

Cadillac Mountain Hawk Watch Season Report 2019

2019 marked the 25th year of the Hawk Watch atop Cadillac Mountain at Acadia National Park. This was also the sixth year of a collaborative partnership between Schoodic Institute and Acadia National Park (ANP). The count began on August 14 and was completed on October 26. A total of 2,838 hawks were documented during 274.25 hours of total observation accrued during 51 days of coverage, a yield of 10.34 hawks per hour. Daily counts, reported in hourly increments, were submitted to an online database www.hawk.count.org, which is administered by the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA).

The 2019 count was carried out by a combination of five staff members from Acadia National Park and 11 volunteers and one staff from Schoodic Institute (Seth Benz, Director of Bird Ecology). The bulk of duty was coordinated by Carol Thompson, a devoted volunteer with prior experience as a park employee and current experience as the Lead Volunteer for Schoodic Institute. Of the 51 days of coverage, Carol was present for 39 days!

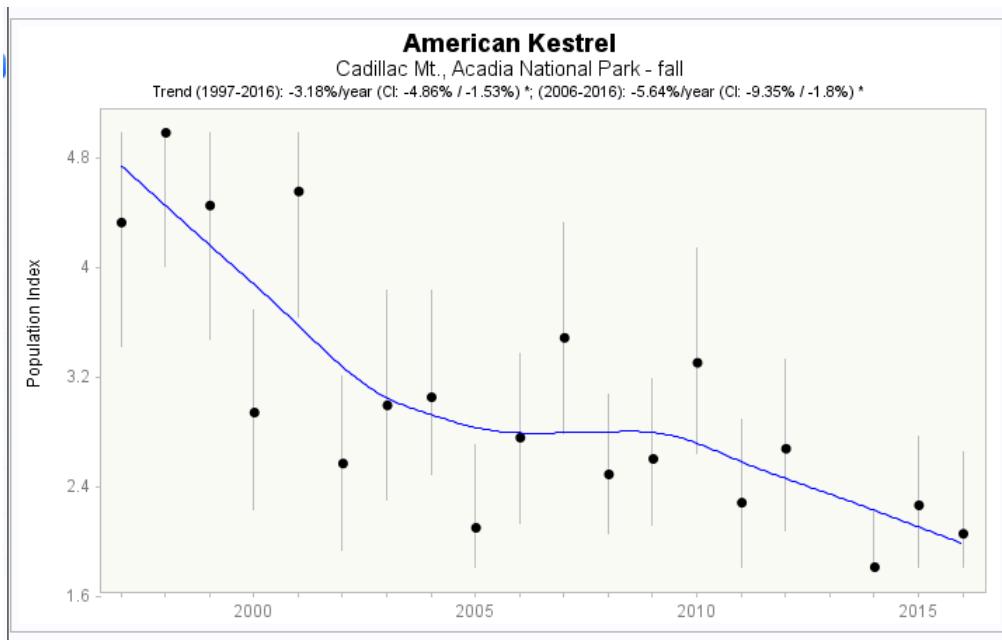
In addition, a total 2,551 visitors stopped by to learn about Hawk Watch or participate.

Volunteers, coordinated by Thompson, Benz, and Dianna McKeage (ANP Volunteer Coordinator), were present to record migrating raptors nearly every week of the season. Volunteer coverage began August 14 and continued through October 26. Volunteers amassed a combined total of 1,155 hours of service devoted to Hawk Watch. Volunteers included: Carol Thompson, Ed Hawkes, Anne Donovan, Steve Schellenger, Angi King-Johnston, Jim and Kathy Zeman, Chris and Joe Ferrara, Holly and Monty Evans, and Shari LaTulippe. ANP staff included Patrick Kark, Mickey Short, Daniel McDermott, Valerie Griffin, and Abby Danner.

