

Species Status Assessment

Class: Birds
Family: Accipitridae
Scientific Name: *Accipiter cooperii*
Common Name: Cooper's Hawk

Species synopsis:

Cooper's hawk is a woodland raptor that specializes in avian prey. It uses deciduous, mixed, and coniferous woodlands as well as urban and suburban areas for nesting and feeding. Cooper's hawk has recovered remarkably well from the two major eras that affected the populations of many raptors in North America: DDT and heavy persecution. Today, populations of this hawk are thriving, owing mostly to this species' ability to exploit man-altered landscapes. The second Breeding Bird Atlas in New York (2000-05) shows an increase in occupancy of 146% since 1980-85.

I. Status

a. Current Legal Protected Status

- i. **Federal** _____ Not Listed Candidate: No
ii. **New York** _____ Special Concern; SGCN

b. Natural Heritage Program Rank

- i. **Global** _____ G5
ii. **New York** _____ S4 Tracked by NYNHP? No

Other Rank:

NYNHP – Watch List

Status Discussion:

Populations of Cooper's hawk are thriving throughout their range and have exploded in New York, although there are still localized threats including loss of appropriate woodlots for breeding and foraging.

II. Abundance and Distribution Trends

a. North America

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: _____ 1999-2009 _____

b. Regional

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Regional Unit Considered: _____ Eastern BBS _____

Time frame considered: _____ 1999-2009 _____

c. Adjacent States and Provinces

CONNECTICUT Not Present _____ No data _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1999-2009

Listing Status: Not Listed SGCN? Yes

MASSACHUSETTS Not Present _____ No data _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1999-2009

Listing Status: Not Listed SGCN? No

NEW JERSEY Not Present _____ No data _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1999-2009

Listing Status: Special Concern SGCN? Yes

ONTARIO **Not Present** _____ **No data** _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1981-85 to 2001-05

Listing Status: Not Listed

PENNSYLVANIA **Not Present** _____ **No data** _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1984-89 to 2004-08

Listing Status: Not Listed SGCN? No

QUEBEC **Not Present** _____ **No data** _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1984-89 to 2012

Listing Status: Not Listed

VERMONT **Not Present** _____ **No data** _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Time frame considered: 1976-81 to 2003-07

Listing Status: Not Listed SGCN? Yes

d. NEW YORK **No data** _____

i. Abundance

declining increasing stable unknown

ii. Distribution:

declining increasing stable unknown

Monitoring in New York.

None.

Trends Discussion:

Cooper's hawk populations are increasing in all parts of the range. There was an explosion of occupancy documented in New York by the second Breeding Bird Atlas with 146% increase statewide from 1980-85 to 2000-05. The increase in the coastal lowlands (Long Island) is particularly notable, with an increase from presence in zero blocks during the first Atlas survey to 45 blocks during the second Atlas survey.

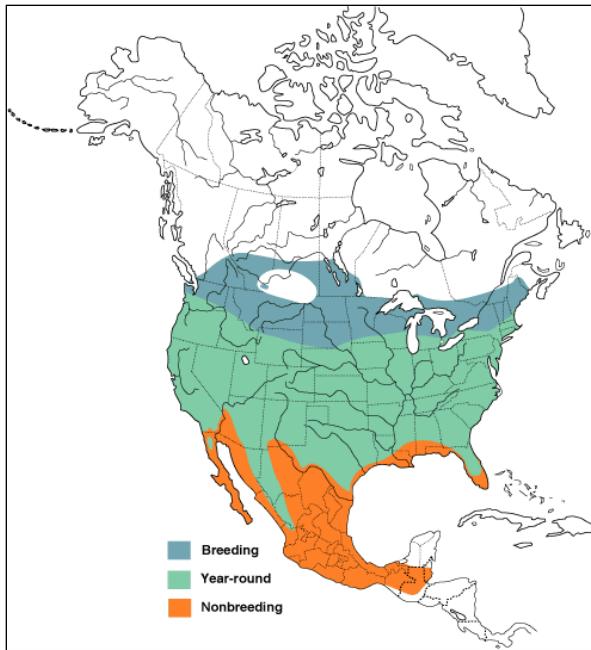


Figure 1. Distribution of Cooper's hawk in North America (Birds of North America Online).

