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### FIRST NESTING OF COOPER'S HAWKS (*ACCIPITER COOPERII*) IN NEW YORK CITY SINCE 1955

Many species of diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey breed in large cities in North America including Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*), and Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*). Over approximately the last two decades, several observers have discovered Cooper's Hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*) nesting in suburban and urban United States (Stahlecker and Beach 1979, *Inland Bird Banding* 51:56–57; Boal and Mannan 1998, *J. Wildl. Manag.* 62:864–871). We report on two Cooper's Hawk nests in New York City, the first documented breeding of this raptor here since 1955.

Historically, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 1940s, breeding Cooper's Hawks were occasionally found in remote, forested sections of New York City such as in Bronx and Richmond counties (Griscom 1923, *Abstract of the Proceedings of the Linnaean Society of New York* 37–38:73–87; Siebenheller 1981, *Breeding birds of Staten Island, 1881–1981*, Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences, Staten Island, NY U.S.A.). The last reported nests were in a large, forested park in Bronx County from 1951–55 (P.A. Buckley pers. comm.). During this time, with the use of synthetic chemicals such as DDT to control insects, a variety of raptor species declined throughout North America, including species that nested near or in cities (e.g., Herbert and Herbert 1965, *Auk* 82:62–94).

With the banning of DDT and similar chemicals in North America, many raptor species have significantly increased (e.g., Bednarz et al. 1990, *Auk* 107:96–109). Since the late 1980s, the Cooper's Hawk has become a fairly common fall migrant and winter resident in New York City, even in Central Park in Manhattan. By the mid-1990s, Cooper's Hawks were found breeding in all parts of New York State except New York City and Long Island (Marsi and Kirch 1998, *Cooper's Hawk*. Pages 188–189 in E. Levine [Ed.], *Bull's birds of New York state*, Comstock Publishing Associates, Ithaca, NY U.S.A.).

Since 1999, two pairs of nesting Cooper's Hawks have been found in New York City: in Richmond County (Staten Island) in 1999, and in Bronx County in 2001–03. When discovered in Richmond County, the male was in first-year (brown back) plumage. In 2001 at the Bronx County nest, the female was in first-year plumage, and the male was in subadult plumage (Clark and Wheeler 2001, *Hawks of North America*, Houghton-Mifflin Company, New York, NY U.S.A.).

We were able to study the nest in Bronx County at the New York Botanical Garden from 2001–03. This 101 ha park is heavily used by the public, and surrounded by parking lots, four-lane streets, and two highways. The nest was situated in nonnative conifers, between 60–120 m from any tract of contiguous forest. The habitat immediately surrounding the nest site was manicured lawn with well-spaced trees, interspersed with pedestrian pathways. These raptors preyed upon small birds and the occasional mammal. Young fledged in each of the 3 yr ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.0 young/yr). In the second and third years, more young fledged ca. one week earlier than compared to the first year nest. This pattern was consistent with previously-documented aspects of the nesting biology of Cooper's Hawks (e.g., Boal 2001, *Condor* 103:381–385). Adult Cooper's Hawks, presumably the same individuals that nested, were observed in the park throughout the winter. In spring 2004, with major construction 50 m from the nest, and extensive pruning of the nest tree, Cooper's Hawks did not breed in the park. No additional reports have been received concerning Cooper's Hawks currently nesting in other areas of New York City.—**Robert DeCandido** (e-mail: [rdcny@earthlink.net](mailto:rdcny@earthlink.net)), **Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Acopian Center, 410 Summer Valley Road, Orwigsburg, PA 17961 U.S.A.**; and **Deborah J. Allen**, **The Linnaean Society of New York, P.O. Box 1452, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009 U.S.A.**

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