, should be added to the list of Accidentals. Please let me know if I have missed any. The future should tell the degree to which the good birding this year was due to more extensive birding or to increased vagrancy of the birds.

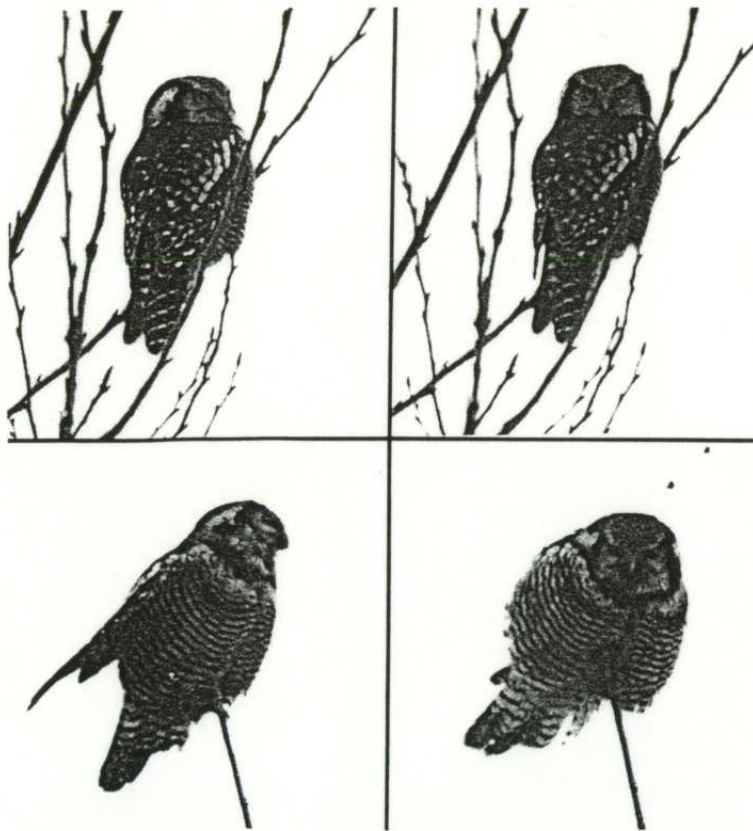
I am most grateful to Donna Sandrock for her professional job in typing the field reports.

Iowa's First Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulua*)

BOB MYERS
1236 Sylvia Ave.
Waterloo, Iowa 50701

On the afternoon of Dec. 25, 1981 I was returning home from our family's traditional Christmas dinner when I noticed an unusual bird perched along Highway 218 in Waterloo. A rounded head, tapering body, and long tail were visible even as I drove by. I half-jokingly told my wife that it sure looked like a Hawk Owl. I grabbed my binoculars and camera at home and raced back to the bird's tree. Identification was easy and positive — a Hawk Owl!

Description: The Hawk Owl is certainly not a difficult bird to recognize.



HAWK OWL
Photos by T.H. Kent

1. Size and shape — The bird was crow size or slightly smaller. The head was large and rounded as in other owls but the body seemed more tapered and the tail was long.

2. Color, feather patterns, etc. — The owl had light gray facial discs that were framed in black. The bird had a dark upper breast or throat band with a wider white band just below it. From the white band on down, the breast and belly were light gray covered with fine dark horizontal bars. The back and wings were brown-gray with white spots. The tail was barred. The eyes were yellow and the hooked beak was very pale yellow.

3. Behavior — In flight the Hawk Owl was swift and direct, like an accipiter, with rapid wing beats. It would usually swoop up and land in the very highest part of a tree very much like a shrike. The bird would occasionally jerk its tail up and down in Kestrel fashion. The owl was quite tame and would perch at the tip top of a tree and it usually sat at a slight angle to the branch it was on not perpendicular to it as with most owls.

The bird represents the first Iowa record of the Hawk Owl to be supported by photographs and documentation. The only other Iowa records are unreliable and not supported by data. E. James, 1823, in *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains Performed in the Years 1819, 1820* list the bird among others from this area but has no details. Anderson, 1907, included the Hawk Owl in his book *Birds of Iowa* on the basis of two reports from George H. Berry that he had taken a Hawk Owl in Iowa and observed another in December 1903 near Cedar Rapids, Linn County. No specimen or any other details can be found.

