

## **Raptorthon 2025**

Raptorthon at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch (AFHW) was held on Saturday, April 19, 2025. The day started with sun and warm temperatures and throughout the day, the temperatures kept rising as did the wind speed coming from the west.

Raptorthon is a partnership between the AFHW and the Hawk Migration Association (HMA). But, since its inception at AFHW, the Freedom Area High School's (FAHS) Naturalist Club has been a part. This year, the Naturalist Club was represented by its current president Dekota Roberts. The president-elect for next year - Leo Kaleugher, and past president – Ella Walden were also on hand. Jeanine Ging, Adam Katrancha, along with Bill and Sandy Cline made a showing for the AFHW. Brian M. Wargo also represented the HMA along with being part of the other groups.

Everyone welcomed visitors who came out to support the day, which is really celebrating the migration of the raptors. While there were many birds flying, most were simply hunting rather than migrating. Regardless, everyone got to see close-up views of Broad-winged Hawks, red-tails, Cooper's Hawks, sharpies, and of course, Turkey Vultures.

Lots of other birds were present, including the following species: American Crow, American Robin, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Jay, Brown-headed Cowbird, Chimney Swift, Common Loon, Common Raven, Double-crested Cormorant, Dark-eyed Junco, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Towhee, Northern Cardinal, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Rough-winged Swallow, Tree Swallow, Tufted Titmouse, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and White-Breasted Nuthatch. More impressively, many Black Swallowtail butterflies along with a few Eastern Tiger Swallowtails made their first appearance for the season.

Overall, it was a nice day. Sunburned attendees got to enjoy the birds, each other, and a surprisingly hot day! Thank you to all of those who donated to this cause!

Picture:

Brian M. Wargo (left) stands with Dekota Roberts (center) and Leo Kaleugher (right) during Raptorthon at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch.

