

UTAH ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VERIFICATION OF UNUSUAL SIGHT RECORD FOR UTAH

COMMON NAME: Boreal OwlSCIENTIFIC NAME: Aegolius funereusDATE: 4 April 1999 TIME: 9:15 p.m. LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED: 1 HourNUMBER: 1 AGE: ? SEX: ?LOCATION: Head of Hell's Kitchen Canyon, a drainage into Franklin Basin in Logan CanyonLATILONG: 41°57'39" N 111°36'37" W ELEVATION: 8,350'DISTANCE TO BIRD: 50'WEATHER: Clear, no wind, cold (41° F)LIGHT CONDITIONS: Dark, no moon.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF BIRD:

We did not get a visual sighting of the bird, but did hear its call, which was a pattern of rapid "hoo"s increasing in pitch slightly but constant in rhythm. (This is unlike W. Screech Owl which increases in tempo.) - See section on Similar Species.

We skied into the site, arriving after darkness had fallen - it was so dark we could not see the broken ski trail at our feet without headlamps.

SONG OR CALL AND METHOD OF DELIVERY:

See

BEHAVIOR: Spontaneously calling as we slid up the canyon. After we played a tape of Boreal Owl, it moved closer, though we never got visual sighting amongst the trees.

HABITAT: Ridgeline with scattered aspen and conifer stands.

SIMILAR SPECIES AND HOW WERE THEY ELIMINATED: Call was distinctly different from 1) N. Pygmy Owl, (which is a constant rhythm of evenly spaced and evenly pitched whistled notes 2) Western Screech Owl (whose call increases in tempo like a ball dropped on a table) or 3) Flammulated Owl which has evenly and long spaced call notes. Our owl gave out rapid series of "hoo" sounds which definitely increased in pitch. We had studied tapes before we went to find it and were very sure of the id. It also responded to our tape of a Boreal Owl by coming closer.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AND SIMILAR SPECIES: Have located and observed other owls in mountains & valleys of Cache County, including W. Screech Owl, Flammulated Owl, N. Pygmy Owl, Great Horned Owl, etc.

REFERENCES CONSULTED: National Geographic Field Guide 2nd Ed., NAS Encyclopedia of N. Am. Birds, Thayer's Birds of N America CD, Peterson's tapes of bird songs.

DESCRIPTION FROM: NOTES TAKEN AT TIME OF SIGHTING _____, NOTES MADE LATER

FROM MEMORY

OBSERVER: Bryan Dixon Jean Loun & Ron Ryel

SIGNATURE: Bryan Dixon

ADDRESS: 10 Heritage Cove

CITY: Logan

STATE: UT ZIP: 84321

OTHER OBSERVERS WHO INDEPENDENTLY IDENTIFIED THIS BIRD:

Bill Mosslich, Stuart Reynolds got visual sightings the previous night.

DATE PREPARED: 11 April 1999

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL: PHOTO _____, DRAWING _____, TAPE , OTHER _____

(Ron Ryel recorded the call.)

RETURN THIS FORM TO:

UTAH ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE
P.O. BOX 1042
CEDAR CITY, UT 84721-1042