

To I.O.U. Members:

The reports of Christmas censuses in Iowa for the past 18 years show a decreasing number of wintering Red-shouldered Hawks with a contrary trend for the Red-tailed. There is evidence of an even sharper decline in the summer resident Red-shouldered in several areas with no apparent decrease in the Red-tailed. Since the two species have similar habitats and food habits, and would presumably be affected equally by any changes in conditions such as the elimination of timbered areas, the increased use of pesticides, etc., these diverse population trends warrant a study of the situation.

The published data regarding numbers of these hawks in Iowa are very largely confined to the Christmas census reports which are for the most part from the central and east-central portions of the state. The I.O.U. membership is being asked to cooperate in a state-wide study of the hawk populations and the reasons for such changes as have occurred.

Ideally we should have for each of the past 10 or 15 years the number of Red-shouldered Hawks seen during spring migration, the number of summer residents, the number seen during fall migration, and the number of winter residents. The same information for the Red-tailed would allow a comparison of the population trends of the two species. When the foregoing data are not available, it would be helpful to have, by year and by season, the number of days, or even weeks in which either species was seen. Failing this, will you furnish what information you have bearing on the Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawk numbers?

May I hear from you promptly, please? Thank you for your cooperation.

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