

Talon wounds are equally present on ducks and geese attacked by Golden Eagles. Duck carcasses (listed only as *Anas* spp.) taken from a Golden Eagle nest showed “. . . talon marks on the shoulders and neck” (Arnold, 1954). Tener (1954) found several talon punctures along the back of a Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) attacked by a Golden Eagle whereas Wallace (1937) reported that an eagle “. . . buried its talons” into a domestic goose (*Anser* sp.). Recently, Kelleher and O’Malia (1971) watched a Golden Eagle snatch a drake Mallard in mid-air and hold it in its talons. Federal Game Management Agent Don Kriebel reports that he has seen Golden Eagles at Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge make mid-air attacks on waterfowl suffering from avian cholera; talons were used prominently in these strikes.

We thus cite our observation, with these others, as evidence that eagles indeed follow the expected course of action when striking at prey. Specifically, eagles use their formidable talons which, of course, are important adaptations to their mode of feeding. Contentions that carcasses of eagle prey are free of talon punctures would thus seem to be largely without merit.

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Roadside raptor census in Colorado—Winter 1971-72.—From 11 November 1971 through 15 February 1972, 13 counts of wintering birds of prey were made in the grasslands and wheatlands east of Colorado Springs and Fort Collins, Colorado. Two routes

TABLE 1
FREQUENCIES OF RAPTORS ON PLAINS EAST OF COLORADO SPRINGS AND FORT COLLINS,
WINTER 1971-72

Species	Total number observed	Miles traveled per individual
Rough-legged Hawk (<i>Buteo lagopus</i>)	107	10 (9)
Golden Eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)	57	18 (52)
Prairie Falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>)	36	29 (27)
Sparrow Hawk (<i>Falco sparverius</i>)	34*	31 (52)
Marsh Hawk (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	24	44 (22)
Ferruginous Hawk (<i>Buteo regalis</i>)	20	52 (112)
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	6	175 (186)
Red-tailed Hawk (<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>)	4	262 (419)
Pigeon Hawk (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)	3	349 (186)

* Eleven of the total were observed on 11 November 1971.

were followed, the first, extending south and east from Colorado Springs, was approximately 150 miles long, involving a total observation area of approximately 48,000 acres (a linear strip 150 miles long and ½ mile wide). The second route, beginning 8 miles east of Fort Collins, was 54 miles long and involved 17,280 acres. A total of 1,048 miles was driven during the censuses (910 miles near Colorado Springs, and 138 miles near Fort Collins). Both routes were chosen because of the abundance of utility poles upon which raptors perch. Observations were generally made early in the morning, on days when the wind was light (0-8 mph), using binoculars and a spotting scope. Table 1 summarizes the frequencies of raptors observed. The data in parenthesis were collected in the same area by Enderson (Wilson Bull., 77:82-83, 1965) in the winters of 1962-63 and 1963-64.

A total of 306 raptors was seen (one every 3.4 miles), including 15 buteos not identified to species. Although the 11 Sparrow Hawks observed on 11 November 1971 were not identified with respect to sex, 17 of 21 identified to sex on the following counts were males. Of 20 Marsh Hawks identified with respect to sex, 16 were males. Three of four Bald Eagles identified with respect to age were adults.

Enderson (op. cit.) counted raptors along nearly identical routes about 10 years ago, traveling 1,675 miles. He recorded Marsh Hawks and Pigeon Hawks twice as often as we did. We recorded Sparrow Hawks 1.7 times more often, and Ferruginous Hawks 2.1 times more often than he did. For the latter species, these and nesting season observations tend to support our impression that Ferruginous Hawks are more abundant in the region in the last two years. We recorded more Red-tailed Hawks, but three of four were seen along a creek just outside of Enderson's route.

In this survey, Golden Eagles, second only to Rough-legged Hawks in abundance, were seen 2.9 times more frequently than a decade ago.—DAVID JOHNSON AND JAMES H. ENDERSON, *Department of Biology, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903, 14 April 1972.*