

PUTNAM COUNTY LAND TRUST

Putnam County Land Trust: Save Open Spaces
P.O. Box 36, Brewster, N.Y. 10509

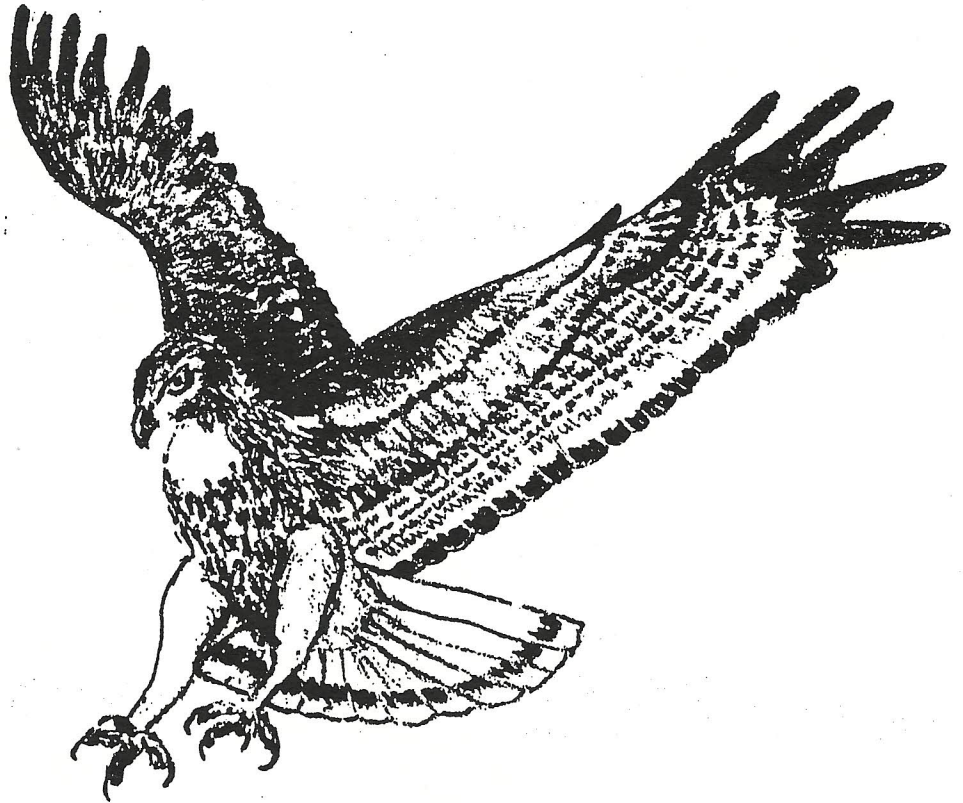
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Hawk

Migration

Signals

Fall



Scan the horizon on a clear September day. High in the skies above you catch sight of a tiny black spec. First one, then another. As they circle closer, you can first distinguish a pattern of wings, then the stubby tail of a Broadwing or the patterned tail feathers of a Red-Shouldered Hawk.

It's a magnificent sight! Raptors are incredible masters of the air! As they soar and circle you are witnessing one of the great spectacles of Fall – the semi annual migration of Hawks and other Raptors.

Why?

Hawks migrate as their food sources diminish. Some Hawks feed on cold-blooded animals that begin to hibernate with the onset of cold temperatures. Sharpshinned Hawks take songbirds as their major food source, so when

the songbirds fly south to follow the insect populations, the raptors, who are at the top of this food chain, like the Sharpie follow them south.

Weather is Important

Weather and geography influence when they will fly. The best time to see Hawks during Fall Migration is after the passage of a cold front. In the Northeast, cold fronts are usually characterized by turbulent air and bands of showers. Hawks and other migrating birds are reluctant to battle the turbulent air. So large numbers of hawks and other raptors get "backed up" behind the cold front. After the front passes, the raptors are on their way again.

Hawks take advantage of other favorable atmospheric conditions. Watching them in the sky, they seem to glide

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