

Ferruginous Hawk - *Buteo regalis*

Abundance: Common

Status: NSS3 (Bb)

NatureServe: G4
S4B,S5N

Population Status: population status and trends are unknown

Limiting Factor: Habitat (and Human Activity): limiting factors are severe; recent nest surveys have resulted in uncertainties about population status and trends of this species statewide due to human-caused habitat loss and deterioration; sensitive to human disturbance during nesting

Comment: change is attributed to unknown population status and trends; moved from NSS3 to NSSU

Introduction

The Ferruginous Hawk breeds from the Canadian Prairie Provinces south to Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, and Oklahoma. It winters from the central and southern portions of its breeding range south into Baja California and central Mexico. It occurs and breeds throughout most of Wyoming. The Ferruginous Hawk is considered a common resident in Wyoming.

Habitat

The Ferruginous Hawk inhabits semiarid open country, primarily grasslands, basin-prairie shrublands, and badlands. It requires large tracts of relatively undisturbed rangeland and nests on rock outcrops, the ground, cutbanks, cliff ledges, or trees.

Problems

- h Species is susceptible to impacts from energy development and other large-scale projects that destroy or impair suitable habitats.
- h Impacted by conversion of native prairie to cropland or other uses, urbanization, industrialization, loss of vegetative cover, poisoning, human disturbance near the nest site, and reduced prey availability.
- h Resource development is occurring or proposed for a significant portion of Ferruginous Hawk nesting habitat in Wyoming, and can decrease prey abundance and/or reduce availability of nesting sites.
- h Although monitoring has been occurring, current efforts are not adequate to document population trends or identify needed management over large areas of the State.
- h Species is sensitive to disturbance during nesting and has been documented to have lower productivity and nest success around mining operations.

Conservation Actions

- h Continue to conduct aerial surveys in Ferruginous Hawk habitat to collect information on nesting activity, including occupancy and productivity.
- h Increase monitoring efforts to document population trends and identify needed management.
- h Work with private landowners to conserve habitat for this species by seeking financial incentives from various sources and providing assistance and expertise with management activities.
- h Manage Ferruginous Hawk nesting areas to minimize the potential for habitat degradation and conflicts with development.
- h Manage Ferruginous Hawk nesting areas to minimize human disturbance during the breeding season (April 1 through July 31) and maintain a 1 mile buffer around nests.
- h Avoid or minimize pesticide use in habitats where this species nests to ensure a food source is maintained. If possible, all pesticide use should be postponed until this species has completed its breeding cycle.
- h Encourage landowners to avoid potentially negative impacts to nesting areas through the use of financial incentives.
- h Maintain prairie dog colonies where this species is present via conservation easements and voluntary agreements with landowners, and habitat management plans with land managers.
- h Manage nesting areas to minimize conflicts with natural resources extraction, wind power development, and recreational activities during the breeding season.
- h Limit control of small mammals in areas where Ferruginous Hawks occur, especially ground squirrel, prairie dog, and rabbit populations.
- h Conserve grassland habitats by minimizing the conversion of native prairie to croplands, fragmentation, roads, urban development, exotic plants, and a shift in community ecology characteristics.

Monitoring/Research

Recent efforts to increase monitoring have occurred. Cooperative inventories with other land management agencies are on-going. State Wildlife Grants project to develop essential datasets and a plan for minimizing wildlife and community conflicts with wind development in southeastern Wyoming.

Recent Developments

Monitoring in 2010 revealed an unusually high number of failed nesting attempts. An increase in industrial development in preferred habitat may negatively affect populations.

References

Collins CP, Reynolds TD. 2005. Ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*): a technical conservation assessment. USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, Online: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/projects/scp/assessments/ferruginoushawk.pdf>.

Oldendorff RR. 1993. Status, biology, and management of Ferruginous Hawk: a review. Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center, Special Report, USDI Bureau of Land Management, Boise, ID.

White CM, Thurow TL. 1985. Reproduction of ferruginous hawks exposed to controlled disturbance. *Condor* 87:14-22.

