Griffith Park Raptor Survey 2019 Season



Outline

Introduction

- Program Goals
- Monitoring Process

Study Results

- 2017
- 2018
- 2019

Discussion

- Future studies
- Goals for next year

Long-term Raptor Monitoring Program Goals

- Develop baseline
- Encourage and facilitate research
- Minimize human-wildlife conflict while still encouraging recreation
- Use the information to inform management
- Expand dataset of nesting raptors
- Contribute to regional species assessments



Nesting Raptors of Griffith Park

Hawks, Eagles, Kites, Falcons

- •Red-tailed Hawk
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- •Cooper's Hawk
- •American Kestrel?
- •Peregrine Falcon?
- •Turkey Vulture?

Owls

- Great Horned Owl
- Barn Owl
- Western Screech Owl



Why Study Raptors?

Top predators

Control prey populations

Natural exterminators & clean up crew (vultures)

Important environmental indicator species

Human disturbance

Environmental toxins (rodenticides/insecticides)

Climate adaptation



Overview of Monitoring Process



Volunteer workshop and training held in the beginning of season 2

Volunteers are assigned nests to monitor nest 2 times a month from February through July 3

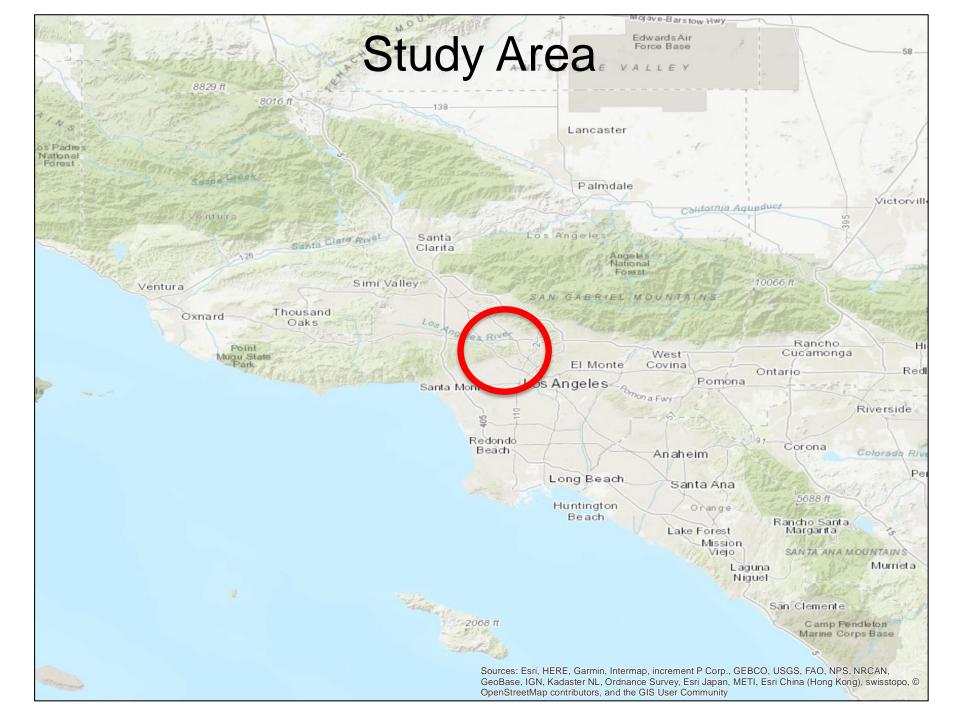
Collect data on supplied data form

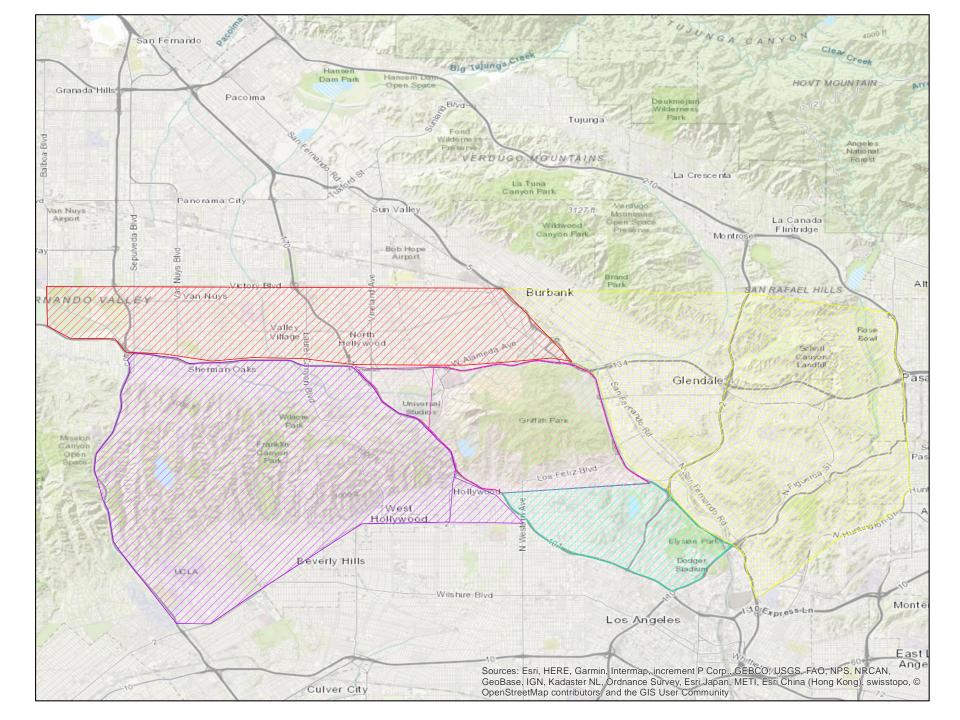


Submit data to Raptor Survey Team within 1 week of visit

Raptor Monitoring Form

NEST	Observers	Date	Hours	Nest Number	Visitat	Species	UTM	Rearing behavior	# of chicks	Nest condition	Notes
RTHA-LA-131 (Debs Park Nursery)		3/3/18	12:30-1:15	RTHA-LA-131	1st	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	1 hawk sitting on nest for most of the time (couldn't see directly into the nest but saw the hawk coming and going). She left briefly to fly with another hawk.
		3/6/18	9-9:15am	RTHA-LA-131	2nd	RTHA		Ŭ	n/a	good	No hawks visible but I heard one calling out from the vicinity of the nest when some ravens flew overhead. I am guessing that it was in the nest as the same thing happened last time.
		3/13/18	11-11:30am	RTHA-LA-131	3rd	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	Observed both hawks sitting on the nest. Looks like the branches shifted so I got a clearer view into the nest. One stayed in the nest the entire time I watched while the second one visited the nest briefly. (or maybe they switched places, I couldn't tell)
