

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE FOR U.F.O. RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION CODES ONLY.

Latitude _____ Reporter _____ Sex Name _____
 Altitude _____ Record type _____ Serial No. _____
 Date/Time _____ Disposition _____ Cx Nos. _____

Common Name <u>Gyrfalcon</u>	Weather at time of this observation.
Scientific Name <u>Falco rusticolus</u>	High variable cloud cover, top of Wellsville Range, clearly visible, no precipitation, no noticeable wind, temp cool, estimated 30's
Sight date <u>11-15-90</u> time <u>9:15 a.m.</u> duration <u>1 hr.</u>	Prior weather & number of days since change A major snow storm was in effect on the Idaho-Montana border approx. 250 miles North
Distance from bird <u>100 yds to 1000 yds.</u>	
Light conditions <u>Daylight, cloudy sky</u>	
Optical equip. <u>*1</u>	
Photo. equip. <u>Olympus 500 mm</u>	
Number of this species seen <u>none</u>	Locality
Notes made at time of sighting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date this report was prepared.	5 miles S.W. of Logan, Cache County Utah on State Hwy 89/91. 1/4 mile South of Jensen Historical Farm. Seen on both sides of highway.
Notes made later from memory <input type="checkbox"/>	
Photo available <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Dec. 3, 1990</u>	
Male <input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age unk. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basic Plumage <input type="checkbox"/> Light Phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Female <input type="checkbox"/> Subadult <input type="checkbox"/> ♀ or Imm <input type="checkbox"/> Breeding <input type="checkbox"/> Dark Phase <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sex Unk. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Juv/Imm <input type="checkbox"/> _____ year bird <input type="checkbox"/> Eclipse <input type="checkbox"/> Molting <input type="checkbox"/>	

Description of bird. Size, Colors, all field marks OBSERVED - Unique features of this bird, if any

*1 Baush and Lomb 10x40 Elite, Bushnell 20x spotting scope, Discover 20-60 zoom spotting scope, Zeiss 10x40

The bird was first seen from a moving vehicle. It appeared white, like the white of a gull or egret, but had a different shape, plus it was sitting on the crossbar of a telephone pole, not the place you would expect a gull to be. I stopped, backed up to within a phone pole away and looked with 10x40 Baush and Lomb binoculars. The bird was big, the size of a large gull or hawk. I saw on the back and side small dark spots on the lower crown, wing coverts and secondaries. The head and body were otherwise pure white. The eye looked big and dark. The bill was dark, short and sharply downcurved at tip. (I was looking for the bill of a gull). The legs were long and feathered. The upper tail was pure white, no bands or spots of any kind. The tail extended well below the wings. This was particularly noticeable because of the cross bar the bird was sitting on. The tail extended just below the bottom of the bar. The wings did not come to the top of the bar. As the bird flew to a second pole, observed the belly, underwings, undertail were all white, no observable markings of any kind. The wings seemed broad, similar to a hawk, wing tips were not noticeably narrow but seemed more like a Redtail Hawk. The wing beat was deep and slow. Then I left the area and called a hotline. On second sighting, 15 minutes later, I observed yellow at base of bill. The observed bird had only 15% to 30% of the dark spotting of the white phase Gyrfalcon a page 205 of Second Edition Natural Geographic Birds of North America.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL NOTES, LISTS OF REFERENCES, SKETCHES FROM LIFE, PHOTOGRAPHS ETC.

Field marks which were not seen. Why not?
No black wing tips. Possibly wear or plumage variation.

Variations from expected field marks.
The amount of dark color on back was maybe 1/4 of what is shown in the Natural Geographic field guide, i.e. the bird appeared much whiter.

List similar species and describe why or how you eliminated them.

All gulls - observed bird had a bill of a raptor and feathered legs
Snowy owl - observed bird had much smaller head in relationship to rest of body, eyes were dark not yellow, bill was that of raptor.
Roughlegged hawk - observed bird had no tail band, no wrist patches
Ferruginous hawk - the back and upper wings of observed bird were white.

Behavior of this bird. Include names of other birds with this one and any interaction.

First sighting - The bird was first observed on a cross bar of a telephone pole by a busy state highway. It did not react to vehicle traffic. It was approachable from the west by foot along highway. At 100 feet, it flew two poles east. Second sighting - The bird was on a fence post having lunch (later determined to be pheasant). Three to four magpies were close by, flying from ground to fence posts within ten to twenty feet of Gyrfalcon. Neither bird species seemed wary of the other. As three observers approached, the Gyrfalcon flew. We did not get as close as first sighting.

Habitat this location and near by or adjacent habitat if significant.

Farmland, pasture, some trees, widely scattered homes, open fields.

Describe birds song or sounds.

No sounds heard

Names of other observers. A/C + phone

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What is your experience with this or similar birds?

No previous experience with this bird by any observers. Three observers have had considerable field experience with Prairie falcons, Peregrine falcons and local hawks. i.e. redtailed, swainson and rough legged. A sighting about thirty minutes after I had left was made by Ron Ryle and Larry Ryle, two very experienced birders

Print name & mailing address below

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Signature *R.D. Atwood*