

# Raptor Trapping Program 2022 Report (Winter Raptor Response Team)

2021 through 2022 final data, 2022-present

---

**Project Leader: Gene Groshon** [gene.groshon@calvertcountymd.gov](mailto:gene.groshon@calvertcountymd.gov) 410-535-5327

Volunteers: Mary Bell, Maggie Silverman, Karen Anderson, Mike Carpenter, Amy Burton, Leah Lotspeich and Evelyn Lotspeich

Total Volunteer Hours: 56 hours

The Calvert County Natural Resources Division started the winter Raptor Trapping Program to gain a better understanding of the local wintering population of American Kestrels, Red-Shouldered Hawks and Red-Tailed Hawks. We also band the birds we capture during this program to track which birds could be returning to the same wintering ground year after year. Banding also provides the chance to learn where these birds travel to outside of their wintering range. In 2020, this program acted more of a volunteer appreciation program rather than a volunteer opportunity.

## SKILLS NEEDED

- Legible note taking and understanding of data being collected
- Taking photos with smart phone of raptors for documentation

### Optional, but Preferred, Skills

- Ability to identify American Kestrels, Red-Shouldered Hawks and Red Tailed Hawks

## VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- If needed recording the data from each capture and photographs taken of the raptors

## REQUIREMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

- **Starting in 2021 Must complete 3 Raptor Road Surveys in order to attend a road trapping/banding day**
- Work in cold conditions but most time is spent riding around in the van

## TRAININGS

- No training needed but will have completed at least 3 Raptor Road Surveys in order to come out for a day of trapping

## PROJECT DATES

- **Winter:** Jan-Mar full on trapping
- **Spring:** nothing
- **Summer:** some attempts during summer
- **Fall:** can begin trapping after Thanksgiving

## Summary of 2021-2022 Activities

September 30, 2021 through March 17, 2021 (12 trapping days total)

New Bandings: We captured 8 American Kestrels, 4 Red Shouldered Hawks, 3 Red Tailed Hawks.

Recaptures: We had our first foreign recapture with American Kestrel 1893-54905. This bird was originally banded on 6/24/2021 in a nest box as a nestling in Flemington NJ 172 miles away. Gene has been in touch with the original banders

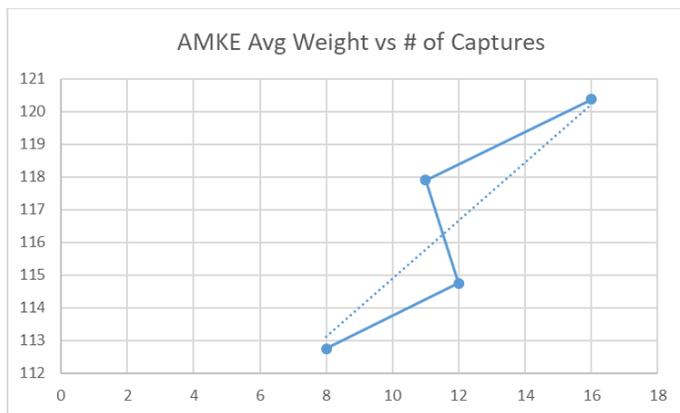
who were glad to hear this bird survived to its likely winter ground. This was their first recapture report of one of their birds still alive.

Interesting Capture: On 1/28/2022 Gene captured an Abieticola subspecies of Red Tailed Hawk. This subspecies is normally found much farther north in eastern Canada but other sightings of this subspecies have occurred in Maryland. The bird has a broader darker belly band and more rich colors throughout when compared to the common borealis subspecies which is found in our area.

### Break down of data among species

#### American Kestrel

We captured 32% of the American Kestrels that we attempted to catch. It was interesting to note as the average weight of the bird increased across seasons the number of captures increased as well. This seems to be opposite of what would be expected.

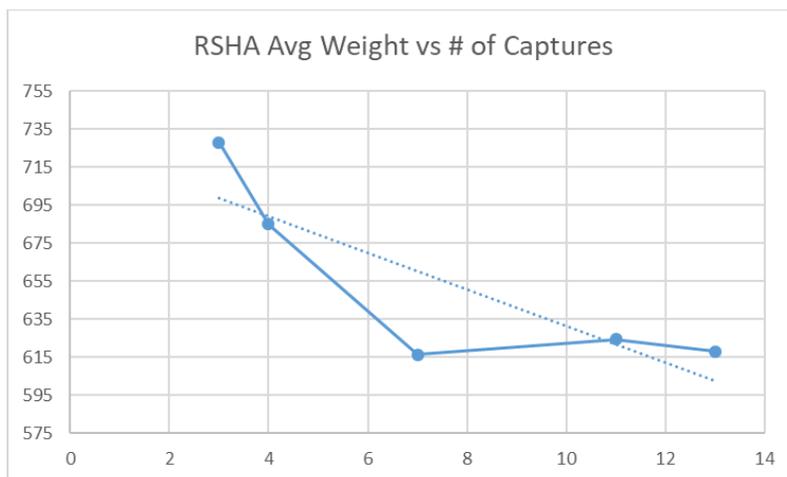


#### Red-tailed Hawk

We captured 100% of the Red-tailed Hawks that we attempted to catch. Every season that we have captured Red-tailed Hawks

#### Red-shouldered Hawk

We captured 66.67% of the Red-shouldered Hawks that we attempted to catch. As the average weight of RSHA captured per season decreased the number of captures increased. This could be due to colder weather with less prey availability resulting in the birds being more food motivated to approach the traps.