		3/20/18	9:45-10am	RTHA-LA-131	4th	RTHA		probably incubating	n/a	good	I didn't see any hawks in the short time I had to observe but I did hear one call out from the vicinity of the nest.
		3/27/18	10-10:15am	RTHA-LA-131	5th	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	
		4/3/18	5:45-6:45pm	RTHA-LA-131	6th	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	
		4/13/18	6:30-6:45pm	RTHA-LA-131	7th	RTHA				good	one RTHA was standing on edge of nest for the entire observation period.
		4/20/18	8:30-8:45am	RTHA-LA-131	8th	RTHA		chicks being fed	2	good	Observed RTHA bring prey to the nest and feed to at least 2 chicks.
		5/6/18	7-7:15pm	RTHA-LA-131	9th	RTHA		chicks stretching and flap	3	good	The chicks have lost their white fuzzy feathers and grown in brown feathers. The adult brought what looked like a branch to the nest.
		6/3/18	5-5:15pm	RTHA-LA-131	10th	RTHA		none		good	No activity at the nest.
											·
UNK-89 (Bard St)		3/21/18	6:30-6:45pm	UNK-89	1st	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	Nest was clearly visible from Bard St with one hawk sitting on nest and the other one perched nearby, then flying and perching right next to the nest.
,			1:15-1:30pm		2nd	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	
		4/20/18	4:30-4:45		3rd	RTHA		incubating	n/a	good	
		5/6/18	10:45-11am		4th	RTHA		fuzzy white chick (s) in th	1	good	At least 1 chick, likely more but hard to see from the distance.
		6/1/18	4-4:15pm		5th	RTHA		1 chick with brown pluma		good	
UNK-90 (Landa St)		3/21/18	6:50-7:05pm	UNK-89	1st	none		none	none	none	I didn't see a nest in any of the trees near the GPS coordinates or any raptor activity. I will check again next week.
		3/31/18	2-2:30pm		2nd	none		none	none	none	Didn't see anything. Heard a loud bird noise coming from nearby trees that could have been a hawk.
		5/6/18	10:30-10:45a	m	3rd	none		none	none	none	no observed activity.
UNK-85 (Fletcher/Glendale)		3/22/18	6:30-7:15pm		1st	RTHA		none			I watched a red tailed hawk perch on several trees in the area but couldn't locate a nest yet, due to low visibility from hills/trees/rain/sunset. I spoke to a neighbor who said the hawk has been around for years and has a mate.
		3/25/18	2-3pm		2nd	RTHA		courting, nest building			Observed 2 hawks flying together, one with legs hanging below. One hawk brought a stick to a pine tree located above Glendale Blvd. No nest visible but could be hidden in the branches.
								aramig, noor banding			
		4/4/18	7-7:30pm		3rd						watched suspected tree, didn't see any activity