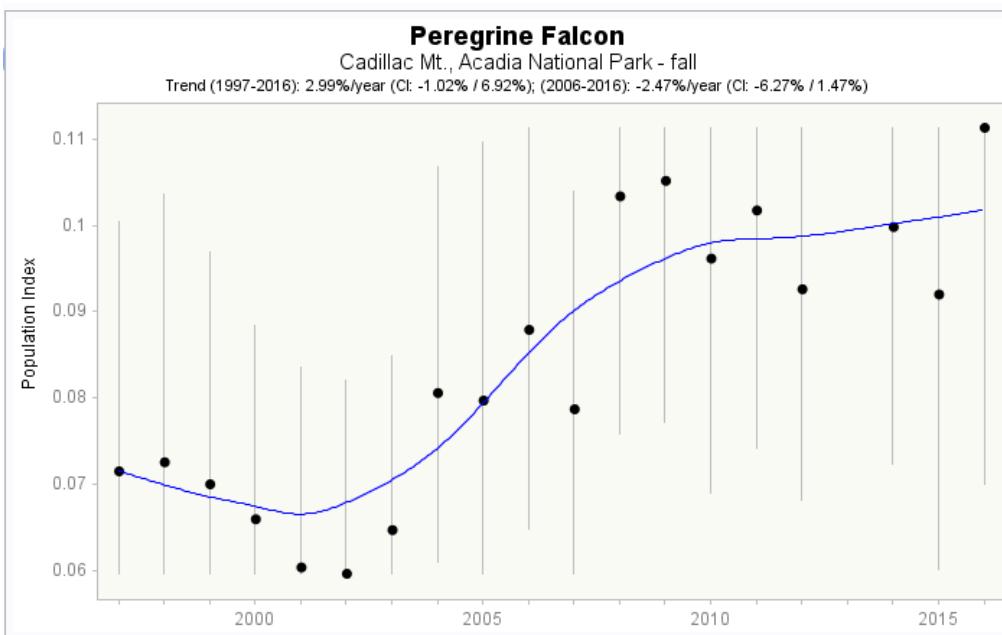
The combination of SI volunteers and ANP interpretive rangers sought to provide coverage seven days per week. However, a couple of days of inclement weather and several other days with scheduling conflicts went uncovered.

Carol Thompson sent an email detailing each day's count to more than 40 recipients, including interpretive rangers, interpretive volunteers, ANP Volunteer Coordinator, fee rangers at Acadia and Schoodic, resource management employees, Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, former Hawk Watch staff, Hawk Watch volunteers, and other interested persons. The email also included migration statistics from other hawk count sites and brought attention to where birds were migrating on certain days. Schoodic Institute Sea Watch counts were also included when available. This outreach effort was the most organized and far-reaching in the 25-year seasonal history of this count.

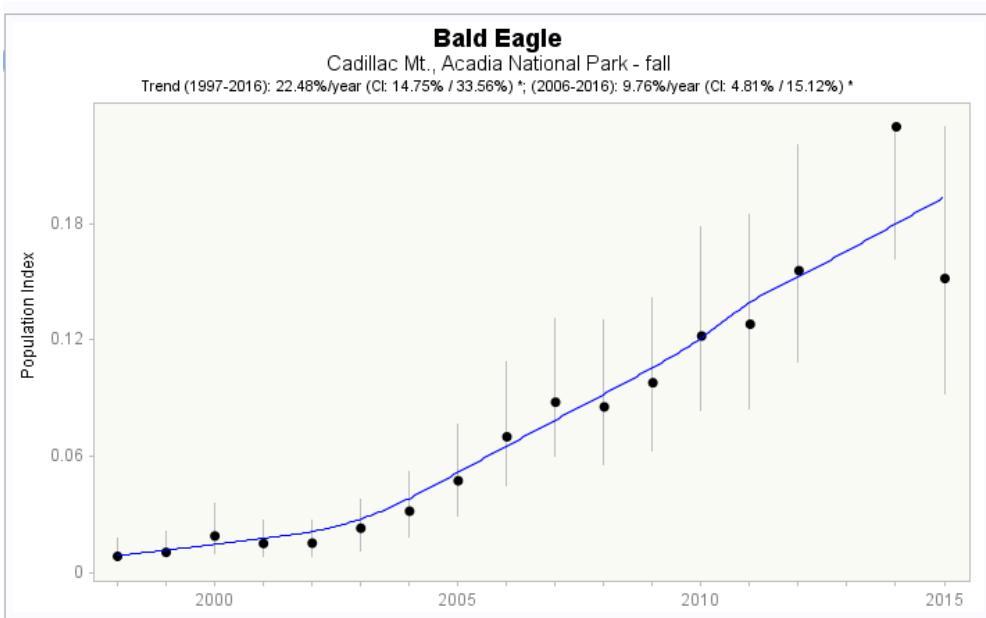
Cadillac Mountain Hawk Watch's 25 seasons of data are merged with 400 other raptor migration sites in North America in order to help scientists document fluctuations in the temporal and spatial movements of diurnal raptors. One result of data analysis is the ability to derive population trends. The following figures depict select species trends in site observations at Cadillac Mountain:



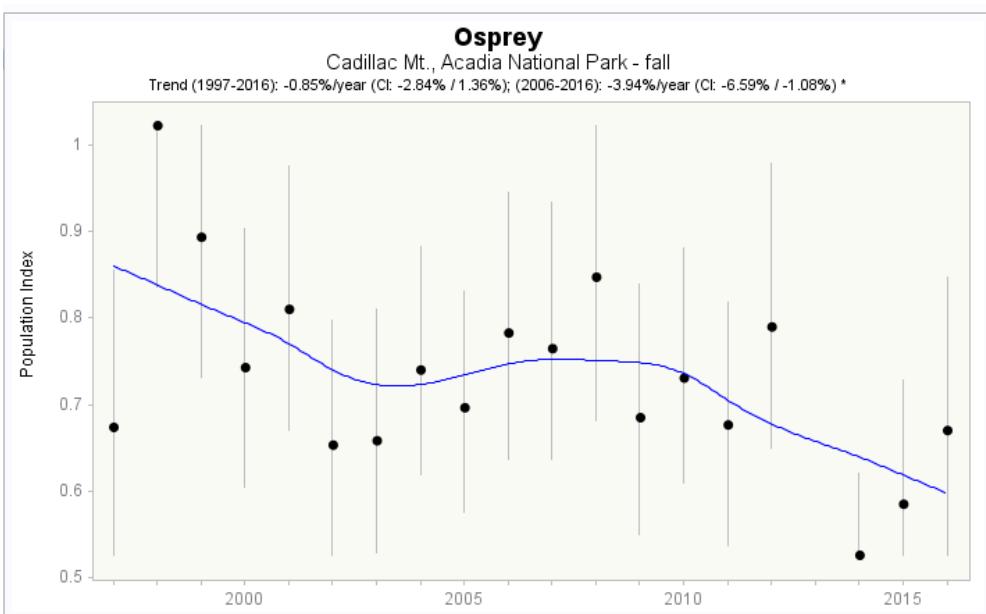
Reading graph from left to right, the blue line indicates a downward trend in the number of sightings of American Kestrel during a 20-year span from 1997-2016. Population Index, expressed on a linear scale, represents the average of the predicted number of individual birds detected per day of survey.



This graph depicts an increase in the number of sightings of Peregrine Falcon, an indication that the population, once decimated in the eastern United States, is recovering.



This trend graph reveals a steady increase in Bald Eagle sightings at Cadillac Mountain Hawk Watch over the past two decades. It provides solid evidence that population restoration efforts are successful.



This trend graph depicts a decline in sightings of migrating Osprey. It is a red flag or alert that changes are taking place in the species life cycle.

The totals for the 2019 season :

Turkey Vulture	193
Osprey	155
Bald Eagle	150
Northern Harrier	67
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	1112
Cooper's Hawk	22
Northern Goshawk	2
Red-Shouldered Hawk	0
Broad-Winged Hawk	363
Red-Tailed Hawk	19
Rough-Legged Hawk	0
Golden Eagle	0
American Kestrel	542
Merlin	53
Peregrine Falcon	22
Unidentified Accipiter	2
Unidentified Buteo	11
Unidentified Falcon	7
Unidentified Eagle	0
Unidentified Raptor	118
Total	2838

51 days of observation

274.25 hours

10.34 hawks per hour of observation

Upon conclusion of its 25th consecutive year, the Cadillac Mountain Hawk Watch has reached a significant milestone thanks to the dedicated and collaborative work and efforts of annual teams of ANP rangers, volunteers, and partner organizations, such as Friends of Acadia and Schoodic Institute. Cumulatively, through the years, tens of thousands of visitors and many aspiring Junior Rangers have witnessed fall hawk migration atop Cadillac Mountain. May the passage of these magnificent birds of prey continue to compel us to carry on.