

WINGBEATS

The Spring 2024 Newsletter of RAPTOR Inc.

Celebrating 46 Years



"Owl Babies" in Class

Join Rufus and Sirin
in the classroom.

Raptor Babies

Raptor babies are coming to
a nest near you!

Upcoming Appearances

Visit us at one (or all) of
these fun events!

2023 Annual Report

A wrap-up of last year's
accomplishments.

Tributes



IN MEMORY OF

Marian Weiskittel from Bogey Benders Golf Club, Margaret A. Garbsch, and Margie Garbsch

Azalia Majoewsky from Catherine Johnson, the family of Azalia Majoewsky, and Susan Dolsen



IN HONOR OF

Gerry Kennedy from Molly Rudick

Andrew Stevenson from Colin Stevenson

"In honor of the wonderful team who took care of black vulture #44! You guys are the best! Thank you so much!" from Gwyn Paullin

RAPTOR Gives "Owl Babies" Presentations to 34 Preschool Classrooms

By Cindy Alverson

For the 2023-24 school year, RAPTOR Inc. has been visiting all Cincinnati Public Preschool Disability classrooms, giving an "Owl Babies" presentation. This is our way of bringing outdoor education into the classroom. The morning and afternoon sessions of all 34 preschool classrooms are being visited by our star Eastern screech owl ambassadors, Rufous and Sirin. Their presence is a part of a 30-minute presentation, along with a book reading and an interactive song.

These presentations were generously funded by Julie Henderson, as well as her generous friends of the Henderson Fund, from the "**Activities Beyond the Classroom**" Foundation. Julie is a retired CPS teacher and is funding our grant in order to give the young, special needs students an up-close animal experience. Unfortunately, this kind of learning experience is often not possible. The preschool disability classes do not have the opportunity to travel on field trips, due to safety concerns for the children. Bringing the Eastern screech owls into their classroom allows the preschoolers to have many new learning experiences in an environment where the children are comfortable and safe.

Rufous and Sirin are giving the preschoolers an up-close and personal look at the large eyes, soft feathers, and sharp talons which owls use for hunting. Each owl remains on the glove of the educator, but the wing and talon artifacts can still be passed around to give the students and staff a

hands-on experience. The preschoolers, teachers, and support staff have learned what these owls eat, where they live, and how they move.

The teachers love this opportunity for the special needs children to have a speaker come into the classroom, something that rarely happens for these preschoolers. The RAPTOR speaker adapts the presentation to the needs of the children, offering the flexibility needed to arouse their senses to learn. No two presentations are alike, since they are based on the individual abilities of the children in each preschool classroom.

The teachers also love the fact that our presentation meets some of Ohio's Early Learning Standards, which encompass sitting and focusing on a speaker, and learning about living things, with the opportunity for these students to use their senses to touch and feel artifacts brought into the classroom.

As I visited the classroom and observed the presentation, there was no doubt in my mind of the impact that the owl, Rufous, made on at least one young boy. As the boy hung back to intently study the owl further, he asked if he could take the owl home with him.

Rufous touched the heart of that one young boy. From such experiences, learning arises.

Front Cover Image: Preschooler modeling owl eyes
(Photo by Groeniger)

