

LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review (to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for). Attach additional pages as necessary. Please print or type. Attach xerox of field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216.

1. English and Scientific names: Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
one adult
3. Locality: Parish: Calcasieu;
Specific Locality: W of Illinois Plant Road from just S of Hwy. 14, then bird moved SSW to just N of Cameron Parish line and about 1 mi. W of Illinois Plant Road on private Lacassine Company road
4. Date(s) when observed: 6 February 2012
5. Time(s) of day when observed: approximately between 1:45-2:05 PM
6. Reporting observer and address: Donna L. Dittmann & Steven W. Cardiff
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): none
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s): none
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Adequate. Partly cloudy, sun high to SSE, sun to our left or from our backs during critical observation periods.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): 10 X 42 Leica binocular (DLD); 10 X 50 Leica binocular (SWC); Kowa 20-60 telescope, all in good condition
11. Distance to bird(s): at closest point may have been within 100-200 feet right above observers; more distant when initially observed.

12. Duration of observation: Total duration not more than 15 minutes.

13. Habitat: fallow and cut rice with goose flocks, scattered isolated woodlots in distance.

14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): We were atlasing in the Hayes Quad and had just started south on Illinois Plant Road. We noticed large flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese and *Plegadis* in some fields off to the west. Suddenly the geese and ibis spooked and many of them moved east over the road. At that point we suspected that an eagle or Peregrine was in the vicinity. Fairly quickly, DLD picked-up a "speck" raptor high and to the SW and told SWC to check it out for a possible Golden Eagle. SWC got the scope on it and confirmed the ID. We quickly lost the bird as it seemed to move off towards the SW. As we continued scanning in that direction, SWC noticed more geese spooking about a mile away and picked up the eagle stooping towards the ground. We jumped in the vehicle and raced down Illinois Plant Road, then turned west on a Lacassine Company road. As we continued west, we relocated the eagle back up soaring and continuing to move southward. We managed to get ourselves in front of its path and DLD jumped out and snapped photos as the bird circled fairly low overhead. This is about as far south as the bird got, and then it started gaining altitude and moving back towards the north, escorted away by a Red-tailed Hawk.

15. Description (include only what was actually seen, *not what "should" have been seen*; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species): Large, all dark raptor with a flight profile somewhat reminiscent of a vulture but with larger head and longer, broader wings, flat wing profile. Generally all blackish brown with generally no contrast between dark blackish brown under wing linings and flight feathers. Tail mostly dark but with a hint of a darker subterminal band and paler base; tail tip was fairly worn and abraded. Golden "hackles" around neck were conspicuous and looked like a cape, and can be seen on the images. Eye appeared dark, bill dark, cere paler; feet yellow. See photos.

16. Voice: silent.

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation): Nothing quite similar. Bald Eagle differently shaped and would show more white in any of the sub-adult plumages; Bald Eagles also look larger-headed and larger-billed. Dark *Buteo* species smaller: see image showing size next to a Red-tailed Hawk.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Yes, photos obtained by DLD;

19. Previous experience with this species: very familiar with this species from long history with it in West, most recently in SE AZ in August 2011. We have also documented at least half a dozen others in LA.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):
None necessary. ID was obvious.

a. at time of observation:

b. after observation:

21. This description is written from: _____ notes made during the observation (_____ notes attached?); _____ notes made after the observation (date: _____); memory, plus using photos and photo EXIF data.

22. Are you positive of your identification if not, explain: Yes

23. Date: 27 February 2011 Time: 1:52 PM

24. May the LBRC have permission to display this report or portions of this report on its website? YES

If yes, may we include your name with the report? Yes



Shape and coloration distinctive – see golden hackles on otherwise poor photograph on this page and next.

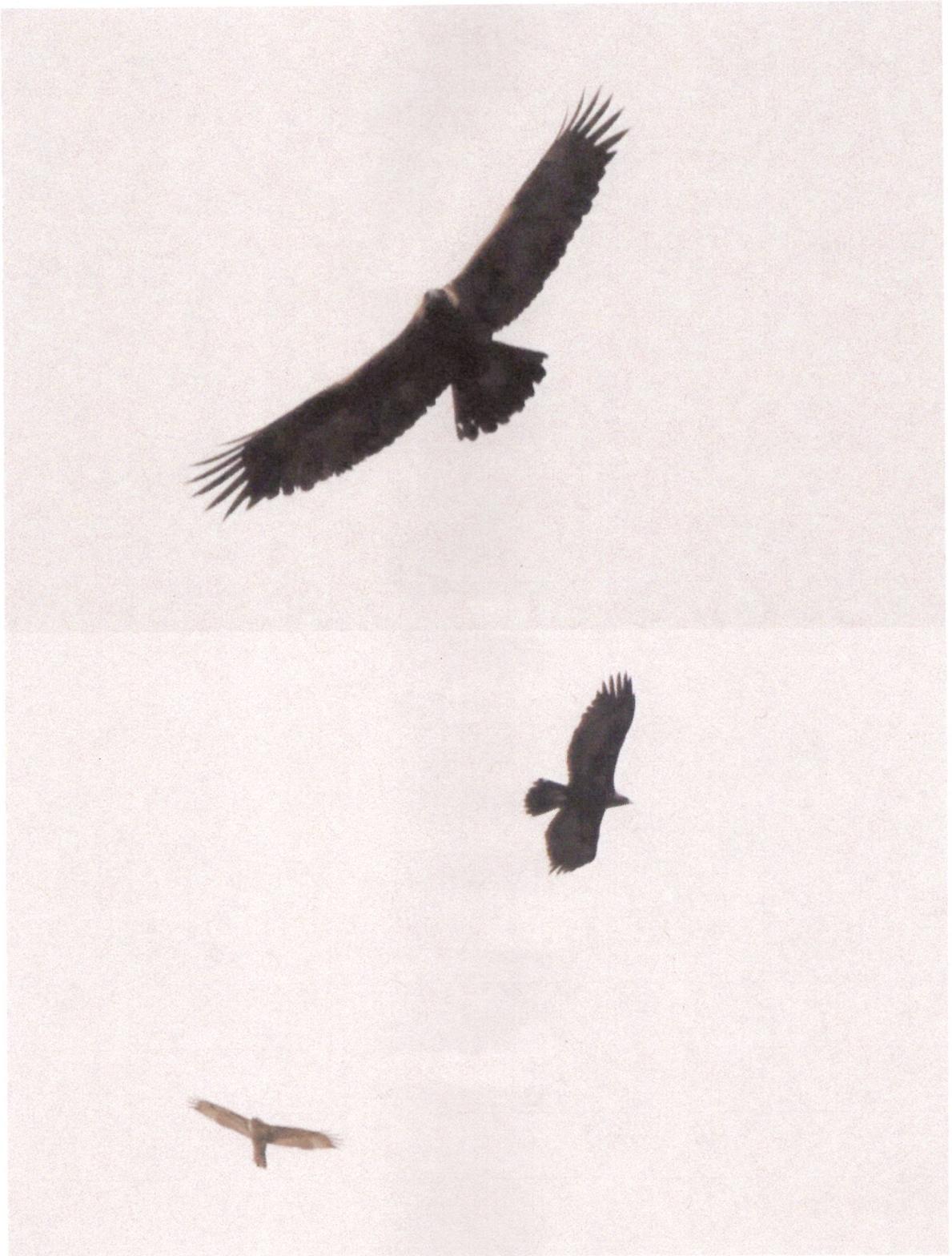


Image above shows adult Golden Eagle being escorted away by adult Red-tailed Hawk.