

TRAPPING AND BANDING OF RAPTORS

EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SEPTEMBER 8, 1997

TO

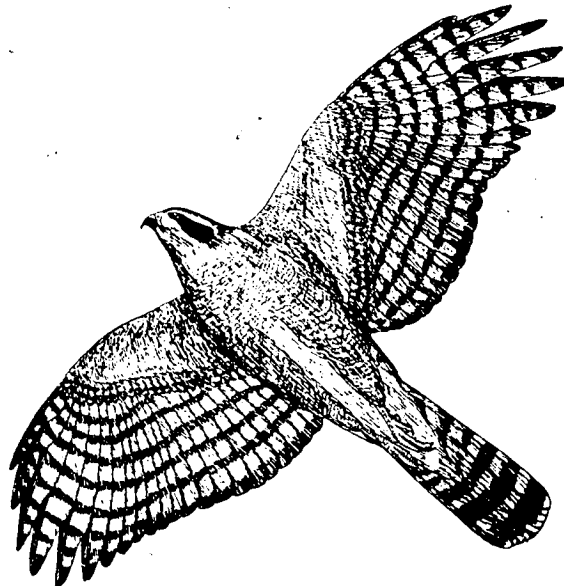
DECEMBER 15, 1997

BY

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THE CENTER FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY  
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY



NORTHERN GOSHAWK  
(*Accipiter gentilis*)

This project was operated at Wise Point on the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge under Special Use Permit #67373 issued to Reese F. Lukei, Jr., volunteer research associate, The Center for Conservation Biology at The College of William and Mary, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service volunteer. This project is funded through the Nongame and Endangered Species Program of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and administered and supervised by Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, Director Emeritus of The Center for Conservation Biology. The daily operation of the banding site was by Reese F. Lukei, Jr., 1046 Azalea Court, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452, telephone 757-340-5948, Federal banding permit #09351-H.

The purpose of the project is to trap and band raptors (hawks and falcons) during their fall migration. Data collected is provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bird Banding Laboratory, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge. Emphasis is placed on observations of the movement of the Peregrine Falcon, an endangered species. This project has been undertaken at this location for over fifteen years.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR is a significant site for this activity because of its location at the southern tip of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The raptors and other birds migrating south during the fall months follow the Atlantic Ocean coastline and the shoreline of the Chesapeake, and upon reaching the 18 miles of open water at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, sometimes pause and wait for favorable winds before crossing the Bay to Virginia Beach. This is very similar to the situation at Cape May, New Jersey. As a result, a large number of raptors are present from about mid-September through mid-December of each year.

Two types of trapping equipment are used to capture the raptors. Mist nets are very fine nylon, 40 feet long, seven feet high, with four pockets, that are held in place with 3/4 inch metal poles. Five of these nets are used, with two outside nets 2set at about a 30 degree angle with a third and fourth in the middle, and a fifth net across the far open end of the right side of the site. The other type of trap is a bow net, which is an aluminum frame about four feet in diameter, covered loosely with cotton crab netting, which folds in half and is activated by hinged springs. The release of the bow trap is controlled by a pull line from a blind. Two of these traps are used and are placed on the ground between the mist nets as shown on map #2.

Pigeons (rock dove), starlings and brown-headed cowbirds are used as lures. The cowbirds are used under USFWS permit #PRT-688032. The lure birds are placed in leather harnesses which are attached to dacron fish line that runs along the ground through ceramic insulators between the blind and wooden lure poles placed beyond the far ends of the mist nets. These lines are pulled to allow the lure birds to fly, thus attracting the migrating raptors to the banding site.

The blind is a wooden structure ten feet long, four feet wide and seven feet high, with open windows on all sides for viewing. There is a door on each end. It will accommodate four people. The blind sits on a small sandhill and faces NNE. It is shown as letter A on map #1 and arranged in relation to the mist nets as shown on map #2.

The banding site was in operation for 65 days from September 8 through December 15, 1997 and was open most days except for rainy weather. The nets were open for 473 hours, for an average of 7.28 hours per day of operation. The nets were generally opened about sunrise and remained open until raptor activity ceased.

