

The 2007 Corpus Christi Hawk Watch at Hazel Bazemore County Park set eight new species records:

* **Turkey Vultures** had a record flight of 46,505, breaking the prior record of 2002 with 42,533. Best flight day was October 25 with 22,791 TVs.

* **Swallow-tailed Kites** with 168, up from last year's record of 99. Of these, only 17 can be attributed to opening the watch on August 1 instead of August 15 in past years. Two record daily flight records were set with 27 on August 23 and 22 on August 26. The Veracruz watch also recorded a record number at 563, besting the prior record of 272 in 2002. This record was certainly the stunner of the season, with Zone-tailed Hawks coming in as the second most astonishing species' flight.

* **Mississippi Kites** with 27,286, up from last year's record of 14,072. Of these, only 2,015 can be attributed to opening the watch on August 1 instead of August 15 in past years. The Veracruz watch also recorded 270,477, its second best record but still short of the record of 306,274 set in 2002.

* **Bald Eagle** with 7, a jump of two from last year's record of 5. Veracruz had a single Bald Eagle at an unstated date in October.

* **Northern Goshawks** with three, including two in the air calling to each other on October 31 and a single Gos on November 13.

* **Zone-tailed Hawk** with 22 different birds counted, up from the prior record of 10 in 2005. Numerous sightings on different days were not counted towards this 22, as they were considered, based on tail bands and molt patterns, to be a raptor that had already appeared.

* **Merlins** charged into a new record with 82, besting the prior record of 65 in 2003.

* **Aplomado Falcons** recorded a record five appearances, including two simultaneously in the air on September 23, 2007.

Overall, the watch had **27 different raptor species**, tying last year's second place but not reaching the 28 different species recorded in 1999. A total of 649,795 raptors were counted, which is below the 720,013 average for the past 11 years.

Both **Sharp-shinned Hawks and Cooper's Hawks** set second place records from past years, and Sharpies constituted 58.5 % of these two accipiters, a percentage that is below the average of 62.29% for the prior 10 years.

Broad-winged Hawks numbers exceeded a half million but these amount was far from a record. Interestingly, the watch failed to record a single day in which at

least 100,000 Broad-winged Hawks flew over the watch. This was only the second time in the past 11 years such a daily flight was lacking; the other year was 2005. Dark morph Broadies numbered 18. Veracruz recorded

The species that seemed significantly down from past years was the **Swainson's Hawk** with a mere 412, making 2007 the poor flight year for the species since 300 in 1997 and a far cry from the thousands usually recorded. Still, Veracruz recorded 865,733 Swainson's, up over 400,000 from last year but not close to the over one million flying over in the first years of the Twenty-First Century at that site.

American Kestrels, which are reportedly doing poorly in the Eastern United States, actually had their third best record at the watch with 851.

Peregrine Falcons had their second best year at the watch with 247, short of the 306 recorded in 2006. Veracruz had a record Peregrine flight for the third consecutive year with 736.

October 3 was this year's most productive date for the **most different buteo species** with six different species: BW/SW/RTH/WTH/ZTH/FH. **October 19** had the **most different falcon species** with four different falcon species on September 23 and 25 and October 3 and 19. The record is still five different falcon species in a day set on September 23, 1999 and October 21, 2005.

Other Species. A single **Whooping Crane** flew over the watch on October 20, 2007, the first time the species had been seen at the watch since two flew over on November 7, 2000. The **Gray Kingbird** reappeared for the second consecutive year with appearances this year record on November 6-7, 11-13, 2007. A **bobcat** was seen sitting in park on October 11, 2007; a great visitor but not quite matching the appearance of a **mountain lion** on a day back in the early 1990s.