

Species:

Boreal Owl
(Vernacular name)Aegolius Funereus
(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.

Date (s): January 25, 1980Time Bird Seen: 7:40 A.M. to 8:30 A.M. (went to school)Locality: 7ft. from ground in 30ft. lodgepole pine in front of garage. (in back of house, it is thickly treed & sparse in front)
8 mi. from Grand Lake, Grand Colorado (1/2 mile south of Stillwater campground on Hwy 34)
Nearest town, county and state:Optical equipment: binoculars (7x35) and telescope (40 power) from 20yds (in garage)

If photographed, please enclose copy. Equipment used: _____

Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: _____Light conditions: light (cloudy & snowing)Distance from bird, and how measured: 9-10 Ft.

Describe the bird's overall behavior:

it was snowing lightly, with large flakes, and the owl's feathers were fluffed up and it ~~was~~ did not move, except its head, whenever a car went by. It did not move at all when I went close to it (9-10 ft). It was close to the trunk about 7ft. from the ground on a branch about 1/2" thick. 5 chickadees (Mn.) were scolding it and it ~~was~~ acted as if they weren't even there. ~~there~~

Describe the habitat in which you observed the bird: at the edge of a mature lodgepole pine forest in a smaller tree (30ft) it was in front of the garage, facing it, the garage is facing 160°. Our house is about 100yds off the highway, the opposite side of Lake Granby, the forest is in the back and sparsely forested in the front (facing west). The forest is met by a sage brush field, there is a forest covered hill in the back. There are no houses for a couple hundred yds and there are only a few.

Other observers who independently identified this bird (Please list name and address): _____

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.

The crown was dark with white speckles, the facial disk was light with grayish (darker) on the sides. light bill yellow eyes, it had dark above the eyes & the inside toward the bill. almost brown on sides of breast and same color on rest of under parts (streaked). white blotches on wing wing. Did not get color ~~from~~ of lining of facial disk. small light bill. small tail (could not see it well & I did not go around to the back)

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

List similar species and how you eliminated them:

Screech Owl - no ear tufts

Pygmy Owl - larger, lighter facial disk and brown streaked breast.

Saw-whet - light bill, light facial disk, black above the eyes, larger, not much difference between the forehead and rest of disk (Saw-whet has a white forehead and rest of disk is ~~light~~ noticeably darker), more white spots on wing

Prior experience with this and similar species: I have never seen a boreal owl before this, and have never seen any of the above owls.

This report was written from notes made during X after X observation; from memory except in the Denver Museum of Natural History.

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