

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Gyrfalcon
(Vernacular Name)Falco rusticolus
(Scientific Name)Date(s): 3 January 1981Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage:Locality: 4 miles northeast of Prewitt Reservoir Elevation:Nearest town: Atwood County: LoganTime(s) observed: ~1545Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 5 minutesOther observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
Bob Righter, Betsy Webb, Kathy Hawkins, Carol Hack, John and Joyce Cooper, Elinor WillsOther observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)
Mark Holmgren, Steve and Diane Larson, Jack Reddall, Van Remsen, Peter GentLight conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):
sun shining on bird from behind observersOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): 10 x 50 binocularsDistance, and how measured: estimated 75'

If photographed, type of equipment and film:

Who else photographed the bird? Kathy Hawkins

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Sitting on crossbar of roadside telephone and in flight

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

Head: face mostly brownish with whitish superciliary stripe and lores; crown brown with darker streaking; brown (dark) malar stripe; cere yellow.

Upperparts: chocolate-brown with most feathers edged with whitish, producing a scaly pattern

Underparts: buffy-white, heavily streaked with brown in the center, becoming chevron-shaped on sides

Underwing in flight: linings brown with numerous pale spots; primaries grayish-brown with brown banding.

Legs: light yellow.

Description (continued):

Size and shape: very large and bulky, massive buteo-sized falcon; head large and flat; tail long; wings long, very broad, pointed; conspicuously larger and much more massive when directly compared to a No. Harrier in flight. Flight very heavy, powerful.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

None

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open agricultural fields

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Very large size, lack of black axillaries, pointed wings

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I have many individuals of all common raptors of Colorado; ^{never} ~~haven't seen~~ Gyrfalcon ~~never~~ before this bird.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation: standard references

This report was written from reports made during X, after observation from memory
Date and time report was written: 7 February 1982

Reporting observer: Robert Andrews Signature: Robert Andrews

Address: 3260 W. 14th Ave., #144, Denver, Colorado 80204

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DENVER, CO 80205

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

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Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Gyrfalcon

Falco rusticolus

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name)

Date(s): January 4, 1981

Number of birds seen: one

Sex: ?

Plumage: gray phase

Locality: five miles east of Prewitt Res.

Elevation:

Nearest town: Sterling

County: Logan

Time(s) observed: 1:37-1:43

Duration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 4 min. sitting and 2 min in flight

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

Jeanne Halsey 6422 Bluebird Ave, Longmont Colo. 80501 530-1628

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

many observers

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):
full light, almost behind me but fairly high.

Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): Bushnell 7 x 50, Bausch & Lomb 20x, 30x, and 40x

Distance, and how measured: 300' estimated

If photographed, type of equipment and film: Ricoh with Vivitar 400mm lens

Who else photographed the bird?

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

Bird was sitting on power pole until flushed. Then flew and soared to another perch.

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

The bird was larger than a Prairie Falcon, it had the same falcon shape except for a lump or bulge in its throat. The bird was overall gray. The throat was very lightly streaked the breast was streaked (bolder than throat), belly and leggings were very heavily streaked. Under side of tail was finely barred, similar to an imm. Red-tailed Hawk. The wings and back were a darker slaty-gray. When wings were folded they went half the distance of the tail. There was a dark area around the eye and came to a thin line running behind the eye for about an inch. The bill was a slaty blue. The legs and feet were a greenish yellow.

Description, (continued):

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

Open grass or graze lands with many dirt roads crisscrossing the area, each road was accompanied by a power line.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

Prairie Falcon has a much bolder mask, and are much smaller than the Gyrfalcon.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I see Prairie Falcons quite often in the area that I live and saw two just before seeing the Gyrfalcon.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: Golden Series Field Guide to Birds

b) after observation:

This report was written from notes made during X, after observation; from memory .
Date and time report was written: July 28, 1981 4:00

Reporting observer: Larry Halsey Signature: Larry C. Halsey
Address: 6422 Bluebird Ave. Longmont Colo. 80501

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DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,
CITY PARK
DENVER, COLORADO 80205