This Hawk Owl was very cooperative always being in the same area so many, and I mean many, birders could find it. I am sure the newly-founded Iowa Birdline was very helpful in spreading word of the sighting. I received calls from birders from as far as Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Kansas City who heard about the bird on the Iowa Birdline and were coming to Iowa to see it.

Literature Cited

- Anderson, R.M. 1907. *The Birds of Iowa*. Proc. Davenport Academy of Sciences, p. 267.
 James, E. 1823. *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains Performed in the Years 1819, 1820* London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown. p. 371.

GENERAL NOTES



Black-legged Kittiwake at Saylorville Reservoir — While birding the grassy north shore of the Saylorville Dam around 11:00 a.m. on 12 December 1981, I noticed a very different gull flying nearby over the lake.

My first impression was that it was a Sabine's Gull as the wing pattern consisted of dark primaries and a light triangular patch on the trailing half of the wing. The gull seemed trimmer — slimmer and smaller — than the hundreds of Ring-billed Gulls on the lake and larger than the Bonaparte's which were still on the lake. As the gull flew by a moment later, I got a good look at it and quickly began taking notes.

Its bill was slimmer than a Ring-billed's and all black. The underparts were white. The head was white with a small oval spot just below and behind the eyes. It had a bar on its nape. The back from the nape bar to the rump was gray. The wings were gray, lighter on the trailing edge, with a bar extending from the middle of the base to the wrist, which contrasted with the overall color of the wing. The primaries were dark, nearly black. The tail was white, notched, and had a terminal band.

Consulting Robbin's field guide I found that it was not a Sabine's Gull, but a Black-legged Kittiwake in immature plumage.

I contacted Dick Mooney in Des Moines who later joined me along with his wife and Margaret Brooke to observe the bird. We watched the bird for about 45 minutes after which time I birded other parts of the lake. At 3:30 p.m. I returned to the dam to view the bird one last time swimming not more than 100 feet from shore. Other birders were contacted and could not find the bird the next day. JOE SCHAUFENBUEL, St. Lucas.

Black-legged Kittiwake at Dubuque — On 6 Dec, 1981 Russell Hays, Francis Moore, and I were observing a mixed group of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls at Lock and Dam 11 at Dubuque, Iowa, when Russell picked out an odd looking gull. Francis quickly located the bird in his field guide and confirmed that we were indeed looking at an immature Black-legged Kittiwake. The bird was judged to be about the same size as a Ring-billed Gull as we watched it feed with the other gulls. The dark spot behind the eye and the black bar on the nape of the neck were easily noted on the basically white gull. The black wing tips with no white spots and the black slashes running diagonally from the bend in the wings to the back were very distinctive. We also observed the slightly forked tail with a black terminal band. Tom Kent from Iowa City relocated the bird the next day. This sighting represents the fourth Iowa record of the Black-legged Kittiwake to be supported by positive documentation from more than one observer. There are also two other records.

The Kittiwake was viewed in excellent light at distances of 100' to 300' with 7x35 binoculars and a 20x scope. BOB MYERS, 1236 Sylvia Ave., Waterloo, Iowa.

Final Report of the "One Day Eagle Counts" — For the past three years the National Wildlife Federation's Raptor Information Center has conducted an annual January National Eagle Count. I still coordinate the Mississippi River count.

With the Raptor Information Center having State coordinators who publish their results, it is no longer necessary for me to publish mine. Each year my accounts have appeared in the *Illinois Audubon Bulletin* and *Iowa Bird Life*. Other articles on eagles might be written for these journals. The reports summary that follows will show the results of four periods of five years each.

year	adults	immatures	not aged	total	percentage of immatures
1977	622	274	30	926	30
1978	977	416	53	1446	30
1979	1077	300	30	1407	22
1980	992	422	5	1419	30
1981	1094	382	35	1511	26
Total	4762	1794	153	6709	27.2

In the above figures which includes all of Illinois, the Mississippi River along Illinois border and along Tennessee and Kentucky, as well as inland in Kentucky. These are the areas I used in my counts. Areas covered each year are fairly consistent. It is not possible to have the exact coverage each year. My counts were mostly designed to show immature total population ratios.

†RK). Gull identification certainly is not easy and sightings of the rarer species (particularly inland records) should be accompanied by written descriptions and, preferably, photographs.

