

LBRC Report Form

1. English and Scientific names: Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*)
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):
one
3. Parish:
Cameron
4. Specific Locality:
About 15 ft up in a small tree in the field adjacent (west) to St. Martin de Torres Cemetery. 3715 Grand Chenier Hwy, Grand Chenier, LA 70643.
5. Date(s) when observed: 11/17/2024
6. Time(s) of day when observed: 11:45 am
7. Reporting observer: William (Billy) Finney
8. Other observers accompanying reporter who also identified the bird(s):
None
9. Other observers who independently identified the bird(s):
On 11/16/2024, Frank Garacci posted (LOS Facebook) a photo taken 11/15/2024 of what appears to be the same bird perched on a wooden telephone pole along Hwy 82, approximately 1km east of this sighting. I acquired the location from F. Garacci through a message with James Beck. Garacci and others on facebook identified this bird as Harris's Hawk
10. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Full bright sun. The sun was high in the south over my left shoulder. i was looking NW at the bird.
11. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): None
12. Distance to bird(s): 35 meters as measured on google earth.
13. Duration of observation: 10 seconds

14. Habitat: Dry brushy field on a coastal chenier. Field was mostly dried vegetation of baccharis, blackberry, goldenrod etc. Field Bisected by mowed pipeline right-of-way. Several mature sweet acacias emergent from field and along adjacent tree line. Live oaks also adjacent to field. Photos of habitat are attached.

15. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation (flying, feeding, resting; include and stress habits used in identification; relate events surrounding observation): I obtained the location of a recent Harris's hawk to include in my day's birding. I travelled to the location (a telephone pole 1km east of my sighting) and passed through the area in my truck looking for the bird. I passed the location by 1km and was turning around for another pass. I pulled into the driveway of the St. Martin de Torres cemetery. The hawk was perched in a small tree adjacent to the cemetery when I unintentionally disturbed it. I saw it as it raised its wings took flight, turned and flew. It was gangly as it broke free of the vegetation in which it was perched. It did not appear to fly very far to find a new dense perch, typical of Harris's hawk.

16. Description (include only what was actually seen, not what "should" have been seen; include if possible: total length/relative size compared to other familiar species, body bulk, shape, proportions, bill, eye, leg, and plumage characteristics. Stress features that separate it from similar species):

Medium-large buteo-type hawk. About the size of a large red-shouldered or small red-tail. Overall dark brown in color. Flashes of cinnamon red at shoulders and legs as it took flight. Bright yellow face/beak and feet. White at rump and on tail. It was facing me in full sunlight when it emerged from vegetation, turned and flew away from me.

17. Voice: None

18. Similar species (include how they were eliminated by your observation):

I can think of no likely expected species that would have this combination of colors. Dark phase red-tailed and swainson's hawks would not have shown this amount of yellow at face and feet, or red at legs. Nor would a very dark female NOHA. I also saw a broad-winged hawk, a red-shouldered hawk, and at least a dozen each of RTHA and NOHA on this day. This bird's behavior (perching low, flying low over veg. relocating to a nearby tree-line rather than flying far off are typical of Harris hawk, but not RTHA, WTHA.

19. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?):
ugh... no.

20. Previous experience with this species: I happened to be working at Palo Alto National Battlefield in Brownsville TX from 11/12-11/15/2024 (this past week) during

which time i saw 6-10 Harris's hawks. I have been working in the Rio Grande valley periodically for 13 years and have made over 20 visits to that area and have seen Harris's hawks on most if not all of those visits. I have also seen Harris's hawks in Big Bend NP. and Portal AZ.

21. Identification aids: (list books, illustrations, other birders, etc. used in identification):

NA

22. Identification aids used when?

None used

23. Are you positive of your identification? If not, explain:

I am positive that i saw an adult Harris's Hawk at said location on said date.

24. Date report completed:

11/17/2024

25. May the LBRC have permission to display in whole or in part this report and accompanying photos on the LOS-LBRC website and LBRC Facebook page?

Yes

26. If yes, may we include your name with the report?

Yes

