

The 2018 season for the Brockway Mountain Hawkwatch

Author of this report and main counter, Bob Baez

March

This is the first job where I commuted to work on a snowmobile. I was wide awake by the time I got to the site and the second cup of coffee was unnecessary but drunk anyway. March was cold and sometimes very windy but only 2 full days were missed due to fog or snow. The count was below average in part due to a string of storms going from west to east to the south of the Keweenaw Peninsula. This pattern continued well into April. The chart below is for the month of March for the last nine seasons. Bald Eagles were the bulk of the March count with a season high of 77 on March 28. No Sharp-shinned Hawks were counted and only 5 Red-tailed Hawks, 1 Rough-legged and zero Red-shouldered.

March	Obs Hrs	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF	UE	UR	NS	TOTAL	
2018	90	0	0	0	181	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	5	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	197
2017	75	0	0	0	77	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	95
2016	65	0	0	0	72	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	12	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	96
2015	67	0	0	0	110	0	1	0	7	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	127
2014	89	0	2	0	332	0	1	0	12	0	0	0	1	0	19	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	370
2013	80	0	0	0	273	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	1	1	21	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	309
2012	126	0	2	0	645	15	39	0	1	12	0	0	106	63	13	9	2	0	0	5	0	12	2	0	0	926
2011	97	0	0	0	147	0	1	0	3	2	0	0	9	1	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	171
2010	83	0	1	0	435	25	21	0	13	1	0	0	125	11	15	1	4	0	1	1	1	16	3	0	0	674
average	86	0	1	0	252	5	7	0	5	2	0	0	30	9	11	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	329

April

The snazzy yellow snowmobile was swapped for an ATV with tank treads in place of tires. I looked bad with the new treads unless someone saw me drive it. Another cold month with storms to the south blocking birds or pushing them east but only 4 days were lost to weather. The count was below average. Buteos started moving on April 20 with the first double digit Red-tailed day and the first of the season Red-shouldered Hawks. The always delightful to watch Rough-legged Hawks numbered 290 from April 21 thru May 7 and continued strong to May 21. April 21, 22 and 23 were the first triple digit count days and the migration got rolling on the 29th. The first Sharp-shinned showed up on 4/20 with a season high of 378 on 4/30. Cooper's Hawks were well represented. April 30th had season highs for 5 species: Sharpies, 27 Northern Harriers, 5 Cooper's Hawks, 3 Red-shouldered Hawks and 5 Peregrines (5 also on 5/7). April 29th had the season high of 89 Red-tailed Hawks.

April	Obs Hrs	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF	UE	UR	NS	TOTAL
2018	194	0	349	17	237	64	601	8	6	6	281	1	307	160	15	23	5	13	0	1	0	0	0	0	2094
2017	168	0	259	10	247	54	267	0	9	4	776	2	400	80	11	24	6	4	0	3	0	0	0	2	2158
2016	187	0	391	3	216	97	394	3	8	8	41	0	680	148	20	36	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	2054
2015	204	0	279	5	263	43	279	2	4	5	96	0	524	109	15	31	6	2	0	0	0	0	55	0	1718
2014	141	0	514	10	689	32	225	3	6	5	3	0	642	80	28	32	23	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	2297
2013	159	0	817	33	676	92	1792	9	26	5	416	1	893	315	46	116	22	30	0	0	0	0	89	0	5378
2012	224	0	172	18	192	89	450	2	14	5	802	3	350	96	13	36	3	4	2	0	0	2	11	0	2264
2011	194	1	257	6	209	44	403	3	13	3	99	0	329	68	15	29	11	6	1	5	2	2	2	0	1508
2010	193	0	432	21	201	107	663	6	8	6	180	2	429	99	9	69	17	9	19	50	3	2	9	0	2341
average	185	0	386	14	326	69	564	4	10	5	299	1	506	128	19	44	11	8	2	7	1	1	18	0	2424

May

The May count was above average. From April 29 to May 30 the count was 11521, a significant portion of this spring's migration. Brockway Mountain Road reopened on May 9. On May 7 Jon Peacock and Mike Myers, no, not that Mike Myers, walked up the hill and caught a ride with Bill. They were of great help on the highest day count of the season and then walked back out. I love that dedication.

The period from April 29 thru May 7 was the peak period or included the peak period for 10 species and had a total count of 5078. The first chart below shows the totals for this period with the peak period species having a red background. May had a secondary peak period for total birds, 6401, primarily Broad-winged Hawks, from May 11 thru May 30. The second chart is the comparative May chart.

