

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.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)

The 10-year migration count trends for the Swainson's Hawk suggest stable populations across North America as 50% of 14 total sites observed stable counts during this span. Increasing counts were observed at 35.7% of sites, and decreased observations were seen at 14.3% of sites. Regionally, populations are mostly stable or increasing (see pie charts and trend maps below). The 20-year count trends (not shown) also reflect a stable population with some increases in the West Region (Gulf Region: 5 stable; West Region: 3 stable, 1 increase).



Most Swainson's Hawks winter south of the United States and are rarely detected on winter surveys such as the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The small number of hawks detected on CBC surveys indicate stable 10-year abundance trends, with declines observed in Washington between 2009-2022. The Swainson's Hawk is listed as a *Species of Least Concern* by the IUCN Red List and has no federal status under the United States Endangered Species Act, but it is listed as a *Species of Special Concern* in Utah, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, and as *Threatened* in California. Evidence

suggests that their populations have been reduced by as much as 90% from its pre-colonial numbers in this region. Swainson's Hawks winter primarily in fields of Argentina and may be recently experiencing a loss of habitat in wintering and in stopovers. They are also documented to be increasingly subject to shooting during migration through Andes. Swainson's Hawks commonly breed in areas of intense agriculture but require access to trees for nesting and roosting. They are especially vulnerable to habitat loss due to urbanization and land development, and can be impacted by environmental contaminants such as agrochemical compounds and pesticides.