The bands that are used are furnished by the USFWS Bird Banding Laboratory. They are aluminum and numbered according to size. The sizes used and raptors applied to during this project were as follows:

| <u>Size #</u> | <u>Raptor</u>  |
|---------------|--|
| 2             | Male Sharp-shinned hawk  |
| 3             | Female Sharp-shinned hawk  |
| 3B            | Female Sharp-shinned hawk<br>Male and Female American Kestrel<br>Male Merlin               |
| 3A            | Female Sharp-shinned hawk  |
| 4             | Female Merlin<br>Male Cooper's hawk<br>Male Northern Harrier                               |
| 5             | Female Cooper's hawk<br>Female Northern Harrier<br>Broad-winged hawk                       |
| 6             | Male Peregrine falcon<br>Male Northern goshawk<br>Broad-winged hawk<br>Red-shouldered hawk |
| 7A            | Female Peregrine falcon<br>Female Northern Goshawk<br>Red-tailed hawk                      |
| 7B            | Red-tailed hawk  |
| 7D            | Red-tailed hawk  |

The raptors that are usually trapped and banded are:

American Kestrel - *Falco sparverius*

Merlin - *Falco columbarius*

Peregrine falcon - *Falco peregrinus*

Sharp-shinned hawk - *Accipiter straitus*

Cooper's hawk - *Accipiter cooperii*

Northern Harrier - *Circus cyaneus*

Red-tailed hawk - *Buteo jamaicensis*

The raptors that are occasionally trapped and banded are:

Northern Goshawk - *Accipiter gentilis*

Red-shouldered hawk - *Buteo lineatus*

Broad-winged hawk - *Buteo platypterus*

Rough-legged hawk - *Buteo lagopus*

The raptors that are observed but not trapped are:

Bald Eagle - *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Golden Eagle - *Aquila chrysaetos*

Osprey - *Pandion haliaetus*

Turkey Vulture - *Cathartes aura*

Black Vulture - *Coragyps atratus*

The results of trapping and banding for 1997:

| <u>Raptor</u>            | <u>September</u> | <u>October</u> | <u>Nov-Dec</u> | <u>Totals</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| American Kestrel         | 20               | 3              |                | 23✓           |
| Merlin                   | 123              | 29             |                | 152✓          |
| Peregrine                | 6                | 8              |                | 14✓           |
| Sharp-shinned            | 110              | 231            | 66             | 407✓          |
| Cooper's                 | 43               | 90             | 7              | 140✓          |
| Northern Goshawk         |                  | 1              | 3              | 4✓            |
| Red-tailed               | 3                | 16             | 39             | 58✓           |
| Broad-winged             | 1                | 2              |                | 3             |
| Red-shouldered           |                  | 1              |                | 1             |
| Northern Harrier         |                  | 2              | 1              | 3✓            |
| Total banded             | <u>306</u>       | <u>383</u>     | <u>116</u>     | <u>805</u>    |
| Foreign retraps:         |                  |                |                |               |
| Merlin                   | 5                | 2              |                | 7             |
| Peregrine                |                  | 3              |                | 3             |
| Sharp-shinned            |                  | 3              |                | 3             |
| Cooper's                 | 1                | 3              |                | 4             |
| Red-tailed               |                  |                | 3              | 3             |
| Total retraps            | <u>6</u>         | <u>11</u>      | <u>3</u>       | <u>20</u>     |
| Total trapped            | <u>312</u>       | <u>394</u>     | <u>119</u>     | <u>825</u>    |
| Days nets were open      | 18               | 27             | 20             | 65            |
| Hours nets were open     | 140              | 218            | 115            | 473           |
| Raptors trapped per day  | 17.3             | 14.6           | 6.0            | 12.7          |
| Raptors trapped per hour | 2.4              | 1.8            | 1.0            | 1.7           |
| Volunteer hours          | 218              | 272            | 200            | 690           |