Bechard MJ, Schmutz JK

. 1995. Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo Regalis*). . In A. Poole and F. Gill, editors, *The Birds of North America*, No. 172. Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, PA, and American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, DC

Bechard MJ, Schmutz JK. 1995. Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*). In: Poole A, Gill F, eds. *The birds of North America*. Nr 172. Philadelphia: Academy of Natural Sciences; Washington: American Ornithologists' Union. 20 pp.

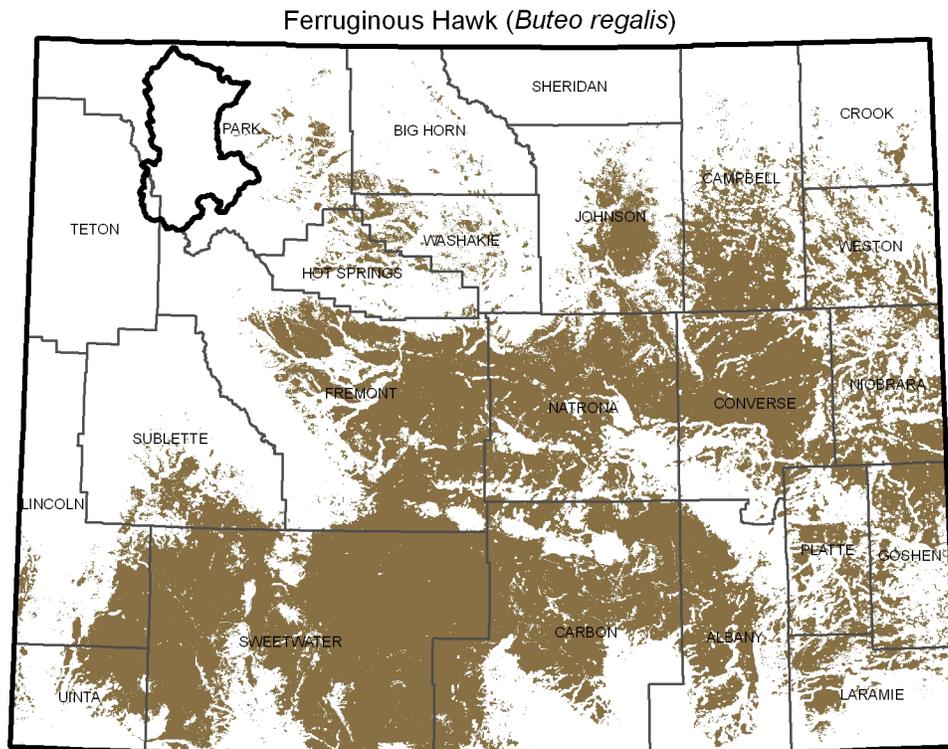
Leukering T, Carter MF, Panjabi A, Faulkner D, Levad R. 2003. Monitoring Wyoming's birds: the plan for count-based monitoring. In: Nicholoff SH, compiler. *Wyoming bird conservation plan*. Version 2.0. Wyoming Partners In Flight. Lander: Wyoming Game and Fish Department. p 575-601. Online: www.blm.gov/wildlife/plan/WY/menu.htm.

Nicholoff SH, compiler. 2003. *Wyoming bird conservation plan* Version 2.0. Wyoming Partners In Flight. Lander: Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 668 p. Online: www.blm.gov/wildlife/plan/WY/menu.htm.

NatureServe. 2004. NatureServe explorer: an online encyclopedia of life. Version 1.8. Arlington (VA): NatureServe. Online <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.

Tesky JL. 1994. *Buteo regalis*. In: Fire effects information system. USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Sciences Laboratory. Online: <http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/>.

Oakleaf B, Cerovski AO, Luce B. 1996. Nongame bird and mammal plan: a plan for inventories and management of nongame birds and mammals in Wyoming. Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Nongame Program. 183 p.



SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges and predicted distributions for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database. University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming. Note that brown indicates the predicted distribution of the species; heavy black lines indicate outermost boundaries of possible occurrence.