

UTAH ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Common Name: Spotted Owl

Scientific Name: Strix Occidentalis

Date: April 8, 1988 Time: 10:15 PM

Length of time observed: 90 min.

Number: 2

Age: ?

Sex: ?

Location: Shinob Canyon, Capitol Reef N.M., Wayne Co. Utah

Latilong: 16

Elevation (if known): 5340

Distance to bird: 90 ft (AT NEAREST POINT) Light conditions: Spot light

Optical equipment: Binos 10x50

Weather: Cool, Clear, slightly breezy

Description: (Write a detailed description of the bird's appearance, including size, shape, plumage pattern, color, and any unique features.)

Due to distance, spot lighting & being alone, it was very difficult to spot the bird with the light and get it in the binocular field at the same time, but I did see enough to rule out all other owls in the area. With spot light all coloration is only relative.

Medium sized owl with mottling on the breast (dark & light streaks & spots). Dorsal was a more uniform darker color.

Earless with a dark outline around an ovoid facial disk. Eyes appeared dark (but most owls eyes appear dark at night!)

Wings were fairly proportionate to body size (not extremely long as in short-eared) and appeared uniformly light underneath with no obvious dark carpal patch.



Voice or call notes and method of delivery: Dog-like 3 and 4 series. First heard at 9:30 PM (just totally dark). After playing a tape of a spotted owl, it made an excited almost "ape-like" sound that went on and on for about 5 min.

Behavior: When spotted was flying back and forth from ledge to ledge on opposite sides of narrow canyon - this was during it's excited "ape" call.

Habitat: Narrow sheer sandstone canyon with "pot holes" in the walls.

What similar species might it have been and how were these eliminated:

Barn owl - tho' dark eye & earless is much lighter with a heart-shaped facial disk - completely different call.

Short-eared - tho' basically earless with same shaped facial disk has much longer wings with dark carpal patch - entirely different call.

Barred owl - with poor lighting eliminating visual detail this species could be a possible candidate, but habitat isn't typical for barred owl and the call was distinctively different to eliminate the barred owl.

What experience have you had with this and similar species:

A lot with Barred & Short-eared

None with Spotted or Barred

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how did these influence this description:

National Geographic Field Guide and more importantly the tapes.

Vocalizations matched the tapes - probably most influential on identification.

Significance of record in this area or the state:

Rare permanent resident in Southern Utah

Additional material: (attach drawing, photograph, tape recording if available)

None

Description from notes taken at time of sighting  notes made later  from memory

Observer: CRAIG L. KEEDEY

Signature: 

Address: 314 S. 4500 W.  
West Point, Utah 84015

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

Voice I.D.'s made on the 15<sup>th</sup> by Ella & Richard Sorenson and Jim Wolfe at same location

Date prepared: 6/6/88

Return this form to: Ella Sorensen  
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