The age and sex of raptors banded:

| <u>Raptor</u>    | <u>Not Sexed</u> |            | <u>Male</u> |            | <u>Female</u> |            | <u>Total</u> |            |
|------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|                  | <u>HY</u>        | <u>AHY</u> | <u>HY</u>   | <u>AHY</u> | <u>HY</u>     | <u>AHY</u> | <u>HY</u>    | <u>AHY</u> |
| American Kestrel |                  |            | 13          |            | 10            |            | 23           |            |
| Merlin           |                  |            | 63          | 5          | 73            | 11         | 136          | 16         |
| Peregrine        |                  |            | 10          |            | 4             |            | 14           |            |
| Sharp-shinned    |                  |            | 203         | 4          | 187           | 13         | 390          | 17         |
| Cooper's         |                  |            | 81          | 3          | 54            | 2          | 135          | 5          |
| Northern Goshawk |                  |            | 3           |            | 1             |            | 4            |            |
| Red-tailed       | 56               | 2          |             |            |               |            | 56           | 2          |
| Broad-winged     | 3                |            |             |            |               |            | 3            |            |
| Red-shouldered   | 1                |            |             |            |               |            | 1            |            |
| Northern Harrier |                  |            | 3           |            |               |            | 3            |            |
| Totals           | <u>60</u>        | <u>2</u>   | <u>376</u>  | <u>12</u>  | <u>329</u>    | <u>26</u>  | <u>765</u>   | <u>40</u>  |
| Percentage       |                  |            |             |            |               |            | 95.03%       | 4.97%      |

Comparative data for the raptors trapped and banded during the years 1989-1997:

| <u>Raptor</u>      | <u>1997</u> | <u>1996</u> | <u>1995</u> | <u>1994</u> | <u>1993</u> | <u>1992</u> | <u>1991</u> | <u>1990</u> | <u>1989</u> |     |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----|
| American Kestrel   | 23          | 11          | 50          | 9           | 13          | 13          | 12          | 26          | 56          | 24  |
| Merlin             | 152         | 77          | 200         | 99          | 64          | 91          | 84          | 81          | 285         | 126 |
| Peregrine          | 14          | 22          | 10          | 8           | 15          | 10          | 23          | 35          | 25          | 18  |
| Sharp-shinned 407  | 396         | 466         | 384         | 476         | 518         | 523         | 433         | 405         |             | 445 |
| Cooper's           | 140         | 136         | 189         | 121         | 190         | 136         | 102         | 150         | 116         | 142 |
| Northern Goshawk   | 4           |             | 1           |             |             |             | 3           |             |             |     |
| Red-tailed         | 58          | 36          | 39          | 57          | 67          | 46          | 34          | 19          | 24          | 42  |
| Broad-winged       | 3           |             | 2           | 1           | 3           | 2           | 2           | 1           |             |     |
| Red-shouldered     | 1           | 1           | 2           |             | 1           | 3           | 1           | 2           | 1           |     |
| Northern Harrier   | 3           | 3           | 5           | 2           | 3           | 2           |             | 5           | 9           | 4   |
| Total banded       | 805         | 682         | 964         | 681         | 832         | 821         | 784         | 752         | 921         |     |
| Foreign retraps    | 20          | 22          | 17          | 13          | 9           | 15          | 15          | 19          | 5           | 15  |
| Total trapped      | 825         | 704         | 981         | 694         | 841         | 836         | 799         | 771         | 926         |     |
| # HY               | 784         | 616         | 939         | 645         | 796         | 796         | 761         | 691         | 870         |     |
| % HY               | 95.0        | 87.5        | 95.7        | 92.9        | 94.6        | 95.3        | 95.2        | 89.8        | 94.0        |     |
| # AHY/ASY          | 41          | 88          | 42          | 49          | 45          | 40          | 38          | 80          | 56          |     |
| % AHY/ASY          | 5.0         | 12.5        | 4.3         | 7.1         | 5.4         | 4.7         | 4.8         | 10.2        | 6.0         |     |
| Days site operated | 65          | 65          | 57          | 55          | 52          | 55          | 47          | 48          | 54          | 55  |
| Hours nets open    | 473         | 424         | 405         | 373         | 416         | 395         | 421         | 386         | 461         |     |
| Hours open per day | 7.28        | 6.52        | 7.11        | 6.78        | 8.00        | 7.18        | 8.96        | 8.04        | 8.54        |     |
| Trapped per day    | 12.7        | 10.8        | 17.2        | 12.6        | 16.2        | 15.2        | 17.0        | 16.1        | 17.1        |     |
| Trapped per hour   | 1.7         | 1.7         | 2.4         | 1.9         | 2.0         | 2.1         | 1.9         | 2.0         | 2.0         |     |

