



2002 Hawk Migration Field Manual

for

Holiday Beach Migration Observatory

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Introduction

Holiday Beach Migration Observatory, HBMO, has become a moving force in the establishment and maintenance of a permanent hawk-watching site at Holiday Beach Conservation Area near Amherstburg, Ontario on the north shore of Lake Erie. HBMO's members have in the past few years attained several important milestones. An excess of one and a half million raptors has been counted at the site during the past 35 years. Site coverage has steadily increased to where the total seasonal hour exceeds 800 daily hours. The site now has a forty-foot observation tower (Donated in 1986 by Detroit Edison of Michigan.) that is benefiting site coverage and creating a focal point for local public interest. An increase in park, HBCA, attendance in the fall can be attributed to the tower and the hawk-watch coverage.

The organization is increasing its membership. HBMO and the hawk site are gaining recognition as a reputable organization and a premier North American hawk-watch site by national and international raptor organizations, ornithological societies, governmental and private agencies, through national and local media coverage, and internet usage. Recently Holiday Beach Conservation and Big Creek Marsh were designated as an Important Bird Area. To explain what this means, the following has been taken from the IBA Canada website, ibacanada.com.

“What is an Important Bird Area?”

“An Important Bird Area (IBA) is a site providing essential habitat for one or more species of breeding or non-breeding birds. These sites may contain threatened species, endemic species, species representative of a biome, or highly exceptional concentrations of birds.”

“What is the history of the IBA program?”

“The first IBA program was initiated by *BirdLife* International in Europe during 1985 in response to the European Economic Community's request of *BirdLife* to produce a priority list of sites for protection in Europe. A directory to IBAs in Europe was published in 1989. Today, IBA programs are underway in Asia, Africa, Europe, Middle East, and the Americas. The Canadian Nature Federation and Bird Studies Canada, the Canadian *BirdLife* partners, launched the Canadian IBA program in 1996. Currently, *BirdLife* has national representation in over 100 countries around the world.”

“Who is *BirdLife* International?”

“*BirdLife*, formerly the International Council on Bird Preservation (ICBP), is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of the world's birds. Through this, *BirdLife* works for the world's biological diversity and the sustainability of human use of natural resources. *BirdLife* operates as a worldwide partnership of conservation organizations that work together to conserve all wild bird species and their habitats.”

“Who are the *BirdLife* International partners in Canada, and what are their respective roles?”

“The Canadian Nature Federation (CNF) and Bird Studies Canada (BSC) are the *BirdLife* International partners in Canada. CNF is taking the lead in activities associated with the development and implementation of site conservation plans, advocacy, and communications. BSC is taking the lead in technical activities involving the compilation and evaluation of site inventory data and writing of associated directory.”

“Site Description”

“Holiday Beach and Big Creek Marsh Conservation Area are located near the western tip of Lake Erie, just east of where the Detroit River empties into Lake Erie. Geographically, this site is located at the bottom-end of the migratory funnel created by the lower Great Lakes (Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair). Birds migrating along the northern shore of Lake Erie have only a short flight across the Detroit River before they are then able to fan out in a broader southern movement. In addition, to acting as concentration site for raptors and other species, the site also includes a large shallow marsh with mostly open water that is interspersed by stands of cattails. It is the largest wetland in the immediate area, and has areas of swamp forest and thicket communities. Several islands and parts of the shoreline support moisture-tolerant forests and vegetation. The adjacent Holiday Beach Conservation Area (formerly a provincial park) contains drier Hackberry and oak dominated forest.”

“Birds”

“Casual observers have noted hawks at this site since the 1950s, with more systematic counts beginning in the 1970s. Since 1974, volunteer observers have worked towards full coverage during daylight hours throughout the fall migration period. Peak daily counts and highest ever annual totals for the more commonly observed hawks include: Turkey Vulture (daily 3,200, annual 19,645); Sharp-shinned Hawk (daily 2,130, annual 18,604); Broad-winged Hawk (daily 95,499, annual 110,221); and American Kestrel (daily 1,105, annual 5,747).

