

## Louisiana Ornithological Society's

## LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

## Report Form

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of species on the Louisiana Bird Records Committee (LBRC) Review List. The LBRC recommends the use of this form or a similar format when submitting records for review (to assure that all pertinent information is accounted for). Attach additional pages as necessary. Please print or type. Attach xerox of field notes, drawings, photographs, or tape recordings, if available. Include all photos for more obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to Secretary, Louisiana Bird Records Committee, c/o Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216.

1. English and Scientific names: HARRIS HAWK
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage): FEMALE (1) By size
3. Locality: LOUISIANA: Vermilion  
3 1/4 mi. South of 700 ON Hwy 35  
(parish)  
(specific locality)
4. Date(s) when observed: 1<sup>st</sup> 11-9-94 - still spotted on Dec. 18, 1994  
on pole
5. Time(s) of day when observed: AFTERNOON
6. Reporting observer and address: m/m PAUL McIntosh  
Rt 1 Box 54  
KAPLAN, LA 70548
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):  
BILL Fontenot, PAUL CONOVER, DAVID PATTON, Joseph Vallee
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): SUNNY DAY
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Swift (8.5x44) PONTAY-(8x40) Bushnell SPACEMASTER
11. Distance to bird(s): 100 ft.
12. Duration of observation: 30 min.
13. Habitat: Brushline next to Rice Field

14. **Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation** (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):  
 first spotted on telephone pole. Crop Duster scared it off. later observed on telephone pole further South. also saw it perched on small shrub near same pole
15. **Description** (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possibly: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):  
 Dark bird with chestnut shoulders. white rump and undertail. white tip on tail. Broad dark band on tail.
16. **Voice:** ?
17. **Similar species** (include how they were eliminated by your observation):  
~~Dark~~ DARK BIRD w/ chestnut shoulders. white rump and undertail
18. **Photographs or tape recordings obtained?** (by whom? attached?):
19. **Previous experience with this species:** once seen near Anubian TX.
20. **Identification aids:** (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):  
 a. at time of observation:  
 b. after observation:
21. This description is written from: \_\_\_ notes made during the observation (\_\_\_ notes attached?); \_\_\_ notes made after the observation (date: \_\_\_); \_\_\_ memory.
22. **Are you positive of your identification** If not, explain: yes
23. **Signature of reporter:** Danielle Monty McArthur  
 (date) (time)  
 12/20/94

LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

REPORT FORM

94-40, F

This form is intended as a convenience in reporting observations of unusual birds. It may be used flexibly and need not be used at all. Leave blank any details not observed. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Please print or type. Attach drawings, photographs, etc.; include all photos if an obscurely marked species. When completed, mail to the Secretary of the LOS Bird Records Committee.

1. Common and scientific name: Harris' Hawk (Parabuteo unicinctus)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g. 2ad. in breeding plumage): 1 ad
3. Locality: Louisiana: Hwy 35 - 1 mi. S. of <sup>Vincennes Refuge</sup> Parish: Vermilion
4. Date(s) when seen: December 31, 1994
5. Times of day when seen: 9:10 - 9:30
6. Reporting observer and address: Phillip Wallace, 4515 S. Prieur St.,  
New Orleans, LA 70125
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird: Curt Sorrells
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird: Many others
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Good to excellent light; sun behind observers
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Zeiss 10X40
11. Distance to bird: 30-50 yards
12. Duration of observation: 20 minutes
13. Habitat (general and specific): Roadside. Perched on telephone pole adjacent to open rice fields.
14. Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc.; include and stress any habits used in identification): Resting, preening, flying.
15. Description (Include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen. Include if possible: total length; body bulk; shape, bill, eye, and leg characteristics; color and pattern of plumage, etc. Stress field marks):

Head - Dark brown

Bill - bright yellow with gray tip

Wings - Folded - chestnut on upper wing  
In flight - Chestnut shoulder patch

Underparts - chin, breast, and belly chocolate brown  
undertail/white from legs back

Tail - Proximal half white; distal half brown; white terminal band; white base of tail conspicuous in flight.

Overall dark brown color

16. Voice: None

17. Similar species (include how they are eliminated by your observations):

None

18. Photographs (Was it photographed? By whom? Attached?):

Slides by Wallace accompanying this report.  
Videotaped by Sorrells.

19. Previous experience with this species: I've seen several times in Texas and Arizona

20. Aids: List books, illustrations, birders, etc. used in identification

a) at time of observation; None

b) after observation: None

21. This description written from:  notes made during observation;  notes made after observation;  memory.

22. Are you positive of your identification? Yes. If not, explain:

23. Signature of reporter:

Philly Wallace

24. Date and time of writing this account:

March 5, 1985

7:45 a.m.

Harris' Hawk

DATE

12/31/94

9:10 -

9:30 a.m.

Overall dark brown.

Underparts - Chin, breast, belly  
chocolate

Undertail - white from leg down.

Bill - bright yellow.

