

# PHOTOSPOT

## Comb-carrying European Honey Buzzard

### *Pernis apivorus*

I recently received two excellent photos (Plates 1, 2) from Dr Antoine Faissal (tonyfaissal@hotmail.com), of a European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* in flight in Lebanon. The second photo was a crop of the underside of the bird from the first photo showing that it was carrying a comb in its talons. Antoine sent me the following details of the observation: "On Tuesday September 5, 2017 I had an interview on a local radio station about bird migration over Lebanon, and I went with my wife after that to my favorite spot at 1713 m in Ehden village, north Lebanon. We arrived at the parking and the sky was already full of European Honey Buzzards. We hiked uphill to reach our spot, and for more than 2.30 h the sky was full of these buzzards. Thousands and thousands crossed over our head that day. I took many photos but didn't see the wasp nest until editing the photos. What a surprise."



Plate 1. Comb-carrying European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* in Lebanon. © Antoine Faissal



**Plate 2.** Comb-carrying European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* in Lebanon (crop of Plate 1). © Antoine Faissal

Hymenopteran combs, larvae, pupae and adults are regular items in the diet of the European Honey Buzzard (BWP, HBW Alive). The photos (Plates 1, 2) suggest that European Honey Buzzards can carry mid-flight snacks. Ospreys *Pandion haliaetus* on migration have been recorded carrying fish (Bierregaard *et al* 2016) including a record of an Osprey carrying a partly eaten fish flush up against the underside of the Osprey's tail (Blinchow 1994). I thank Andrea Corso for assuring me that the European Honey Buzzard of this record was not a hybrid and Yoav Perlman for bringing migrating Ospreys carrying fish to my attention.

#### **LITERATURE CITED**

- Bierregaard, RO, AF Poole, MS Martell, P Pyle & MA Patten. 2016. Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), vers 2. In: Rodewald, PG (ed). *The Birds of North America*. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, <https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.683>.
- Blinchow, J. 1994. Osprey carrying partly eaten prey on migration. *British Birds* 87: 335.

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