

4 December 1994

Dorothy Smith
Box 54
Fisher, PA 16225

Dear Dorothy,

Thank you for submitting documentation on the Gyrfalcon at Fisher on 26 September to 29 September to P.O.R.C. After careful review, we feel we are unable to accept this record. Various committee members felt the details submitted did not conclusively rule out several other species of raptors e.g. Northern Goshawk, Cooper's Hawk and Perergrine Falcon. This does not mean of course that the bird was not a Gyrfalcon, merely that the details did not allow for a concrete determination.

We hope that this does not discourage you from submitting documentation on any rare birds you find in the future. Please be encouraged to send as much detail as possible.

Sincerely,

Nick Pulcinella
Chairman

Record # 200-01-1993

200-01-1993

11/2/93

Dear Editors,

I don't know quite what to say about the Gyr Falcon sighting. Dorothy Smith and I have not been acquainted very long, only since September this year. She and her husband both were involved with the Cornell Lab Nesting Bird Program for a number of years. They are not beginning birders by any means. Dorothy was unshakable in her opinion that she saw a Gyr Falcon so I had her fill out the only rare bird form that I had, the CBC form. When she first told me about the sighting on the phone she emphasized the falcon shape, the slowness of the wing beats, and the difference in size compared to the crows. She also mentioned the facial markings as being distinctive. Looking at p. 102 in Hawks in Flight by Dunne, Sibley and Sutton, they say there that Goshawks can resemble Gyrs in some situations. There were trees in her description also. I believe she said the birds came in sight "over the trees". Dunne, et al, claim that gyrfalcons are never in trees. Wish she had taken a picture!

Fred Crowley went out on 9/30 to see if he could find the bird. Negative.

Puzzled,

Margaret Buchwalter

Do you want to call her?

ALUMENUM

Beverage cans--can check with magnet. If they stick to magnet--they are NOT all aluminum. ^{NOTE} Some cans have aluminum sides and metal ends. We cannot take them. Must be all aluminum.

PET BOTTLES

This is the 1, 2, and 3 liter plastic beverage bottles. The lids must be removed.

Please note--any items turned down must be taken back by the customer. We cannot dispose of your trash. Thank you.

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

SUPPORTING DETAILS: UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES/HIGH NUMBERS

CBC Name _____ Date _____ Compiler _____
Observer writing this account & date Dorothy M. Smith - 814-764-5278
Box 54, Fisher PA 16225

SPECIES Gyr Falcon NUMBER, AGE, SEX 1
Distance from bird(s) 100 - 150 ft Relative size of bird much larger than the crows

HEAD & NECK (Describe forehead, crown, auricular, malar region, median line, etc.)

Forehead lighter than top of head. Top of head gray - yellow eye ring
and top of beak - darker "mustache" line. Big head

EYE & LORES (Describe supercilium, ring, stripe, color, etc.) yellow eye ring
with darker line under the eye -

UPPER & LOWER MANDIBLES Bill yellowish - dark tip

LEGS & FEET Saw it in flight - feet appeared yellow.

UPPERPARTS (Describe nape, back, rump, upper tail coverts, etc.) The nape of
the neck appeared lighter than the head & back which were
gray - not a uniform gray, darker & lighter

UNDERPARTS (Describe throat, belly, side, flanks, crissum, etc.) Underside was
very light and spotted or streaked - throat was lighter, less spotted.

RECTRICES (Describe inner, middle, outer tail feathers, color pattern, shape, etc.)

Tail was long and tapered - Outer feathers seemed
a little darker.

WING (Describe color, length, shape, linings, bars, coverts, leading & trailing edges, etc.)

Very large long wings - very slow wing
beat - majestic - two toned underwing - darker edges

VOCALIZATION None

BEHAVIOR Was being chased by numerous
crows

Date of observation 9/29/93 Time 7:20am Weather clear Sky cloudy

Duration of observation 5 min Bird - Sun orientation in sun

Exact location One and one half miles west of Fisher, Pa

Habitat _____ Other observers _____

Optical equipment not needed.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS The crows alerted me - stood on my deck

and watched the falcon fly not more than 20'-30' high and
very close to my home. The falcon wing shape held my attention

AN ACCOMPANYING SKETCH OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN BE MOST HELPFUL

I knew I was seeing something unusual. Checked
my observation with Petersons Field Guide to make
sure.

Box 54 Dorothy M. Smith (Mrs. Leroy)
Fisher, PA 16225
8 14-764-5278

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

SUPPORTING DETAILS: UNCOMMON OR RARE SPECIES/HIGH NUMBERS

CBC Name _____ Date _____ Compiler _____
Observer writing this account & date Dorothy M. Smith

SPECIES Gyr Falcon NUMBER, AGE, SEX 1
Distance from bird(s) 500 ft. Relative size of bird _____

HEAD & NECK (Describe forehead, crown, auricular, malar region, median line, etc.)

EYE & LORES (Describe supercilium, ring, stripe, color, etc.) _____

UPPER & LOWER MANDIBLES _____

LEGS & FEET _____

UPPERPARTS (Describe nape, back, rump, upper tail coverts, etc.) _____

UNDERPARTS (Describe throat, belly, side, flanks, crissum, etc.) _____

RECTRICES (Describe inner, middle, outer tail feathers, color pattern, shape, etc.)

WING (Describe color, length, shape, linings, bars, coverts, leading & trailing edges, etc.) _____

VOCALIZATION _____

BEHAVIOR _____

Date of observation 9/26/93 Time 3pm. Weather Sunny Sky Bright

Duration of observation 15 sec. Bird - Sun orientation Bird East - Sun West

Exact location Between Clarion Limestone School + RT 66.

Habitat _____ Other observers _____

Optical equipment _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS Brief observation. Knew what it was because had seen one before at Todd Sanctuary. Confirmed by Ornithologist.

AN ACCOMPANYING SKETCH OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN BE MOST HELPFUL

Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Voting Tabulation - Round # 1 of

Species: Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*)

Date of Sighting: 26 September 1993 to 29 September 1993

Location: FISHER

County: CLARION

Observer(s): Dorothy Smith

Date of Submission: 1993

Submitted by: Dorothy Smith

Written Description: YES Photo: NO Specimen: NO

Recording: NONE

Member	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V			Abstain
					A	B	C	
F. Haas							X	
N. Pulcinella							X	
E. Kwater							X	
R. Ickes			X					
G. McWilliams				X				
P. Schwalbe							X	
J. Skinner				X				
TOTALS			1	2			4	
DECISION							X	

Comments:

Signature (Secretary):

J. C. Haas

Date:

9-25-94