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## Migration Threats

Posted on [March 21, 2016](#) by [Harriett Raptor](#)

Many H. sapiens don't realize how perilous migration can be for birds. They just chalk it up to something we do and go about their business. Bird migration is usually not even on the minds of modern-day H. sapiens. But, I want to tell you, there are many deadly threats along the way. Here are a few of the dangers my species and I face twice a year:

- **Exhaustion:** We fly hundreds of miles during migration, often covering large distances without rest. Exhaustion can make us less wary of potential threats, and tired birds are more apt to collide with obstacles or falter in flight. This is especially true if the birds' flight path passes through storms or unfavorable wind patterns, or if we are migrating later in the season and must cover more ground each day to reach our destination.
- **Starvation:** Inadequate food supplies cause starvation among many migrating osprey every year. This can be caused by habitat destruction that effectively strands us without food along our route, or it may be a result of greater feeding competition among large masses of other migratory birds.
- **Collisions:** Many of us collide with obstacles in mid-flight during both spring and fall migrations, and the majority of these collisions cause fatal injuries. Even if we are not killed on impact or from our injuries, stunned we are more susceptible to predators. The most common obstacles that are hazardous to migrating osprey include tall buildings, electrical wires and poles, wind turbines and similar structures. Birds that migrate at night are more likely to collide with lighted windows or other light sources. We don't fly at night.
- **Predators:** Predators kill many of us each year. During migration, we are often unaware of local predators at stopovers during our journey.
- **Disease:** When migrating birds gather in large flocks, a disease outbreak can be devastating. This can be even more detrimental when surviving birds carry the illness to either breeding grounds or densely populated winter ranges, when more birds may become infected and the overall population can be decimated.
- **Pollution:** Pollution such as [lead poisoning](#), [oil spills](#) and DDT is not only harmful to locally affected birds, but to migratory birds as well. Polluted habitats provide less food, and birds that ingest toxins during migration may continue to suffer from the poisonous effects longer after leaving the area. Furthermore, heavy pollution will reduce available food supplies and suitable habitat, making it more difficult for birds to complete their migration successfully.
- **Natural Disasters:** Hurricanes, blizzards, wildfires and other [natural disasters](#) can destroy crucial stopover and rest sites as well as destroying food sources birds need to refuel along their journeys. Osprey that are caught in these disasters can suffer other effects that cause injury, debilitation or death, such as singed feathers in a wildfire or freezing in an early or late blizzard.
- **Hunting:** Many hunting seasons coincide with migration periods, making this perilous time even more threatening for birds. Illegal hunting and poaching are also a threat at this time, and even legitimate hunters may make mistakes and inadvertently shoot an osprey that they have misidentified in flight.
- **Inexperience:** An osprey's own inexperience with migration can be a great threat to its success and survival. Many juvenile birds make these long journeys without guidance from adults, and they may not be able to complete the trip if they are unsuccessful in finding adequate food or if they stray too far from the typical migration route. Straying far off course is a death sentence for a young osprey.

I have made this round trip seven times and I've seen more than I want to have seen. I can give you many specific events/tragedies, but it is all very depressing. I must keep my spirits up until I get home. I can't wait to see Ozzie; I really love that bird. It will be nice to be near The Doctor too. He always has something interesting to discuss, and he likes to tell me how his winter months have been."



Harriett O. Raptor

Doctor's Platform

North River Carteret Co. NC

Latitude: 34.7286515079363

Longitude: -76.6212389981747

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### About Harriett Raptor

Eight-year-old mother of five, fluent in telepathy, a possessor of genetic memory, a genius and scholar. Harriett holds the equivalent of a PhD in philosophy, biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, and the Homo sapiens' concept of the humanities. Her understanding of mathematics and logic are beyond Homo sapiens' current comprehension. Harriett is a thinker, a wise osprey, especially distinguished for her expertise in the Homo sapiens problem. [View all posts by Harriett Raptor](#) →

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## 2 Responses to Migration Threats

**Margaret Merrick, MD** says:

March 23, 2016 at 12:42 pm

It's incredible to think they could make this journey once, much less 7 times!

[Reply](#)

**Harriett Raptor** says:

March 24, 2016 at 8:51 pm

Fatality rates are high.

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