Each fall observers tally between 600,000 and 750,000 migrant birds of which 300,000 may be Blue Jays. Peak daily counts for Blue Jays exceed 50,000, with a peak day in September

1994 of 65,400. Other daily peaks include Ruby-throated Hummingbird (200), Eastern Bluebird (825) and Great Egret (195). Annual totals are quite high for some species, such as American Goldfinch (25,000). During the breeding season of 2000, three to five pairs of Prothonotary Warblers (nationally endangered) were recorded at this site, up from the usual one pair.

Big Creek Marsh, and the adjacent waters of Lake Erie, occasionally support large numbers of staging waterfowl: Canvasback (850 October 1996); Redhead (1,275 October 1996), and Red-breasted Merganser (an astounding estimate of 195,000 in November 1992). Such large numbers of mergansers do not concentrate at this site on a regular basis.”

Missions and Goals

HBMO’s Mission

HBMO’s bylaws state, “The objectives of the organization are the promotion of the scientific, educational and conservation pursuits which advance our understanding, supervision, and appreciation of all forms of wildlife and their environments. This will be accomplished by advancing the following objectives.

- Conduct studies of populations of migrating raptors, hawks.
- Direct examination of communities of other organisms through observation, census and other means.
- Educate the public of the value of migratory and non-migratory species and the importance of their safekeeping and management.
- Cooperate with individuals, organizations, and governmental bodies, like Hawk Migration Association of North America and the Essex Region Conservation Authority, whose goals and objectives are consistent with the stated purposes of the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory.
- Promote conservancy, protection, and wise utilization of natural resources.
- Cultivate scientific understanding of migration of raptor and non-raptor bird species.
- Encourage scientific understanding of migration of other animal species.

- Provide mechanisms, consistent with the above objectives, for outdoor recreation and provide opportunities to witness the natural history of species migration.
- Sustain a non-profit organization. The chattel, property, holdings, assets, earnings, profits, net income, and financial standing of this organization are irrevocable dedicated to charitable purposes and no part of the chattel, property, holdings, assets, earnings, profits, net income, or financial standing of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit on any private individual.”

HBMO’s Goals

Because of the unique location of Holiday Beach, the primary goal of HBMO is to count all migrating hawks from September 1 through November 30 of each year. Every attempt should be made to count every hawk seen flying past the site. A second goal is the delivery of the recorded information to a database. This database is accessible on the Internet with the URL, hawkcount.org. This web-based site allows the hourly data to be entered, reviewed, saved, automatically sent to various listservs, sent to other databases (Cornell’s Bird Study’s Site), and other designated sites. In December the daily species totals can be easily retrieved and a summary be sent to the HMANA’s Regional Editor for inclusion in the Great Lakes portion of the fall issue of the *Hawk Migration Journal* and additionally published in the HBMO’s *Northwind* newsletter. Every effort should be made to submit the completed data forms in a

timely fashion for this purpose. Analysis of avian data by HBMO should also be done.

HMANA's Mission

The Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) was founded in 1974 as a not-for-profit all volunteer organization. Its purpose is to conserve raptor populations, to advance knowledge of raptor migration, to monitor migrant raptor populations, and to provide through the use of standard reporting forms and procedures, a data bank on migration for the use of professional and amateur ornithologists. Members of HMANA include professional ornithologists, conservationists, research scientists, bird banders, birders, and hawk watchers.

In December of 1997, the Board of Directors met and adopted a revised mission statement: *"To conserve raptor populations through the scientific study, enjoyment, and appreciation of raptor migration."*

HMANA's Goals

Several immediate goals were established in accordance with this new mission. To a large extent, these goals represent a continuation and rededication to ongoing initiatives. The following are HMANA's goals.

- To inspire and educate the public on the value of hawk migration studies. Facilitate broad public involvement at count sites by supporting local efforts to provide meaningful watchable wildlife and educational opportunities. It is a goal of HMANA to promote conservation of hawks through the advancement of scientific theory and educational outreach.
- To expand HMANA's membership and involve members in high-priority raptor conservation activities at the local, state, regional, and national levels.
- To coordinate scientific, volunteer-based raptor migration counts to monitor the status, trends, and distributional changes of migrant raptor populations across the continent by;
 - » Ensuring site-specific standardization of data collection through protocol and written documentation, forms, and techniques, in accordance with standardized scientific methods.
 - » Providing technical support, as needed to improve data collection and analysis procedures, at existing count-sites.
 - » Providing inspiration, expertise and training in support of local volunteers to

facilitate the start-up of new count sites, especially in regions where data are lacking.

