

In the fall of 1955, under Chandler S. Robbins' Fish and Wildlife Service hawk count, several surveys were made on eastern Long Island. Roy Latham of Orient on September 17, from 7:00 a. m. to 7:00 p. m. counted 15 hawks of eight species with an easterly wind of from five to seven miles an hour. There were nine Falcons; three Sparrow Hawks and six Pigeon Hawks. Except for a small flight of Pigeon Hawks flying low westward, all others appeared to be tarrying or feeding locally. The same day was very poor on the South Shore, with Mrs. Wilfred Walter of East Quogue observing one Pigeon Hawk and two Sparrow Hawks from 8:00 a. m. to 4:00 p. m., Quogue to Mecox; and Roy Wilcox of Speonk counting one Pigeon Hawk and eight Sparrow Hawks, between Westhampton and Bridgehampton, in the morning of that day. Later in the season, on September 21, with a 15 mile-per-hour northwest wind, Wilcox counted 10 Sparrow Hawks and 35 Pigeon Hawks between Westhampton and Shinnecock in one hour, from 11:15 a. m. to 12:15 p. m. This is perhaps an all-time high for Pigeon Hawks in one hour's time. On September 22, Westhampton to Moriches, with a light five mile-per hour north wind, he totaled 19 Sparrow Hawks and 11 Pigeon Hawks in two hours — 9:45 to 11:45 a. m. From Westhampton to Mecox 1:50 p. m. to 4:50 p. m. same day, he observed one Duck Hawk, 16 Sparrow Hawks and five Pigeon Hawks.

Easterly winds, fairly strong, around 15 miles per hour or more, may occasionally be productive, as on September 24, 1960, at Jones Beach, when in one-half hour's time, beginning at 11:00 a. m., a dozen small Falcons and a Peregrine were seen very high above Jones Beach (Baldwin Bird Club). These birds were practically out of sight; and such observations indicate that some Falcon movements may pass through entirely unobserved unless a careful scanning of the upper skies is made.

Westward of Jones Beach, John Mayer and George Rose have made Falcon counts at Broad Channel, and John Bull at Far Rockaway on different occasions, with some success. Bull is of the opinion that, as with the Peregrine at Fire Island Inlet, other Falcons, including the smaller Sparrow and Pigeon Hawk, head out over the ocean from Rockaway Point (on a much shorter tangent than from Fire Island) toward the New Jersey shore.

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HAWK MIGRATIONS AT JONES BEACH

CORNELIUS WARD

Approximately 17 days of hawk watching along Jones Beach produced a total of 614 hawks in the fall of 1958. Of this total 75 percent were seen on six "hawk days"; days during which the winds were northwesterly, a prerequisite for good flights.

Sparrow Hawks made up the largest number among the migrants, followed by Pigeon Hawks. The latter outnumbered the Sparrow Hawks in late October and early November. Marsh Hawks and Ospreys were next in numbers followed by the Accipiters and Peregrine Falcons. Of the 12 Perigrines seen, half of them showed up on "off days". On one day of

southwest winds when all that could be accounted for were two Ospreys, a Sparrow Hawk and a Pigeon Hawk, three Peregrines were observed. Two of the Peregrines included in this survey were seen in Queens; one over Flushing Bay, the other cruising over Long Island City.

In order to get a good idea of the flights I tried to be at the beaches early in the morning on days which seemed most propitious. Two days, one in September and one in October, still remain clear in my mind. One for the hawks it did produce and the other for what it might have produced!

On September 28 the winds were strong from the northwest, weather clear and comfortably cool. I stationed myself on one of the dunes at Parking Field One and watched. The first hawk to be seen was, as usual, a Sparrow Hawk. Then Sparrow Hawks began to appear, several at a time. Some of them would stop and hover over the dunes, drop to the sand to pick up a grasshopper, then rise several feet, tack into the wind, and devour their meal on the wing.

Soon another falcon appeared in the distance, its fast, low flight following the contours of the dunes. Before I realized it this Pigeon Hawk, only slightly larger than a Sparrow Hawk, but half again as heavy was so close to me I had to re-focus my glasses to see the heavy streaking of its underparts. A few second after this blue-backed falcon had passed another Pigeon Hawk appeared out of nowhere, this one was a female or immature, dark brown in color. Weaving in and out among the Japanese Pines, it made a wide arc over my head and dashed into the trees again, rushing in and out, low and high, probably to panic some small bird into flight where it would have little chance of escape. Unsuccessful in the hunt it sped on.

