

MPG Ranch Spring Raptor Update
April 20-26, 2012
Eric Rasmussen



Week six of raptor observations resulted in another record-breaking count: we counted 589 raptors! Our highlights this week included: three broad-winged hawks (the first-ever for our spring count), four ferruginous hawks, seven Swainson's hawks, and a burrowing owl. We saw season highs for osprey, Cooper's hawks, and all of the falcon species.

The predicted warm front arrived last weekend. Temperatures ranged from 60°-80° F. We enjoyed four straight days of high raptor numbers. On April 22nd we recorded 103 birds. Our third highest count of the spring was the 23rd with 169, followed by 98 on the 24th, and 118 on the 25th. Our running season total has surpassed 2,000. For comparison, observers at Dinosaur Ridge in Colorado have only counted 700 raptors so far.

We still anticipate a push of immature accipiters. They are starting to trickle in, but cold rain moved into the region late in the week. We expect normal temperatures to return by this Monday. We should see another round of decent numbers before the migration tapers off in early May.

<i>Species</i>	April 20-26, 2012	<i>SEASON</i>
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Turkey vulture	27	264
<u>Osprey</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>92</u>
Bald eagle	5	76
<u>Golden Eagle</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>112</u>
<u>Northern harrier</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>176</u>
Sharp-shinned hawk	91	285
Cooper's hawk	130	210
<u>Northern goshawk</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
Red-shoulder hawk	0	0
Broad-winged hawk	3	3
Swainson's hawk	7	13
Red-tailed hawk	56	517
Ferruginous hawk	4	6
<u>Rough-legged hawk</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>160</u>
American kestrel	71	139
Merlin	8	13
Peregrine falcon	4	4
<u>Prairie falcon</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
U. Accipiter	21	51
U. Buteo	12	96
U. Eagle	0	14
U. Falcon	2	3
<u>U. Raptor, UU</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	589	<u>2285</u>



Rob banded a new female American kestrel near lower Sheep Camp. He saw it mate with a male banded on 4/29/2011. The pair is nesting in a previously unoccupied nest box.



On April 19, Raptor View saw a fourth American kestrel banded last year. Rob originally banded the adult male on 4/26/2011 near Sheep Camp. This year, he spotted it in the same area.

