

ONTARIO Bird Banding

VOL. 8, NO. 3

SEPTEMBER, 1972



HAWK CLIFF RAPTOR BANDING STATION
SECOND ANNUAL REPORT, 1972

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Officers for 1972

PRESIDENT J. Miles, 656 King St. E.,
Hamilton, Ontario.

VICE-PRESIDENT Dr. A. Salvadori, Department of
Mathematics, University of Guelph,
Guelph, Ontario.

TREASURER W. Wasserfall, 22 Roycrest Avenue,
Willowdale, Ontario.

SECRETARY Miss Jayne Evans,
P. O. Box 551, Midland, Ontario.

OTHER OFFICERS Dr. E. Dinniwell, 7 Esquire Place,
Hamilton, Ontario.

R. Popko, 18 Strathy Road, Ajax,
Ontario.

R. Cubitt, 28 Rockport Crescent,
Richmond Hill, Ontario.

HAWK CLIFF:
STATION COORDINATOR
M. Field, 89 Elm St.,
St. Thomas, Ontario.

SECRETARY/TREASURER
Mrs. S. Fowler, 17 Fifth Avenue,
St. Thomas, Ontario.

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING

Published quarterly by The Ontario Bird Banding
Association

Vol. 8, No. 3

September, 1972

CONTENTS

HAWK CLIFF RAPTOR BANDING STATION: SECOND ANNUAL REPORT	44 - 60
- by Marshall Field and William Rayner	

Cover Illustration by Barry Kent MacKay

Donated in memory of
John O.L. Roberts



HAWK CLIFF RAPTOR BANDING STATION

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT, 1972

Marshall Field and William Rayner

The 1972 banding season at Hawk Cliff has been another very successful one. The total number of raptors banded increased from 733 in 1971 to 1057 in 1972, (see table # I). One of the surprises was the invasion of goshawks (Accipiter gentilis), (see figures 1 & 2) into Southern Ontario. Our seasonal total for this species climbed from 4 in 1971 to 13 in 1972. Probably the greatest impact from this invasion was felt at Duluth, Minnesota, where a total of 392 goshawks were captured and banded at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve.

Three new species of raptors were added to the Hawk Cliff list. One highlight for the season was the capture and banding of an immature golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos) on October 30 (see figure III). The overall wing span was 72 inches and the weight was 9¼ lbs. The bird was held about two hours for pictures and to allow a few more banders the opportunity for a close look at the station's first golden eagle. Another first for the Hawk Cliff station was an immature female merlin (Falco columbarius) on Sept. 16, (see figure IV) taken in a mist net. The first hawk owl (Surnia ulula) was banded by sub-permittee John Lemon approximately sixty miles from Copper Cliff, Ontario. It was taken on a bal-chatri trap using



Fig. I. A second year Goshawk. The eye colour was a blotched brownish-orange.

mice for bait. A northern shrike (Lanius excubitor) was captured in a mist net at Hawk Cliff. Unfortunately it escaped from a small can before it could be banded.

The raptor migration season started rather early as there was a significant flight of kestrels, sharp-shins and marsh hawks during the last week of August. There was also another flight during the first weekend in September 9th, so consequently we missed some of the early birds. An effort will be made to have all stations set up and ready to operate by September 1, 1973.

Our increase in numbers of hawks banded this year could be attributed in part, to the numbers of, mainly kestrels, (Falco sparverius) that were road trapped around Sudbury (J.L.) and in southwestern Ontario. During April the migrant kestrels were numerous around Elgin County and road trapping, using a bal-chatri with a mouse was very effective. John Lemon had good success road trapping kestrels; also 2 broad-wings (Buteo platypterus) and 2 rough-legs in the Sudbury-Manitoulin area.

It appeared to be a poor season for nesting red-tails. Only one of the 17 successful nests in 1971 was occupied in 1972. Miller banded some red-tails (Buteo jamaicensis) for the station in the Stratford area and he also noted poor success in nesting. Thirteen kestrel nest boxes were constructed and erected in Elgin County. Two boxes were occupied but only one was successful in fledging two young (see figure V). Three natural nesting sites for kestrel were located. Only one of these fledged a brood. The young had left the successful nest before it could be checked and the young birds banded.