It was a banner year for inland Glaucous Gulls with six at Peoria, Ill., Dec. 28-Feb. 6 (MS, LA, m.ob.), 5-6 in w. Kentucky Jan. 28-Feb. 7 (BPB, AB) and 1-2 at 7 other locations. Great Lakes maxima were only 3-9 birds. Iceland Gull reports included at least four at Lorain, O., Jan. 14-Feb. 22 (m.ob.), one at Chicago Dec. 6 (*fide* LB) and two in Peoria County, Ill., Jan. 16-Feb. 6 (†LA, MS *et al.*). Normal numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls appeared along L. Erie while singles were noted at Chicago Dec. 13-Jan. 30 (JL, MMI). Inland reports included a well described first-year bird at Alton, Ill.-Mo., Feb. 11-15 (†RK, †BR) and two adults near Lawrenceburg, Ind., Feb. 28 (†CM *et al.*). At least three Lesser Black-backed Gulls were periodically observed along L. Erie between Lorain and Avon L., where this species has become regular in winter (†m.ob.). A possible immature at Land Between the Lakes, Ky., Jan. 30-31 (†BPB, †AB) awaits review of photographs by experts. Thayer's Gulls were also well reported with at least eight in w. Kentucky Jan. 28-Feb. 7 (†BPB, †AB), six at Peoria Dec. 28-Feb. 2 (†MS, m.ob.), at least three in the Alton-St. Louis area Dec. 17-Feb. 13 (m.ob.) and singles along the Ohio R., at 2 Kentucky locations. Great Lakes sightings included five plus at Lorain Dec. 3-Feb. 10 (†m.ob., ph.), four at Chicago Dec. 6-Feb. 21 (†PC, JL, m.ob.) and one at Gary, Ind., Dec. 12 (KB). The only Black-headed Gull was observed at 2 L. Erie locations Dec. 8-Jan. 4 (JP). Little Gulls were scattered along L. Erie through Jan. 15 with a maximum of seven at several cities. Immature Black-legged Kittiwakes in Iowa at Dubuque Dec. 6-7 (†RMy, FM *et al.*) and Saylorville Res., Dec. 10-17 (†JSc) were noteworthy. However, the incredible report of an ad. kittiwake at Dayton, O., Jan. 10 following a severe storm (†NC, †CM) awaits review by the Ohio Records Committee. Without a doubt, the most amazing report of the period was a bird killed by fishermen at L. Monroe, Ind., during mid-December. The skin has been tentatively identified as a Marbled Murrelet and sent to the U.S. Nat'l Museum for confirmation (RM).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A Ground Dove at Union County Conservation Area, Ill., Dec. 23 was exceptional (†MH, K). Barn Owls continued their decline. Except for CBC sightings, the only owl was reported at Danville, Ky., Jan. 17 (JE). Following last year's record-setting invasion, this winter's Snowy Owl flight was quite modest with birds appearing at 7 Ohio, 5 Illinois, 4 Iowa and one Indiana locations. Except for one at Dayton, O., Dec. 20-Jan. 10 (JH, m.ob.), they were restricted to n. areas. Iowa's first Hawk Owl obligingly established residence at Waterloo Dec. 25 and



Hawk Owl, Waterloo, Iowa, Dec. 26, 1981. Photo/T.H. Kent.

was widely observed through Feb. 25 (†RMy, m.ob., ph.). It was a good winter for Long-eared Owls with 30 reports from all states. Many roosts comprised 6-10 birds. In contrast, Short-eared Owls were widespread only in Illinois with scattered reports elsewhere. Saw-whet Owls were numerous in s.w. Ohio; 24 were banded near Cincinnati (RA) with many others reported from the Cincinnati-Dayton area. They were also discovered at 13 other locations in all states except Kentucky.