Looking up, I saw an Osprey passing over carrying a flounder.

A small bird with broader wings, leisurely flapping and sailing came into view. It seemed to be flying sideways into the wind examining all of the trees along the way. It was a Sharp-shinned and came within several feet of me before realizing I wasn't a normal part of the landscape.

Within 30 minutes I had seen 30 Sparrow Hawks, a half-dozen Pigeon Hawks, an Osprey, Marsh Hawk and a Sharp-shinned Hawk. The total seen in six and one-half hours, the extent of my stay that day, was 195 hawks.

On October 13th I got out to the beaches late, about 11 a. m. The largest concentrations are to be seen in the early morning hours, from about 8 a. m. to noon. With this in mind, and the weather very cloudy with a light northwest wind, I had little prospects for good hawking.

I decided to pass my usual lookout, beach Parking Field One, and go right to the fishing station, northwest of Parking Field Four. As I passed I saw a Sparrow Hawk sitting on a light pole, one on another pole, one in a tree, two in another tree and before I realized it I had counted 15, either sitting, or hovering in the air. Leaving my car at the fishing station I was amazed at the number of hawks in the air. They were everywhere, at all altitudes, some so high as to appear like swallows, mostly Sparrow Hawks, many were on light poles. They were widely spread between the ocean and the bay. More than a dozen could be seen in the air at any time. A second good look showed me that there were Sharp-shinned Hawks in the air also. They could have been easily overlooked because of the height at which they were flying. Once an Accipiter made a pass at a Sparrow Hawk, it was a Cooper's Hawk, easily identified since it was twice the size of the falcon.

Unfortunately it began to rain and the flight ceased. How many hawks had passed before I reached the beaches, how many would have passed had it not rained, I will never know. It was, however, a vivid reminder of Cape May at its best.

What apparently caused this great concentration of birds were strong west to northwest winds of the two previous days. These winds carried the birds to the coast, and the ocean acting as a barrier, concentrated the birds along the coast.

The breakdown on numbers of the 17 days of "hawking" is as follows:

Sparrow Hawk	-----405
Pigeon Hawk	----- 78
Duck Hawk	----- 12
Osprey	----- 37
Marsh Hawk	----- 40
Sharp-shinned	----- 21
Cooper's Hawk	----- 1
Unidentified	----- 20 (two of which were Accipiters)

614

Though not nearly so spectacular as the flights at Cape May or Hawk Mountain, Jones Beach does offer interesting "hawking". In particular an observer has more opportunity to become familiar with such migrants as the Pigeon Hawks and Marsh Hawks. Here you can actually study the bird, observing their methods of hunting, flying, and in the case of the Pigeon Hawk you can expect fascinating and fancy flying.

Buteos are infrequently seen along these beaches in migration, or at any other time for that matter. In three years I have seen only one Red-tailed Hawk in the area!

In 1959, on October 10, again at Jones Beach, I counted no less than 18 Peregrine Falcons between 7:30 a. m. and 1:30 p. m., and my total from October 2 to October 12 was 33!

71 East Centennial Avenue, Roosevelt, L. I., N. Y.

1960 FALL SHOREBIRD MIGRATION IN CENTRAL NEW YORK

Fritz Scheider

"Tu-tu-tu" "Chu-wee" "Here comes a flock of Pectorals". "Kwit, kwit" "There're four phalaropes down here." "Whee-ur-ee" "My word, a Buff-breast!" "Krick, krick" "Chur-ee" "Check that flight pattern." Such a welter of shorebird and shorebird-watchers' calls accompanied many a central New York field trip this past season (Jul - Nov 1960). A combination of excellent shorebird conditions, careful, enthusiastic birders, and a grapevine system of information that would have done justice to the Maquis of occupied France produced a wealth of shorebird data (compiled and compared with previous years' information below). By late July the plethora of shorebird flats — and shorebirds — gave clues to a coming tide of plovers and sandpipers. Local observers agreed to keep close tabs on the many shorebirds, and they soon amassed impressive quantitative data.