Fig. II. Golden Eagle

Two new 4 by 8 foot buildings were constructed - one to relocate the #4 station which is located 1½ miles inland (see figure VI). The second to replace the makeshift blind near the cliff edge, known as #5 location (fig. IV Vol 7, No. 3 Ontario Bird Banding). The #4 station proved to be very efficient in its new location in the corner of a pasture field near a ravine. There was no crop interference or mud situations as there was with the former location. This station was in operation every suitable weekend from September until December. The #5 station had a fairly low total of hawks banded but there seems to be a good potential for kestrels and marsh hawks in this location. It is difficult to use mist nets here because of frequent high winds; in fact strong enough to blow the station over on one occasion.

Considerable time was spent remodelling a larger building at the #3 location on the O.W.R.C. road allowance. This station banded more hawks this year partly because it was in operation earlier than in 1971.

A big flight of red-tails comparable to November 13, 1971. (59 banded) never did materialize. The weather deteriorated badly in November, 1972 thus eliminating the possibility of any peak flight days. Rough-legged hawks (Buteo lagopus) were noticeably low in numbers. In figs. VII and VIII some attempt has been made to record numbers of hawks observed. These figures are usually much lower than the actual flight as it is difficult to trap and record sightings at the same time during a heavy migration.

1973

There appears to be very little, if any,



Fig. III. The first Merlin to be caught at the Hawk Cliff Station.

construction required for the 1973 banding season. The major expense appears to be the renewal of mist nets, additional mist net poles, lure lines and other miscellaneous equipment pertaining to the trapping operation.

The supply of lure birds continues to be a limiting factor on the number of participants. Craig Brown, an assistant at the Hawk Cliff station, is raising barn pigeons specifically for use at the trapping stations. The supply of these birds seems adequate for a normal season. It is still a problem to keep ahead on the smaller lure birds such as house sparrows and blackbirds.

SUMMARY SHEETS

Most of the banders were quite efficient in filling out the band record sheets properly. We found that some of the summary sheets were lacking in times for station opening and closing. We had hoped to relate the number of hours a station was in operation to total number of birds banded.

There were no special studies carried out at the station in 1972. David Pass from the Veterinary College, University of Guelph did take blood samples from nestling red-tails in Elgin County and the Stratford area. This blood sampling is part of a study on mercury contamination levels in red-tail hawks.

FINANCIAL

This was the first year that no financial help was required from O.B.B.A. A total of \$145.50 was received from donations and station memberships. Expenditures for the season came to \$125.62.



Fig. IV. A female Kestrel incubating in an artificial nest-box.

Mr. Doug Tarry supplied material for two 4 by 8 foot buildings amounting to about \$200.00.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is fortunate that some of the St. Thomas participants can supply coverage during the week. Weekends are no problem for coverage but unfortunately the weather does not always co-operate. Once again I would like to mention our appreciation to Mr. Steve Ivan for the use of his property to carry out the hawk trapping operation. The co-operation of the members of the Hawk Cliff committee and others who helped in various ways is greatly appreciated.

FOREIGN RECOVERIES

Sharp-shinned Hawk - female - less than one year old when banded by J. B. Holt of Harrison, Ohio near Wheatley, Ontario. 07-10-71.
Recaptured at Hawk Cliff 01-10-72.

Sharp-shinned Hawk - female - less than one year old when banded by J. D. Judge of Lansing, Michigan near Merlin, Ontario 29-09-71.
Recaptured at Hawk Cliff 08-10-72.

STATION REPEATS

There were 1 sharp-shin, 5 red-tail and 2 kestrel inter-station repeats at Hawk Cliff during the fall 1972 season.



Fig. V. Left to right; Danny Allen, David Lemon and Craig Brown outside the new building at #4 station.

TABLE IRAPTORS BANDED FROM HAWK CLIFF STATION

	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970-71</u>	<u>1971-72</u>	<u>1972</u>
Goshawk	-	5	3	13
Sharp-shinned Hawk	40	166	223	390
Cooper's Hawk	9	10	50	81
Red-tailed Hawk	4	71	345	285
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	3	5	4
Broad-winged Hawk	1	-	-	2
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	5	3
Golden Eagle	-	-	-	1*
Marsh Hawk	1	2	28	33
Peregrine Falcon	1	1	4	-
Merlin	-	-	-	1*
Kestrel	143	85	56	212
Screech Owl	2	-	2	12
Great Horned Owl	-	1	7	18
Long-eared Owl	-	-	4	1
Hawk-Owl	-	-	-	1*
Saw-Whet Owl	1	-	1	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	202	344	733	1057

* Denotes first of species caught.

