



Harris Hawk

(*Parabuteo unicinctus*)

Order: Family: Accipitridae

SIZE: 18-23 inches tall. Wingspan, 3 ½ - 3 ¼ feet. Weight, 1lb 6 oz to 2 lb 10 oz. Females larger than males.

DESCRIPTION: A black, medium size hawk with chestnut shoulders and thighs. Rump and base of tail are white. White band on tip of tail. Sharp, pointed talons.

VOICE: A low, harsh hissing sound.

HABITS: Found in semiarid regions with mesquite brush and cacti. Often seen perched atop a telephone or power pole. Extremely social birds. Several groups of birds will help rear the young. Will also hunt cooperatively and share food with family group members. Several cooperative hunting strategies have been observed by scientists. The first is a surprise pounce, where several hawks converge on their unsuspecting prey that is isolated from cover. The second involves flushing prey out of its protected place while other hawks wait nearby for the ambush. The third observed tactic involves several hawks taking turns chasing or herding the prey, somewhat like a relay, until one eventually kills the prey. Prey items are then shared by all members of the hunting party.

DIET: Rabbits, rodents, lizards, snakes, squirrels, gophers, quail and other small birds. Will occasionally eat carrion.

RANGE: Southwestern United States south to Argentina.

FAMILY LIFE: 1-5 dull white eggs with faint brown spots are incubated by both male and female. Young can usually take flight around 40 days after hatching.

NESTING: Stick nest lined with grass built in a cactus or mesquite, palo verde or ironwood tree. Both male and female help build the nest.

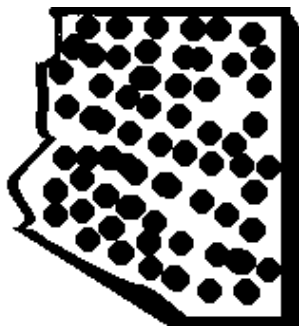
DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- The life expectancy of a Harris' Hawk in the wild is 11-15 years, longer in captivity.
- Cooperative hunting by a group may allow capture of prey too large, such as a jackrabbit, or too elusive for one individual to successfully handle.



Scat

Harris' Hawk Pellet is regurgitated and contains bones, fur and non-digestible parts of its prey.



Range

Southwestern United States south to Argentina. Found in most all areas of Arizona.