DATE	TOTAL	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF
29-Apr	343		44	4	34	11	64	2		1	53		89	30	1	6		4			
30-Apr	749	0	22	8	16	27	378	2	0	3	224	1	31	25	0	7	0	5	0	0	0
1-May	1074	0	26	14	6	10	349	5	1	0	605	0	32	19	2	3	0	2	0	0	0
2-May	1						1														
3-May	971	0	32	1	3	5	260	2	2	2	564	0	36	55	0	7	0	2	0	0	0
4-May	166	0	2	0	4	2	60	0	3	0	73	0	7	12	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
5-May	305	0	27	0	0	4	22	0	0	0	225	0	13	10	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
6-May	183	0	36	0	10	2	13	0	0	0	99	1	19	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
7-May	1286	0	19	1	39	4	152	2	1	2	961	0	51	36	3	7	1	5	1	1	0
Total	5078	0	208	28	112	65	1299	13	7	8	2804	2	278	187	9	33	1	22	1	1	
Season																					
Total	14186	0	893	54	916	112	1697	20	19	18	9196	6	737	354	36	71	16	36	2	2	1

May	Obs Hrs	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF	UE	UR	NS	TOTAL
2018	237	0	433	31	368	45	1081	10	11	11	7807	4	360	191	15	42	9	23	2	1	1	0	0	0	10445
2017	195	0	437	12	178	47	567	0	5	3	5083	1	554	25	14	42	5	11	0	2	0	0	0	0	6986
2016	207	0	390	14	296	24	620	1	2	2	5287	1	585	13	13	27	16	20	0	46	0	9	1	0	7367
2015	205	1	376	27	274	52	1006	0	5	10	3351	2	303	101	5	49	11	30	0	0	0	0	127	0	5730
2014	169	0	956	62	459	30	628	9	2	8	10652	6	728	37	21	54	15	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	13712
2013	184	1	992	124	357	36	1162	9	8	14	9290	4	1042	68	14	124	26	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	13311
2012	230	0	105	41	261	67	1409	10	8	0	11485	2	736	79	4	22	7	20	0	8	0	0	2	0	14266
2011	211	0	211	14	176	34	2008	4	7	0	7617	4	356	29	2	81	16	27	0	2	2	0	4	0	10594
2010	225	0	283	23	169	12	896	15	8	2	4542	5	130	17	9	24	22	13	6	60	2	0	8	0	6246
average	207	0	465	39	282	39	1042	6	6	6	7235	3	533	62	11	52	14	25	1	13	1	1	16	0	9851

June

June was below average. The month started slow but southerly winds kicked in the second week bringing Broad-winged Hawks, with a fair number of adults. The south winds continued but with unsettled weather of rain or low overcast until the counts end. The count was extended one day to take advantage of the wind but with only modest results. Bald Eagles were still moving and a few late roughies were a pleasant surprise. One day was lost to fog and a few days were shortened by rain.

June	Obs Hrs	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF	UE	UR	NS	TOTAL	
2018	106	0	111	6	130	3	15	0	0	1	1108	0	65	2	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1449
2017	100	0	100	2	65	3	8	0	0	0	562	0	156	2	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	905
2016	86	0	85	4	79	1	5	0	1	0	1230	0	94	0	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1505
2015	106	0	142	1	125	0	26	1	0	0	1189	0	109	0	0	3	2	1	0	3	0	0	10	0	0	1612
2014	66	0	297	2	178	3	10	2	0	0	1667	0	90	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2255
2013	110	0	354	18	135	6	32	3	1	2	5947	0	246	1	0	19	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6767
2012	87	0	6	3	57	4	25	2	0	0	2287	1	62	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2451
2011	82	0	9	1	13	2	13	0	0	0	1630	0	51	0	0	4	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1727
2010	72	0	44	3	21	1	4	1	0	0	212	0	14	0	0	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	306
average	90	0	128	4	89	3	15	1	0	0	1759	0	99	1	0	5	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2109

The last nine seasons

This season's count was below average. Sharp-shinned, Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawks all started late but had above average counts. Cooper's Hawks were numerous with the 2 counted on March 28 being the earliest record for the past nine seasons. Red-tailed Hawks were well below average while the other buteos were above or close to average. Rough-legged Hawks had the second highest count in 9 seasons.

The observation hours were above normal. The early spring storms mostly stayed to the south and there were only a total of seven full days lost to weather.

