

Accepted JR 3/23/74

VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION OF AN UNUSUAL RECORD

1. Species: SNOWY OWL Nyctea scandiaca 2. Number: 1
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)
3. Location: 6975 S. Chase Court, Littleton (Jefferson Co.) Colo.
4. Date(s): Dec. 29, 1973 5. Time bird seen: approx 1:30 and 2:00 PM
6. Description of size, shape and color-pattern. (Describe in great detail all parts of the plumage including beak and feet coloration in addition to the diagnostic characteristics; however, include only what actually was seen in the field):
Bird was in flight, above me. This underside was a creamy white calai with V-shaped areas of dark brown-black. Wingspread was 30-36". Depth of wings was 8-9". Body length appeared to be about 20", but maybe larger.
7. Description of voice, if heard: No voice heard
8. Description of behavior: Flew first from inside a utility fence to a pine tree; left pine tree, made a complete circle & returned to tree.
9. Habitat--general: Suburban development.
specific: Group of med-large evergreen trees.
10. Similarly appearing species which are eliminated 6, 7 and 8 above; Explain:
11. Distance (how measured?): By knowing size of our yard.
12. Optical equipment: None
13. Light (sky, light on bird, position of sun in relation to bird and observer): Day was very overcast. No sun all day, but plenty of light to see by.
14. Previous experience with this species and similarly appearing species: None with Snowy. Have seen owls twice while camping & had a screech owl.
15. What made you think this species was unusual or rare? once in our yard. Size mostly & calai.
16. Other observers: Son 18 yrs; Daughter 13 yrs; son 9 yrs.
17. Did others agree with your identification? Yes
18. Other observers who independently identified this bird: None
19. Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation: World Book Encyclopedia
Audubon's Birds of America.
20. If bird was photographed, please attach pictures and describe equipment used:
- Signature: Carolyn Sprengler Street Address: 6975 S. Chase Court
- Date Prepared: Jan. 26, 1974 City and State: Littleton, Colo. 80123

(USE THE REVERSE, OR ADDITIONAL PAGES, IF NECESSARY)

over -

Owl was first seen by our 3 children. The children were sitting on fam. room floor playing a game (also looking a TV.) The owl flew up out of the utility fence & the 18 yr. old saw him (& the other two). But the 18 yr. old, John, was very excited as he back packs & has sighted other large birds - falcons, hawks, etc. John said he flew over to a pine. I began watching from upstairs. After about 20 min., the owl flew from the pine toward the house. It approached at an angle & I had a good view of him. At the closest point he was about 25' from me. I thought he was leaving the yard but as he flew he suddenly turned, swooped back, made a complete circle & returned to the area ^{where} he had been before. This time he landed in a Pinyon pine.

I watched til dusk, but he didn't fly again. However he stayed in that tree area all afternoon. I searched for evidence before I phoned the Past & found great quantities of pellets on both pine trees mentioned. Pellets indicated he had eaten only seeds - contained seeds & seed casings or husks. I also found a small downy feather. It is 1-1/4" long; portion at base is gray, upper part is white with a dark brown dot toward tip.

The utility fence is about 65' from the fam. room door. This is a sliding glass door so the view was good. Also my view was through a sliding glass door, but on the

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The area where the owl spent the afternoon has many evergreens - both trees + shrubs. It's an area about 20' long with a hedge of juniper trees along the fence. Evidence showed he ate a quantity of juniper berries. The pines are in front of the junipers toward the house so he was well hidden in this area.

I ~~fact~~ ^{would assume} the owl sighted at Columbine Airport is the same owl. The airport is due west of us - 3-4 miles.

Carolyn Sprenzler

I am very happy to co-operate with you in this matter. If we ever again sight an unusual bird, I will phone you right away. C.S.