Raptors that were trapped at Wise Point in 1997 that had been banded at other locations, foreign retraps, were (there were 8 others that return data is not yet available):

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Specie</u> | <u>Sex</u> | <u>Age</u> | <u>Band #</u> | <u>Banded</u> | <u>Where</u> |
|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 9-14        | Merlin        | F          | HY         | 1204-53728    | 9-15-97       | Kiptopeke    |
| 9-20        | Merlin        | F          | HY         | 1204-53811    | 9-20-97       | Kiptopeke    |
| 10-04       | Peregrine     | F          | HY         | 1807-40591    | 10-03-97      | Assateague   |
| 10-04       | Merlin        | M          | HY         | 2003-71534    | 10-04-97      | Kiptopeke    |
| 10-06       | Peregrine     | M          | HY         | 2206-18296    | 10-03-97      | Assateague   |
| 10-10       | Merlin        | F          | HY         | 1204-53950    | 10-08-97      | Kiptopeke    |
| 10-11       | Cooper's      | M          | HY         | 1204-53914    | 10-08-97      | Kiptopeke    |
| 10-12       | Cooper's      | F          | HY         | 1705-18146    | 10-12-97      | Kiptopeke    |
| 10-14       | Peregrine     | F          | HY         | 1807-04252    | 10-13-97      | Assateague   |
| 10-29       | Sharp-shinned | F          | AHY        | 1373-20043    | 10-24-96      | Cape May, NJ |
| 11-16       | Red-tailed    | U          | HY         | 1387-91119    | 11-15-97      | Kiptopeke    |
| 11-19       | Red-tailed    | U          | HY         | 1387-91138    | 11-29-97      | Kiptopeke    |

Raptors that were trapped at Wise Point in 1996 that had been banded at other locations, foreign retraps, were:

| <u>Retrapped</u> | <u>Banded</u> | <u>Band #</u>     | <u>Specie</u>    | <u>Location</u> |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 9-21-96          | 9-21-96       | 1204-47409        | Merlin           | Kiptopeke       |
| 9-26-96          | 9-23-96       | 922-73509         | Sharp-shinned    | Cape May, NJ    |
| 9-27-96          | 9-27-96       | 1204-47447        | Merlin           | Kiptopeke       |
| 9-28-96          | 9-25-96       | 2206-17628        | Peregrine        | Cape May, NJ    |
| 9-30-96          | 6-10-96       | 1807-08454        | Peregrine        | New Brunswick   |
| 10-03-96         | 10-03-96      | 1705-26412        | Cooper's         | Kiptopeke       |
| 10-05-96         | 10-04-96      | 1204-59920        | Cooper's         | Cape May, NJ    |
| 10-06-96         | 10-04-96      | 1433-87960        | Sharp-shinned    | Kiptopeke       |
| 10-07-96         | 10-05-96      | 1807-34589        | Peregrine        | Assateague      |
| 10-09-96         | 10-05-96      | 1204-59925        | Cooper's         | Cape May, NJ    |
| 10-17-96         | 10-16-96      | 987-19992         | Northern Goshawk | Kiptopeke       |
| 10-17-96         | 10-15-96      | 1204-43364        | Cooper's         | Cape May, NJ    |
| 10-17-96         | 10-13-93      | 1453-47581        | Sharp-shinned    | Cape May, NJ    |
| 10-18-96         | 10-18-96      | 1043-86749        | Sharp-shinned    | Kiptopeke       |
| 10-22-96         | 7-26-96       | 4083498 (Denmark) | Peregrine        | Greenland       |
| 10-22-96         | 10-07-91      | 1204-05524        | Cooper's         | Cape May, NJ    |
| 10-23-96         | 10-18-96      | 1043-86750        | Sharp-shinned    | Kiptopeke       |
| 10-30-96         | 10-01-96      | 872-13137         | Sharp-shinned    | Nova Scotia     |
| 11-15-96         | 11-15-96      | 1207-62111        | Red-tailed       | Kiptopeke       |
| 11-15-96         | 11-15-96      | 1387-06880        | Red-tailed       | Kiptopeke       |
| 11-16-96         | 10-04-96      | 872-13168         | Sharp-shinned    | Nova Scotia     |
| 11-17-96         | 11-15-96      | 1387-06889        | Red-tailed       | Kiptopeke       |

