

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

Bird name (common & scientific): Broad-winged hawk (Buteo platypterus)

Date & time of sighting: 1 May 1993, approximately 3 PM

Length of time observed: approximately half minute

Number of birds observed: 1

Age & Sex: possibly immature, as red on breast was not noticed

Latitude/longitude: (NE end of Deer Creek Reservoir, Heber Valley)

Elevation: ? (valley bottom)

Distance to bird: ~200 - 300 ft.

Light conditions: good

Optical equipment: 10 x 40 Bausch & Lomb Custom binoculars

Weather: clear & sunny/partly cloudy

Description of bird:

- Buteo build, yet the jiz was wildly different from local buteos
- Tail appeared very short & truncated, but turned out to be untruncated, but only short relative to body/wings
- Tail black on top, with at least two visible distinct white bands in mid-tail
- Wings pale below, outlined with very distinct dark fringe on flight feathers
- Brownish above, pale below, with no bright color visible

Voice or call notes and method of delivery: --

Behavior: flew low (about 50' off ground, in a big arc toward trees in north

Habitat: bare hill, sagebrush habitat next to Deer Creek Reservoir on to farmland with tall trees

Similar species and how these were eliminated:

- body proportions, "short" tail, and broad wings eliminate other buteos and accipiters
- black tail with broad white bands eliminates all other possible buteos in area
- pale (not white) color below eliminates short-tailed hawk light phase, as did amount of black on tail (this hawk had more black than white on tail by far)
- lack of reddish color, proportions, and number of stripes visible on tail eliminates red-shouldered hawk

Previous experience with this and similar species: I've never seen a broad-tailed hawk, but I have seen many buteos

Books, illustrations, and advice consulted, and how these influenced this description:
 I recognized it as probably this species prior to consulting Peterson's Western guide and the National Geographic guide. Mark Stackhouse, though initially thinking it an odd Swainson's hawk, quickly came around when the bird revealed its underwings and tail as it passed

Significance of record in this area or the state:
 Listed as "occasional" on Aviary list of Northern Utah birds, and "rare" on other Utah list. Mark says they are more common during fall migration than spring. Looking at distribution

maps, this last point makes sense.

Additional material (drawing, photograph, tape, DNA sample, corpse, etc.): --

Description from: 1. Notes taken at time of sighting _____
 2. Notes made later (if so, when) _____
 3. From memory ✓ (though salient points & arguments made there & then)

Date this form was prepared: 3 May 1993

Observer: David Salas Wheeler
Address: 2196 So. 1000 Ea.
 Salt Lake City, UT 84106
Phone: (801) 484-7319

Signature:

Other observers who independently identified this bird: Mark Stackhouse