Few Belted Kingfishers managed to survive the harsh conditions this winter. Common (Red-sh.) Flickers only appeared in Iowa with singles in Mills County (BW) and Story County (*fide* JD). Red-headed Woodpeckers were locally abundant in Iowa and Missouri while fair

numbers were reported elsewhere. Wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers maintained their improved numbers of recent years.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WRENS — In s. states, E. Phoebes lingered through late December. Early migrants returned N to St. Louis County, Mo., by Feb. 23 (RC). Horned Larks were generally noted in good numbers with flocks of 1000+ in Iowa and Kentucky and an extraordinary 50,000 near Cincinnati Feb. 12 (RA). Early Tree Swallows returned to Mingo N.W.R., Mo., Feb. 27 (SD *et al.*). The largest reported Cqm. Crow roost was 10,000 near Lexington, Ky., in December (DCo). Concentrations of 500-3000 were also discovered at 4 Illinois sites and one in Iowa. Few Black-capped Chickadees were noted S of their normal range, even in Ohio where there was a modest flight last fall. Red-breasted Nuthatches were again widespread in all states although in smaller numbers than last winter. Two House Wrens were late at Spfld., Dec. 7 (H). Winter Wrens remain very scarce or absent in all areas. Few Bewick's Wrens were reported from Missouri and Kentucky; this species is rapidly disappearing from the Region. Carolina Wrens staged a short-lived comeback in early winter including Iowa's first record in 2 years. Many birds disappeared during the cold January weather although numbers of survivors were greater than following the 1977-1978 winter. Two Long-billed Marsh Wrens at Spring Valley W.M.A., O., Feb. 14 managed to successfully overwinter in spite of the harsh conditions (RN).

MIMIDS THROUGH SHRIKES — Gray Catbirds were very scarce, appearing at only 2 s.w. Ohio locations. Brown Thrashers fared better with at least 14 reports from Illinois and many December sightings from Kentucky. There was a general exodus of Am. Robins from n. areas where they were scarce except for several flocks of 100-200 birds. They must have moved farther S this winter since numbers in Kentucky were much higher than last year. Six Varied Thrush



Varied Thrush, s.e. White Co., Ind., Feb. 5, 1982. Photo/D.Z. Arvin.

reports are normal for recent years. Singles appeared at Harrisburg, O., Jan. 14-23+ (JSh, m.ob. ph.), Marysville, Ia., Jan. 16 (†P), Union, O., Jan. 22 (†TH *et al.*), Danville, Ind., Jan. 30-Feb. 18 (m.ob., ph.), Chalmers, Ind., Jan. 31-Feb. 18 (DA, ph.) and the Plato Center, Ill., bird remained through Jan. 17 (†m.ob.). Fewer Hermit Thrushes wintered in n. states although 14 lingered at Kelly's I., O. through Dec. 7 (JP, DC). Good numbers of E. Bluebird survived the winter in Kentucky and Missouri. Farther n., their numbers were fair at best; a strong late February movement brought sightings of 50-100 birds at several locations. A Townsend's Solitaire at St. Joseph, Mo., Feb. 13-15 (†L, m.ob.) provided the first Regional winter record in 3 years. Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce in most areas except Kentucky while Ruby-crowneds were practically nonexistent. Winter Water Pipit records included singles at Saylorville Res., Ia., Dec. 12-13 (JSc), Louisville Jan. 15-25 (BPB) and near Pocahontas, Ia., Feb. 27 (†WJ). In addition to CBC reports from Iowa and Ohio, a Bohemian Waxwing appeared at Ames, Ia., Feb. 1 (JSc). Wintering Cedar Waxwings were generally scarce except in Kentucky and s.w. Ohio. The expected February migration brought only small numbers to Illinois and a flock of 350 to Cherokee, Ia. (DB). Northern Shrikes staged one of their strongest movements in recent years with 14 reports from Ohio, 10 from Illinois, eight from Iowa, seven from Indiana and four from Missouri. This movement extended S to

Summary of Review of an Ornithologic Observation
by the Records Committee
of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

81-22

SPECIES: *Hawk Owl*
DATE SEEN: *25 Dec 1981*
SITE OF OBSERVATION: *Waterloo*
OBSERVERS: *Bob Myers m. G.*
DATE OF REVIEW: *1982*
METHOD OF REVIEW: *mail*
CLASSIFICATION OF RECORD: *I-P*
COMMENTS:

*mailed
5/21/82*

Everyone was speechless.

Any action may be re-reviewed upon submission of additional evidence.

Explanation of Classification:

- I = labeled, diagnostic specimen, photograph, or recording available for review by the Committee
- II = acceptable sight record documented independently by 3 or more observers
- III = acceptable sight record documented by 1 or 2 observers
- IV = probably correct record, but not beyond doubt
- V = record with insufficient evidence to judge
- VI = probably incorrect identification, escapee, or otherwise unacceptable record

Classification is based on the highest category agreed upon by six of seven committee members.

