

# LOUISIANA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

## REPORT FORM

1. English and Scientific names: Rough-legged Hawk, *Buteo lagopus*
2. Number of individuals, sexes, ages, general plumage (e.g., 2 in alternate plumage):  
One light morph juv/immature
3. Locality: East Carroll Parish  
Specific Locality: ca. 2 mi S of Transylvania
4. Date(s) when observed: 02/17/2018
5. Time(s) of day when observed: ca. 9:30 p.m.
6. Reporting observer and address: Paul Conover, Lafayette, LA
7. Other observers accompanying reporter who also *identified* the bird(s): Phillip Wallace
8. Other observers who *independently identified* the bird(s): Bird found by Van Remsen, seen by others subsequently
9. Light conditions (position of bird in relation to shade and to direction and amount of light): Dense fog persistent throughout
10. Optical equipment (type, power, condition): Nikon Fieldscope 20-60X, Zeiss 10s, Samsung S8 thru scope
11. Distance to bird(s): ca. 125 feet per Google Maps
12. Duration of observation: 20-30 minutes
13. Habitat: wide open ag land with a few islands of trees just west of Mississippi River levee
14. Behavior of bird / circumstances of observation: Perched in a tree when first seen. We watched for several minutes, and the bird seemed unconcerned with our presence, or perhaps was reluctant to fly in the moisture of the fog. Eventually the bird flew to a nearby pecan grove. We later drove past the grove and saw the bird again.
15. 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):

A small-billed, feather-legged *Buteo* with broad dark belly band, large black carpal patches, a pale-based tail with smudgy dark tail band, and somewhat kite-like bill and facial features.

Body had frosted look, with mostly whitish head, white breast and undertail, and liberal mixture of white on scapulars and mantle feathers. Otherwise brownish above with pale fringed flight feathers, pale rump, and broad, solid dark belly band.

Brow ridge slanting down in a V to small bill on a pale face imparted a White-tailed Kite-like look to this bird.



In flight, buffy underwing linings contrasted weakly with finely and sparsely barred white flight feathers. Blotchy dark carpal bar and a few scattered dark feathers along trailing edge of buff wing linings. 5 long dark-tipped “fingers,” and P5 dark-tipped and intermediate in length between P6 and P4.

White uppertail and rump with small, regularly spaced dark spots tracing the outline of the rump. Tail from views that I had pale-based with dark indistinctly patterned terminal band. Pale primary patches above somewhat like Ferruginous Hawk.

Bill dark-tipped, cere yellow. Legs not seen well.

16. Voice:

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

No other Buteo in N.A. with more than a passing resemblance to this plumage of RLHA. Hybrid considered, but number of primary fingers matches RLHA.

18. Photographs or tape recordings obtained? (by whom? attached?): Photos and video by me.

19. Previous experience with this species: Only a few, never seen perched before.

20. This description is written from memory and photos.

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

22. Date: 02/27/2018