Wing - ~~red~~ Chestnut on  
upper wing (folded)

Head - Dark brown

Feet and legs - yellow

Tail - white upper; brown  
~~feet~~ lower; white terminal bar

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or header.

1918

1918

1918

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In flight; chestnut shoulder  
patch; white eye trail.

Tip of bill - gray

Light good to excellent.  
Sun behind us.

May 35

On telephone pole  
1 mi below Vincent's Refuge.  
Open rice fields.

1 feather out of place on  
shoulder.

Distance 30 - 50 yds.

about twelve months ago  
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Heater; preening.

Couldn't see chestnut  
feathering on legs.

Flew whenever we got out of  
car.

Flushed 3 times; disappeared S.  
Perched in tree last time.

January 1900

Dear Mother  
I hope you are well

and happy as ever  
I am well at present

and hope you will  
write soon and let me  
hear from you

**REPORT TO THE  
LOUISIANA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE**

1. Common and scientific name:  
Harris' Hawk, *Parabuteo unicinctus*
2. Number of individuals seen, sexes, ages, general plumage, etc.  
One bird, perhaps a young adult
3. Locality:  
Vermilion Parish, LA, on LA Hwy 35 near the Vincent Refuge, between the towns of Kaplan and Rayne
4. Date(s) when seen:  
March 19, 1995
5. Times of day when seen:  
From about 12:10 PM to about 12:40 PM
6. Reporting observer and address:  
John P. Sevenair, 325 Stafford Place, New Orleans, LA 70124
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird:  
Nancy Newfield
8. Other observers who independently identified the bird:  
Many; the bird has been seen near this location for several months.
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and amount of light):  
The day was bright and clear. The bird stood on tree branches and telephone poles in the open, and for most of the observation time was in full sunlight. We had clear views, only slightly obscured by limbs of the tree.
10. Optical equipment:  
Zeiss 7x42 binoculars.  
Bushnell Spacemaster scope with 20x eyepiece.
11. Distance to bird:  
Approximately 20 meters
12. Duration of observation:  
About half an hour
13. Habitat (general and specific):  
When first seen the bird was on a leafless tree about a hundred yards from a residence and twenty yards from LA Hwy 35. Later it flew to telephone poles along the highway. Most of the general area is devoted to rice and crawfish cultivation; houses are infrequent and traffic along the road is light. Trees are relatively few and scattered.
14. Behavior (flying, feeding, resting, etc.; include and stress any habits used in identification):  
When first seen the bird was standing on a large, nearly horizontal limb in a leafless tree. It was alert, ruffling its feathers from time to time and moving its head as if looking around. It hopped a few feet along the branch twice during a twenty-minute period, and then flew to the crossbar of a telephone pole a couple of hundred meters away. In flight the bird alternated flapping and gliding; when gliding the wingtips appeared to be bowed very slightly downward. When we followed, the bird allowed observation for about five minutes before it flew again, to another pole a couple of hundred meters away. After that we left it in peace.

15. Description (Include what was actually seen, not what should have been seen. Include if possible: total length; body bulk; shape, bill, eye, and leg characteristics; color and pattern of plumage, etc.

The bird was obviously a hawk, shaped more like a buteo than a kite, falcon, or accipiter. It was a sizable bird, roughly the size of a Red-tailed Hawk. (None were available for direct comparison, but we saw several that day.) The tip of the beak was hooked like a hawk's and steel-gray in color. The extensive cere area was yellow, and appeared to extend back to the eye. The eye itself was dark.

The feathers of the head, back, throat, breast, and belly were dark slaty (not glossy) brown. Rusty coloration of feathers was visible in patches on the shoulders and at the two points where the legs met the body. The rump and/or base of the tail (seen only when the bird was flying away from us) was bright white, as were the undertail coverts. The tail was dark brown for most of its length both above and below, fairly long in proportion to the bird's body length, and somewhat rounded and white at the tip for perhaps 2 cm. When the bird was viewed from the back, we could see that the tips of the folded primaries reached roughly half way down the tail.

The legs and feet were yellow and bore no traces of falconers' apparatus. The talons were dark gray or black.

16. Voice:

Not heard

17. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observations):

The bird was too small to be a Golden Eagle, and its brown areas were on the shoulders rather than the back of the head and neck. The Golden Eagle also lacks a white tail tip.

The tail pattern and rusty shoulder areas were wrong for a dark-phase Swainson's Hawk. The absence of white on the throat, breast, and belly of this bird are not consistent with either White-tailed Hawk or Ferruginous Hawk.

The uniform slate-brown of most of the plumage, the presence of rusty shoulder areas, and the bright and well-defined white areas at the base and tip of the tail would rule out dark-phase Red-tailed Hawks. Odd-looking hawks of this species are fairly common in the area.

18. Photographs:

None were taken

19. Previous experience with this species:

I've seen some in Texas, a decade or so ago

20. Aids: List books, illustrations, birders, etc. used in identification

a) At the time of observation:

None (though the bird was more or less a stakeout)

b) After observation:

The National Geographic Society's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, second edition.

21. This description written from:  Notes made during observation;  notes made after observation;  memory.

A copy of the notes is enclosed.

