

HAWK MIGRATION AT ONEONTA

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Hawk migration has been well studied at a number of locations in the northeastern United States. Few spring studies have been attempted, although there have been reports from Derby Hill, Oswego, for over a decade. Fall flights have been observed for many years at places such as Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, and Hook Mountain, Nyack. Much information has been collected at these and other lookouts, but the data are limited in scope. Since it is now known that hawks often migrate along very wide fronts, much remains to be learned about the large areas that have yet to be studied.

In 1976, a hawk migration lookout was established at Franklin Mountain, two miles south of the city of Oneonta, in the town of Davenport, Delaware County (see L in figure). Migration was monitored during both spring and fall.

A total of thirteen species was recorded for the year. The most common species in both seasons was the Red-tailed Hawk (Tables 1 and 2). At most lookouts Broad-winged Hawks are the most numerous migrants. On 26 October, 1231 Red-tailed Hawks were counted from the lookout. This flight was one of the largest reported in the East in recent years for this species. Ten Golden Eagles reported in the fall were also noteworthy.

Many hawks could not be identified to species because they passed the lookout at great distances or were obscured by trees. For the same reasons, and the fact that only one observer at a time was present at the lookout, many hawks probably passed unseen. Casual observations in both spring and fall showed that hawks migrated along at least two north-south ridges to the east of Franklin Mountain. This may indicate that raptors take more than one route through the Oneonta area.

The data included with this paper show that large numbers of hawks migrate through central New York. Just how extensive migration is in New York State and what routes are used is still not known. Field work is badly needed, especially to the east of Oneonta. It is likely that other locations like Franklin Mountain can be found and used to observe hawks migrating through central New York. As these are found a more complete picture of the migration puzzle will be available.



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Table 1.

SPRING 1976 HAWK COUNT AT FRANKLIN MOUNTAIN

Species	Month				Total
	February	March	April	May	
Turkey Vulture	0	11	36	0	47
Goshawk	1	4	6	0	11
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	6	44	0	50
Cooper's Hawk	0	1	4	0	5
Red-tailed Hawk	4	17	82	1	104
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	11	21	2	35
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	65	0	65
Rough-legged Hawk	0	0	2	0	2
Golden Eagle	0	0	1	0	1
Marsh Hawk	0	2	14	0	16
Osprey	0	2	6	1	9
American Kestrel	0	3	7	1	11
Unidentified buteo	9	79	224	10	322
Unidentified accipiter	1	17	113	9	140
Unidentified falcon	0	0	4	0	4
Unidentified hawk	2	38	117	6	163
TOTAL HAWKS	18	191	746	30	985
TOTAL HOURS	8.5	38.5	91	6.5	144.5
TOTAL DAYS	6	15	24	2	47

Table 2.

1976 HAWK COUNTS – AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

SPRING, 1977

Date	Hours	Turkey Vulture	Goshawk	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk	Red-tailed Hawk	Red-shouldered Hawk	Broad-winged Hawk	Rough-legged Hawk	Golden Eagle	Bald Eagle	Marsh Hawk	Osprey	American Kestrel	Unidentified	TOTAL
August																
30	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	5
September																
3	2.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	16
5	4.5	0	0	1	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	28
6	7.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	39	0	0	0	0	1	2	19	62
7	7.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	126	0	0	0	0	2	3	28	160
8	7.0	2	1	1	0	1	0	104	0	0	0	0	1	5	10	125
9	6.5	0	0	4	0	0	0	211	0	0	0	0	5	6	8	234
11	3.0	3	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	22
12	7.0	0	0	24	0	3	0	224	0	0	0	1	2	2	25	281
13	6.5	0	0	27	0	0	0	176	0	0	0	0	2	2	25	232
14	7.0	2	0	10	0	1	0	26	0	0	0	1	3	0	7	50
15	5.0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
17	7.0	4	0	15	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	3	2	4	68
18	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
19	7.5	5	0	43	0	2	0	58	0	0	0	0	5	7	23	143
20	2.5	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
21	7.0	0	1	21	0	1	0	67	0	0	0	0	3	9	26	128
22	5.0	0	0	11	0	1	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	35
23	1.0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
24	6.5	0	0	3	0	4	0	24	0	0	0	1	5	0	25	62
25	6.0	1	1	11	0	9	0	25	0	0	0	0	6	3	44	100
26	1.0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
28	3.5	1	0	18	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	4	5	7	42
29	7.0	1	1	71	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	1	2	6	8	95
30	6.0	0	0	73	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	1	2	12	105
TOTAL																
	124.5	22	4	339	1	23	0	1200	0	0	0	4	47	67	298	2005

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Table 3.

1976 HAWK COUNTS – OCTOBER

Date	Hours	Turkey Vulture	Goshawk	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk	Red-tailed Hawk	Red-shouldered Hawk	Broad-winged Hawk	Rough-legged Hawk	Golden Eagle	Bald Eagle	Marsh Hawk	Osprey	American Kestrel	Unidentified	TOTAL
1	6.0	0	0	58	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	2	19	86
2	6.0	0	0	59	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	5	77
3	6.0	1	0	46	0	3	2	9	0	0	0	0	1	3	6	71
4	6.0	1	0	55	0	8	0	7	0	0	0	1	2	0	35	111
5	6.0	1	0	19	0	5	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	49
6	3.5	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
7	6.0	0	0	13	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	24
8	1.0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
10	4.5	1	1	32	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	7	51
11	6.5	1	0	9	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	45
12	6.0	1	0	26	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	36
13	4.5	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
14	2.5	0	0	9	0	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	58
15	6.5	2	0	5	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
16	6.5	1	0	33	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	63
17	7.0	1	0	43	1	73	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	17	138
18	7.0	0	1	28	0	161	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	200
19	4.5	1	0	2	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	10
21	6.0	1	3	5	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	6	25
22	5.0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
23	6.0	1	0	0	0	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	23
26	7.0	2	1	15	0	1231	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	1255
27	6.5	0	1	3	0	79	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	89
28	3.0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
31	2.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	131.5	15	7	471	2	1716	8	32	1	3	0	10	16	33	127	2441

Table 4.

1976 HAWK COUNTS – NOVEMBER

Date	Hours	Turkey Vulture	Goshawk	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk	Red-tailed Hawk	Red-shouldered Hawk	Broad-winged Hawk	Rough-legged Hawk	Golden Eagle	Bald Eagle	Marsh Hawk	Osprey	American Kestrel	Unidentified	TOTAL
1	6.5	0	0	4	0	31	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	8*	49
2	6.5	0	2	0	0	38	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	6*	50
3	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	1.0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
7	4.0	0	0	0	0	33	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	37
8	6.0	0	1	0	0	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	51
9	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
10	4.0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8
11	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	1.0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
TOTALS																
	32.5	0	4	4	0	158	0	0	1	7	1	4	0	1	23	203
TOTALS for 1976																
	288.5	37	15	814	3	1897	8	1232	2	10	1	18	63	101	448	4649
				18%		41%		27%						2%	10%	

*—One unidentified eagle was seen on each of these days.