



HackBack

The Newsletter of RAPTOR Inc.

Celebrating 37 Years

HackBack

www.raptorinc.org

Autumn 2015

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Mission

Since 1978, RAPTOR Inc. (Regional Association for the Protection and Treatment Of Raptors) has been dedicated to "the rehabilitation and return of raptors to their natural environment, the education of the public on the importance of raptors, and the preservation of their natural habitat".



Training Avian Ambassadors: The Key to Success

by Alice McCaleb, Volunteer

An important component of RAPTOR Inc.'s mission is to educate the public about these beautiful creatures and their relationship with the natural world. Last year, more than 200 education programs were presented. Have you ever seen our education ambassadors at work during a program? If so, you might have wondered how they stand so calmly on the glove. It certainly doesn't happen overnight.

We use a training technique called operant conditioning. It is a type of learning where behavior is controlled by consequence. The key concept in operant conditioning is the use of positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is the use of a reward following a desired behavior with the purpose of increasing the likelihood that the behavior will occur again. The most commonly used reward is food.

This type of training can be used to train birds to be comfortable on the glove. It can also be used to target birds to different areas of an enclosure. Husbandry techniques can

be made less stressful with the use of training. Cleaning enclosures and changing perches can be much easier if a bird is comfortable with human interaction. Birds can be trained to allow manipulation and closer examination. This is essential for monitoring bird health. They can also be trained to get on a scale and go into a crate for transfer.

In the last year, RAPTOR has welcomed 2 new birds to our collection of education ambassadors. They are Jiminy, the American Kestrel, and Spencer, the Barred Owl. Each of these birds had prior training experience at the institutions they came from; however, they needed much more work in order to get to the level that we desired. A plan is designed for each individual and select trainers work with them each week. With consistency in mind, trainers work diligently to move the bird's behavior in the direction of our final goal. We are confident that these birds will make excellent additions to our education programs and people will experience a connection with the natural world after they meet them.

Holiday Shopping?

Not a problem! Support a great cause with our 2016 RAPTOR calendar!

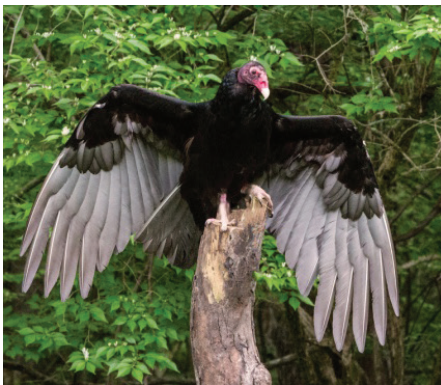
Now is your chance to order a beautiful 2016 RAPTOR calendar for only \$15! It's the perfect gift for the holidays and can be ordered now. Delivery is expected before Nov. 20 so you can even get it in the mail early for those far-away friends and relatives!

The 2016 calendar will have entirely different photos from the ones you've been enjoying in the Hackback.



2015 RAPTOR Inc. Calendar Photos

This edition of the HackBack continues with this quarter's winning photos which are showcased in the RAPTOR Inc. calendar.



October: Turkey Vulture by John Langsenkamp



November: Eastern Screech Owl by Tonja Ante



December: Leucistic Red-tailed Hawk by Tim Jeffries

RAPTOR Inc. Board

Erica Locke, President
 Marc Alverson, Vice President
 Jeff Hays, Treasurer
 Melinda Simon, Secretary
 Dan Bailey, Trustee
 Jackie Bray, Trustee
 Dan Begin, Trustee
 Jeff Hays, Trustee
 Donna Morsbach, Trustee

Cindy Alverson, Executive Director
raptor@raptorinc.org

The Board of Trustees generally meets the third Wednesday of each month, at 7:00 P.M. All RAPTOR members are welcome to attend.

Contact Jeff Hays at (513) 821-9822 for meeting time and location.

