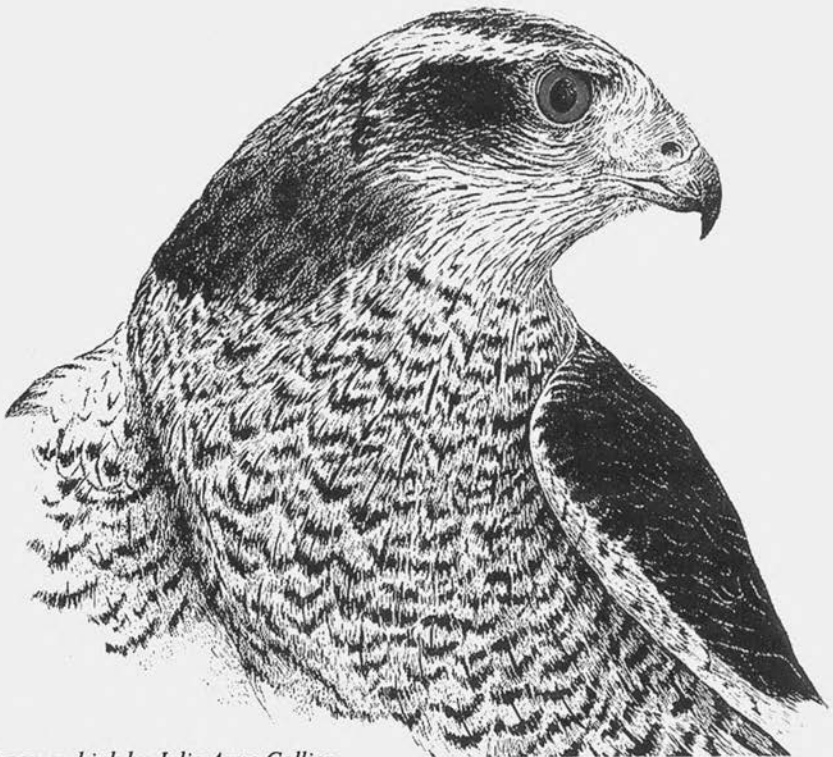


Editor's note

It was September and my friend Carol kept insisting that I drive out to Mount Wachusett and join the fall hawkwatch. So I took a way-long lunch break mid-week and headed west. On the road up the mountain I noticed a half-dozen Broadwings circling slowly just above the slope and below the summit. I glanced at them and thought "there'll be plenty more at the top" and drove on. Counting those birds, my total for that day plus at least two additional hawkwatches came to fifteen (recognizable) raptors. At Lighthouse Point I was leaving the Port-o-Potty as my colleagues pointed in my direction shouting unintelligible urgent commands. I learned later that the most magnificent Peregrine of the day had flown directly over my head. Eventually, I did see thousands of Broadwings rise from the valley floor, form kettles, and peel off southwards; it was a thrilling experience. Never one to scoff at a warm day spent in a beach chair in collegial surroundings with a scope nearby, I have come to appreciate the special skills involved in sorting out those fast-moving dark dots at the horizon line — the 'wings and 'tails, sharpies and coops, and occasional grey-ghost adult gos, among others. In anticipation of their autumnal appearance in our skies, we welcome Paul Roberts as guest editor of this issue of *Bird Observer*, with its timely focus on raptors, particularly on where, how, and under what conditions to see them in migration.

Brooke Stevens



Original pen and ink by Julie Anne Collier