

LEUCISTIC RED-SHOULDERED HAWK  
IN BEAVER COUNTY, OKLAHOMASCOTT MCCONNELL<sup>1</sup>, JAMES LISH<sup>2</sup>, WILLIAM VOELKER<sup>3</sup>, AND JAN KELLER<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>Department of Zoology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078;<sup>2</sup>Center for Veterinary Health Sciences, Oklahoma State University,Stillwater, OK 74078; <sup>3</sup>P. O. Box 341, Cyril, OK 73029;<sup>4</sup>Route 2, Box 18C, Turpin, OK 73950.

At 0900 h on 24 September 2005, JK's family noted a white hawk next to a pond in their backyard in Turpin, Beaver County, Oklahoma. Over the next hour, they took several photographs and videos of the bird as it drank at the pond and preened in a willow tree.



**Fig 1.** Leucistic Red-shouldered Hawk photographed near Turpin, Oklahoma, 24 September 2005. Photo by Jan Keller.

Later examination of the photos (Fig. 1) indicated that the bird was a leucistic hatch-year Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). The bird's plumage was almost entirely white, but the faint, brownish markings on the breast, tail, and wings helped us make the identification. The photos clearly showed typical markings in the ventral view of the tail. The faint markings of the secondaries also showed typical markings of *B. lineatus*. The tarsus was

longer proportionate to the body than that of the Red-tailed (*B. jamaicensis*) or Swainson's hawks (*B. swainsoni*), and finer in girth. Feathering of the tarsus did not extend as far down the leg as in the other *Buteos* in question. Toe and talon proportions were consistent with the Red-shouldered Hawk. Having worked with both species in the hand, the beak also impressed us with the laterally compressed form typical of the Red-shouldered Hawk and not at all like the Red-tailed Hawk. The eye was a pale bluish-gray, indicative of a hatch-year bird.

Leucistic Red-shouldered Hawks are apparently rare. Palmer (1988: 414) said "a few completely white (albinistic) individuals are known" but gave no references. Dr. H. Meng supplied us with a photograph of a captive albino Red-shouldered Hawk removed as a nestling in Woodstock, New York, in 1952.

The bird described here (Fig. 1) was presumably a migrant, but any Red-shouldered Hawk in Beaver County may be an unusual sighting. The area is west of the species' breeding range. Sutton's (1974) westernmost records were of wintering birds in Alfalfa and Caddo counties (>200 km from Turpin); the westernmost blocks in which the species was found during the Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas (Reinking 2004) and the first 2 years of the Oklahoma Winter Bird Atlas (Reinking pers. comm.) were in Blaine County, also ca. 200 km from Turpin.

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#### Literature Cited

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- Reinking, D. L., Ed. 2004. Oklahoma breeding bird atlas. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
- Sutton, G. M. 1974. A check-list of Oklahoma birds. Stovall Museum of Science and History, University of Oklahoma, Norman

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**First nesting of Tree Swallows in Comanche County and Fort Sill, Oklahoma.**—While visiting nest boxes designed for Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) on 9 May 2005 on Fort Sill Military Reservation West Range (1.6 km west of Deyo Mission Road and 1.6 km north to McKenzie Hill Road), Comanche County, southwestern Oklahoma, I was attacked by what I thought was a Eastern Bluebird. In my 15+ years of checking nest boxes, a bluebird had never attacked me. Upon raising my head, I realized it was not an Eastern Bluebird but likely a Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*). I studied the bird for a few minutes but never saw definitive color characteristics of the Tree Swallow due to the light conditions. I did notice a white cheek