2017 Survey Results

Over 100 confirmed or potential nests

60 active & identified to species

32 fledged nests (>50%)

Red-tailed hawks most common (22 nests) Cooper's hawks 2nd most common (17 nests)

Great Horned owl & Red-shouldered hawk (5 nests)

Pine trees represented 40% of the nest substrate, ficus important as well

Lack of nests in Griffith Park interior

2018 Survey Results

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55 active & identified to species

45 fledged nests (>75%)

Red-tailed hawks most common (29 nests) Cooper's hawks 2nd most common (16 nests)

Great Horned owl (4) & Red-shouldered hawk (6)

Pine trees represented 45% of the nest substrate, euc. and syc. important as well

GHOW are mobile and difficult to find

2019 Survey Results

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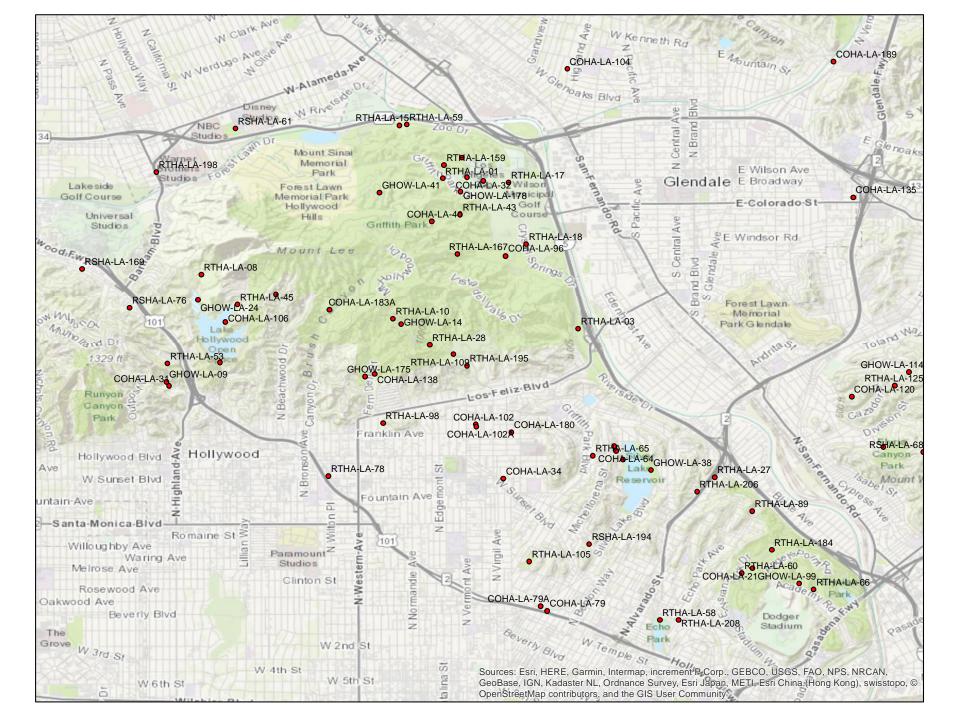
High fledge rate of 86%