22. Are you positive of your identification?  yes If not, explain:

23. Signature of reporter:

John P. Severian

24. Date and time of writing this account:

This account was written during the evening of March 19, 1995.

flew 12:30 white bare  
 tail  
 yellow cere <sup>brown</sup> gray  
 bill, dark front  
 rufous/rusty back  
 white tail tip white  
 u tail coverts dark  
 nest hidden just above  
 by branch  
 later: dark brown tail except tip  
 dark eye  
 no jesses  
 hop on branch  
 yellow  
 gray fairly long tail  
 yellow legs  
 feet  
 12:30  
 mid-sight 100 ft below



12:30 on phone pole  
dark (slaty) brown  
back, white rump  
tail kind of rounded

 dark primary  
tips  
white

ruffy tufts at  
point where legs  
emerge from body

flew tree to pole to  
pole - flaps, glides after  
water -

 very slight  
bowing of  
wings

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LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

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1. English and Scientific names: Harris' Hawk  
(*Parabuteo unicinctus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g. 2 ad.in breeding or alternate plumage): one in adult plumage
3. Locality: LOUISIANA; Vermilion  
(parish)  
about 2 mi. S Hwy. 699 on Hwy. 35 (12/23/94); 1 mi. W Hwy. 35 on Hwy. 699 (2/24/95)  
(specific locality)
4. Date(s) when observed: 23 December 1994 & 24 February 1995
5. Time(s) of day when observed: about 3 PM on 12/23; about 10 AM on 2/24
6. Reporting observer and address: Steven W. Cardiff & Donna L. Dittmann  
Museum of Natural Science, 119 Foster Hall  
Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3216
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): on 2/24/95, Frank B. Gill, David Agro, and George Armistead from Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences
8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s): many observers. We believe that the bird was first reported by Harvey Patten in late Oct. 1994; subsequently seen by many observers into March 1995
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Excellent on 12/23/94. Overcast but good on 2/24/95.
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Leica Ultra 10 X 42 binoculars

11. **Distance to bird(s):** on 12/23, with 40 ft. using car as a blind (we couldn't get bird to fly until we got out of the car!); on 2/24, about 200 ft. from the highway (after a few minutes, with 7 people standing on the road, bird finally got nervous and flew farther away).
12. **Duration of observation:** at least 10 minutes
13. **Habitat:** agricultural area with scattered hedgerows and clumps of trees near houses, woods along bayous. On 12/23, bird sitting on telephone pole, then flew to Pecan tree over house; on 2/24, sitting 10 ft. up in hackberry along the outer edge of a wooded bayou/ditch west of hwy. just N of Hwy. 699 curve, then flew to tall dead tree behind yard.
14. **Behavior of bird/circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation):**

Perched, relatively tame; seen in flight when approached too closely. On 12/23 we (and Curt Sorrells in separate vehicle) searched for the bird for about 4 hrs. before it appeared (after Curt left) along Hwy. 35 at a spot that we had checked several times earlier. We missed the bird while cruising the area on 29 January (overcast, cold, and windy) and 11 February (overcast, windy, periods of rain during frontal passage).
15. **Description (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possibly: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):** A medium-sized, *Buteo*-like hawk, about the size of a small (male) Red-tailed Hawk. Entirely brownish-black, with chestnut "shoulder patch" and thighs, white rump patch, undertail coverts, basal 1/3 or so of tail, and terminal band of tail. Bill dark; bare, yellowish cere and area of bare yellowish skin extending from bill to in front of eye. Legs and feet bare, yellow. Eye dark. We could not make out the chestnut feathering on the underwing coverts. **SEE PHOTOS.** The bird was in good plumage (at least by the dates that we saw it) with no sign of plumage wear, missing or broken feathers, molt, leg bands, or jesses.
16. **Voice:** not heard
17. **Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):** Overall dark coloration combined with chestnut wing patch, tail pattern, and facial skin configuration eliminates all other superficially similar species.
18. **Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):** Color slides by SWC attached.
19. **Previous experience with this species:** Considerable in AZ & TX. Also in CA (escapes and released birds only), NW Mexico (SWC), and NW Peru.

20. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):  
a. at time of observation: none  
b. after observation: none
21. This description is written from: \_\_\_ notes made during the observation; \_\_\_ notes made after the observation (date: \_\_\_\_\_); X memory.
22. Are you positive of your identification if not, explain: YES. ID is straightforward. Origin, on the other hand, is debatable. Several other recent LA records have been dismissed as escapes or deliberate introductions by misguided falconers. Apparently, there is evidence of a major northward dispersal by this species during fall-winter 94-95. We feel confident that this record does not pertain to the individual that we saw on the Lafayette CBC, 2 Jan. 1995.
23. Signature of reporter: Donnal D. Dorman 13 April 1995  
(date) (time)

*Steven W. Cardiff*



94-40

Harris Kraft

Vermilion Trail

11-18-94

Rene Falton



94-40

Henri Gust

11-18-54

Vermilion Parish

Deane Talton