

Hamburg Hawk Watch

Some quick reminders, updates, advice, and caveats for the upcoming season...

- We are a Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) hawk watch. Our dedicated coverage is from **March 15 - May 15**. However, before or after these dates, if weather conditions look promising and you have the inclination, feel free to spend some time at the watch and report what you see!
- We are keeping track of hawk and weather data **by the hour**, not by the day.
- **Plan to stay at least four or five hours**. Sometimes it can be a slow morning, only to have a hawk flight in the afternoon. Sometimes it's the reverse. Rain may stop the flight for an hour only to have it resume two hours later. *Don't assume that a wet morning will result in no afternoon flight.*
- Weather happens! We average a handful of "washout days" each season. If this happens to you, use the reporting process at HawkCount.org to flag that fact. (see below)
- **The count takes place where the Official Daily Counter is**. Our primary watch site is by the main entrance of Lakeside Cemetery or by Section H. The parking lot at the William Williams Little League Ball Park, located on Rogers Rd, may be closed but can be a good option if open and if the winds are right and the flight is closer to the lake.
- **IMPORTANT!** There has been an increase in military funeral services at the cemetery over the past few years. Grounds workers may or may not apprise you of the time and location of a scheduled service. Always respect those activities by moving the watch farther into the cemetery for an hour or so.
- **From Cemetery Management: Keep cars parked with all 4 tires on the asphalt.**
- The restroom in the 1st mausoleum is now locked. The closest accessible public restroom is at the Walmart on Route 20 and Rogers Rd. Tim Horton's on Lake Shore near Big Tree is another good option.
- Come prepared! As Fran Rew often said, "Always dress warm for a hawk watch." Consider bringing a lunch, a folding chair, sunscreen, gloves, a warmer coat, etc.
- Schedule conflicts can arise. Try contacting another counter if you need to swap.
- Please keep track of and report any non-raptor species that are seen.

Weather Data

Most of the hourly weather data needed is easily determined just by observation at the watch - cloud cover, precipitation, wind direction (the cemetery road runs due west into the

woods) & wind speed. HMANA wants wind speed in Beaufort Scale, which is found on the "Weather and Observation Codes" worksheet (a separate download). I print out a copy for myself to refer to at the watch. The only hourly weather data needed that cannot be easily determined at the watch is temperature (in Celsius), humidity and barometric pressure.

Hourly temperature, humidity and barometric pressure can be obtained online from <https://www.wunderground.com/history/> which provides data from the National Weather Service office at the Buffalo Airport. Pick the date you need, then click "Submit". Scroll all the way down to "Daily Observations" at the bottom of the new page. Folks with smart phones can likely find this hourly info through various weather apps.

Boring but IMPORTANT Please note that on most weather sites or apps the temperature is given by default in Fahrenheit. This needs to be converted to Celsius for HawkCount reporting. Three websites (among many) that offer Fahrenheit to Celsius temperature conversions:

- <http://www.mathsisfun.com/temperature-conversion.html>
- <http://www.csgnetwork.com/tempconvjava.html>
- <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=fahrenheit+to+celsius>

Boring but IMPORTANT All hourly data for HawkCount needs to be recorded using Eastern Standard Time ("Bird Time"). Most weather sites will change over to Daylight Saving Time (which begins on Sunday, March 9th this year) and will therefore be ahead by 1 hour. Wherever you choose to obtain the hourly weather data from, you will need to subtract one hour for the difference!

Quick Guide to Online Data Entry

Online data entry takes very little time to complete, speeds up the reporting process and updates the progress of the season immediately. Once you have completed your report it is automatically posted to the geneseebirds listserv and hawkcount mail lists.

1. Go to... <https://hawkcount.org/>
2. Click Login and enter your Username (first initial + last name... i.e., jlandau) and Password (hamburg)
3. Click Data Entry, then select appropriate date and click "Retrieve/enter days report"
4. At this point, each successive screen offers choices, help, and opportunities to correct any errors. *If you don't cover your day due to weather, there is a "No count conducted during this day" box to check on the first screen.

5. After all hourly data is entered you have an opportunity to review data and either approve it or go back and correct it. If you discover any entry errors after you have submitted the daily report, you should be able to go back and make corrections.

NOTE: A great way to become familiar with online reporting is to click the HELP link, near the bottom of the window on the left of the page. The second topic, DATA ENTRY, is very well thought out and understandable.

As the Site Administrator I have given all counters "Access Rights" to enter, correct, and read their daily entries. If for some reason you cannot do so, let me know and I will work to resolve any problems.

Leadership Change

A heartfelt word of thanks goes out to Jim Landau, who has managed the Hamburg Hawk Watch for several years. Jim will still be standing by to help and advise but Sue Barth will now be doing the scheduling. If you feel you can give some of your time to the hawk watch, please let Sue know (suebarth@verizon.net).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE HAMBURG HAWK WATCH!

~ Jim and Sue