Upcoming RAPTOR Public Appearances*

| | | | |
|--------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1-Jun | 1-2p | Blue Ash Library | 4911 Cooper Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45242 |
| 3-Jun | 6-7p | Grant County Public Library | 201 Barnes Rd, Williamstown, KY 41097 |
| 6-Jun | 10a-1p | Smale Riverfront Park Family Fun Day | 166 W Mehring Way, Cincinnati, OH 45202 |
| 14-Jun | 2-3p | Blanchester Branch Library | 110 N Broadway St, Blanchester, OH 45107 |
| 15-Jun | 2p-3p | Little Miami Conservancy River Center | 211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140 |
| 16-Jun | 12p-2p | Peaceful Acres Lavender Farm | 2387 Co Rd 80, Martinsville, OH 45146 |
| 17-Jun | 2p-3p | Madeira Branch Library | 7200 Miami Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45243 |
| 21-Jun | 2p-3p | West End Branch Library | 805 Ezzard Charles Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45203 |
| 25-Jun | 2p-3p | Symmes Twp Branch Library | 11850 Enyart Rd, Loveland, OH 45140 |
| 26-Jun | 3p-4p | Mt. Washington Branch Library | 2049 Beechmont Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45230 |
| 28-Jun | 2p-3p | Pendleton County Library | 801 Robbins Ave, Falmouth, KY 41040 |
| 30-Jun | 1p-4p | RAPTOR Inc. Open House | 961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150 |
| 8-Jul | 10:15a-12:30p | MidPointe Library Trenton | 200 Edgewood Dr, Trenton, OH 45067 |
| 10-Jul | 10:15a-2p | MidPointe Library West Chester | 9363 Centre Pointe Dr, West Chester Township, OH 45069 |
| 11-Jul | 4p-5p | Adams County Fair | 836 Boyd Ave, West Union, OH 45693 |
| 12-Jul | 10:15a-12:30p | MidPointe Library Middletown | 125 S Broad St, Middletown, OH 45044 |
| 13-Jul | 2p-3p | Pleasant Ridge Branch Library | 6233 Montgomery Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45213 |
| 16-Jul | 10a-11a | Tower Park | 900 S Ft Thomas Ave, Fort Thomas, KY 41075 |
| 17-Jul | 2p-3p | Price Hill Branch Library | 970 Purcell Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45205 |
| 20-Jul | 2p-3p | Little Miami Conservancy River Center | 211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140 |
| 22-Jul | 6p-7p | Owensville Branch Library | 2548 US-50, Batavia, OH 45103 |

*Contact Sponsor for details and to see if reservations are required

Babies are arriving!

by **Cindy Alverson**

Trees are blooming, grass is growing, and spring is finally here. This means that raptor babies are hatching. We received our first great horned owlet, approximately 2 weeks old, on March 8. With soft fluffy down and gold, hazy eyes, it still needed weeks before it was ready to be out on its own. Scouting out the tree under which it was found, we discovered the remnants of its nest on the ground.

Great horned owls do not make a nest; rather they take whatever nest is available, as they are early nesters in the season and get first choice of whichever old nest is available. But, in this case, the choice was not a good selection; the nest was very flimsy and could not withstand the weather without some maintenance that the parent owl failed to do.

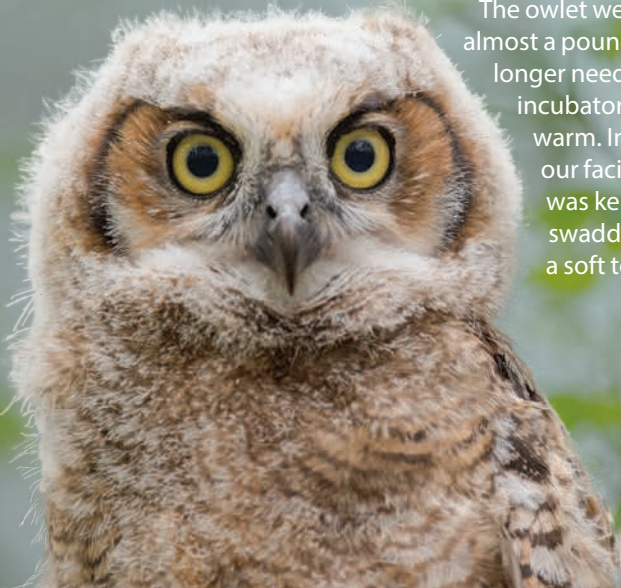
The owlet weighed almost a pound and no longer needed an incubator to keep warm. Inside our facility, he was kept warm, swaddled in a soft towel,

shaped like a nest. At this age, the owlet was not moving around, and needed regular feedings. Our goal was to temporarily care for this owlet until we could ascertain whether or not there would be an adult owl who could feed and care for the owlet once a substitute nest was constructed and installed in the original or nearby tree. A mother owl is the best model of what owlets need to learn, such as behavior, flying, and hunting.

Currently, we are installing the substitute artificial nest and watching for adults to care for the owlet. Typically, the female will brood the owlet, with the male doing most of the hunting and delivery of food to the growing family. As owlets get older and bigger, you can see the adult female sitting higher in the nest. As the days and nights get warmer, less brooding is necessary and the adults can be seen sitting nearby, outside the nest, as guardians.