Raptors that were banded at Wise Point in years prior to 1997 that have been recovered at other locations:

| <u>Raptor</u> | <u>Date Banded</u> | <u>Date Recovered</u> | <u>Location Recovered</u>       |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Merlin        | 09-28-82           | 05-04-86              | Baffin Island, Canada           |
| Merlin        | 09-29-82           | 04-22-84              | Solon, Maine                    |
| Peregrine     | 10-04-83           | 10-10-83              | Villa Clara, Cuba               |
| Merlin        | 10-09-83           | 12-01-85              | Adelaide Beach, Florida         |
| Cooper's      | 10-27-83           | 05-09-84              | Cambridge, New York             |
| Merlin        | 09-21-84           | 04-09-85              | Guarare, Panama                 |
| Sharp-shinned | 09-28-84           | 01-24-89              | Charleston, South Carolina      |
| Sharp-shinned | 10-12-84           | 10-08-86              | Kittatinny Mountain, New Jersey |
| Sharp-shinned | 10-19-84           | 01-05-85              | Courtland, Virginia             |
| Red-tailed    | 11-03-84           | 02-19-85              | Virginia Beach, Virginia        |
| Sharp-shinned | 09-26-85           | 05-04-89              | Randolph, New Jersey            |
| Cooper's      | 10-26-85           | 03-04-88              | Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania       |

