

Fall Migration of Golden Eagles in the Wellsville Mountains, Northern Utah, 1976-1979

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Abstract

Migratory movements of Golden Eagles were investigated in detail as part of a 4-year autumn raptor migration study atop an 8,600-foot ridge in the Wellsville Mountains. In 856 observation hours (161 days) between 6 August and 28 November, 898 Golden Eagles (10% of the total raptor flight) were counted. Eagle movement patterns in the Wellsvilles differed substantially from those observed at Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania. Eagle migration in the Wellsvilles was first noted in late August and continued through November, with an indistinct peak occurring in mid-October. Adults were recorded in greatest numbers in late September and again in November; immatures and sub-adults were most numerous in mid-October. Thirty-six percent of those classified were adults, compared to 50% at Hawk Mountain. Migratory activity in the Wellsvilles was concentrated in the period 1400-1700 hours (M.S.T.), later in the day than at Bake Oven Knob, Pennsylvania. Strong winds and cold fronts were most often closely associated with "red-letter" eagle days.