

1978 FALL HAWK WATCH

You are invited to participate in the third annual Eastern Massachusetts Fall Hawk Watch. This year the watch will be in three parts. Coordinated watches will be conducted throughout New England on the following weekends: Sept. 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, Sept.30-Oct.1, and Oct.28-29. The extra weekend in early September has been added because, during the past three years, good flights have been observed quite early in the month.

Secondly, on the weekends of Sept.16-17 and 23-24, we will maintain an observation line from Salisbury through Amesbury, Haverhill, North Andover, Chelmsford, Littleton, Groton and Ashby, to Ashburnham, and a close-site line in Harvard, Ayer, Princeton, Clinton and West Boylston. These are the weekends when we plan to have our most comprehensive coverage.

Thirdly, a consecutive-day watch will be maintained on the summit of Mt. Wachusett, in Princeton, from Sept.9th through October 1st. This is an ambitious project, requiring a number of volunteers to commit themselves to observing on one or more weekdays. Last year the consecutive-day watch tallied more than 3300 hawks in only 19 days, including inclement weather. If you have not been to Mt. Wachusett, there is an excellent road to the summit, where the parking lot provides good views in all directions.

Volunteer observers are needed for all dates, including the weekday watch at Mt. Wachusett. Don't hesitate to participate if you don't feel confident about your ability to identify hawks. The watch attempts to station two or more people at each site. If you wish, you can be stationed with more experienced observers who would be able to help you learn the techniques of field identification while you help spot birds. Studying hawks during migration is the best way to become familiar with them. Even if you can't identify a majority of the hawks you might see, it is still important to know that there was substantial activity at a particular site. If you'd like to review your knowledge of hawk identification with others, on September 10th, at Mt. Wachusett, there will be an informal discussion of field identification.

If you are interested in participating, please contact:

Paul M. Roberts
24 Pearson Road
Somerville, MA. 02144 (617) 776-8566

Please indicate what dates and where you would like to watch: either at a site mentioned above, another site (perhaps a favorite local spot), or note if you'd be willing to go wherever your presence would be most valuable. (At N.Andover, Chelmsford, and Ashburnham, volunteers are required to hike uphill from their cars.) Please notify Paul as soon as you've decided on your dates and sites. If possible, commit yourself to one or more dates now; you can always add other dates later.

Finally, if you observe any significant hawk flights or uncommon individuals during the season, Paul would be most grateful if you would send him a brief note describing what species were seen, how many of each, in which direction they were flying, and what the weather conditions were.