

The Broad-Winged Hawk

WARREN NELSON

The Broad-winged Hawk is one of the most common hawks in our area and it is quite an interesting one. Often called a 'squeaky hinge' from the strange call that it makes which sounds a lot like a rusty door opening. It is referred to as the friendliest, most approachable of all hawks. It is a medium-sized hawk at 16 inches long, with a wing span of almost 3 feet, which makes it about the same size as a crow. It is dark brown above and barred underneath. In flight, its tail feathers show three broad black and two broad white bands, one of the best field identification marks.



Adult Broad-wing Hawk. WARREN NELSON PHOTO

The nest is built by both adults usually in a deciduous tree anywhere from 15 to 30 feet up. They normally lay two to four white eggs about two inches long with brown speckles that are incubated by both adults. The young hatch out in about 24 days, about three

of prey and droppings left in the nest, which helps to protect the young against disease. By the time that the young are ready to fledge, about 40 days later, the nest is just about level with leaves.

Over the years, I have found several Broad-winged Hawk nests and have helped bird banders in banding some of them. Although they are all the same species, they have their own special personalities. When you are at the nest, some adults will simply fly off and only come back after you have left the nest and the young. Others will sit about 100 feet away and constantly scream at you with that squeaky hinge call. Then there is the type-A personality, the one that comes right after you. Those are the type where I would send other more gullible banders into. As the bander reaches for the young, both parent birds swoop in and, if you don't look out, you have a neck full of talons. And I think that most banders would much rather band the young shortly after hatching. By the time the young are about a month old, they are pretty belligerent. I guess when you are a hawk, toughness counts.

inches long with short whitish down feathers (cute is definitely the right word for them). The adults are excellent hunters and catch quite an array of prey: rodents, squirrels, small rabbits, frogs, snakes, bugs, even earthworms. The hawks are



Above: One day old Broad-wing Hawks.



At right: Three week old Broad-wing Hawks.

WARREN NELSON PHOTOS

It nests in the northern two-thirds of Minnesota, returning from its southern wintering grounds in South America in late April.

noted for being really quite smart. Each day the hawks bring fresh leaves or pine needles to line the nest with. The leaves and pine needles help to cover up any bits

For any of you who have been to Hawk Ridge in Duluth in the fall, the Broad-winged Hawk is one that puts on a real display if for no other reason than its sheer numbers. Peak migration is in mid-September, but may continue well into October. They come through in tens of thousands. When the winds are right, on a good day, it isn't uncommon to see kettles of a few hundred at a time.

Portrait workshop at Jaques

Jaques Art Center welcomes Wanda Carter, artist and instructor, in teaching a three-day workshop on portraiture July 12-14, 9 am to 4 p.m. This series of workshops will cover a charcoal and value study, painting from a live model, and refinement of principles and techniques. Tuition is \$165 for all 3 days. Per day tuition for students not able to attend all three days is \$55 for members and \$65 for non-members.

Instructor Wanda Carter is a Florida resident who also resides in Lexington, MI. She has studied portraiture with master instructors and painters and belongs to Portrait Society of America, Sarasota Portrait Society, Great

Lakes Pastel Society, and SW FL Pastel Society. She has had several one-woman shows and her work is in collections in the U.S. and Canada. For more information on Wanda, visit her website at www.wandamcarter-sart.com.

For more info. and to sign up, call 218-927-2363. Jaques



"Story Teller" pastel by Wanda Carter.

Art Center is located two blocks west of the stoplights in Aitkin. Admission is always free. Regular hours are 11-4 Tues. through Sat.

Tree, shrub identification class

An educational class on "Tree and Shrub Identification" will be offered Thur., July 12 in Baxter/Brainerd, from 2-6 p.m at Northland Arboretum, 14250 Conservation Drive. In this class, participants will use a dichotomous key to identify

common trees, shrubs and other herbaceous plants in the landscape. They will be able to identify factors that influence where a plant grows. In developing a forest stewardship plan, knowing trees in your forest and identifying species in it are

very important. This workshop is a Woodland Advisor class and is approved for continuing education hours for Master Gardeners. The public is invited to attend.

Woodland Advisor is a program of the Minnesota Forestry Association, the University of Minnesota Extension, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry.

The cost of attending this class is \$20. To register for this workshop visit: <http://cfc.cfans.umn.edu/wa/> or contact Sue Crotty at 888-241-0720, crott012@umn.edu.

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