## Current 2022-2023 season

We were only able to go trapping two times in all of December and January. This season we have only captured 3 Red-shouldered Hawks. Gene was able to take Volunteer Coordinators Paige Stevens and Kevin Creek out trapping so they could learn more about the project and lucky for them that was the day we captured the 3 RSHA. Gene led one public program for teens which filled with 4 people. We did not catch any birds that day but did see some up close while in the van. Gene received an email from Suzi Gibson saying her daughter had a blast at the program and they welcomed me to try to catch raptors on their farm. The February program is already filled too, and extended that program by an hour to give us more time to catch a bird. Will be trying to trap a lot more in February to collect more data and reward our volunteers that have been conducting surveys.

## Future Plans

We will use the data collected from the Volunteer Raptor Road Surveys to aid in finding raptors to trap. We will also use this data to compare with sightings during trapping to estimate populations of these species in our area during the winter. Plans to deploy Motus transmitters on American Kestrels has been delayed. We may be able to do it in 2023 but more likely it will be the following season.



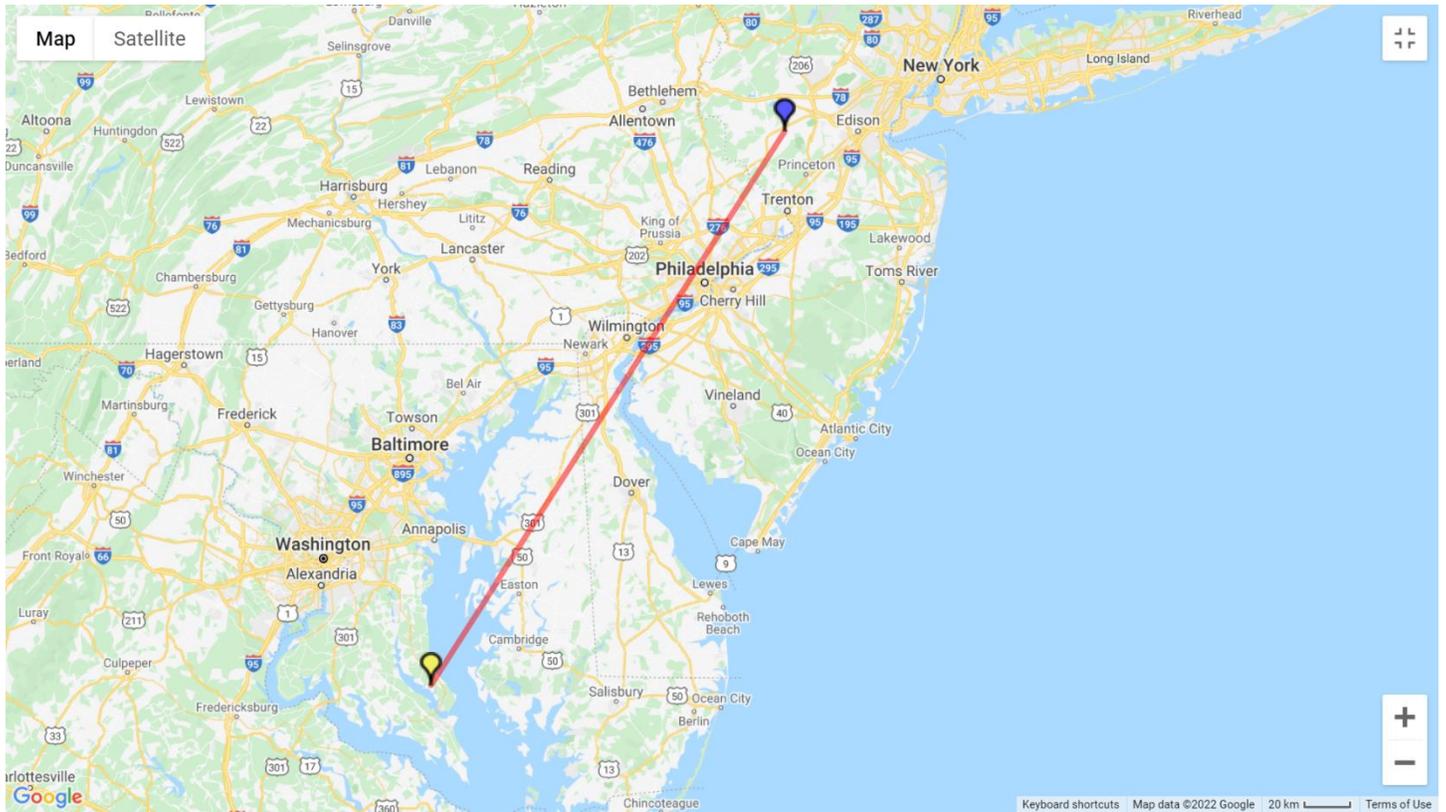
*Abieticola* Northern Red-tailed Hawk



Recaptured American Kestrel from Flemington NJ



Band on recaptured American Kestrel



Map showing original banding location (blue marker) and recapture location (yellow marker)

*Supporting Calvert County's nature parks and natural spaces*



# CALVERT STEWARDS

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

*A partnership between Calvert Nature Society and Calvert County Natural Resources Division*

# 2022 Annual Report

Date of Issue March 2023

CALVERT STEWARDS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM  
c/o Natural Resources Division  
2880 Grays Road  
Prince Frederick, MD 20678  
(410) 535-5327

Volunteer Portal: <https://calvertstewards.galaxydigital.com/>

Calvert Nature Society: [www.calvertparks.org](http://www.calvertparks.org)

Calvert County Natural Resources Division:  
[www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources](http://www.calvertcountymd.gov/NaturalResources)

