

# Project Report: Bonney Butte HawkWatch: Monitoring Raptor Migration and public outreach



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14 March 2018

Fall 2017 marked the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive season of operation at the Bonney Butte HawkWatch. From August 27<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup> our five-person crew counts migrating raptors, traps and bands migrant raptors, and offers a unique outreach and education experience for visitors to the site. Observers counted a total of 430 hours during the 2017 season and documented 2,141 migrating raptors, and banding efforts captured 210 individuals (Table 1). Our model of operation also emphasizes professional development opportunities for the volunteer composed crew. These individuals provide an in-kind donation of their time that far exceeds the cost of living per diem they receive. Each crewmember has the opportunity to build identification, trapping and handling, outreach, and leadership skills during the season.

We held a migration festival this year for the first time, with activities in Government Camp and at the Bonney Butte HawkWatch. Over 150 people visited either the displays in town and/or the site. It was a great success for a first time festival and we look forward to growing it in 2019 and beyond. During the season, 207 people visited Bonney Butte HawkWatch, including an organized group from Portland Audubon and biology students from Pacific University.

A more detailed report on the raptor flight will follow at the end of April, but the 2017 total flight of 2,141 raptors was the second lowest in the 24-year history of Bonney Butte HawkWatch. There are many possible reasons for this, but early and late season wildfires in the immediate area and regions to the north likely played a role, either in the routes migrant took this season and/or in nesting success and fledgling survival for some species.

We would like to thank the USFS for being a long-term partner in these efforts. The Oregon Wildlife Foundation generously provided support for this year's crew leader, Lauren di Baccarri. The Oregon Birding Association provided support for new lurebird aviaries (pictured).



Table 1. Summary of 2017 Fall Migration count and banding at the Bonney Butte HawkWatch.

Species	1994-2016		2017	% Change	All-time Record		Banded in 2017
	Mean Count $\pm$ 95 % CI				Season	Year	
Turkey Vulture	364.0	$\pm$ 66.9	474	30.2	790	2012	
Osprey	68.4	$\pm$ 9.1	78	14.0	121	2012	
Northern Harrier	26.5	$\pm$ 5.1	22	-16.9	56	1998	
<b>Accipiters</b>							
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1122.1	$\pm$ 124.4	525	-53.2	1790	2004	92
Cooper's Hawk	344.5	$\pm$ 37.1	347	0.7	485	2004	44
Northern Goshawk	27.3	$\pm$ 5.0	26	-4.8	53	2014	28
Unidentified accipiter	77.4	$\pm$ 17.0	33	-57.4	160	2008	
TOTAL ACCIPITERS	1571.3	$\pm$ 152.5	931	-40.8	2337	2004	
<b>Buteos</b>							
Red-shouldered Hawk	1.1	$\pm$ 0.7	0	-100.0	7	2004	
Broad-winged Hawk	6.0	$\pm$ 6.4	7	15.8	75	1999	
Swainson's Hawk	0.8	$\pm$ 0.5	2	155.6	4	2010	
Red-tailed Hawk	553.7	$\pm$ 63.9	371	-33.0	932	1999	39
Ferruginous Hawk	0.3	$\pm$ 0.2	1	228.6	1	2017	
Rough-legged Hawk	11.1	$\pm$ 3.5	6	-46.1	30	2000	
Unidentified buteo	25.3	$\pm$ 7.3	18	-28.9	58	1999	
TOTAL BUTEOS	598.4	$\pm$ 70.2	405	-32.3	1090	1999	
<b>Eagles</b>							
Golden Eagle	81.0	$\pm$ 12.6	27	-66.6	176	1999	2
Bald Eagle	53.4	$\pm$ 6.7	86	61.1	93	2011	
Unknown eagles	3.4	$\pm$ 1.3	2	-41.2	12	2016	
TOTAL EAGLES	137.7	$\pm$ 14.0	115	-16.5	231	1999	
<b>Falcons</b>							
American Kestrel	17.6	$\pm$ 3.3	7	-60.1	35	1997	
Merlin	75.2	$\pm$ 10.1	74	-1.6	114	2011	3
Prairie Falcon	4.7	$\pm$ 1.1	5	7.5	10	1998	2
Peregrine Falcon	9.1	$\pm$ 2.3	11	20.5	21	2011	
Unidentified falcon	4.2	$\pm$ 1.7	9	113.4	18	2005	
TOTAL FALCONS	110.7	$\pm$ 10.9	106	-4.3	148	1997	
Unidentified Raptor	19.4	$\pm$ 8.4	10	-48.5	90	1997	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2896.5</b>	<b><math>\pm</math> 260.4</b>	<b>2141</b>	<b>-26.1</b>	<b>4133</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>210</b>