|                  |          |          |                                 |
|------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Merlin           | 09-16-86 | 09-20-86 | Ponce Inlet, Florida            |
| Merlin           | 09-22-86 | 08-01-96 | Azua, Dominican Republic        |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-04-86 | 11-27-86 | St. Augustine, Florida          |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-04-86 | 12-20-86 | Bokeeiia, Florida               |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-04-86 | 12-29-86 | Hendry County, Florida          |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-10-86 | 10-10-86 | Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia       |
| Merlin           | 10-10-86 | 10-15-87 | St. Johns, Newfoundland         |
| Merlin           | 10-10-86 | 08-10-88 | Cupids, Newfoundland            |
| Merlin           | 10-11-86 | 10-11-86 | Kiptopeke Beach, Virginia       |
| American Kestrel | 09-18-87 | 01-20-88 | Anquillia, British West Indies  |
| Merlin           | 09-18-87 | 11-30-88 | La Sierpa, Cuba                 |
| Merlin           | 09-30-87 | 05-14-88 | Amherst, Virginia               |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-06-87 | 10-05-88 | Lehigh Furnace, New Jersey      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-06-87 | 10-11-88 | Cape May, New Jersey            |
| Cooper's         | 10-10-87 | 10-13-88 | Cape May, New Jersey            |
| Cooper's         | 10-10-87 | 10-15-90 | Branchville, New Jersey         |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-11-87 | 10-18-88 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Merlin           | 09-12-88 | 04-01-91 | St. Honore, Quebec, Canada      |
| Merlin           | 09-23-88 | 10-02-88 | Belhaven, North Carolina        |
| Merlin           | 09-23-88 | 11-28-88 | Guimaro, Cuba                   |
| Sharp-shinned    | 09-29-88 | 11-28-88 | Lake City, Florida              |
| Merlin           | 10-01-88 | 05-12-94 | Lac St. Francis, Quebec, Canada |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-01-88 | 11-05-88 | Jacksonville, Florida           |
| Cooper's         | 10-08-88 | 02-03-89 | Swanadell Acres, Delaware       |
| Merlin           | 10-14-89 | 02-22-90 | Holguin, Cueto, Cuba            |
| Cooper's         | 10-22-89 | 10-25-90 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-30-89 | 04-20-92 | Colebrook, New Hampshire        |
| American Kestrel | 09-25-90 | 07-01-91 | Phillipsburg, New Jersey        |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-02-90 | 01-20-91 | Dagsboro, Delaware              |
| Cooper's         | 10-06-90 | 10-06-90 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Cooper's         | 10-09-90 | 10-10-90 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Cooper's         | 10-10-90 | 10-12-90 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Cooper's         | 10-11-90 | 10-12-90 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia  |
| Cooper's         | 10-14-90 | 01-16-92 | Melitota, Maryland              |
| Sharp-shinned    | 11-03-90 | 04-30-91 | Skowhegan, Maine                |
| Cooper's         | 11-03-90 | 00-00-92 | Littleton, New Hampshire        |
| Sharp-shinned    | 11-11-90 | 12-10-90 | Chesapeake, Virginia            |
| Merlin           | 09-18-91 | 02-08-92 | Banao, Cuba                     |
| Merlin           | 09-18-91 | 02-01-97 | Gibara, Cuba                    |
| Peregrine        | 10-02-91 | 04-26-95 | Santos, Brazil                  |
| Cooper's         | 10-04-91 | 01-03-96 | Miami, Florida                  |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-05-91 | 04-22-94 | St. Redempter, Quebec, Canada   |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-08-91 | 01-20-95 | Norcross, Georgia               |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-15-91 | 12-24-91 | Key West, Florida               |

|                  |          |          |                                     |
|------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Cooper's         | 09-18-92 | 10-23-95 | Cape May, New Jersey                |
| Merlin           | 10-05-92 | 08-28-96 | St. Pierre, Quebec, Canada          |
| Cooper's         | 10-08-92 | 02-27-93 | Accomac, Virginia                   |
| Peregrine        | 10-10-92 | 10-10-92 | Fisherman Island NWR, Virginia      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-10-92 | 02-25-95 | Santee Cooper Lakes, South Carolina |
| Cooper's         | 10-11-92 | 10-22-92 | Cape May, New Jersey                |
| Cooper's         | 10-15-92 | 10-29-94 | North Round Hill, West Virginia     |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-16-92 | 02-14-93 | Charleston, South Carolina          |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-18-92 | 10-18-92 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-25-92 | 10-26-92 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Northern Harrier | 11-04-92 | 04-19-95 | Braddock Bay, New York              |
| Red-tailed       | 11-13-92 | 07-21-95 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania          |
| Merlin           | 10-01-93 | 06-04-94 | Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada     |
| Merlin           | 10-09-93 | 11-24-93 | Holguin, Cueto, Cuba                |
| Cooper's         | 10-11-93 | 05-06-95 | Center Tuftonboro, New Hampshire    |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-28-93 | 11-17-93 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Red-tailed       | 11-11-93 | 11-12-93 | Cape May, New Jersey                |
| Red-tailed       | 10-11-94 | 10-12-94 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-12-94 | 12-21-94 | Tuckahoe, New Jersey                |
| Red-tailed       | 10-12-94 | 11-26-94 | Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania         |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-19-94 | 01-01-95 | Smyrna, Delaware                    |
| Cooper's         | 10-23-94 | 10-24-95 | Cape May, New Jersey                |
| Red-tailed       | 10-25-94 | 10-25-94 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-29-94 | 07-15-97 | Gatineau, Quebec, Canada            |
| Cooper's         | 10-29-94 | 06-08-97 | Stillwater Reservoir, New York      |
| Cooper's         | 11-02-94 | 11-08-94 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Sharp-shinned    | 11-02-94 | 11-09-94 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Red-tailed       | 11-12-94 | 11-14-94 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Red-tailed       | 11-12-94 | 05-03-97 | Westminster, Massachusetts          |
| Merlin           | 09-16-95 | 12-03-95 | Los Palos, Cuba                     |
| Merlin           | 09-16-95 | 05-02-96 | Sandy River, Maine                  |
| Cooper's         | 09-28-95 | 09-28-95 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Merlin           | 09-29-95 | 06-13-97 | Troy, Maine                         |
| Cooper's         | 10-08-95 | 10-09-95 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Cooper's         | 10-19-95 | 10-20-95 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Red-tailed       | 11-22-95 | 11-24-95 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Merlin           | 09-13-96 | 05-07-97 | Centreville, New Brunswick, Canada  |
| Sharp-shinned    | 10-04-96 | 10-04-96 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Cooper's         | 10-27-96 | 10-28-96 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |
| Red-tailed       | 11-15-96 | 11-15-96 | Kiptopeke State Park, Virginia      |

