**Title:** Using DNA metabarcoding to study the diet of raptors during migration

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**Abstract:** Duluth, Minnesota is home to one of the largest raptor migrations in North America. Every autumn, tens of thousands of raptors from more than a dozen different species are counted flying past Hawk Ridge on their way south. While much research has gone into understanding the timing and patterns of migration, little has been done to understand the diet of raptors during migration. Most raptor dietary studies focus on the breeding season or winter, but migratory diet may be quite different due to differences in habitat type and prey availability along migration flyways. Understanding diet during the full life cycle has important implications for conservation, ecotoxicology, and land management. My work investigates the use of DNA metabarcoding on cloacal swab samples to study the diet of migrating raptors. I collected cloacal swabs from raptors at Hawk Ridge in 2019 and amplified the DNA using primers to target mammalian and avian prey DNA. Prey DNA was detected on approximately 20% of the swabs, indicating that this method has potential for further use.