Communications

Gary Young, Newsletter Editor
 Erica Locke, Assistant Newsletter Editor

To submit articles or pictures for consideration in HackBack, email the article to:
raptor@raptorinc.org
 or by mail to:
 RAPTOR Inc.
 961 Barg Salt Run Road
 Milford, Ohio 45150

To report an injured raptor in the Greater Cincinnati area call RAPTOR Inc.
 (513) 825-3325



Thank You To Our Veterinarians!

Bob Dahlhausen, D.V.M.
 (513) 576-1990

Joseph Grossi, D.V.M.
 (513) 772-6060

D.J. Haeussler, D.V.M.
 (513) 332-0718

J. Peter Hill, D.V.M.
 (513) 793-3032

Vanessa Kuonen Cavens, D.V.M.
 (513) 561-0069

Paul Levitas, D.V.M.
 (513) 871-8866

RAPTOR Inc.'s Most Valuable Resource Is... Our Volunteers!

by Jackie Bray, Associate Director

RAPTOR Inc. comprises approximately 360 members and over 70 active volunteers. These volunteers donate over 5400 hours of service each year. The latest estimation of the value of volunteer time is \$23.07 per hour. Independent Sector (I.S.), the premier advocacy coalition for nonprofit organizations, updates this figure annually so that charitable organizations have a means to quantify the immeasurable value of their volunteers. I.S. President and CEO Diana Aviv stated, "Though we could never truly put a price tag on what volunteers mean to their communities, we are proud to offer this figure to attempt to frame the immense value of the time and effort they give." At RAPTOR Inc. this equates to approximately \$125,000 per year.

Clearly, volunteers provide many intangibles that cannot be quantified, including the amount of support an organization has within a community. The value of volunteering is much deeper, much more fulfilling and much more important in contributing to a healthy and vibrant community than money can ever measure. The Corporation for National & Community Service advises that volunteers are almost twice as likely to donate to charity as non-volunteers. Nearly 8 in 10 volunteers donated to charity, compared to 4 in 10 of non-volunteers. This statistic supports what we already know...our members and volunteers are caring, generous, and dedicated to making our world a better place.

Volunteers at RAPTOR Inc. possess a diverse array of talents that they leverage to support our organization. The numerous ways that our volunteers contribute their time and energy may

surprise you. We have dispatchers and transporters who ensure that raptors in need are brought to our facility. Highly trained rehabilitators provide medical care and support to give the birds the best chance for release back to the wild. Veterinarians and other skilled professionals donate specialized services essential to our mission. Educators deliver programs that connect our community to wildlife and promote environmental stewardship. Maintenance and landscaping crews guarantee our facilities are safe, functional and beautiful. Our Saturday Teams carry out important husbandry and repair duties that must be performed on a regular basis. Numerous volunteers contribute to administrative tasks that are essential to maintain the efficient operation of our organization. Some of these tasks include fundraising, writing grants, designing and distributing publications, managing the membership and adoption programs, submitting reports to maintain our state and federal permits, and providing leadership by serving on our board of trustees.

RAPTOR Inc. depends on our volunteers to carry out our mission... to preserve birds of prey through rehabilitation, education, conservation, and community service. If you would like to become more actively involved with RAPTOR Inc., there are numerous ways you can contribute. We are especially interested in those with expertise in operant conditioning, public relations, advertising and marketing. Please contact our Executive Director, Cindy Alverson, at (513) 825-3325 for additional information.



Volunteer Joe Lucas beautifying our property



Volunteer Corey Morsbach painting the corn crib



Volunteer Liz McCullough documenting food given to the raptors



The Landen scout group visited RAPTOR Inc. to learn how people can help protect these birds of prey

RAPTOR Inc. Gives On-site Programs

(aka The Show Must Go On!)