Red-tailed hawks most common (33 nests) Cooper's hawk and Great Horned owl 2nd with 11 & 12 active nests

Red-shouldered hawk least common with 4 active nests

Non-native trees important nesting habitat

Nest re-use high (47%)



Nest Phenology

First date of each nesting stage (2017 - 2019 combined)

Species	Incubating	Nestlings Visible	Branching	Fledging
Red-tailed Hawk	February 13	March 25	April 22	May 9
Red-shouldered Hawk	March 6	April 20	May 18	May 26
Cooper's Hawk	March 16	May 10	June 6	June 14
Great Horned Owl	February 10	April 3	April 26	April 30

Red-shouldered Hawk nestlings appear *nearly a full month after* first Red-tailed Hawks'

Cooper's Hawk nestlings appear c. *6 weeks after* Red-tailed hawk nestlings

Fledging dates for Cooper's hawks *began* in early summer (first noted June 14)

Fledging by Red-tails and Red-shouldered hawks peaked mid-spring (May)

Late rains this winter/spring (2019) delayed nesting process by a few weeks

Nest Re-use

Species	Nests active in 2017	Nests active in 2018	Nests reused (2018)	Total active nests (2019)	Nests reused (2019)
Red-tailed Hawk	22	29	13	33	17
Red-sh. Hawk	4	6	1	4	2
Cooper's Hawk	21	16	6	11	4
Great Horned Owl	7	4	2	12	3
TOTAL	54	55	22	60	26

47% re-usage rate across *all species* (26 of 55 of 2018 active nests re-used in 2019).

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The lowest nest site fidelity of the four species was found in Cooper's Hawk (25% re-usage rate). So, 3 out of 4 Cooper's Hawks we find are "new"..

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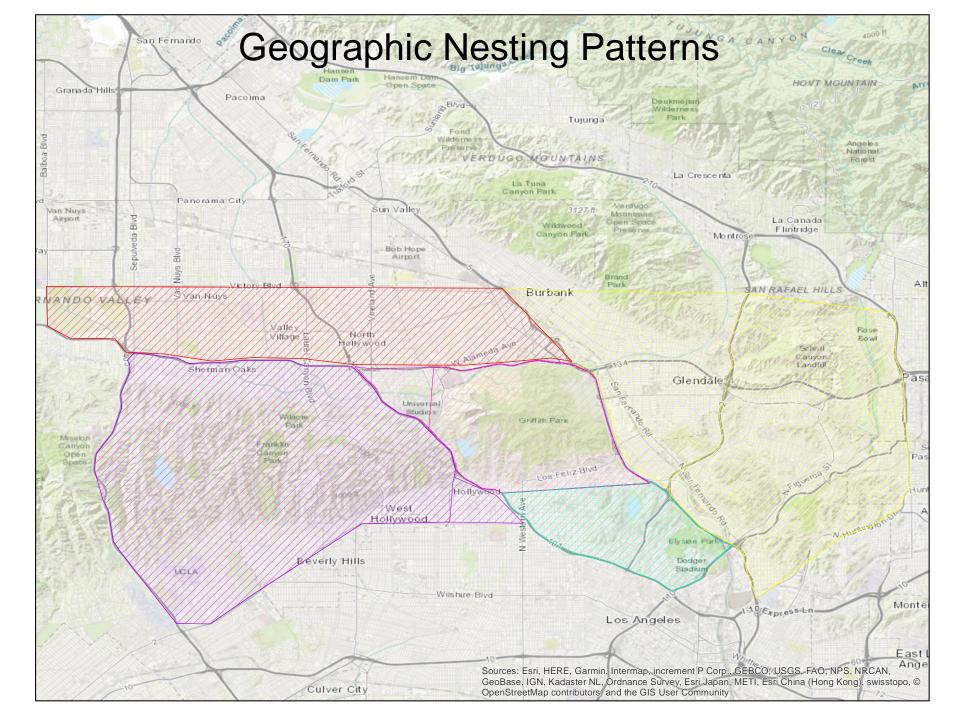
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2 of the 6 Red-shouldered Hawk nests from 2018 active in 2019 (33%).



