

A SURVEY OF DIURNAL RAPTORS IN THE WET-DRY TROPICS, NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

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The relative abundance of diurnal raptors in the Australian wet-dry tropics during the early dry season (winter) was measured during a twelve day, 3 024 kilometres road transect survey from northern Western Australia to northern Queensland in 2006. The results are compared with base-line data obtained during the nation-wide 'Birds of Prey Watch' scheme conducted 15–20 years earlier. Raptor densities in zones in the Top End of the Northern Territory were higher by a factor of between two and seven compared with those reported previously for the corresponding season. The tussock grasslands of the Barkly Tableland are identified as a wintering or concentration area for raptors, perhaps of similar importance to the Mitchell Grass Downs of central Queensland.