Following the Ohio Department of Agriculture's temporary ban on any birds traveling off-site, RAPTOR is now focusing on giving presentations at our Milford facility to small groups. Perfect for groups of 15 or less, RAPTOR is giving presentations to groups such as scouts, garden clubs, and retirement communities. Call now to make your group's reservation to see these magnificent birds up close and learn about the raptors in your neighborhood!

Avian Influenza: Impact on the US

by Cindy Alverson, Executive Director

As of October, 2015, Ohio still has had no detected cases of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). However, within the US as well as globally, this disease has had a massive impact. With the first cases in the US identified in late December, 2014 in Washington State, it has been spreading by wild migrating birds and has now been confirmed in 16 states. The HPAI virus spread rapidly along the wild bird migratory flyways – first the Pacific, Central and then Mississippi flyways in 2014 and 2015. HPAI has been detected in wild bird populations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Iowa, California, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Montana, Kansas, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Michigan, Minnesota, and Indiana (one case). The last detection was reported on June 17, 2015.

Avian influenza viruses have been detected in more than 100 different species of wild birds from around the world. The majority of these cases have been low pathogenic strains although the Highly Pathogenic strains are occasionally detected. Aquatic birds (gulls, terns and shorebirds) and waterfowl such as ducks, geese and swans are considered reservoirs (hosts) for avian influenza A viruses. They do not die from the disease. Currently, it is believed that since waterfowl are not affected, they are spreading the virus through their feces and respiratory secretions to wild birds. Captive raptors have also died due to eating infected waterfowl from hunters. Direct contact with bedding or materials that have been contaminated by infected birds are other potential routes of infection.

To date, there is no evidence that there are any human cases of this particular strain of bird flu in the U.S. The Center for Disease Control considers the risk to people from these HPAI strains in wild birds, backyard flocks, and commercial poultry to be low.

Avian Influenza: Impact Globally

China is no longer importing poultry or eggs from the US because of the HPAI found in the U.S. This trade channel is worth more than \$270 million a year. This ripple effect resulted in 20 other countries also banning poultry from the U.S.

The HPAI virus is causing the worst disease in turkeys as it is believed turkeys require lower doses of the virus to become infected. The industry is already warning that there may not be enough turkeys for Thanksgiving dinner. The disease is also devastating the poultry industry. Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin declared states of emergency as more than 26 million chickens or turkeys died or had to be killed to prevent the spread of the disease. With Ohio being the second largest egg producer in the country and home to over 50 million meat and egg-producing chickens and turkeys, the Ohio Department of Agriculture issued a ban in an attempt to prevent the spread of this disease into Ohio.

Declared in June 2015, this ban cancelled all remaining live bird exhibitions for the 2015 season, including all gatherings of birds for show or sale. This ban was devastating to RAPTOR as we were forced to cancel 63 presentations which

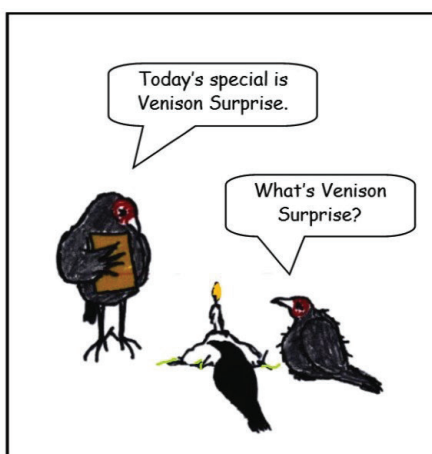
were scheduled through the end of the year. The ban proclaimed that it would be reevaluated at the end of 2015, but could possibly extend through April 2016. Until this ban is lifted, no travel of birds is allowed.

In the US, an extensive national surveillance plan was developed from summer through winter to identify the distribution of influenzas, the spread to new areas, and to improve management of issues associated with the HPAI. This included risks to commercial and backyard poultry, game bird farms, wild birds, wild bird rehabilitation facilities, falconry birds and captive bird collections in zoos/aviaries.