- » Providing technical support for each site for the analysis and interpretation of migration count data.
- To provide and maintain a central depository for migration data to facilitate its use in accordance with the HMANA Data Release Policy.
- To ensure the timely dissemination of migration counts and trends to HMANA members, the scientific community, public and private agencies, conservationists, and the general public to promote the cause of raptor conservation by;
 - » Communicating through publications, web pages and email listserv (BIRDHAWK), and conferences.
 - » Collaborating with organizations which have similar missions.

Site Coordinator and Official Counter Goals

The site coordinator and official counters at the tower are the HBMO's primary daily representatives. Since they are in major contact with the visitors at the tower, each site coordinator and official counters should be familiar with:

- the tower site history and park history,
- the purposes and goals of HBMO and HBCA,
- the purposes and goals of HMANA and
- the procedures of hawk ID data collection, recording, and Internet data management.

This manual and other sources will help site coordinator and official counters gain the knowledge they will need to interact with the public and the knowledge and resources to conduct their 'citizen science' for the hawk-watching community.

HBMO has been working closely with the ERCA, Essex Region Conservation Authority, in an advisory capacity to assist in the administrative control of the birding facilities at Holiday Beach Conservation Area. Through position papers and committee work, HBMO has suggested environmental policies for avian management of the tower site, the raptor banding sites, the non-raptor banding sites, and the management of habitat in the HBCA areas that maintain the avian wildlife. HBMO's interests are not just with raptors but

include all species of birds and other migratory animals within the western Lake Erie basin.

Hawk Migration Field Manual Goals

One way to assess the effect of environmental changes on the biology of raptors is to conduct population studies. Many North American studies of this nature have been done over the past 50 years, but unfortunately, many of them have been, for various reasons, inconclusive in their findings. Biologists are beginning to realize that maybe 25+ years of “good” data are called for to statistically note changes, if any, in raptor populations. Any acceptable study must be based on data that has been obtained through standard means. With this premise in mind and with the multiple changes in the count area, the Hawk Migration Committee studied the procedures by which we and other hawk sites collect data and the committee has prepared this *Hawk Migration Field Manual*.

Our hawk count is and has been conducted entirely by volunteers. Site procedures have evolved over the years. The data forms and methods suggested by HMANA were used since 1975 and annual reports were sent to them for publication. Since 1985 more importance was placed on uniformity of collecting and recording data at the site. By making use of the personal computer a higher level of record keeping was developing. Today a very basic and flexible personal computer database entry,

storage, and retrieval system is being used by HBMO. In fact this system, developed and maintained by one of our members, is the same system adopted and being used by HMANA for member hawk sites.

Four basic components to the site management will be addressed in this manual. They include:

- (1). reliable identification of raptors,
- (2). consistent field record keeping of species and meteorological data,
- (3). electronic database management, and
- (4). analyzing and publishing the data.

Each hawk counter needs to become familiar with this manual and follow its guidelines. The Hawk Migration Committee realizes that some of the suggested procedures contained within this document are the same as those that have been used for many years. Some are just common sense. Some are new and need clarification. Some procedures may not be to an individual’s liking but should be followed to maintain consistency. This consistency is essential in the collecting of migration data that is observed and recorded through standard means. Each year these procedures and guidelines need to be reviewed and updated. All field workers should evaluate these procedures and make recommended changes and refinements to the Hawk Migration Committee.

Data Sheet Instructions

Record all weather data at the beginning of the hour. The first reading of the day should be done one-half hour after setup and initiation of the daily count. This will allow the instruments to acclimate to the site. Always keep the instruments in a shaded place. The primary tool is the *Kestrel 4000*, manufactured by Nielsen-Kellerman, 104 West 15th St., Chester, PA 19013. On the weather portion of the HOURLY data sheet you need to record the appropriate data in the BOXES provided.

The following meteorological and observational data sets are the same as noted on the data HOURLY sheet. Some of the descriptions are a little different since manual was edited after the sheets were prepared. Read through this section before using the Kestrel 4000.

It is understood that mistakes in recording data will happen. You are encouraged to reread the instruments and the codes you enter on the HOURLY data sheet. It is also important that the same care be given when entering the codes into the database (Hawkcount.org). In some cases a history

or some other tidbit is given for one of the data points.