Season	Obs Hrs	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UA	UB	UF	UE	UR	NS	TOTAL	
2018	625	0	893	54	916	112	1697	20	19	18	9196	6	737	354	36	71	16	36	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	14186
2017	537	0	796	24	567	105	842	0	14	7	6421	3	1121	107	31	69	13	17	0	5	0	0	0	2	0	10144
2016	544	0	866	21	663	122	1020	4	13	11	6558	1	1371	161	39	67	22	25	0	46	0	9	1	2	0	11022
2015	581	1	797	33	772	95	1312	3	16	15	4636	2	937	211	24	83	19	33	0	3	0	3	192	0	0	9187
2014	464	0	1769	74	1658	65	864	14	20	13	12322	6	1461	117	68	87	40	53	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	18634
2013	532	1	2163	175	1441	134	2987	21	40	21	15653	5	2182	385	81	259	52	70	0	1	0	5	89	0	0	25765
2012	666	0	285	62	1155	175	1923	14	23	17	14574	6	1254	238	30	67	13	26	2	13	1	14	15	0	0	19907
2011	585	1	477	21	545	80	2425	7	23	5	9346	4	745	98	23	114	28	34	1	9	5	2	7	0	0	14000
2010	573	0	760	47	826	145	1584	22	29	9	4934	7	698	127	33	97	44	22	26	113	6	18	20	0	0	9567
average	567	0	978	57	949	115	1628	12	22	13	9293	4	1167	200	41	102	27	35	3	21	1	6	36	0	0	14712

Visitors

Many people visited the site mostly for the views, some for the hawk watch. I was impressed with their considerate manners. If I looked busy they did not ask me questions and overall were pleasant people. Guests came from 5 continents. Tokyo Japan, Sydney Australia, Brazil, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium and Finland were represented. Most visitors were from the UP and Lower Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Travelers also came from Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, California and Nevada. Calumet primary and middle school classes and Copper Harbor school visited and also a group from Michigan Tech and Finlandia U. and an Elderhostel group. Lots of Keweenaw Peninsula folks showed up for the hawks.

Support

It takes a lot of hard work and effort by many people to keep a hawk watch up and running. Thanks to the following people for their support.

Joe Youngman and Debra Mues covered the count on my days off and Joe was of great help teaching me the ropes of the site and how to enter data in the digital data base.

Bill and Bonnie of The Tamarack Inn maintained and stored The Shack.

I congratulate the leaders of this site for bringing some civility to hawk counting by providing shelter and a swivel office chair on site.

Karen Karl kept the show running and listened to my moaning when things were not rosy and hosted me at The Brockway Inn before and after the count.

Ken and Vicki Stigers put me up in the comfortable Pines Resort for the season.

Hannah Rooks kept things running when Karen was away.

The friendly people at The Copper Harbor Fuel Stop kept the exotic vehicles in fuel.

There are more people and groups behind the scene that I did not meet.

I enjoyed this season in a very special and beautiful place. Good birds, good people.

Below are several tables. The first is first date, last date and max count day for each raptor. The rest of the tables are each count day by month.

Most of the tables in this report are modified reports from Hawkcount.org data.

APPENDIX A: Migrant Raptors – Brockway Mountain, Spring 2015.

SPECIES	FIRST	MAX	MAX DATE	LAST	E. TOTAL	W. TOTAL
Turkey Vulture	9 Apr	66	23 Apr	16 Jun	893	367
Black Vulture					0	0
Golden Eagle	18 Mar	5	21 Apr	25 May	36	2
Osprey	22 Apr	14	1 May	13 Jun	54	3
Northern Harrier	21 Apr	27	30 Apr	14 Jun	112	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	20 Apr	378	30 Apr	16 Jun	1697	259
Cooper's Hawk	28 Mar	5	30 Apr	12 May	20	2
Northern Goshawk	20 Mar	3	4 May	23 May	19	0
Bald Eagle	17 Mar	77	28 Mar	16 Jun	916	173
Red-shouldered Hawk	20 Apr	3	30 Apr	8 Jun	18	2
Broad-winged Hawk	21 Apr	961	7 May	16 Jun	9,196	2330
Swainson's Hawk	28 Apr	1	various	21 May	6	0
Red-tailed Hawk	17 Mar	89	29 Apr	16 Jun	737	56
Rough-legged Hawk	23 Mar	55	3 May	11 Jun	354	28
American Kestrel	22 Apr	8	22 Apr	9 Jun	71	5
Merlin	8 Apr	2	4/21 5/25	13 Jun	16	2
Peregrine Falcon	8 Apr	5	4/30 5/7	27 May	36	1
Unidentified Accipiter					2	
Unidentified Buteo					2	1
Unidentified Falcon					1	
Unidentified Eagle						
Unidentified Raptor						
TOTAL					14186	3241