Baby season is in full swing. Please call us if you see young raptors which are too young to be outside the nest. Some may be returned quickly, and some may need more care.

Ultimately, the goal is to reunite the babies as soon as possible with their parents, or else to find suitable foster parents.



It was a very busy year in rehabilitation, with only one less admission than our highest year of admissions. In addition, the number of hours of off-site educational presentations we gave was record-breaking; we traveled to schools, libraries, and community events, as well as increasing our on-site presentations and the number of guests at our Open Houses. Fortunately, to accommodate the large increase in activities, we had a welcome and encouraging increase of 15 volunteers this past year.

Rehabilitation

2023 recorded the second highest number of injured raptor admissions in the history for RAPTOR Inc. 385 raptors were received for treatment (the highest year of admission was 2021, with 386 admissions).

We received a record-breaking number of red-shouldered hawk admissions at 75, ten more than the highest number previously recorded in 2021. We need to add that we actually do have a bias toward the receipt of these hawks over other birds, in part because of the relationships between homeowners and researchers from RAPTOR Inc., which developed during the past 25 years of studying of these hawks. (See <http://redshoulderedhawkstudy.com/>.)

The increased number of admissions of red-shouldered hawks may also be attributed to the destruction of woods, where these birds tend to make their home. These hawks have become quite adaptable to living in urban areas. In 2023, there were two downtown nesting pairs – one even on a fire escape. Needless to say, the more urbanization that we experience around or near larger birds of prey, the more admissions we have, often due to anthropogenesis, such as window-strikes or collision with vehicles.

Banner Year for Bald Eagle Releases

As the population of bald eagles grows in our area, so does our number of admissions. This year three immature bald eagles were admitted for care and ALL three were released. One of the three immature bald eagles was admitted from Cynthiana, KY. We were

able to use this opportunity to collaborate with the Southside Elementary school and give a presentation during the public release at the school. All of the students were able to share in the celebration of the bald eagle release.

Raptor Sponsorships

Sponsorships are a great way to learn more about our rehabilitation efforts and to track how our patients do over time. Our raptor patients were sponsored by: Karen Adcock, Mary Auer, Rachel Bilchak, Bryan Davis, Peggy & Stephen Davish, Ronn Jerolaman, John Johnston, Steven Medgyesi, Mary Pat Michaels, Shane Moore, Sean Stuessel, Taunga Thompson, and Judy Todia.

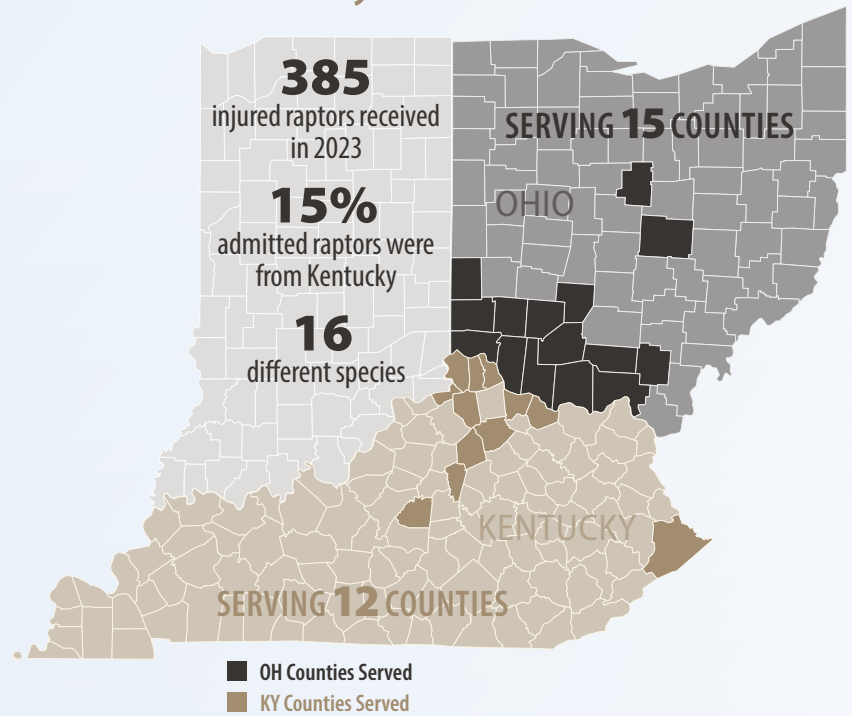
2023 was a record breaking year for red-shouldered hawks at RAPTOR



