

TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF RAPTOR TREND DATA FOR MONTANA^{TWS}

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A state-wide system of raptor survey routes was established in 1977 to develop long-term trend data on diurnal raptors. One route is located in each of the states 47 latilongs (degree blocks), and routes average 50 miles long. Routes are run by cooperators during nesting season annually from May 15-June 5. Number of birds seen per 1000 miles of route are calculated by species. Three year running means are presented to reduce effect of uncontrollable variables, and a regression is calculated to illustrate species' trends over the course of the survey effort. Population increases and decreases are reported for species for which this technique is adequate, and an example is provided for a species which cannot be monitored with this technique. Comparisons are made with Breeding Bird Survey data as well as other studies which corroborate and validate this technique. Since use of extensive transect data is not equally valid for all species, cautions are provided.