

## COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS - SIGHT RECORD FORM

NEW STATE RECORD UNUSUAL RECORD 

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Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.

Species: Spotted Owl | Strix occidentalis  
(Vernacular Name) (Scientific Name)Date(s): April 5, 1991 Dark night - cloudy skies - no moon.  
Warm 55-45° No wind - could hear a pin drop.Number of birds seen: 1 Sex: Unknown Plumage: adult  
South of Sunset House (old bird)?Locality: House of Many Windows (ranch overlook) Mesa Verde National Park Elevation: 6800' ±  
(see map over)Nearest town: Cortez (west) Mancos (east) County: MontezumaTime(s) observed: 10:30 PM briefly 11:30 PM 5 minutesDuration of observation (e.g. 1 sec., 5 min., etc.): ↑

Other observers who saw the bird with you (give names, addresses, telephone numbers):

None

Other observers who saw the bird independently (give names, addresses, telephone numbers)

Light conditions (position of bird to light and shade, direction and strength of light):

Very dark night - Moon didn't come up till AMOptical equipment used (e.g. power, types): None - Using Halogen lightDistance, and how measured: 100 feet → walked up to 15 feet away est.If photographed, type of equipment and film: NoWho else photographed the bird? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the bird's behavior (e.g. flying, feeding, or habits used in identifying):

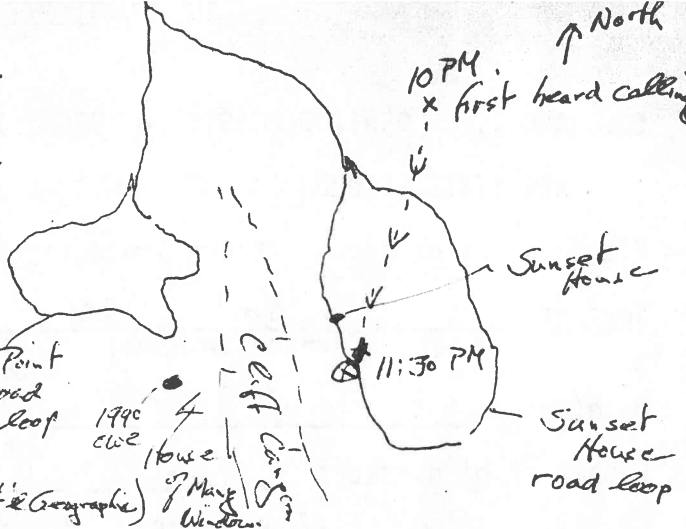
I first heard the bird calling at 7:30 PM. I was to the west on the Sun Point road loop. It took me  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours to walk over to the east side. Then I waited - occasionally playing my tape for another hour before I heard the bird again. By 10 PM I had positioned myself in range and I could tell the bird was moving toward me. Unfortunately when it

Describe in detail the bird's relative size, overall shape, plumage and color pattern. Include details of bill, wing and tail shape. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance to field guide descriptions and illustrations is not enough. Describe only what you actually observe in the field:

landed near me, it was behind a clump of cedar when I moved it flew off. It called continuously until after I finally saw the bird at 11:30 about 1 mile south of where we started. It flew about 15-20 times during that 90 minute chase and I got close enough to see its back instantaneously one time. I tried everything I could think of to get close - not playing the tape most of the time. Finally I decided to get fairly close, let him call twice, then I would answer once very softly. This mesmerized him and I walked up to 15 feet away - light in his eyes

Description (continued):  
and he/she kept calling and just sat there.

This was a fairly large owl with brown eyes and no ear tufts. The back was pale brown with much less white than either National Geographic or Golden Guide shows. The face looked like a monkey, much like the Golden Guide and unlike National Geographic with prominent concentric rings. This face was plain. The breast was much more white than either Golden or Nat's Geographic. The bird had a white ~~central~~ vertical central stripe in the center of the breast giving almost a vertical appearance. It also had a prominent, white, horizontal throat patch (like that shown on Barred Owl in Nat's Geographic).



Describe the bird's song and call, if given, including method of delivery, (i.e. from perch, in flight, duration):

The barring on the breast was an intricate combination of horizontal and vertical, and very pale-brown feathers looked worn, the plumage pale. So I got the impression that this was a very old bird. Its hoot always given when perched, was more of a 3-note than 4-note call. Occasionally he had a rather different rattle of hoots. When excited it would call as often as every 15 seconds.

Describe the general and specific habitat in which you observed the bird:

The bird was always up on top of the mesa. It never went down into the canyon thank goodness. The mesas are covered with a loose growth of cedars and pine. The bird always perched on dead branches half way up in the largest pines. It invariably picked spots where I couldn't find him when I turned my light on Star tree.

How did you eliminate similarly appearing species?

1. This bird had a Spotted Owl, not a Barred Owl case.
2. Barred Owls have vertical streaking on the breast. This bird had a complex of horizontal + vertical barring which is typical of Spotted Owls. There are no other large, brown-eyed owls, with no ear tufts.

What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species?

I have seen both Barred Owl and Spotted Owls. a Spotted Owl last year with the CFO group on April 7, 1990. We had ~~one~~ calling to the west of Cliff Canyon which was seen by Richard Reynolds and Vic Zarbi.

List books, illustrations, recordings, other birders, etc. consulted and how this influenced your identification:

a) at time of observation: None

b) after observation: Golden Guide and National Geographic Birds of North America

This report was written from reports made during \_\_\_\_\_, after observation \_\_\_\_\_ from memory X  
Date and time report was written: 5:15 PM April 6, 1991

Reporting observer: L. W. Dan Bridges Signature: L. W. Dan Bridges

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All reports will be maintained permanently at the address below:

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