2019 Season								
Species	Griffith Park	Eastern SMM	Elysian Park Area	Northeast L.A.	San Fernando			
Red-tailed Hawk	13	7	8	5	1			
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	1	1	1	1			
Cooper's Hawk	4	1	3	3	1			
Great Horned Owl	6	2	2	2	1			
TOTAL	22	11	14	11	4			



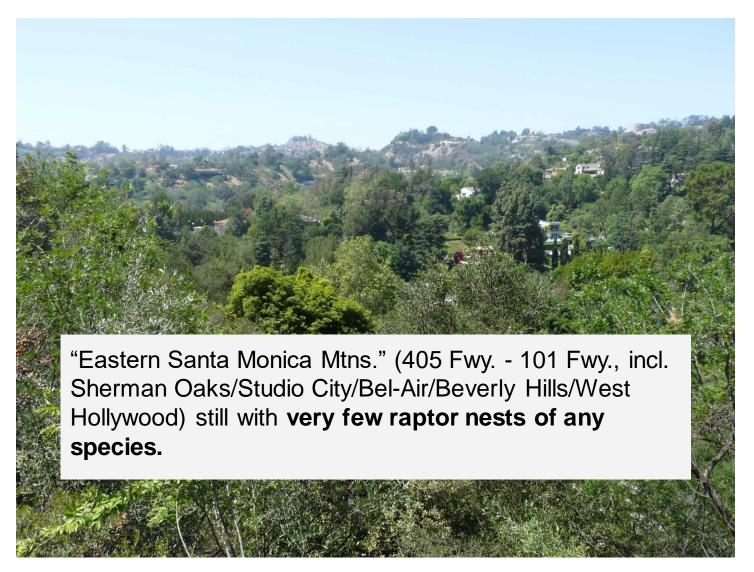
- ✓ Representation of survey effort, volunteer ability, and volunteer location from year to year
- ✓ Raptors *may* maintain fairly stable populations by shifting nesting sites from year to year, hence the variability in number of nests per subregion.

Why wouldn't a RTHA reuse nest?

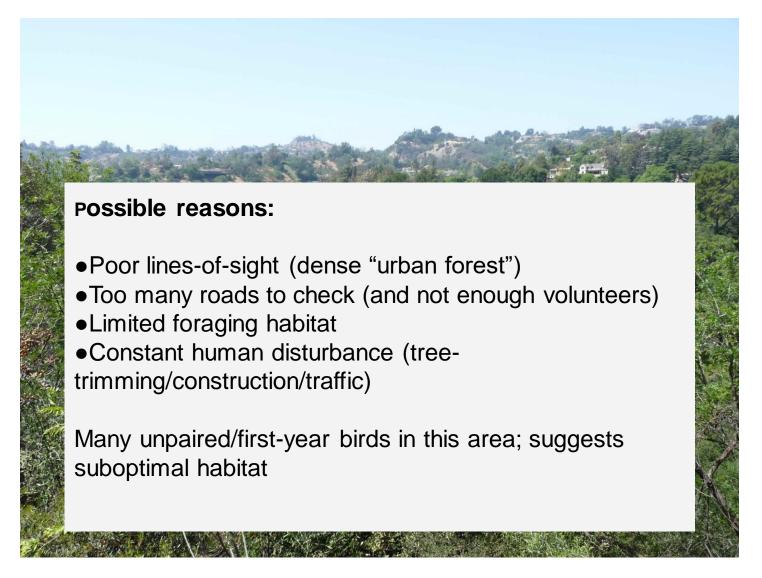
11 RTHA nests from 2018 were not reused in 2019