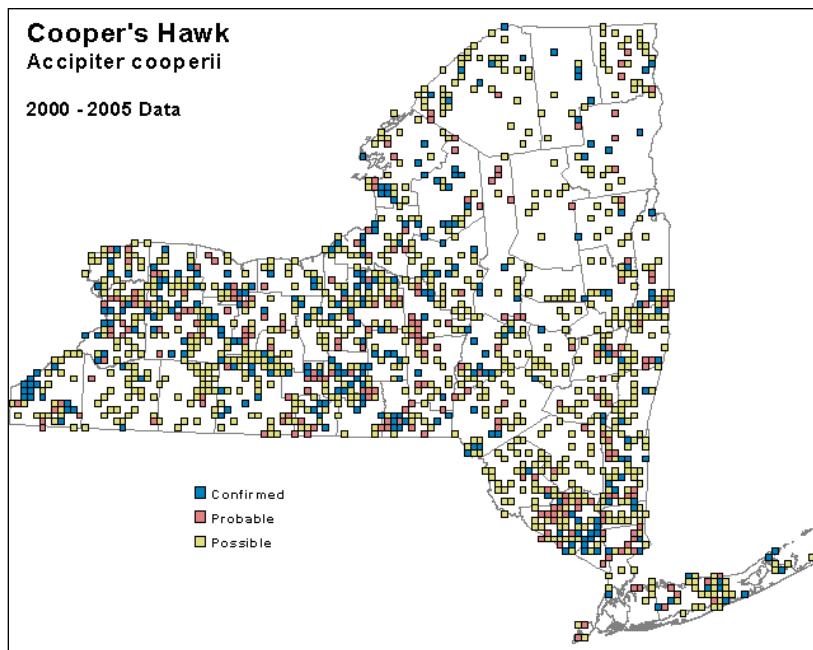


Figure 2. Occurrences of Cooper's hawk from the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas (McGowan and Corwin 2008).

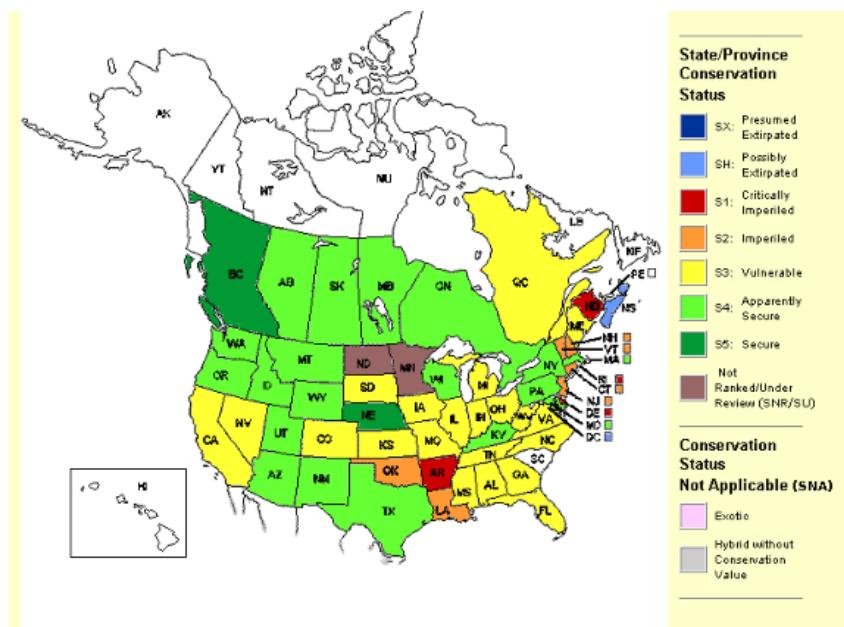


Figure 3. Conservation status of the Cooper's hawk in North America (NatureServe 2012).

III. New York Rarity, if known:

Historic	<u># of Animals</u>	<u># of Locations</u>	<u>% of State</u>
prior to 1970	_____	_____	_____
prior to 1980	_____	_____	_____
prior to 1990	_____	<u>550 blocks</u>	<u>10%</u>

Details of historic occurrence:

The first Breeding Bird Atlas (1980-85) documented occupancy in 550 survey blocks statewide (Andrle and Carroll 1988).

Current	<u># of Animals</u>	<u># of Locations</u>	<u>% of State</u>
	_____	<u>1,355 blocks</u>	<u>25%</u>

Details of current occurrence:

The second Breeding Bird Atlas (2000-05) documented occupancy in 1,355 survey blocks, an increase of 146% (McGowan and Corwin 2008). This increase included a new presence on Long Island, where no records were reported during the first Atlas.

