

Introduction to North American Raptor Conservation Species Assessments

In the assessments, we provide a summary of the continental and regional migration count trends through 2023 for each species using data from 80 migration count sites across North America, spanning from Canada to Mexico. For complete and/or long-distance migrants such as Osprey, Broad-winged Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, and Mississippi Kite, where essentially the entire population migrates out of its breeding range to a separate wintering range, the migration count trends provide a reliable assessment of actual population trends. For partial and short-distance migrants such as the Red-tailed Hawk, there is evidence that some species may be shifting their migratory behavior or wintering ranges in response to climate change and other factors (Bolgiano, 2013; Paprocki, et al, 2017). Our goal is to provide accurate population trend summaries and highlight species of concern.

Another factor to consider in viewing the trends is that other species (e.g., Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon) have resident populations that may not be well-represented in the migration count data. Therefore, it is important to review results from multiple datasets, including the Christmas Bird Count (CBC, <https://netapp.audubon.org/cbcobservation/>) and Breeding Bird Survey (BBS, <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/results/>), for a complete picture of the population status of many raptor species. In these assessments, we also briefly discuss CBC trends where those data augment the findings from the migration count results. The results discussed here derive from www.audubon.org and were published in Soykan, C.U., Sauer, J., Schuetz, J.G., LeBaron, G.S., Dale, K., and Langham, G.M. 2016. *Population trends for North American winter birds based on hierarchical models. Ecosphere*, 7(5). The CBC data represented here only show trends where the confidence interval for the trend derived does not include zero.

Hook-billed Kite (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*)

Only two sites recorded Hook-billed Kite numbers in the last decade. The 10-year migration count trends for the Hook-billed Kite suggest stable or declining populations as signaled by the two fall count sites in Veracruz, Mexico. This is similar to recently reported twenty-year count trends suggesting stable and decreased fall counts (Gulf Region: 1 stable, 1 decrease).

The Hook-billed Kite is a *Species of Least Concern* with a decreasing population trend status, designated by IUCN Red List. It has recently colonized South Texas and is



M. Carson, D. Oleyar, D. Ethier, L. Goodrich, D. Brandes, J. Brown, and J. Sodergren. 2025. The Raptor Population Index: 2023 Species Assessments. Available at <http://rpi-project.org/2023/assessments2023.php>

locally common in Venezuela, Surinam, and Guatemala, but is rare in Paraguay. New count sites in Belize may provide important information in the future.

The Cuban Hook-billed Kite is listed as Critically Endangered by CITES and the species has gone extinct in Trinidad. Declines are likely due to habitat loss, invasive species reducing food availability, and persecution by humans, especially farmers, in addition to contamination of water sources. Education and outreach efforts are being made to help reduce the human related pressures this species faces.

Hook-billed Kite, Gulf (fall only) 2014-2023 (n=2)