Flight Direction

This value is usually determined at the end of the hour. Generally it is a western direction but might be different. CIRCLE the compass direction migrants are HEADING, i.e., S, SSW, etc. The Tower railings are positioned north-south and east-west. The lake is south.

Height of Flight

This CODE is recorded at the end of the hour.

Entry Code	Majority Height of the Hourly Raptor Flight
0	Height of flight is below eye level.
1	Height of flight is eye level to about 30 meters.
2	Height of flight is above 30 meters but birds seen easily with unaided eye (eyeglasses not counted as aids).
3	Height of flight is at the limit of unaided vision.
4	Height of flight is beyond limit of unaided eye but visible with binoculars 10x power or less.
5	Height of flight is at the limit of 10x power binoculars.
6	Height of flight is beyond limit of 10x power binoculars, but can detect with binoculars or spotting scope of greater power. Mark "H.F." in COMMENT box and note magnification.
7	Height of flight is found at several levels equally. Therefore no predominant height..

Precipitation

Enter the CODE on the data sheet.

Entry Code	Precipitation Type
0	No Precipitation
1	Haze or Fog
2	Drizzle
3	Rain
4	Thunderstorm
5	Snow
6	Wind Driven Dust, Sand or Snow

Wind Speed

The **Beaufort Wind Strength Scale** was long in use as a system for estimating wind speeds. In 1806 by Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort (1774-1857) of the British navy introduced this scale to describe wind effects on a fully rigged man-of-war sailing vessel. It was later extended to include descriptions of effects on land features as well. Today the accepted international practice is to report wind speed in knots (1 knot equals about 1.85 km, or 1.15 mi, per hour).

The Beaufort scale is divided into a series of values, from 0 for calm winds to 12 and above for hurricanes. Each value represents a specific range and classification of wind speeds with accompanying descriptions of the effects on surface features.

Face into the wind holding the Kestrel 4000 instrument. Read the miles/hour or km/hour and record the CODE in the table on the data sheet.

Entry Code	mi/hr	km/hr	Type and Visual Evidence
0	< 1	< 01	Calm or Still: Smoke rises vertically and large water surfaces are mirror smooth.
1	01-03	01-05	Light Air: Smoke/Steam moves slightly with breeze and shows direction of wind.
2	04-07	06-11	Light Breeze: You can feel wind on your face and hear the leaves start to rustle.
3	8-12	12-19	Gentle Breeze: Smoke will move horizontally and small branches start to sway. Wind extends a light flag.
4	13-18	20-28	Moderate Breeze: Loose dust or sand on the ground will move and larger branches will sway, loose paper blows around, and fairly frequent whitecaps on water occur.
5	19-24	29-38	Fresh Breeze: Small trees in leaf sway.
6	25-31	39-49	Strong Breeze: Large tree branches move, open wires, such as electrical wires, begin to "whistle", umbrellas are difficult to keep under control.
7	32-38	50-61	Moderate Gale: Large trees begin to sway, noticeably difficult to walk.
8	39-46	62-74	Fresh Gale: Twigs and small branches are broken from trees, walking into the wind is very difficult.
9	47-54	75-87	Strong Gale: Slight damage occurs to buildings, shingles are blown off of roofs.
10	55-63	88-101	Whole Gale: Large trees are uprooted, building damage is considerable.
11	64-72	102-115	Storm: Extensive widespread damage. These typically occur only at sea, and rarely inland.
12	>73	>115	Hurricane: Extreme destruction.

Visibility

Judge from your longest view and enter the visibility code (VH, H, C, VC)

* Object distances have been checked (from the ground before 1985) using a sextant and aeronautical, navigational and topographical charts. There may be an error margin of 0.05 km due to heat distortion.

