

## DOCUMENTATION FORM

## Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

Species House Finch (Male)  
 Location 934-13<sup>th</sup> S.E., Mason City, Ia 50401  
 Habitat Suburban lawn with 4 large ash trees and shrubs  
 Date (s) June 15, 1987 Time 8:20 AM to 8:24 AM  
June 16, 1987 Time 3:15 PM to 3:18 PM  
 Name and Address Jan Walter, 934-13<sup>th</sup> S.E., Mason City, Ia 50401  
 Other observers Jan Walter

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 behavior and voice. *Size - Smaller and slimmer than House Sparrow; Bill - Thicker and less conical than House Sparrow; Eye - Black; Forehead, Lores, and Eye Stripe - Orangy Red; Brown triangular patch on cheek; Crown, Neck, and Back - Red, heavily streaked with brown, making it look more brown than red; Rump - Red; Wing - brown; Tail - Moderately long and narrow with deeper notch than female; Throat and Breast - Red; I couldn't see the belly and undertail; Sides and flanks - white with brown streaking; Legs and feet - Brownish*

*Behavior on back*  
 Voice - The first time gave repeated 3 note phrases, the first 2 the same, the 3rd lower. The second time gave a musical warble the same as on the Peterson tape.

Similar species and how eliminated: *Size and markings eliminated sparrows. The orangish, rather than purplish red color; the heavy brown streaking on the crown and neck; and the streaking on the sides and flanks eliminated the male Purple Finch*

Did anyone disagree or have reservations about identification? No

If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), and optical equipment: *Sunny, feeder in shade distance 17 feet measured with steel tape*  
 Binoculars *7x50 and 7x35*

Previous experience with species and similar ones: *Had seen female 37 times between June 4 and June 15, 1987*

References and persons consulted before writing description: *Golden Press Birds of North America, National Geographic Birds of North America*  
 How long before field notes made? At the time. How long before this form

completed? 1 week - *I was waiting to see if he came back, but he didn't. The female was back 4 more times the 16<sup>th</sup>, I was gone a lot so she could have been here, but I didn't see the female again till the afternoon of June 22nd, when she returned with a begging fledgling which she fed.*

Behavior: On the 15<sup>th</sup>, the female landed in a tree to the right of the feeder and chattered for a few seconds, then flew to the feeder. The male immediately flew to the feeder from a tree to the left, singing the repeated 3 musical note phrases. Both continued vocalizing as they ate sunflower seeds and as they flew away together.

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the male was at the feeder alone for about 3 minutes, then was chased away by a House Sparrow. He landed on a tree branch nearby. The female then landed on a branch above. After a few seconds, they flew away together.