TABLE

	<u>MONTHLY TOTALS INCLUDING</u>				
	<u>JAN.</u>	<u>FEB.</u>	<u>MAR.</u>	<u>APR.</u>	<u>MAY</u>
GOSHAWK					
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK					
COOPER'S					
RED-TAILED	19	8	3	1	6
RED-SHOULDERED					2
BROAD-WINGED					2
ROUGH-LEGGED	1				
GOLDEN EAGLE					
MARSH HAWK					
PEREGRINE FALCON					
MERLIN					
KESTREL	2	2	29	36	4
GREAT HORNED OWL				11	6
SCREECH OWL	2	3	3		
LONG-EARED OWL			1		
HAWK OWL					
SAW-WHET OWL					
	—	—	—	—	—
	24	13	36	48	18

II

ROADTRAPS & NESTLINGS

<u>JUNE</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUG.</u>	<u>SEPT</u>	<u>OCT.</u>	<u>NOV.</u>	<u>DEC.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
				8	5		13
			119	271			390
			5	75	1		81
20			14	107	98	9	285
			2	2			4
							2
					2		3
				1			1
			20	12	1		33
							-
			1				1
8	10	12	73	35	1		212
					1		18
2						2	12
							1
				1			1
							-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
30	10	12	234	511	110	11	= 1057

TABLE III

STATION COMPARISONS FOR TRAPPING RESULTS

	<u>Total New Banding</u>		<u>Total Days Operating</u>		<u>Average Birds Banded per day</u>	
	1971	1972	1971	1972	1971	1972
Station # 1	213	175	59	55	3.6	3.1
Station # 2	334	280	58	63	5.6	4.4
Station # 3	60	156	31	26	1.9	6.0
Station # 4	47	205	9	14	5.2	14.6
Station # 5	4	25	4	16	1.0	1.5

TABLE IV

SPECIES CAPTURE RESULTS BY ALL METHODS									
MIST NET	BOW NET	BAL-CHATRI	NESTLING	NEST BOX	SWEDISH GOS	TOTALS 1971	TOTALS 1972		
2	11	-	-	-	-	3	13		
352	35	3	-	-	-	223	390		
29	52	-	-	-	-	50	81		
23	201	35	26	-	-	344	285		
1	3	-	-	-	-	5	4		
-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2		
-	-	3	-	-	-	5	3		
-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1		
20	13	-	-	-	-	28	33		
-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-		
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		
32	13	165	2	-	-	56	212		
-	-	1	1	10	-	2	12		
1	-	-	17	-	-	7	18		
-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1		
1	-	-	-	-	-	4	1		
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-		
462	329	210	46	10	-	732	1057		

