

DOCUMENTATION OF RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS  
FOR  
THE COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS' RECORDS

Species: SPOTTED OWL; Strix occidentalis  
(Vernacular name) (Scientific name)

If you watch birds solely for your own enjoyment, a written description of your observations is unnecessary. But, if you have seen something unusual, and would like to share this with others, a written description is essential. Compilers of regional bird lists must insist that their records be scientifically sound; future bird students -- those studying occurrences 50 years from now -- must have a written record on which to depend. By providing the verifying written description, you are employing a basic rule of the scientific method.

We recognize that experienced field observers can provide important and reliable records, if supported by an adequate verifying description. Thus this request is an effort to perpetuate your record by obtaining concrete evidence which may be permanently preserved for examination by others in the future. This procedure is required for every extraordinary observation, irrespective of the observer.

Dates (s): November 7, 1982 Time Bird Seen: approximately 2:50am to 10:10am

Locality : Boulder, Co., Amphitheatre Trail, approximately 130' down trail from Amphitheatre rock. Left side of trail going down trail, facing (the owl, that is) uphill, perched on conifer branch about 12' high.

Nearest town, county and state:  
BOULDER, BOULDER COUNTY, COLORADO.

Optical equipment: 10x40 & 10x50 Binocs, 200mm & 400mm camera lenses.

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: 4 - 35mm slides enclosed. Minolta XD-5, 400mm APO lens, UV filter, Fujichrome 400 film rated at ASA500, shutter speeds 1/15" - 1/30", f8-11. I apologize for underexposure, it was sold (Don) enclosed pix by Don Johnson. Mine (Lee's) were all with 200mm lens on Kodachrome 64.  
Number of birds seen: ONE (1) Sex: unknown Plumage: Normal- brown/white.

Light conditions: Heavy shade, high contrast sky (variable overcast). No haze.

Distance from bird, and how measured: 20' to 45', estimate & lens focus.

Describe the bird's overall behavior: Generally quiet, appeared to be drowsing. Did respond to camera operation, moved head repeatedly from side to side, opened eyes fully 2 or 3 times ( have one full-face photo with eyes open - served to verify dark eye color). Bird generally ignored human traffic.

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird:

Steep, rocky hillside, medium-dense conifer forest, elevation 6000'+. Large rock outcroppings nearby ( the Amphitheatre is a climbers' area).

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address): Don Johnson, 12604 W. Virginia Ave., Lakewood, Co.;

W. W. Brockner, Evergreen, Co.; Freeman Hall, Boulder, Co. \*\*\*\* reports that J. Reddall, K. Hawkins, B. Jickling, W. Finch & many others saw bird later in day. Bird apparently first reported by someone from Boulder on 11-6-82, late afternoon. Per Bob Jickling & several others, bird could not be found in area on Monday, 11-8-82.

APPENDIX II Continued

Describe in great detail the bird which you saw. Emphasize particularly the field marks used to identify the bird, but include a complete description of the bird. Include size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern; details on shape or size of bill, wings, and tail. (Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions is not enough). Describe what you actually saw in the field.

Length about 16" to 18", rounded head without ear tufts, DARK EYES, Brown and white plumage, white spots on head and upper shoulder area, BARRING on LOWER FRONT appeared to run across ( HORIZONTAL) body.

This bird also matched a watercolor I painted about ten years ago of an owl which perched in our yard for three days following a severe storm. I had the bird identified by a biologist at the Federal Center as a *Strix occidentalis*. See also enclosed slides . ( Ten years ago I was not aware of CFO Records).

Describe the bird's calls or sounds, if heard; including method of delivery-- i.e., from perch, in flight, etc.:

Made no sounds during period of observation.

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Eliminated other round-headed owls by size, plumage or locale.

Prior experience with this and similar species:

Have seen Great-horned, Snowy, Sawwhet, Long-eared, Burrowing Owls.  
Have studied descriptions and photographs on other N. A. species or seen mounted specimens.

This report was written from notes made during X after        observation; from memory X       .

Name (print) : LEE (MRS. D.F.) JOHNSON

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Tel: 985-2065

Signature: Lee Johnson 11.23.82

Return Form To:

CFO Records Committee  
c/o Curator - Dept. of Zoological Collections  
Denver Museum of Natural History  
City Park  
Denver, CO 80205

Charlie -  
Give us a call if "eyes open pin" the bird after 2+ hrs in the  
is of interest. LEE feeling the bird "island" and  
cold - full moon. Had gone sighted it.  
Freeman arrived just as she sighted it.  
Thank for your help on the know-how.  
(11/23/82)