

### **2023 Winter Raptor Survey** — Linda Moore, *Compiler*

Eight of the nine winter raptor survey routes were run in January, with one being canceled due to inclement weather and poor road conditions. These routes are registered with the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA). *If GPS information is provided, routes are entered into the database on their website. The data is then available for researchers or anyone to use. Access to the data can be found at [www.hmana.org](http://www.hmana.org) by clicking on research -> winter raptor survey-> view recent surveys. Any of the surveys in New Mexico are the ones run here, covering a large area from the Arizona border into Otero County. A typical route takes most of a day to complete, and runs anywhere between 100 to 200 miles or even more.*

The routes are typically run on the weekend of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, but this year the weather made some adjustments necessary. Still, there was a good showing of raptors, with **a total of 253 raptors counted**. The most numerous species, not surprisingly, is the red-tailed hawk, with 135 counted this year. American kestrels were the second most numerous with 81 counted. Other species seen were Northern harriers, Sharp-shinned hawks, Cooper's hawks, Ferruginous, Bald and Golden eagles, Prairie falcons and Merlins. Our Otero county friend observed two Harris' hawks, while a White-tailed kite was seen in the Bootheel, not the first time one has been seen there. Greater roadrunners and Loggerhead shrikes are also counted as 'honorary raptors' since their habits are certainly prey based. These data are not entered into the database, but included just for fun. This year seven roadrunners were seen, and 21 shrikes. The shrike number is uncommonly low, as 69 were seen in 2020 as a high number with around 40 as the average seen yearly.