Objects visible from the Tower	Mi.	Km.	Direction
Radio Tower with flashing light	10.1 *	16.25 *	N
Highway Bridge over Big Creek	3.0 □	4.82 □	NNW
Allied Chemical stack, Amherstburg	7.0 □	11.0 □	NNW
Edison Trenton Power stacks (red & white)	9.5 □	15.0 □	WNW
Boblo Island Tower	5.5*	8.85*	NW
Detroit River Flashing Navigation Light	5.0 *	8.0 *	SW
Point Mouillee Banana Dike	8.0 *	12.87 *	SW
Edison Fermi II Cooling Towers	11.75 *	18.9 *	SW
Monroe Edison Power Plant stacks	18.0 *	28.9 *	SSW
Ohio Cooling Towers (Tops are barely visible above the horizon but usually steam is visible.)	29.5 *	47.47 *	S
Lake Erie Beach	0.12 □	0.2 □	S
West Sister Island Light (Looks like a missile on the horizon.)	20.35 *	32.7 *	ESE

Although all observers are volunteers, some determination needs to be made regarding the hawk identification abilities of each participant. This should help to maintain high standards of data collecting and give credibility to our hawk program. Every effort should be made to encourage participation and learning in an atmosphere of enjoyment and camaraderie. Helping each other is the key to successfully identifying the next fly-by. There are four recognized types of site individuals; Site

Cloud Cover

Record percent of sky with background cloud cover.

Humidity

Use the Kestrel 4000 and record the percent relative humidity at the start of the hour as a percent.

Wind Direction

The Tower railings are positioned north-south and east-west. The lake is south. Enter compass direction from which the wind is coming, i.e., N, NNE, SE, etc. If variable, enter VAR.

Temperature

Use the Kestrel 4000 and record the temperature at the start of the hour in degrees Celsius.

Barometric Pressure

Use the Kestrel 4000 and record the barometric pressure at the start of the hour in inches of mercury.

Site Coordinator(s)

The Site Coordinator is the individual(s) in charge of the hourly count and data entry. Only one individual should be in charge at a time. Print their full name and list the total time for the hour to the nearest quarter hour. Specify time in minutes. There may be more coordinators for an hour but with different times.

Observers

The number of observers CONTRIBUTING to the count for each hour should be recorded along with their time to the nearest quarter hour. Specify time in minutes. Print their full names. Usually a maximum of four individuals should be used in any one hour.

Duration of Observation

Specify time in minutes. Round to the nearest quarter hour, i.e., 15, 30, 45, 60.

Official Observers

Coordinator, Official Observer, Observer Trainee, and Site Visitor. They all have specific qualifications, training, and duties at the hawk site.

Qualifications, Training, and Duties of Tower Staff

- **Site Coordinators** are determined at the pre-season meeting in August and are chosen from the groups assigned to one of the weekly count days.

- **Official Observers** must have had two years of regular counting experience with HBMO or regularly participated in another hawk watch site recognized by HMANA, or successfully participated in our training program.
- Abilities of site **visitors** will vary and their participation and recording of their sightings will be determined by the site coordinator.
- The training program will have of a minimum of three (3) different days totaling eighteen (18) hours of observation and instruction.
- The Hawk Migration Co-Chairpersons will notify Site Coordinators when an individual wishes to begin the training program. When the training has been completed, the Site Coordinators will immediately make recommendation to the Hawk Migration Co-Chairpersons, they will make a determination to including the Trainee in that years count program. Further training may be necessary. Every effort should be made to help the Trainee.
- The abilities of official observers will change with age and health. It is hoped that when inconsistencies of identification are continuously being made by an official observer that the matter can be handled properly by the Site Coordinator and Hawk Migration Chairperson.
- There is no limit to the number of observers at the site. It is expected that usually four will be listed on the hourly data sheet.

Site Coordinator

Each day during the count period, one of the volunteer observer or counters will be the daily site coordinator and act as the **tower manager**. The site coordinator will be determined at the pre-season

meeting and will execute their duties on each of their group's assigned days. The site coordinator will be an observer and will also have the following responsibilities.

1. Be the **contact person** for that day. If there is information to be given to all counters, then the site coordinator will be contacted and will see that daily members are informed. If a member wishes to direct visitors to the site, then the site coordinator's name should be given as the contact person.
2. **Verify** that data are collected, recorded and reported according to established guidelines. This includes confirming that the data is being entered into the Hawkcount.org database. During the season a review of the database with the original data sheets must be done. The site coordinator does not have to do this review, it may be assigned or volunteered.
3. **Make decisions** for the daily group. These may include site selection, daily duties of other observers, coordination of multiple site observers, verification of data or identification, talking with site visitors and other activities that may occur. All decisions should be based on the guidelines of this document, common sense judgment, and personal welfare.
4. **Confirm** that the site is covered on their assigned day. If the Site Coordinator will be absent, they will assign a temporary site coordinator from their group. If they are the only site observer, then they will find a replacement for that time and immediately report this to the Hawk Migration Co-Chairpersons.

