

Raptor Research Update

May 3, 2016



We counted 170 migrating raptors this week, the majority of which were Accipiters and Red-tailed Hawks. So far we have counted fewer American Kestrels and Ospreys than in previous seasons, but more Bald Eagles and Red-tailed Hawks. We expect Accipiters, Red-tailed Hawks, and Turkey Vultures to make up the majority of the count's last two weeks.

Weekly (4/27-5/3) and Seasonal Raptor Totals			
		Weekly Total	Season Total
Eagles	Golden Eagle	1	50
	Bald Eagle	3	50
	Unknown Eagle	0	7
Accipiters	Sharp-shinned Hawk	41	128
	Cooper's Hawk	42	153
	Northern Goshawk	0	7
	Unknown Accipiter	5	41
Buteos	Red-tailed Hawk	39	420
	Rough-legged Hawk	2	95
	Swainson's Hawk	2	8
	Broad-winged Hawk	1	1
	Ferruginous Hawk	1	2
	Unknown Buteo	2	67
Falcons	American Kestrel	3	28
	Merlin	0	3
	Peregrine Falcon	0	5
	Prairie Falcon	0	5
	Unknown Falcon	0	0
Other	Northern Harrier	13	60
	Osprey	10	23
	Turkey Vulture	5	157
	Unknown Hawk	0	23
	Total	170	1,333



Scooter's mate (top) from the ranch entrance nest, began to incubate this week. Helen and her mate (bottom) from the Sapphire Ranch seem to be considering a move to the platform on Sainfoin Bench. They spent the week bouncing between Sainfoin Bench and the nest Helen used in 2014 and 2015.





Walter, Helen's lone offspring from 2014, began his first northern journey this week. We look forward to seeing if he returns to the Bitterroot Valley. So far he has traveled nearly 300 miles from his wintering grounds in El Salvador.



A young Bald Eagle was found dead on the Sapphire Ranch recently. After noticing the bird was wearing a blue band, they reported the mortality, and we arrived to find Blue 22, a bird we captured February 24, 2016. Were it not for the highly visible band, this mortality would likely have gone unreported.



The young Bald Eagle was located beneath a dangerously configured power pole, and showed signs of electrocution. We will do our best to encourage the utility company to retrofit the pole, however, it is just one of many in a long stretch of dangerous lines.