This surveillance is conducted collaboratively by USDA, the Department of Interior (DOI) US Geological Survey, the DOI Fish and Wildlife Service, and state departments of natural resources. According to the September 18, 2015 USDA report, over 6000 wild birds have been collected in July and August with no detection of HPAI.

The Surveillance Plan for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Waterfowl in the United States can be viewed at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/animal_diseases/ai/2015-hpai-surveillance-plan.pdf, and current findings (updated weekly) can be viewed at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa_animal_disease_information/sa_avian_health/ct_avian_influenza_disease/!ut/p/a1/

Raptor Ink



Growing Again: RAPTOR Hires Associate Director

by Marc Alverson, Vice President

With RAPTOR's continuing growth, a part-time position was created to expand our services to the community. RAPTOR has recently hired Jackie Bray for the part-time position of Associate Director, reporting to Executive Director, Cindy Alverson. In her new position, Jackie will assist Cindy in all aspects of RAPTOR business including

care of education and rehabilitation birds, development and expansion of RAPTOR's education programs, volunteer coordination, and fundraising.

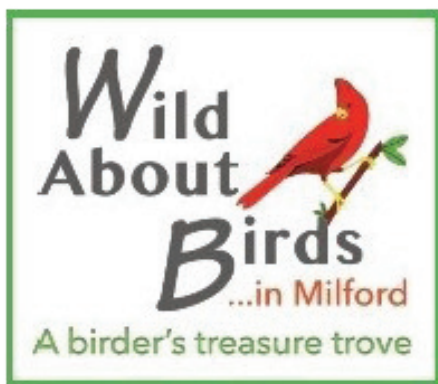
Jackie's background as bird trainer at the Wings of Wonder Bird Show at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden along with a master's degree in zoology and bachelor degree in education, is a

perfect fit for the further development of our education presentations. Her passion and desire to work with RAPTOR Inc. to accomplish our goals will be a great asset.

The RAPTOR board would like to extend a warm welcome to Jackie as she begins work in her new position in November!

The Results are in...

and the Raptors are Flying High



The 2nd annual Fall Feeder cleaning hosted by Wild About Birds was a HUGE success!

Thanks to all of you raptor supporters as well as the loyal customers at Wild About Birds!

The donations from this sale will go toward care and feeding of our avian ambassadors!

Your support makes a huge difference!



RAPTOR Inc. Is Going Viral!

We are working to expand our social media presence and we need your help! In addition to our website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel, we have added a Flickr group, a Twitter account and an Instagram account. We will also be adding a GoFundMe account and a CrowdRise account in the next few weeks to assist us with fundraising.

Attention Photographers!

RAPTOR Inc. has our own flickr group and we would love to have you join us! Our goal is to compile a comprehensive collection of high-quality photographs in a centralized location to illustrate the value of raptors in our environment and the contributions RAPTOR Inc.

In today's tech-savvy business environment, social media are an essential tool to connect with the public and to develop professional relationships. These outlets will allow us to expand our conservation impact and build upon RAPTOR Inc.'s stellar reputation. In accordance with our social media policy, we are hoping our

makes toward their conservation. Please consider visiting our group and adding your photographs to help expand our mission and share our story. The website can be accessed at:
https://www.flickr.com/groups/raptor_inc/

members and volunteers will share our posts, add supportive comments and contribute photographs to make our accounts entertaining and educational. We will share additional information about our social media accounts in future Hackback issues, but for now let's start with Flickr...

flickr

Connect with our other Social Media Accounts:

Website: www.raptorinc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/RAPTOR-Inc-261924778196/
YouTube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCuMLbJv2ZL7OYdSDw1aQSA
Flickr: www.flickr.com/groups/raptor_inc/

Twitter: twitter.com/RAPTOR_Inc_OH
Instagram: www.instagram.com/raptor_inc/

GoFundMe: www.gofundme.com/raptorinc
CrowdRise: www.crowdrise.com/raptorinc

Who Am I?