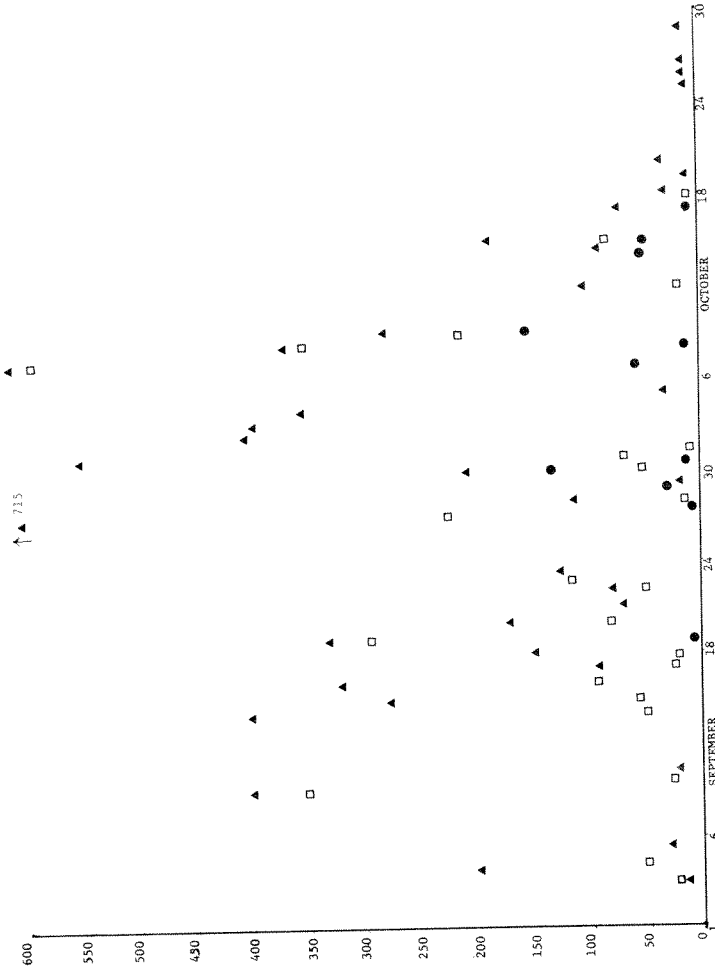


Fig. VI. Daily totals of birds observed, figures under 5 being omitted.
 ● Turkey Vulture. ▲ Sharp-shinned Hawk. □ American Kestrel.

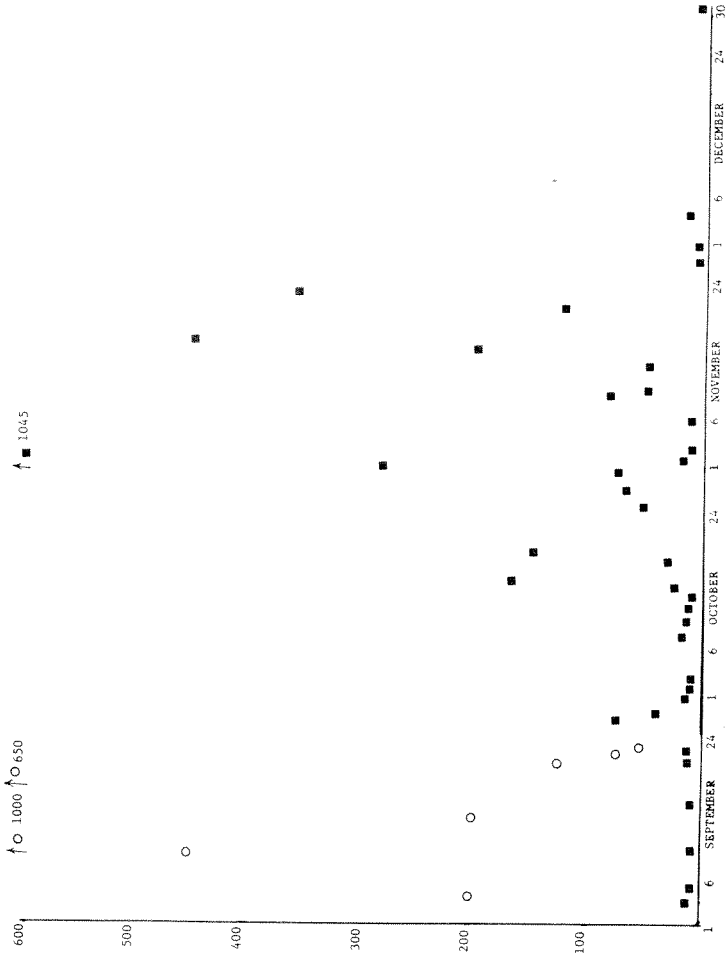


Fig. VII. Daily totals of birds, figures under 5 being omitted.
 O Broad-winged Hawk. ■ Red-tailed Hawk.



ONTARIO BIRD BANDING

EDITOR

Dr. A. D. Brewer,
277 Arthur St. N.,
Guelph, Ontario.

824-4342

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING is published quarterly by the Ontario Bird Banding Association. The annual membership dues of \$6.00 include a subscription to ONTARIO BIRD BANDING. Single copies are available at \$1.50 each. Orders for single copies or back numbers and requests for information on membership should be sent to the secretary.

Although emphasis is placed on material of interest to banders, manuscripts of articles or short notes dealing with any aspect of ornithology are welcomed. Manuscripts should be typewritten and double spaced. Tables and figures should be prepared on separate sheets. Photographs should have good contrast for successful reproduction.

Contributors receive 25 reprints of their article gratis. Additional reprints are to be paid for by the author, and these must be ordered at the time the manuscript is returned for proof-reading. Information on the cost of reprints is available from the editor.

Authorized as Second Class Mail by
the Post Office Department, Ottawa,
and for payment of postage in cash.

