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COMMON BLACK HAWK × RED-SHOULDERED HAWK IN CALIFORNIA

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Since at least May 2005, a Common Black Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) has resided at Delta Pond, between Graton and Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California (Iliff et al. 2007). It was likely at the same location in October 2000, but that report was inadequately supported (McKee and Erickson 2002, Iliff et al. 2007). On 18 February 2009 Stan Moore banded the bird, identifying it as a female. On 21 July 2012, during a Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation field trip, I saw a juvenile hawk, closely following the adult female Common Black Hawk, with the birds calling to each other continuously. I saw the juvenile on two additional visits in summer 2012, each time with the Common Black Hawk. In 2014, Stan Moore (pers. comm.) observed the female nesting with a Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). Recordings of the juvenile and the female Common Black Hawk are available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXgU928a7Jg.

The overall plumage and facial pattern of the juvenile hawk matched the streaked pattern of a juvenile Common Black Hawk (see ventral view on this issue's outside back cover). The bird had a prominent light buffy eyebrow, a dark malar stripe, a pale lower cheek, and a dark mask over its eye. However, the bird looked slightly slimmer, with a slightly smaller bill, and perhaps slimmer legs, than a typical Common Black Hawk. Also, a Common Black Hawk typically has wavy white bands on the upper surface of the tail. This bird had straight buffy barring, as seen in the dorsal view on this issue's outside back cover. It also lacked the pale base of the bill of a juvenile Common Black Hawk (B. Clark pers. comm.).

The Common Black Hawk is an extremely rare vagrant in California. The California Bird Records Committee has accepted records representing at least 10 individuals. In addition to Delta Pond, sites of other northern California records include Stockton, San Joaquin County (24 February–12 March 2004 and 1 October 2004–12 March 2005), Aromas, San Benito County (31 March 2008), and near Tiburon, Marin County (2 April 2008). The California Bird Records Committee considers at least the sightings in San Benito and Marin counties in 2008 to represent the same individual that has spent most of the last 11 years in Sonoma County (Hamilton et al. 2007, www.californiabirds.org/cbrcc_book/update.pdf).

A comprehensive literature search revealed no other records of a Common Black-Hawk hybridizing with a Red-shouldered Hawk. In general, hybridization of these two species is extremely unlikely because there is very little overlap in their breeding ranges and intergeneric avian hybrids are relatively rare in nature. The Red-shouldered Hawk has recently bred in Arizona, where it was formerly an "irregular and sparse visitor" (Monson and Phillips 1981). It continues to be rare throughout Arizona, but a small resident breeding population has become established on the Hassayampa River in Maricopa County (Corman and Wise-Gervais 2005), also the only site resulting from a search at www.eBird.org for localities of June/July records the Red-shouldered and Common Black hawks have in common. In spite of the report of the Common Black Hawk there on 17 July 1997 (J. Holloway), surveys in this area in spring 2016 by C. Kondrat-Smith (*vide* R. Glinski pers. comm.) have confirmed three nesting pairs of the Red-shouldered Hawk but no breeding of the Common Black Hawk—a significant change since 2006. The Red-shouldered Hawk is expanding its range in Arizona while

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populations of the Common Black Hawk populations are holding steady (R. Glinski pers. comm.), possibly increasing the opportunities for these species to hybridize.

There is also a slight possibility of the two species occurring together during breeding season along the Rio Grande in Texas. The Texas Breeding Bird Atlas map shows confirmed breeding of the Common Black Hawk coinciding with possible breeding of the Red-shouldered Hawk in Val Verde County (Telfair 2007, Tweit 2007). In the lower Rio Grande valley, breeding of the Red-shouldered Hawk was confirmed during the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas survey period (1987–1992), but there are no recent breeding records and no records of breeding of the Common Black Hawk at any time (B. Clark pers. comm.).

I thank Guy Smith for allowing property access to observe this hawk. I also thank Stan Moore for all his time and patience that he spent studying the Common Black Hawk's habits and behavior over the years. Thank you Steve Howell for helping me document the 2012 hybrid juvenile bird. I also thank John Sterling, Bill Clark, Rich Glinski, Philip Unitt, and Scott Terrill for information and their patient editing work.

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“Featured Photos” by © Lisa Hug of Sebastopol, California: Juvenile hybrid Common Black Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) × Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) near Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California, representing the first known hybridization of these species, far to the northwest of the Common Black Hawk’s normal range, as reported in this issue by Lisa Hug. Ventral view, 29 July 2012; dorsal view, 7 August 2012.