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BOOK REVIEW

AUTUMN HAWK FLIGHTS. Donald S. Heintzelman, Rutgers University Press, 30 College Avenue, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903, 1975. 399 p. Illus. Index. \$30.00.

Hawks, unlike most birds, migrate during the day; consequently their sometimes spectacular flights south in the fall are witnessed and enjoyed by thousands of enthusiastic birdwatchers. An interest in migration, and a general fascination with birds of prey, have for many years brought uncounted numbers of people to key points in the eastern United States where the southern passage of hawks can be observed and their numbers counted.

Much has been learned about the timing of these flights, the navigational principles involved, and the weather systems that influence them. In fact, more is known about the migratory patterns of North American hawks than about those of most birds. This knowledge spawns more questions, and the answers to some of them could have far reaching merit. Perhaps I am just trying to justify the hours which many of us have squandered watching hawks, but somehow the data gathered should provide information on hawk population trends. Then, because of the hawks' role as a top predator in complex food webs, this information could be used to help assess the status of entire communities.

If you are interested in any of these problems, or are simply captivated by soaring hawks, you will find *Autumn Hawk Flights* an interesting reference. The author has assembled a great deal of information, much of which comes from reports and other sources which could otherwise be difficult to obtain. The text has six parts: (1) an introduction describing methods of observation and identification; (2) a survey of the known eastern hawk lookouts; (3) "Raptor Morphology, Anatomy, and Flight"; (4) and (5) discussions of migration and weather and of migration routes; and (6) on the evolution of the Broad-winged Hawk. The book contains 40 figures, 60 tables, 48 maps, 88 black-and-white photographs, and an extensive bibliography.

Despite containing a wealth of useful information, many of the 18 chapters do not live up to their ambitious titles. (Part 6 is particularly weak.) The tables, figures, and maps vary considerably in value. Most of the pictures are good shots of hawks in flight, and much can be learned from them. Others, mostly of various lookouts and people peering through binoculars, contribute little, except possibly to the cost of the book. This already is unnecessarily high and could have been held down by more judicious editing. Much of the material in the book stems from Heintzelman's own observations on Bake Oven Knob in Pennsylvania, and most of the rest is from a relatively confined area of the central Atlantic states. Some of the author's opinions and speculations do not seem justified in view of scant data.

Hopefully, future editions will show improvement, for in all fairness the book is a useful one that, judging from the crowds at Hawk Mountain, should have a large audience. Perhaps CBC members will be inspired by the lack of data on hawk movements in the Carolinas and will not be influenced by Heintzelman's belief that only those observations from places receiving large volumes of hawk traffic are significant. —DAVID LEE, 1 September 1975.