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa


What species? Hawk-owl How many? 1Location? Waterloo, Iowa - Black Hawk CountyType of habitat? River bottom Timber along Black Hawk CreekWhen? date(s): Dec. 25, 1981 time: 4:00 PM. to 4:50 PM. and once about 5:00 PM.Who? your name and address: Robert K. Myersothers with you: Francis Moore (came after I phoned him)

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.

Basic size & shape - owl-like (large rounded head) tapering body (not chunky) - smaller than barred owl - about size of short-eared owl - owl had a long tail (very noticeable) - wings seemed narrow in flight

Color - back + wings were brown-gray with white spots - from throat thru under tail coverts the bird was finely barred (horizontally) brown or black on light grey - Tail was barred below - had yellow eyes - light gray faced was framed in bold black that extended just above eyes - a light (white?) "vee" was formed above eyes just above this black frame. see back of page -

Behavior - Bird was perched for first 50 min - it would cock its tail up occasionally (like a wren) and drop it. When the bird flew its flight was fast and low (like an accipiter) - It always perched on the tip top of a tree and sat at an angle on the branch  not straight up

Similar species and how eliminated:

The long tail, horizontal barring of breast, yellow eyes, facial pattern and behavior eliminated all other possible owls.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? NO

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:

Light was good at first then got darker + darker - Dis 60'-75' est.

used B&L 7x35 binoculars + Nikon 600mm for pictures

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

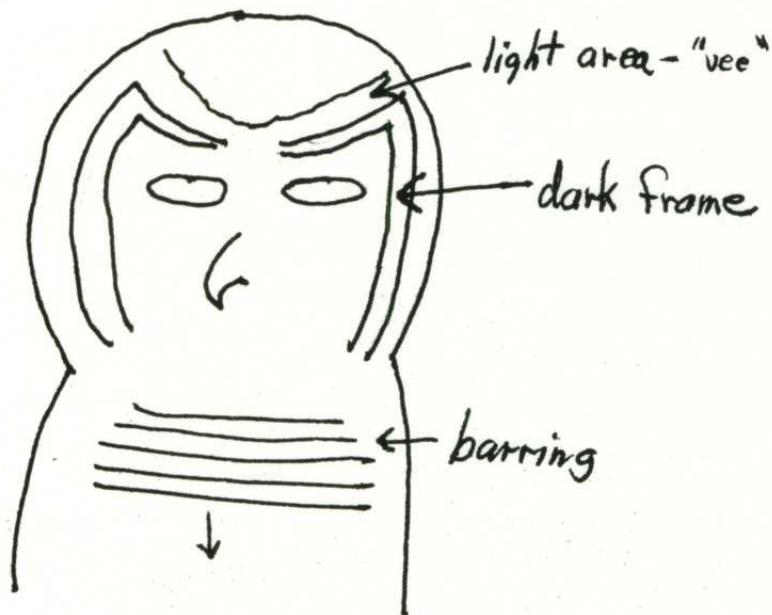
None - but have seen barred, burrowing - short-eared, somewhat

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 15 min. this form completed? 4 1/2 hr.

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

Face-



Note - please excuse drawing but
I'm not an artist

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*) How many? 1Location? At Injun Country / Hope Martin Park in Waterloo just off U.S. 63Type of habitat? Open deciduous / hardwood growth along Black Hawk CreekWhen? date(s): December 25, 1981 time: _____ to _____Who? your name and address: Francis L. Moore, 264 Western Ave., Waterloo, IA 50701others with you: Bob Myers

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. Size was smaller than an American Crow but larger than the other small owls (Saw-whet, Burrowing, Common Screech) in this area. Shape of the bird seemed to taper from the head to the tail. The bird had facial discs without ear tufts. The facial discs were outlined on the outside by a black outline that ran from the top part of the facial disc and ran down the outside of the facial disc down into the chest area. The top of the head had small white spots on it. The eyes were yellow and the bill was a light color (not dark). The back had large white spots from the neck down the back and into the tertials. The back, wings, head and tail was a dark brownish gray color. The breast, belly and undertail coverts were a ~~tan~~ tan color with fine horizontal barring throughout from the lower throat all the way into the undertail coverts. The tail was long (for an owl) and rounded at the end. No voice was heard. The bird was perched at the very top of a small (about 35' to 40' tall) hardwood when seen. At my approach the owl watched me closely and nervously until I stopped about 100' from it. It sat there for awhile until it flew, seemingly unprovoked by my presence. It flew from the perch like a shrike diving lower to the ground and then flying fast about 15' to 20' from the ground (into a cemetery), beating its wings fast, almost accipiter-like until it flew over a hill and out of sight.

