

FIRST DOCUMENTED RECORD OF HARRIS'S HAWK (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) (TEMMINCK, 1824) FEEDING ON CARRION

Primer registro documentado de Peuco (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) (Temminck, 1824) alimentándose de carroña

FERNANDO MEDRANO^{1,2}, MATÍAS TOBAR-GONZÁLEZ³ & CARLOS CASTRO-PASTENE³

¹ Instituto de Ecología y Biodiversidad. Departamento de Ciencias Ecológicas. Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad de Chile. Casilla 653. Santiago, Chile.

² Red de Observadores de Aves y Vida Silvestre de Chile (ROC). Santiago, Chile.

³ Strix Chile, Edgardo Ramírez 1932. Chillán, Chile.

Correspondencia: Fernando Medrano, fmedrano@renare.uchile.cl.

RESUMEN.- Mediante el registro de una cámara trampa, documentamos el consumo de carroña por parte del peuco (*Parabuteo unicinctus*). Aunque la dieta de esta especie es bien conocida, existen pocos estudios acerca de sus estrategias de forrajeo. Este nuevo registro ayuda a comprender mejor la conducta y sugiere una nueva estrategia de alimentación del peuco.

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The Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) is a raptor species with a distribution ranging from southwestern United States to southern Chile and Argentina (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001, Bierregaard & Boersma 2016, eBird 2016). This species feeds on a wide variety of prey, ranging from insects to small mammals (Bent 1937, Mader 1975, Salvador 2012, Bierregaard & Boersma 2016). The diet of *P. unicinctus* is relatively well known in Chile, and is mainly composed of small mammals and birds (Jaksic *et al.* 1980, Jiménez & Jaksic 1993, Figueroa & González-Acuña 2006, Pavez *et al.* 2010, Santander *et al.* 2011, Ortiz 2014). It is generally assumed that the Harris's Hawk feeds only on live prey (Mader 1975). However, there are no current studies that describe how this species obtains its food, with the exception of coordinated cooperative hunting (Bednarz 1988). Bent (1937) suggested that this raptor may feed on carrion; however, this idea has not been confirmed. Later, Jakle & Gratz (1984) found individuals of this species feeding on fish, but they did not report if these Harris's Hawks were seen hunting, or just feeding on dead fishes. Here, we present the first documented record of a scavenging behavior of the Harris's Hawk in Chile.

We installed a camera trap between July 14th to 31st 2014, on a Boldo tree (*Peumus boldus* Molina), located in a sclerophyll forest remnant (Gajardo 1994), in the vicinity of the town of Las Cabras, Región del Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile (34°16'25.02"S, 71°17'27.54"O). The

vegetation was dominated by Boldo and Quillay (*Quillaja saponaria*). The bait used was chicken fat and meat. At 18:00 pm, on the third day (July 17th) since the camera trap was setup, a total of eight pictures of two Harris's Hawk individuals (one adult and one juvenile) were taken. In these pictures, it can be noticed that the adult arrived first to the tree, but the individual eating the chicken lure was the juvenile.

Since Bent (1937) and Jakle & Gatz (1984) proposed that this species could be also scavengers, no research has confirmed this finding. However, it is unknown if this scavenging behavior was only an opportunistic or not recurrent habit, because most of the field observations have described this hawk as an active hunter (Mader 1975, Pavez 2003, Martínez & González 2004, Santander 2011). Additionally, there are no documented observations for this species feeding on carrion, in the same places where another raptor species (*e.g.*, Crested caracara *Caracara plancus*, Chimango caracara *Milvago chimango* [Pavez 2003]) have been seen doing so. The scavenging behavior by the Harris's Hawk could be due to a scarcity of its common prey items in the environment, a behavior that is common during the winter in other Accipitridae species (Thiollay 1994), such as the African fish eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) (Kemps & Marks 2014). As the digestive physiology of eating carrion requires special adaptations to avoid intoxication risks (Henny & Elliot 2007) and to



Figure 1. Sequence of pictures of a Harris's Hawk couple feeding on a chicken bait tied onto a tree. The red elipses shows where the chicken bait was located. The picture on the right shows a Harris's Hawk feeding on the chicken bait.

increase digestive efficiency (Houston & Duke 2007), it is unlikely that this may be a common behavior in the Harris's Hawk in central Chile, and thus, more observations are needed to confirm this.

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