Species Admitted in 2023

| Species | Received |
|---------------------|------------|
| American Kestrel | 30 |
| Bald Eagle | 4 |
| Barred Owl | 39 |
| Black Vulture | 13 |
| Barn Owl | 6 |
| Broad-winged Hawk | 4 |
| Cooper's Hawk | 44 |
| Eastern Screech Owl | 21 |
| Great Horned Owl | 47 |
| Merlin | 1 |
| Osprey | 2 |
| Peregrine Falcon | 2 |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 75 |
| Red-tailed Hawk | 81 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | 1 |
| Turkey Vulture | 15 |
| Totals | 385 |

Ohio & Kentucky Counties Served



Top 10 Causes for bird injuries in 2023

This list compiles the leading causes of injuries in the raptors we received for rehabilitation. There are many other causes as well as the top 10, such as: becoming entangled in barbed wire or fishing line, being orphaned, having its nesting tree cut down or felled by weather, or becoming trapped in chimneys.

1. Collision with vehicles
2. Found unable to fly for unknown reasons
3. Found down due to trauma
4. Fell from nest
5. Collision with windows
6. Inexperienced flier
7. Trapped in a building
8. Emaciated or malnourished
9. Found in a pool
10. Entanglement in soccer nets



New software launched

RaptorMed was purchased with a generous grant received from the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden to assist our rehabilitation efforts. This software allows us to enter patient data into a database where it can be easily searched and accessed.

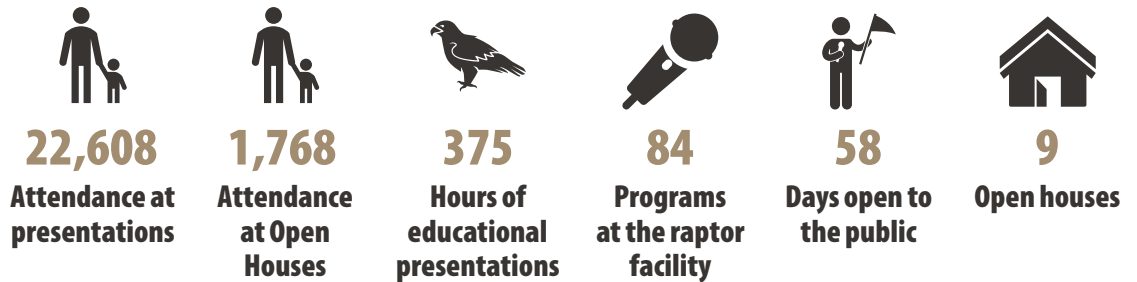


Education

Our education presentations revolve around our avian ambassadors. These birds have been with us for many years and we have gotten to know them – their personalities and their quirks. The

ambassadors are the stars of our education presentations. The birds give our guests the opportunity to experience raptors up close. People also can learn more about each species.

RAPTOR's Education Programs



Avian Ambassador Presentations

Below are the number of presentations each bird has contributed to the number of presentations in 2023. The number of programs each raptor ambassador gives, far exceeds the minimum

of the 12 presentations needed for us to satisfy the applicable federal regulations.



Grant for Presentation to Preschoolers with Disabilities

A grant was funded by Julia Henderson and Friends of the Henderson Fund from the Activities Beyond the Classroom Foundation. This grant allowed RAPTOR Inc. to give the

Owl Babies presentation to 34 Cincinnati Public Preschool Disability classrooms for the 2023-2024 school year.



Owl babies presentation (photo by Groeniger)

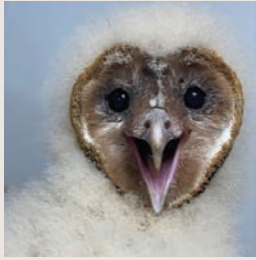
Conservation



Raptors Banded: 94
Bands Recovered: 9

Banding

Bands recovered means we had nine raptors who were admitted, dead or alive, which were wearing a band on their leg. The leg-band provided information such as how far they traveled, or how much longer they lived.