Pictured at the right are 2 young birds RAPTOR examined at admission and found to have no injuries. Parents were present which made the birds ideal candidates for returning them to their nest site. Unfortunately, the parents did not make the best choice of nest site and the young tumbled from the snag in the rotten tree onto the ground

where they were targets for children to poke them with sticks. RAPTOR was called and a crate was hoisted up and secured at the same height as the original nest site and the adults continued to feed the youngsters.

Who am I?

Answer: Turkey vulture chicks. Turkey vultures make their nest in caves, abandoned buildings, hollow logs, fallen trees. This nest was built in a snag of a rotten tree which had a hollow trunk.



RAPTOR Strategic Plan

by Erica Locke

To promote and focus RAPTOR's continued growth, the RAPTOR Inc. board recently completed a strategic planning process. This culminated in a document laying out a path to realize our vision of becoming the premier raptor rehabilitation, education and conservation organization in southern Ohio and northern Kentucky. The newly approved document lays out an ambitious series of goals for the next 3-5 years in four core areas: Rehabilitation, Education, Community Service and Conservation. To view the Strategic Plan in its entirety, see www.raptorinc.org.

Specific rehabilitation objectives include expanding the rehab area to house more avian patients, acquiring new diagnostic equipment, and ultimately hiring part-time veterinary staff. In education, our big focus is to increase RAPTOR's reach by constructing an onsite education center on our lower property. This development would allow RAPTOR to host programs on-site which has taken on renewed urgency given the ODA avian exhibition ban.

RAPTOR's community service goals include increasing our numbers of skilled volunteers, particularly those with expertise in public relations, advertising and marketing, and offering more development opportunities for our existing volunteer base.

In the area of conservation we would like to collaborate with other like-minded organizations on projects to promote the continued welfare of birds in our local environment. This includes facilitating increased public awareness and community action for wildlife conservation with programs like the live Peregrine Webcam and other outward facing services.

To bring the strategic plan to life, the RAPTOR board outlined a development strategy that includes increasing staffing, creating a permanent committee focused on fundraising, promoting membership and pursuing grants and sponsorship opportunities.

If you are interested in getting involved in any of these areas, have feedback, or would like to learn more, please feel free to contact us at raptor@raptorinc.org. We look forward to having you join us on the exciting journey ahead!

Want the HackBack by Email?

Email your request to raptor@raptorinc.org and add "Email HB" in the subject line or call 513-825-3325 and leave a message for follow-up.

Kroger Community Rewards

Thanks to all who register their Kroger Plus Card to raise money for RAPTOR Inc.! If you haven't registered yet, it's easy to join!

1. Go to: krogercommunityrewards.com
2. Select "RAPTOR Inc."
3. Enter RAPTOR's Non-Profit Organization number: 82506.

If you have any questions, contact Cindy at raptor@raptorinc.org or (513) 509-2469.

We have already received \$677 this year. Help us top \$1,000!



RAPTOR Wish List

RAPTOR Inc. is in need of the following items for our bird care facility. To donate any of these items, please email RAPTOR at: raptor@raptorinc.org or call 513-825-3325.

- Cedar bedding
- Dawn dish detergent
- Dry dog food
- Gas cards
- HE laundry detergent
- Latex exam gloves (any size)
- Office Max gift card
- Pine bedding
- Trash bags: 55 gallon and 30 gallon

Thank You for all of your donations!

2015 Admissions

American Kestrel	10	Broad-winged Hawk	3
Merlin	1	Red-shouldered Hawk	31
Peregrine Falcon	2	Red-tailed Hawk	37
Eastern Screech Owl	11	Rough-legged Hawk	0
Barred Owl	21	Turkey Vulture	5
Barn Owl	1	Black Vulture	1
Great Horned Owl	29	Osprey	2
Long-eared Owl	0	Golden Eagle	0
Saw-whet Owl	0	Bald Eagle	0
Snowy Owl	0	Total	185
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	<i>Released</i>	46%
Cooper's Hawk	30	<i>Transferred to other facility</i>	2%

RAPTOR Inc. Donors

Thanks to the following groups and individuals for their recent financial contributions to RAPTOR Inc.

