

Introduction to North American Raptor Conservation Species Assessments

We provide species assessments based on trend analyses through 2023 from 80 raptor migration count sites across North America spanning from Canada to Panama. Synthesis of trends at the continental and regional scales can highlight species and/or regions that warrant a closer look in the case of widespread declines, or highlight conservation successes in the case of widespread increases. It is important to note that the intent of long-term monitoring efforts like RPI is to identify changes over time, not necessarily to explain them—that is where focused research efforts come into play. RPI shines a light on species and places in need of closer looks and focused efforts.

In these assessments, we provide a summary of the continental and regional migration count trends for each species and highlight species of concern. 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 and/or wintering ranges in response to climate change and other factors (Bolgiano, 2013; Paprocki, et al, 2017).

Another factor to consider in viewing the trends is that some species (e.g., Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon) have resident populations that may not be well-represented in the migration count data. Therefore, considering 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/>), can provide a more complete picture of the population status of many raptor species. In these assessments, we also briefly examine CBC trends, especially where those data inform 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.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)

The 10-year migration count trends for the Cooper's Hawk suggest a mix of stable and decreasing populations across North America, as 42.5% of sites recorded stable counts, and 35.7% of sites recorded decreasing counts. The remaining 23.8% of sites reported increasing counts during this period. Regionally more sites were decreasing in West and Central Regions during recent years than increasing. Twenty-year count trends reflect a mostly stable population

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>

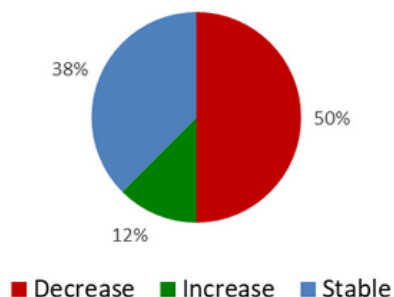
at regional level with a mix of decreasing and increasing counts. A decreasing migration tendency may be influencing population changes observed.

Winter survey data from the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) shows increasing 10-year trends continent-wide with the annual percent change in population reported to be an increase of 3.20% from 2009-2022. However, abundance data from eBird has documented a decrease of 3% annually from 2012-2022. Declines may suggest changes in migration behavior or actual declines in some regions, but further research is needed to understand these patterns.

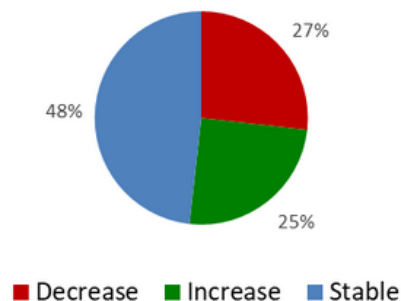


The Cooper's Hawk is a *Species of Least Concern* as designated by the IUCN Red List, and has readily recovered from widespread North American raptor declines during the previous century, which is likely due to its ability to exploit human-altered landscapes. Increases are occurring in some suburban landscapes where birds may be less likely to migrate. Some localized threats include contaminants, disease, and shooting.

**Cooper's Hawk, Central
2014-2023 (n=8)**

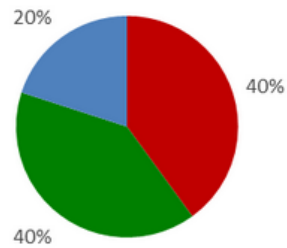


**Cooper's Hawk, East
2014-2023 (n=52)**



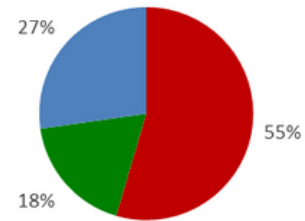
M. Carson, D. Oleyar, D. Ethier, L. Goodrich, D. Brandes, J. Brown, and J. Sodergren. 2025. The Raptor Population Index: 2023 Species Assessments. Available at <http://rpi-project.org/2023/assessments2023.php>

**Cooper's Hawk, Gulf
2014-2023 (n=5)**



■ Decrease ■ Increase ■ Stable

**Cooper's Hawk, West
2014-2023 (n=11)**



■ Decrease ■ Increase ■ Stable

