

Red-footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus*). 16th October, 1972.

At 15.50 hrs. on 16th October I was walking near the Rocket Pole when a hovering falcon drifted up into sight. Expecting it to be one of the three or four Kestrels that were present on the island I was amazed to see at once that it had a very noticeable white cheek patch, chin and quite broad band up the side of the neck, giving a capped effect, and showing a dark bar extending down from the region of the eye.

I watched the falcon from my vantage-point for about ten minutes as it drifted along the top of the sidelands. It would drift and glide 50-100 yards, then hover for a time (perhaps ten seconds or more), drift again, dip, rise and hover again. This continued for some five minutes, during which time I mentally noted certain features:

Generally chocolate-brown upperparts including cap, greyer on outer part of wings; brownish tail barred below (upper side not well seen); pale underparts lightly streaked brown, thighs same colour as belly (i.e. not russet); and the head and neck markings described above. The bill, eye and leg colours were not noticed. Size as Kestrel, with perhaps a slightly shorter tail. It hovered with deep, fluid wing-beats.

Gradually the falcon became more distant, still flying lazily with frequent short hovers, at no time showing any aerial speed or dash. It alighted for half a minute or so on a fence-post near the Church, but two Ravens that passed close by completely ignored it. Then it flew slowly northwards, being lost from sight behind Stoneycroft. It was not seen again.

I subsequently identified it as an immature Red-footed Falcon, a new record for Lundy. The record has been accepted by the Rarities Committee.

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