

### Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*

The Broad-winged Hawk is common in the eastern United States but a rare visitor to California, mainly in fall migration. Records from San Diego County are mostly from Point Loma. The species' frequency has declined since the 1980s, becoming less than one per year by the turn of the century.

**Migration:** In a faint echo of the raptor migration at the Marin Headlands on the north side of the Golden Gate, Point Loma (S7) guides and accumulates migrating birds of prey, which are reluctant to cross over water. Thus it is the logical site for species like the Broad-winged Hawk moving south along the coast. In San Diego County records away from Point Loma are few and largely near the coast, such as one at La Jolla (O7) 6 October 1999 (S. E. Smith, NAB 54:104, 2000). Farthest inland was one at Palomar Mountain (D15) 31 October 1983 (R. Higson, AB 38:246, 1984). Records are concentrated in the first two weeks of October; fall migrants extend in date from 18 September 1991 (Point Loma, D. and M. Hastings, AB 46:148, 1992) to at least 17 November (1999, Point Loma, J. R. Sams, NAB 54:104, 2000). Some records in December may have been of late fall migrants as well.

The three spring records are all inland: Palomar Mountain 2 April 1969 (AFN 23:625, 1969), Pine Valley Creek 2 miles north of Noble Canyon (O21) 26 April 1995 (K. F. Campbell), and Scissors Crossing (J22) 20 April 2003 (J. R. Barth).

**Winter:** Of San Diego County's eight December–March records of the Broad-winged Hawk, only one is since 1981, at Point Loma 28–29 December 1991 (R. E. Webster, AB 46:314, 1992). Unitt (1984) listed earlier records. McCaskie (1968a) collected the only specimen, the first Broad-winged Hawk reported from California, in the



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

Tijuana River valley 11 December 1966 (SDNHM 36086).

**Conservation:** The Broad-winged Hawk was more frequent in San Diego County in the late 1970s and 1980s: the seven reported in 1977 and 1980 have not been equaled since. In the 1980s, Guy McCaskie (pers. comm.) expected to see a Broad-winged if he watched migrating hawks at Cabrillo National Monument between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM during the species' peak season. But his similar effort there at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century returned an average of less than one individual per year.

**Taxonomy:** Broad-winged Hawks in North America are all nominate *B. p. platypterus* (Vieillot, 1823); other subspecies are confined to the West Indies.