Adventure Guides, Twighttree Tribe
Kroger Community Rewards
Landen Scout Pack #419
Mr. & Mrs. R. Douglas McFarland
Ohio Valley Camera Club
Elizabeth W. Ott
Matha Howser Paas
Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Ready
Mr. & Mrs. Tony L. Shipely
Mr. & Mrs. R. Stickle

Falcon Level \$500 to \$999

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Butler

Osprey Level \$1000 and above

Wild About Birds
Mr. and Mrs. Irv Simon

In-kind List for Fall HackBack

Animal Hospital on Mt. Lookout Square

Jackie Bray
Stephen Einson
Joe Lucas
Donna Morsbach
Melinda Simon
Robert E. Smith
Sandra Stone

RAPTOR Inc. Membership & Renewal Form

As introduced in the Summer 2015 issue of HackBack, please note our new perks, tiers, and pricing for membership. Changes are effective immediately for new members and will apply to existing members at renewal. Renewal notices are sent out in October for annual collection for the following year. Dues paid after September 1 will be credited for the following year.

Please use the form below to become a member or update your contact information. You can also become a member online at our website: raptorinc.org

If you don't need the membership form, consider passing it to someone who might be interested in becoming a member of RAPTOR Inc.!

Your membership dollars provide for the care, treatment, and feeding for our birds as well as the continuation of our education programs.

Mark the membership level you request, all membership levels include electronic (default) or postal delivery of the newsletter, as well as an invitation to the Fall Picnic. Members are also invited to attend Board meetings and may nominate candidates to serve on the board.

☐ Student: \$10 (1 year - up to age 18)

☐ \$25 Hawk Membership (1 year)

☐ \$50 Owl Membership (1 year): Receive perks from lower tier(s) plus a stunning RAPTOR Notecard Set

☐ \$100 Eagle Membership (1 year): Receive perks from lower tier(s) plus a Charley Harper-designed t-shirt

☐ \$500 Lifetime Membership: Receive perks from lower tier(s) plus a personalized tour for five people

☐ \$1,000 Sponsorship: Receive perks from lower tier(s) plus a stunning Rookwood Owl Set

Eagle, Lifetime, and Sponsorship memberships, please indicate t-shirt size (S, M, L, XL, XXL): _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Check if you prefer email delivery of HackBack

Mail this completed form with your check or money order to:

RAPTOR Inc., 961 Barg Salt Run Road, Milford, Ohio 45150 Attn: Membership

Thank you for your support of RAPTOR Inc.!

Sponsor a Banded Raptor

Since the fall of 1994, RAPTOR Inc. has been banding most rehabilitated birds released back into the wild. Over a long period of time, this will help us determine how successful our rehabilitation efforts are. You can get involved with our "Sponsor a Banded Raptor" program. Sponsors will receive a fact sheet on the selected species and a certificate with the following information:

- Species and date of release
- Age (if known)
- Weight at time of release
- U. S. Fish & Wildlife band number

If the bird you sponsor is recovered, you will be notified of the date and location of the recovery.



Yes, I would like to sponsor a banded bird of the species checked below:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel: \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Screech Owl: \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooper's Hawk: \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Barred Owl: \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-shouldered Hawk: \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Horned Owl: \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk: \$25 | |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

In the event your selection is not available, we will contact you to arrange an alternative. Sponsoring a bird is tax deductible. All proceeds benefit RAPTOR Inc. Complete this form, enclose a check or money order, and mail to:

RAPTOR Inc., 961 Barg Salt Run Road, Milford, Ohio 45150 Attn: Membership

Thank you for your support of RAPTOR Inc.!