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD

Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: GYR FALCON | FALCO RUSTICOLUS
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): 1/6/81Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Possibly IMMATURELocality: JUNCTION OF I76 & COLORADO 63 Elevation: ~4000'Nearest town: ATWOOD, NEAR STERLING County: BORDER OF LOGAN & WASHINGTON COUNTIESTime(s) observed: 3-25 - 3:45 pmDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): 20 MINUTESOther observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):
ROSIE & JIM WATTS, MARTHA & ED CURRY ALL FROM COLORADO SPRINGSOther observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)
BOB ANDREWS, MARK HORNIGREN, STEVE LARSON, JACK REDDICK, VAN REMSENLight conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):
VERY GOOD, LOWISH SUN DIRECTLY BEHIND OBSERVERS → BIRD IN FULL SUNLIGHT.Optical equipment used (e.g. power, types): TELESCOPE 20 → 45 MAGNIFICATIONDistance, and how measured: 1/4 MILE, ESTIMATEDIf photographed, type of equipment and film: —Who else photographed the bird? —Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):
SITTING ON CROSSBAR OF TELEGRAPH POST UNTIL DRIVEN OFF BY A PRAIRIE FALCONAND THEN FLYING AWAY.

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

THE BIRD WAS FINALLY CHASED AWAY BY A PRAIRIE FALCON WHICH THEN TOOK OVER ITS PLACE ON THE POST - HENCE I HAD A GOOD COMPARISON OF THE TWO AT THE SAME DISTANCE AND COULD COMPARE THEIR FLIGHTS.THE BIRD WAS LARGE, BUTTED SIZE, BUT OBVIOUSLY A FALCON BY ITS SHAPE AND POSTURE. IT WAS A VERY LIGHT BIRD EXCEPT FOR A VERY NOTICEABLE MOUSTACH STRIPE

Description (continued): AND HEAVY VERTICAL BARRING ON THE BREAST (ALMOST BLOTCHES) WHICH WERE DARK. THE CHEEKS AND TOP OF HEAD WERE LIGHT WITH * SOMEWHAT DARKER EYEBROWS IN THE CENTER OF THE BREAST WAS A SMALL PURE WHITE HORIZONTAL BAND (ABOUT 2/3 OF BREAST WIDTH) WHICH WAS MAYBE JUST HOW THE FEATHERS WERE LYING AND MAYBE WHY THE BIRD WAS AN IMMATURE? IT WAS MUCH HEAVIER & BULKIER THAN THE PRAIRIE FALCON; 2-3" LONGER AND VERY NOTICEABLY BROADER. THE HEAD & BREAST MARKINGS AND THE BACK COLOUR OF THE TWO BIRDS WERE DIFFERENT. THE GYR FALCON WAS FEATHERED AS FAR DOWN ITS LEGS AS COULD BE SEEN (NEARLY TO FEET). WHEN IT FLEW THE WING BEATS WERE NOTICEABLY SLOWER THAN THOSE OF THE PRAIRIE FALCON WHICH I OBSERVED AS IT APPROACHED.

Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

ON POST NEAR I 76 IN PLATTE RIVER VALLEY WHICH IS AGRICULTURAL HERE.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

- 1) SIZE, MUCH LARGER THAN PRAIRIE & PEREGRINE
- 2) DID NOT HAVE BLACK AXILLARS IN FLIGHT - PRAIRIE
- 3) DIFFERENT FACIAL PATTERN, OVERALL BODY COLOUR AND BREAST MARKINGS THAN PRAIRIE OR PEREGRINE.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

NEVER SEEN THIS SPECIES BEFORE, HAVE SEEN MANY PRAIRIE FALCONS
AND SOME (\approx 6) PEREGRINE FALCONS.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

- a) at time of observation: WAS EXACTLY LIKE HOW BOB ANDREWS DESCRIBED THE BIRD TO ME. ALSO LOOKED AT THE ROBBINS FIELD GUIDE
- b) after observation: THE BIRDS OF EUROPE HEINZEL, FITTER & PARLOW.

This report was written from reports made during X, after observation _____ from memory _____
Date and time report was written: 1/7/81

Reporting observer: PETER GENT Signature: Peter R. Gent

Address: 55 S 35th ST, BOULDER, CO 80303.

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