Other Considerations

Site Location

Since the acquisition of the tower, the ideal location for observation would be the top of the tower. Therefore, the preferred count site is the top of the tower. An alternate site, the second level or the ground at the base of the tower, may be chosen because of weather (excessive rain or wind) or because of acrophobia or because of health reasons. Changes in the count are determined by the site coordinator and must be noted on the hourly data sheets. Multiple sites may be established as needed, but the tower site will always be maintained. Separate data forms are to be used for each secondary site. Records of the non-raptors should likewise be maintained and submitted for individual count sites.

At the moment the secondary site data is not to be entered into the database.

Flight Plane

Most hawks are migrating on a flight path from east to west. Individuals will be counted and recorded only if they cross the north-south line through the site. Westbound birds are recorded as positive birds and eastbound birds are recorded as negative birds. This negative or reverse direction should be noted on the hourly data sheet. Resident birds are frequently difficult to determine, especially Bald Eagles. **Resident birds should be noted on the hourly forms IN THE COMMENT BOX ONLY and recorded as 'residents'. Giving a complete description of these birds will aid others in resolution of resident status.** Post these

descriptions on the storage cabinet and in the log book. **Do not include the resident birds in the hourly totals.** It should be noted that experience has shown that non-resident Bald Eagles and other non-resident raptors tend to fly through the area on a determined path (their behavior is not leisurely) and are most often at altitudes above 300 feet. When there is doubt of the bird's residency, the site coordinator will make a determination. This behavior is also noted for Turkey Vultures in the early season. Many reside in the quarry northwest of the tower.

Daily Time of Count

Every effort should be made to observe and count between the hours of 7:00 AM EST and 4:00 PM EST. Observations and counts may be done outside these times as determined by the site coordinator. In September it is hoped that the count can start one hour earlier and end 1 to 2 hours later. Migrants have a larger window of migration in the early season and a small window late in the season. In November the count could start one hour later and end on time or earlier. If you must leave the site very early for personal reasons, you should make arrangements with someone to cover that lost observation time. This is important during September and October.

Viewing Equipment

To properly identify hawks, seven (7) power or higher binoculars must be used. Using spotting scopes is suggested but not required.

Weather Equipment

These measurements should be taken and recorded on the hourly sheets; temperature ° C, wind direction, wind speed, sky cover, visibility, barometric pressure, and humidity. Any unusual weather during

the hour will be noted on that hour's sheet. Weather data and observations will be taken on the hour and recorded on the hourly sheets. Many meteorological measurements can be made by looking at the sky. Others must be gotten from reading instruments. The primary tool is the *Kestrel 4000*, manufactured by Nielsen-Kellerman, 104 West 15th St., Chester, PA 19013. Use this to record the: Time, Temperature, Humidity, and Air Pressure. Each site coordinator and official observers should be trained in reading and maintaining the weather instrument. This can be done at the pre-season meeting.

Recording Data

The primary objective is to identify each passing hawk to species. The numbers observed are recorded on the hourly sheets. The secondary objective is to determine the age and sex of most birds. If age or sex of the bird cannot be determined it is recorded in the spaces for unknown ('Unk') or undetermined ('U'). If the bird's age and or sex can be determined, mark this individual in either the Adult ('A') or Immature ('I'), etc.). If the sex of the individual is known, record in either the Male, Female, Female or Immature area ('M', 'F', 'F or I'). Other secondary information for selective species may also requested, such as color phase or time of observation. Please make every effort to know and record as much as possible for every bird. This year, 2002, we want to pay close attention to the Red-shouldered Hawk and list the age classes.

Reporting Daily Raptor Total for Hawkcount.org

Information will be given in a separate document.

Report Forms

Hourly Raptor Migration and Weather/Observation Form

This form is a two-sided with hourly raptors on one side and the weather/observers on the other. Be sure to date each form and list the hour. Use this form to enter data to the database. Return the forms to the Hawk Migration Co-Chairpersons ASAP.