Barn Owls

RAPTOR Inc. assisted with rescuing and re-nesting four orphaned barn owls in Cincinnati. We collaborated with a bird bander, and we were able to establish active barn owl nest boxes in central Ohio.

Awards and Mentions

Miami Milford Township Chamber of Commerce Education Award

RAPTOR Inc. was awarded the 2023 Wayne Florea Pillar Award for Education. The Pillar Awards are the highest honors a company can receive from the Milford Miami Chamber of Commerce. Finalists are chosen by the Chamber Committee.

Cincinnati Magazine

An article in the June issue, "Into the Wild" highlights the conservation work of RAPTOR Inc., as well as articles on two of our volunteers, Jordan West for his wildlife photography and influence as an educator, and Cheryl Dykstra as a wildlife research consultant and editor-in-chief of "The Journal of Raptor Research".

Volunteers

"Volunteers don't get paid because they're worthless, but because they're priceless." - Sherry Anderson.

That quote by Sherry Anderson couldn't have said it any better. The volunteers at RAPTOR Inc. give their heart and soul to the care of our birds, sharing their knowledge with the community and making sure our facility and grounds are clean and safe for animals and humans alike.

Last year, 90 volunteers donated over 6700 hundred hours of their time and talents to RAPTOR Inc. in many different capacities. According to the Independent Sector, the 2023 value of volunteer time in Ohio was \$29.17 per hour, meaning our volunteers donated a whopping \$189,605! Thank you to all of our passionate and dedicated volunteers who demonstrate their love of these birds every day!

Marc Alverson
Eddie Annal
Rosemarie Ayers
Lori Balough*
Daniel Begin
Kathryn Bennett
Stephanie Berrie*
Lisa Berry
Alison Bewley
Richard Binstadt
Megan Braemer
Dylan Brasier*
Thomas Bray
Sara Brink
Steve Brinker
Gay Bullock
Kathy Caminiti
Bruce Cortright
Robin Cotton
Alison Cummings, DVM
Bob Dahlhausen, DVM
Carly Dovale
John Dransman
Jessica Edelbrock

Emily Egan
Elena Egan
Thomas Eisele
Martha Ferguson*
Tim Fitzpatrick*
Ellen Foley*
Linda Fowler
Eunice Frahm
Shelly Fryman*
Susan Gates
Kristen Groeniger*
Carolyn Hall
DJ Haeussler, DVM
Tracy Hayden*
Jeff Hays
Charlene Howell
Kat Jenkins
Jeffrey Kirssin
Ben Kitzler
Kimberly Klosterman
Donald Kroner
Mary Landis
Richard Landis
Sarah Lang*

Michael LaTour
Elizabeth Lindemann
Erica Locke
Jonas Locke
Marianne Lord
Gary Lord
Erin Lowery
Joseph Lucas
Megan Mahon
Anne Manharth, DVM
Erin Matthews
Alice McCaleb
Mark Moore*
Donna Morsbach
Bailey Mulhern
Nina Nash
Edward Nolan*
Dana Ogden
Stephen Olden
Stefanie Paeg
Ken Pawlowski
Jonathan Perlman
Angela Puposar
Danielle Quales

Mike Rahe*
Ryan Randall
Tyler Rankin
Jamie Ratliff
Kira Rehn
Tim Roggenkamp
Jeff Ruhlman
Robert Smith
Zan Smith
Sandy Stehlin
Andy Stevenson
Susan Strating*
Logan Tepe
Erin Tkatschenko
Mindy Weiss
Jordan West
Carol Wick
Tom Wick
Michael Wood
Tisha Wright
Gary Young
* New

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

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:

- ☐ American Kestrel: \$50
- ☐ Eastern Screech Owl: \$50
- ☐ Cooper's Hawk: \$50
- ☐ Barred Owl: \$50
- ☐ Red-shouldered Hawk: \$50
- ☐ Great Horned Owl: \$50
- ☐ Red-tailed Hawk: \$50



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

Thank you for your support of RAPTOR Inc.!