New York's Contribution to Species North American Range:

Distribution (percent of NY where species occurs)	Abundance (within NY distribution)
— 0-5%	— abundant
— 6-10%	— common
<u>X</u> 11-25%	<u>X</u> fairly common
— 26-50%	— uncommon
— >50%	— rare

NY's Contribution to North American range

— 0-5%	—
<u>X</u> 6-10%	—
— 11-25%	—
— 26-50%	—
— >50%	—

Classification of New York Range

Core

Peripheral

Disjunct

Distance to core population:

IV. Primary Habitat or Community Type:

1. Mixed Northern Hardwoods
2. Plantation and Disturbed Land Pioneer Forests
3. Oak-Pine Forest
4. Oak Forest
5. Urban and Recreational Grasses

Habitat or Community Type Trend in New York:

Declining **Stable** **Increasing** **Unknown**

Time frame of decline/increase: _____

Habitat Specialist? **Yes** **No**

Indicator Species? **Yes** **No**

Habitat Discussion:

Cooper's hawk is a woodland raptor of deciduous, mixed, and coniferous forests. Although previously believed to avoid urban landscapes, Cooper's hawks have recently proven remarkably adaptable to such areas. Their affinity for human-altered habitats (including housing areas, plantations, and high-use recreational areas) is possibly because developed areas generally support

higher numbers of favored bird prey. Also, Cooper's hawks are adapted to hunting in structurally complex habitats, which urban/suburban environments mimic (Mannan et al. 2000).

V. New York Species Demographics and Life History

X Breeder in New York

X Summer Resident

X Winter Resident

Anadromous

Non-breeder in New York

Summer Resident

Winter Resident

Catadromous

Migratory only

Unknown

Species Demographics and Life History Discussion:

The age at first breeding for Cooper's hawks is usually at two years, with one brood annually. There is no information on lifetime success, but the maximum reported age is 12 years. Nest predation, especially by raccoons (e.g., Schriver 1969) and great horned owls (Rosenfield 1988), is probably most widespread and important cause of nestling mortality, albeit largely unquantified.

In Arizona (Mannan et al. 2004), information collected from 34 radio-tagged fledglings showed that the young hawks were initially sedentary in the natal area, then moved relatively long distances 11-13 weeks after hatching, and became sedentary again on winter home ranges. Females generally moved longer distances during the 'exploring' period (average 6.8 km for females and 3.8 km for males), and on average, females settled further from their natal site (10.9 km) than their male counterparts (6.0 km).

Rosenfield et al. (1996) found that urban-nesting Cooper's hawks in Wisconsin lay, on average, had larger clutches than pairs in rural areas and that the number of bandable young in urban sites was among the highest recorded for the species.

VI. Threats:

Logging may alter suitability of nesting or foraging habitats as well as prey populations on local or regional scales, but magnitude and seasonality of such impacts uncertain (Reynolds 1989).

Evidence suggests that some localized, urban breeding populations may be exposed to elevated levels of trichomoniasis (contrasting with none in exurban nests), resulting in comparatively high nestling mortality. It has been suggested that the high levels of trichomoniasis infections are due to urban Cooper's hawks focusing their hunting efforts at bird feeders, where they catch high numbers of doves, which are known to carry the infection (Boal and Mannan 1999), but this theory needs further investigation.

Are there regulatory mechanisms that protect the species or its habitat in New York?

No Unknown

Yes

Cooper's hawks are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Describe knowledge of management/conservation actions that are needed for recovery/conservation, or to eliminate, minimize, or compensate for the identified threats:

Conservation actions following IUCN taxonomy are categorized in the table below.

Conservation Actions	
Action Category	Action
Land/Water Protection	Site/Area Protection
Land/Water Protection	Resource/Habitat Protection
Land/Water Management	Site/Area Management
Land/Water Management	Habitat/Natural Process Restoration

The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (NYSDEC 2005) includes recommendations for the following actions for forest breeding raptors, which includes Cooper's hawk.

Habitat management:

- Habitat management for all these species (except the golden eagle, which is effectively extirpated as a breeder) is largely unknown and it is therefore important to experiment with different techniques. Examples include different cutting regimes and different buffer distances (and potentially fire management where appropriate), in both hardwoods and conifers (plantations and native).

VII. References

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