- •Griffith Park had 6 "abandoned" nests: Roosevelt Cafe, Wilson & Harding Golf Course, Lake Hollywood, L.A. Zoo (1), Live Steamers, and Linwood/Laughlin
- Silverlake/Echo Park had 2 (Allesandro/2 Fwy, End of Bard/Valentine)
- 2 near Sepulveda Basin (101/405 interchange; south of Burbanks)

"Missing nests"



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- ✓ The finding highlights the importance of *certain* very large, (yes) nonnative trees in and around the region, many of which have matured — and are now the tallest trees around.
- ✓ But, surrounding natural open space/foraging habitat is *still critical* for Red-tailed Hawk and Red-shouldered Hawk.
- ✓ As the study continues, further collaboration and protection of these important species can occur.

Stories from the field (2019)

At around 7:45 AM on May 30, Dan Cooper got a call from a project volunteer about an injured Cooper's Hawk sitting in a road median in Los Feliz.

A few minutes later, a photo sent revealed a fledgling Red-tailed Hawk!

After a few frantic text exchanges, the hawk was "corralled" into a nearby yard and its parents returned!





Questions & Thank You This project was made possible through the vision and support of Eriends of Griffith Park, including Garry Hans

This project was made possible through the vision and support of Friends of Griffith Park, including Gerry Hans, [VP, Science and Conservation]. Survey volunteers conducted much of the fieldwork, and provided invaluable ecological information that would have been otherwise difficult to obtain. In particular, we wish to thank the volunteers who tracked active nests for 2018, including Carla Alvarado, Adrine Arakelian, Beth Armstrong, Ben Bowes, Brett Boydston, Lisa Brewer, Mary Brooks, Ann Brunner, Carol Brusha, David Cardell, Andrea Cavanaugh, Kali Ciesemier, Chip Clements, Alexander DeBarros, Traci DeWilde, Diane Dickey, Toby Gad, Margaret Gallagher, Kiernan Graves, Stephanie Green, Kat Halsey, Claudia Herrera, Lauren Hill, Molly and Maureen Hill, Jon Hofferman, Patricia Hutchinson, Leigh Jacoby, the Jeffrey Family, Anna Josenhans, Nurit Katz, Richard Krafsur, Kathryn Louyse, Bill Luddy, Alex MacInnis, Richard Magram, Dayna Mauer, John McCoy, Al Moggia, Robert Montalbano, David Mull, Elinor Nissley, Linda Othenin-Girard, Kelly Park, Tracy Park, Shana Rapoport, Dani Rayne, Brenda Rees, Gary Regester, Susana Rinderle, Travis Roe, Larry Russell, Joanna Sintek, Maro Siranosian, Louise Steinman, Beatriz Schwarz, Dessi Sieburth, Susan Streaser, James Strzelinski, Anita Sohus, Judy Taussig, Stan Thompson, Brian Tomikawa, Scott Torres, Lisa Vebber, Lucia Venegas, Jen Wang, Erika Wilder, Cheryl Weinfeld, Jennifer Young, Betty Ys, and Taylor Zagelbaum. Joe Salaices, Griffith Section Superintendent, Department of Recreation and Parks, assisted us with access to several non-public park venues. The Los Angeles Zoo provided access and a group of staff and volunteers provided updates on nests there. In addition, several local birders and bird enthusiasts notified us of local nests and while there are too many to name, we thank them for their information and contribution to this study.

Deples Gollotter 2008