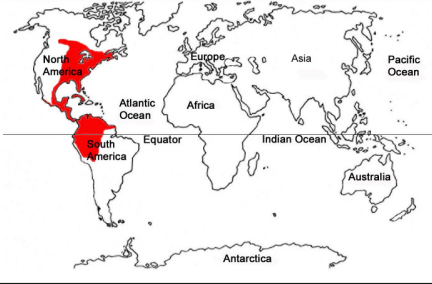


Native Range Map



Broad-winged Hawk

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Aves
Order: Falconiformes
Family: Accipitridae
Genus: *Buteo*
Species: *platypterus*



Photo courtesy of Karen Marzynski

Habitat

- **In the Wild:** Broad-winged hawks breed throughout the eastern United States and most of southern Canada. Their winter range includes southern Florida, the Pacific slope of southern Mexico, Central America and northern South America. *Buteo platypterus* are found in coniferous, broad leaf, temperate or tropical forests, with wetlands, semi-open areas, and water nearby.
- **Exhibit Location:** Check for current location.

Characteristics

- Weight: 11-17 ounces; Length: 13-19 inches; Wingspan: 32-39 inches
- The broad-winged is a medium-sized hawk with a stocky body and short, broad wings.
- Adults have a pale breast and belly with horizontal cinnamon or chestnut barring, with a dark brown back, a dark gray to black tail with broad bands of alternating black and white.
- Juveniles are similar in appearance to adults, but have longitudinal, rather than horizontal barring on their chest and belly.
- Males and females of any age look similar, but the females are slightly larger.
- Wing tips are pointed in flight. When perched, the wing tips do not reach the tip of the tail.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild** 14.3 years (longest known), 12 months (expected); **In Captivity** about 8-10 years

Behaviors

- Broad-winged hawks are one of the few raptors that migrate in flocks called “kettles”. The size of the kettle may range from a few individuals to thousands.
- Completely leaving its breeding grounds in fall and winter, the broad-winged hawk can migrate an average of 4,350 miles to northern South America.
- Excellent at soaring, broad-winged hawks make good use of thermals (static soaring on rising heated columns of air) and updrafts.
- They are solitary and territorial except during migration.
- Its preferred hunting technique is “still-hunting” where it will drop on prey from a perch such as utility poles, wires, or near water along the edge of woods.
- Broad-winged hawks are diurnal, being active primarily during the day.
- They vocalize with a thin, high whistled “kee-eee.” The male’s call is noticeably higher than the female’s. Both vocalizations and physical displays are used to communicate.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** insects

Reproduction

- Most broad-winged hawks do not breed until they are at least 2 years of age.
- Broad-winged hawks are monogamous. They breed once a year and raise one brood a breeding season.
- Breeding season is from April to August.
- Nest building takes 2-4 weeks and is done by both male and female. The nest is built with dead sticks, leaves, lichen, fresh sprigs, and is lined with bark chips. Some pairs may renovate and reuse nests of other species. Most nests are near water.
- Clutch size is 1-4 eggs, and is usually 2-3. Clutch size increases as you go south to north.

- Incubation is 28-32 days and is done by both sexes, but mostly by the female. The male provides food when he is not assisting in the incubating.
- The young stay in the nest 29-35 days and are fed by both the male and female during that time. The chicks leave the nest 5-6 weeks after hatching, but remain in their parents' territory for another 4-8 weeks. At about 7 weeks, they begin to capture their own prey.

Diet

- **In the Wild:** insects, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, small birds
- **At the Zoo:** rats, mice, quail

Conservation Status

- **IUCN status:** LC (Least Concern); **CITES Appendix:** not listed
- The global population of broad-winged hawks is believed to be on the decline, though data is scarce.
- Broad-winged hawks are considered common in North America.
- They are protected under the U.S. Migratory Bird Act.
- The primary causes of mortality of this species include predation, trapping, shooting, and vehicle collisions.
- Predators: humans, raccoons, porcupines, American crows, black bears, great horned owls

Did You Know?/Fun Facts

- Their name comes from *buteo* (Latin) "kind of falcon or hawk"; *platypterus* (Greek) "broad-winged."
- Broad-winged hawks have 2 color phases: a common light phase and a rare dark phase.

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