**OBSERVATIONS:**

The 1997 season began as if it would set a number of records, but in the end was an average season. There was a strong flight of Merlin and Peregrine, but the flight of other raptors except Northern Goshawk was average or below. A new station record of four Northern Goshawk was set. The average number of raptors banded during the 1989-1997 seasons is 805, which is exactly the number banded in 1997. September 20 was the day that the highest number of raptors were trapped, 59 banded and 2 foreign retraps.

**Peregrine Falcon**

The Peregrine Falcon, a Federal and Virginia endangered species, is the focus of this project. Records are kept daily of all sightings of this specie. 1997 saw the highest number of sightings since 1990. As in sightings in past years, the adult pair of Peregrine that reside at Fisherman Island were frequently seen and those sightings are included in the numbers below.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Sightings</u> | <u>Trapped</u> |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1997        | 204              | 17             |
| 1996        | 161              | 26             |
| 1995        | 127              | 13             |
| 1994        | 130              | 9              |
| 1993        | 96               | 16             |
| 1992        | 70               | 12             |
| 1991        | 150              | 25             |
| 1990        | 300+             | 39             |
| 1989        | 300+             | 25             |

As has been noted in prior years, the most frequently used migration route for the Peregrine is from north to south along U.S. Route 13. Approximately 75% of the Peregrine use this route. The pine trees to the north and west of the blind have grown to such height that many Peregrine cannot be seen from the blind or are not sighted until they are past the banding site. 1997 saw new records for Peregrine sightings at the Kiptopeke State Park Hawk Watch Station, and the Peregrine banding operation at Assateague National Seashore set a new record of 254 Peregrine banded.

**Bald Eagle**

Bald Eagles continue to be seen at Wise Point, especially early in the fall season. On an almost regular basis, two adult and two immature Bald Eagles were observed arising or landing into the east end of the tree line denoted as "C" on map #1.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Days Site Open</u> | <u>Days B. E. Sighted</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1997        | 65                    | 35                        |
| 1996        | 65                    | 41                        |
| 1995        | 57                    | 23                        |
| 1994        | 55                    | 21                        |
| 1993        | 52                    | 18                        |
| 1992        | 55                    | 30                        |