Similar species and how eliminated: The long tail, barred front and unique facial pattern ruled out the other small owls (Saw-whet, Boreal, Common Screech, Burrowing) and the smaller size ruled out Barred and Great Horned. Lack of ear tufts and the long tail ruled out Long-eared and Short-eared owl. The flight pattern was not like any other owl I had seen. Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: Using 7x35mm B+L Roof Prism Binoculars estimated at 100' closest to 250' while perched. Lighting was even coming over my shoulder as I faced East to Southeast. Darkness was falling but still had a good amount of light to see detail.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: No experience with this species, have seen 1 Burrowing Owl, Several Saw-whet Owls, no experience with Boreal Owl. Lots of experience with Common Screech, Barred, Great Horned, Long-eared and Short-eared Owls.

References and persons consulted before writing description: None

How long before field notes made? 1 Hour this form completed? 3 1/2 Hours

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

What species? Hawk Owl How many? 1Location? Junction of Highways 63 + 218 in Waterloo IAType of habitat? Creek bottom area and edge of cemeteryWhen? date(s): 26 Dec 1981 time: 7:20 to 10:05 AMWho? your name and address: Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St, Iowa City IA 52240others with you: Bob Myers, Francis Moore

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.

"Smaller than a crow, slightly larger than a Blue Jay. Long-tailed owl sitting more horizontally than other owls. Black on sides of face includes eye. Also black from eye around top of head and across nape. White stripe behind eye. Top of head soft brown with fine speckles. Eyes yellow. Small hooked beak. Underparts gray with fine horizontal black streaks. Darker upper breast band with lighter gray to chin. No streaks above breast band. Wings brown with prominent white spots or speckling. Tail long, light beneath, brown above, possibly barred - could not see well. Leg color not noted. Not heard. Sitting most of time. Flew short distances and perched again." In flight, wings were rounded and tail long. Rather direct flight without sailing. The bird paid no attention to me or busy highway 50 yards away. I took one roll of pictures, went down town and bought a roll of Black + White, came back and shot another roll of pictures.

Similar species and how eliminated: No similar speciesDid any one disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
First seen in light snow, later snow stopped and sky lighter.
35 yards - closest - perch.

20x scope, 8x binoculars, 15x Celestron lens.

Previous experience with species and similar ones:

Seen in Minn. + Alaska

References and persons consulted before writing description:

None

How long before field notes made? 10 min (10:15 AM) this form completed? 21 hrs.

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

DOCUMENTATION FORM for extraordinary bird sightings in Iowa

What species? Hawk Owl How many? one

1/26/82

81-22

Location? just S. of Jct. Rts. 63 & 218, WaterlooType of habitat? Roadside tree topsWhen? date(s): Dec. 29, 1981 time: 9:10 A.M. to 10:15 A.M.Who? your name and address: Peter C. Petersen, 235 McClellan Blvd. Dan Faothers with you: Marylou Petersen, Lewis, Corey & Brian BlevisOthers before or after you: Bob Myers, Francis Moore (with us); T.H. Kent, Fred

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.

(photo notes 2A)

Crow-sized bird, perched at a 45° angle, long tail, large head.

Bill pale yellowish, eyes yellow, large. Head black and white, with black around facial discs -

Forehead speckled white on black,

black below bill & on sides of

Chest around white crescent.

Breast barred. Wings blackish speckled white

tail faintly barred, very long.

No vocalization heard.

Bird perched in topmost branches (small) of roadside trees. Not observed in flight by us.

Photographed - film in camera.

Similar species and how eliminated: Barred Owl - this bird smaller, face with different pattern & tail much longer.Did any one disagree or have reservations about identification? no

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment:
Sun behind obs, est. dist. 75 yards - 100 yards - 10X40 Binocs,
Zoom scope at 30X & 60X - 60mm.Previous experience with species and similar ones: Observed this species at Duluth, 1978.References and persons consulted before writing description: other obs. listed above &How long before field notes made? 15 min. this form completed? 12 hrs.

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