

☒ RARE OR UNUSUAL RECORD

☐ NEW STATE RECORD

GEO-ORC FILE NO. 20 10-00  
☒ ACCEPTED ☐ REJECTED *02/15/76*

Species: Spotted Owl

Strix occidentalis

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): Sept. 5, 1976 Time Bird Seen: 9:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

Locality: Mesa Cortina

Nearest Town: one mile west of Silverthorne County: Summit

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

none

Optical Equipment: 7x35 binoculars, aided by flashlight with 2 Size D Eveready batteries

If photographed, type of equipment used: \_\_\_\_\_

Light Conditions: Moonlight and shadows

Distance from bird (how measured): 30-45 feet, estimate

Number of Birds Seen: one Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Plumage: \_\_\_\_\_ adult

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor:

*vocal*

Urling first saw the owl flying across a road; an owl imitation (four hoots, accent on the second hoot) drew the bird back so that he swooped by us four times and perched twice. The first time he perched only briefly, the second time he stayed for a couple of minutes. He showed particular curiosity about the source of the hooting, and about our white dog, Sneakers; he peered and twisted his head to figure out what manner of thing our dog might be. He perched, not in the tree tops, but rather in

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field:

the middle section of the trees. He lit about 30 feet up in lodgepole pines 50 feet tall. He stretched out, then stretched and bent/<sup>and twisted</sup> his head and body to look down at us and at Sneakers.

Hugh's  
notes

The bird was a dark, middle-sized owl with dark eyes. It had a slim shape with a prominent facial disk, outlined in black but with a distinct white inner lining, especially noticeable on the lower outside perimeters of the disk. The dark face may have emphasized this feature. The disk was composed of 2 semi-circles--not one big circle. The bird's plumage was gray-brown or dark gray-brown (the flashlight gave little color information) but spotted with white throughout.

The bird perched mostly sideways to us, but by moving around I saw a small section of horizontal barring on its lower underparts.

In flight the owl had short stubby wings and appeared stubby; however when perched it had a slim shape rather like a Long-eared Owl. I would have estimated the size as about that of a Prairie Falcon. It did not glide in flight, but flapped, moth-like or bat-like.

Urling's  
notes

The face reminded me of a Barn Owl, it was so distinctly outlined. It appeared quite round in shape, dark inside but outlined in white.  
Dark eyes.

Smaller than a Great Horned Owl, but fairly large; larger than a Kestrel.  
Stout in flight, slender (OVER)  
perching. Short, stout wings.

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc:

The bird was silent, both vocally, and, in particular, in flight.

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird:

Dense lodgepole pine forest, 9200 feet elevation.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated?

This owl had no ears, eliminating all the eared owls.

This owl had dark eyes, eliminating all owls except Barn and Flammulated.

Barn Owls have white faces, breasts, and legs; this owl was dark throughout.

Flammulated Owl is much much smaller.

Barred Owl is really the only similar species. It is eliminated by habitat, horizontal barring. Our owl seemed smaller and slimmer than the Barred Owls which we saw last December in Massachusetts and New York.

Our impression of the slender shape may relate to the bird's stretching and twisting to look at us and Sneakers.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species:

None with this, to our knowledge.

Barred Owls: we saw 2-3 last Decemb~~er~~er.

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

Birds of North America and Peterson's Western Guide, to ascertain diagnostic features and confirm our identification.

This report was written from notes made during \_\_\_\_\_ after x observation; from memory \_\_\_\_\_

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