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

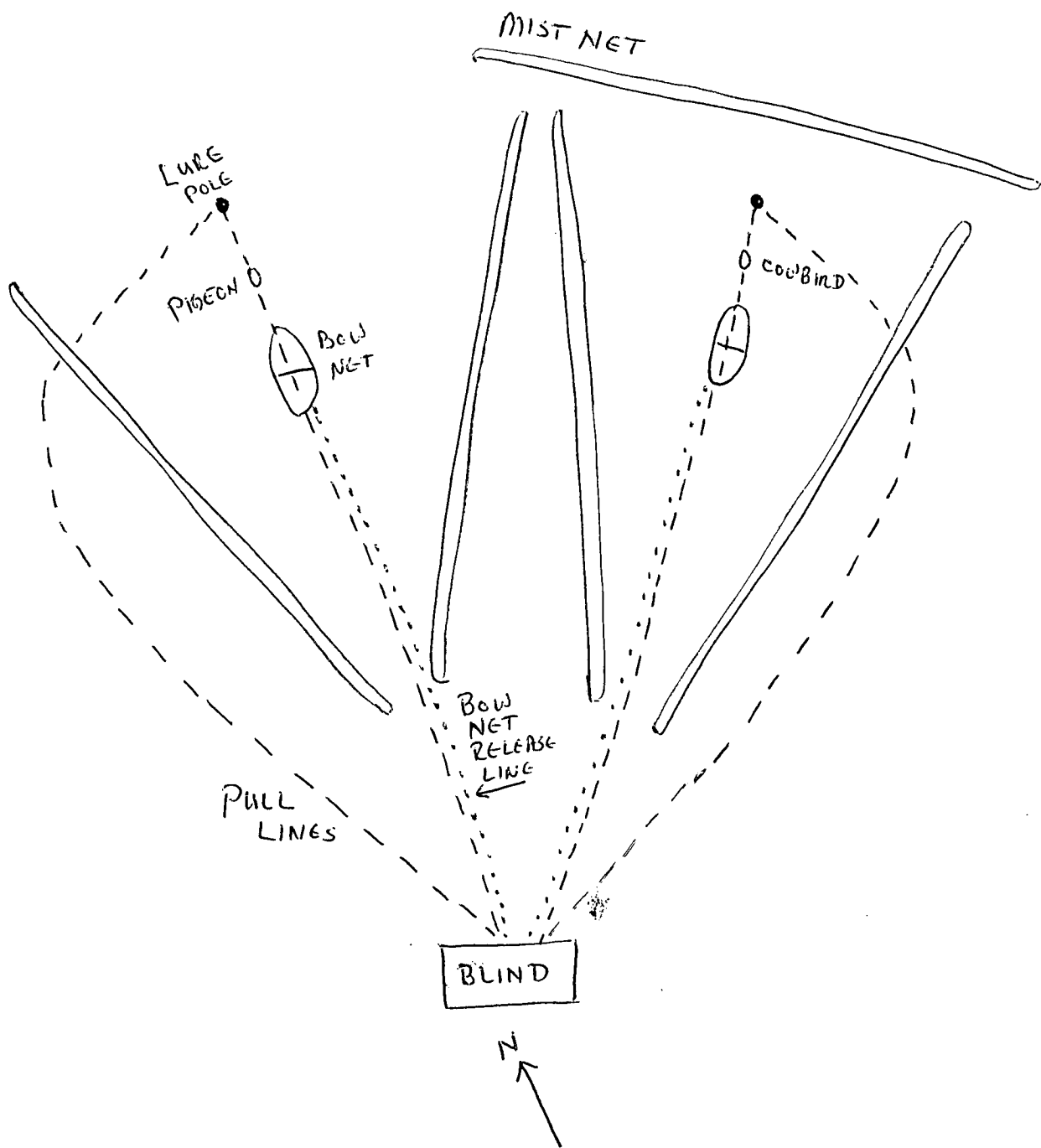
I wish to thank those who assisted at the banding station during the season: Shawn Padgett, Rudy Cashwell, Susan Rice, Walter Conrad, Lexie Caswell, Florence James, Alan Feyerherm, Melinda Lukei and Jerry Cobleigh. Earl Hodnett, who operates the raptor banding station at Kiptopeke State Park, provided cowbirds throughout the season.

Susan Rice, refuge manager, and her staff provided assistance in clearing the banding site and the path to it, and with other support throughout the season. Dr. Mitchell Byrd continues to provide administrative support to the project. Bill Woodfin and David Whitehurst of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries continue to provide encouragement and financial support to the project. I would not be able to carry out this project without the assistance and support of my wife, Melinda.

**REPORT SUBMITTED BY:**

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BANDING SITE ARRANGEMENT  
MAP #2