Daily Non-Raptor Migration Report

- Recording of migrants other than raptors is second in priority to tallying, aging, and sexing of hawks, and is optional for observers to participate. Over the years, much valuable data has been gathered for many species along with hawks, and information from these daily report forms is the source of data for the *Annual Migration Reports* distributed to all HBMO

members. Hawk counters are urged to participate to the extent they feel comfortable, even if it means counting or estimating only Blue Jays. Even one piece of information can help fill out a broader picture of migration at Holiday Beach. Forms should be sent to Paul Pratt, Non-hawk Migration Chairperson, by placement in the appropriate folder. Please attempt to turn in your forms on time as the compiler is frequently asked for running totals of many species. Please follow these guidelines when filling out this form.

- Make sure that the date, start and end time, and observer names are listed.
- List all contributing observers.
- Put an asterisk (*) by the sightings YOU feel are unusual.

- Do not use word descriptions (i.e., many, lots, hundreds, a few). Also, a check mark or an X in the “**Totals**” column can only be interpreted as a 1 (one), which may not be an accurate interpretation of the data. Only numerical data can be databased and analyzed.
- Give documentation for species listed in bold italic type; for species not on this list; for unusual numbers of common species, or for unusual arrival or departure dates.
- Document rarities based on the guidelines in the section on reporting rare sightings.
- If recording all species is overwhelming at first, try to focus on Blue Jays, Ruby-throated

Hummingbirds, Swallows, and American Goldfinches.

- Please make sure that you total all species, and that you have tallied them accurately.
- Send late forms to:
Paul Pratt - Non-Raptor Report Compiler,
Ojibway Nature Centre,
5200 Matchette Road,
Windsor, Ontario N9C 4E8,
519-966-5852,
prairie@netcore.ca
- The Non-hawk Migration Committee Chairperson will gladly assist anyone in refining their identification skills.

Rare Bird Reporting Criteria, Procedures, and Techniques

Please keep the attached Rare Bird Report Form, Checklist of Fall Birds, and Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) Provincial Review List for your reference. Also, please read the attached article on How to Document Rare Birds. It provides good information on ways to document birds as well as why it is done, what happens to the record, and how it may be reviewed. Criteria and procedures at Holiday Beach may fall into one of three situations:

Situation 1

Any birds seen that are listed on the Review List for Southern Ontario (attached) requires documentation. These records will not be reviewed by the compiler (Paul Pratt), but will be copied for HBMO records and sent to the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) for review. The compiler will follow up with the OBRC to determine whether the records were accepted or rejected. The observer(s) submitting a report can be notified of the OBRC decisions upon request to the compiler. Note that even a rejected record is held on file and is of value. Records are periodically re-reviewed, such as when new information on the vagrancy of certain species is learned. Also note that single observer sightings are

more difficult to corroborate, and can be more easily rejected. If there is any other birder in the area, get them on the bird, then get their name and address!

Situation 2

Any species listed as ACCIDENTAL (a) on the attached Holiday Beach Checklist of Fall Birds (checklist) requires documentation. If it is also on the Review List of the OBRC, then the procedure in Situation 1 will be followed. If it is not, the record will not be sent to the OBRC, but will be copied for the HBMO files and reviewed by the compiler. Decisions of this review will be reflected in the Annual Migration Report.

Situation 3

Documentation is preferred for species listed as RARE (r) on the checklist. Records will be reviewed as in Situation B. Note that lack of documentation will make acceptance of certain records difficult. Any suggestions that may improve this process are very welcome.

Paul Pratt

Ontario Bird Records Committee

Rare Bird Report Form

Species: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Number-Age-Sex: _____ Time: _____ to _____

Location: _____

Habitat: _____

Weather Conditions: _____

Distance: _____

Optical Equipment: _____

Photographs Taken?: Yes: ____ No: ____

Other Observers:

Name	Address	Phone	e-mail
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_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
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Experience of main observer: _____

Date Description Written: ____/____/____

Description of Sighting: (include size, shape, colour patterns, song, call notes, behaviour, and other diagnostic characteristics, but only what was actually observed in the field. Attach sketches, photographs, and additional sheets, if necessary.)

Similar Species / How Eliminated:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Address: _____

Mail this form along with accompanying materials to:

Rob Dobos, OBRC Secretary
1156 5th Concession Road West
RR#2
Waterdown ON L0R 2H2
rob.dobos@ec.gc.ca
HBMO Field Manual