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SHORT NOTE

ONE-WINGED AUSTRALASIAN HARRIER

On 27 June 1974 I banded an adult female harrier (*Circus approximans*) No. L15317 and she was recovered on 7 February 1977 from a waterhole on our neighbour's property about 1.5 km from the banding site. She was alive and in good condition and I was most surprised to find that her right wing was missing and that the stump of the humerus had healed over. She may have subsisted on frogs or perhaps had been supplied by her mate; the pellet she cast next day contained only vegetation detritus. Seven years ago I rehabilitated a Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) with only one wing. It had survived for 8 days by being fed by its (presumed) parents, although it must have been fledged for well over a month.

Nobody in this area has to my knowledge been shooting or trapping harriers and it seems that the cause of this bird's injury was probably wire or possibly traffic. The only road here is about 0.5 km from the waterhole and is a little-used dead end. We have had 2 wire-casualty harriers sent here in the last 2 years and wire seems to be the most likely cause.

Harriers have been known to survive without feet and this bird has shown that they can survive without a wing. The tenacity of the species is remarkable!

Incidentally, this female was at least 5 years old at the time of recovery and her irides were still dark brown.

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