

WINGBEATS

The Summer 2024 Newsletter of RAPTOR Inc.

Celebrating 46 Years

Farewell to our Feathered Friends

EARL, ATHENA, AND SIRIN WILL BE DEARLY MISSED

By Cindy Alverson

We are saddened that we have lost part of our family in the past three months: Earl, Athena, and Sirin. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service rules, we are required to say that our avian ambassadors are not pets when we are giving presentations. That may be true, but they are family. We work with them, we care for them, and we have the privilege of being a part of their lives and getting to know their individual personalities.

EARL, our resident turkey vulture, was a showstopper. She was almost as old as our organization and delivered over 1,000 presentations in her lifetime. She was admitted because she was imprinted on people. Earl lived her life with RAPTOR Inc. for the past 40 years – older than many of our guests. Earl was known by name and loved by many, sharing her story and big personality with her out-stretched wings. She helped change the perception of turkey vultures from being ugly birds with no purpose to birds with beautiful iridescent feathers which provide substantial benefits to people and the environment.

I am saying “she,” but in the end, we were flabbergasted to learn that Earl was actually a male! We will never know how the urban myth started forty years ago. Was it the result of an April Fool’s joke that Earl laid an egg? We will never know, but it is conclusive from our veterinarian’s report that Earl was a male. Looking back at Earl’s playful personality of tugging at our shoestrings or sitting on our head, it is just like “him” to play this trick on us.

Continued on page 2



(Photo by Vicki Villavicencio)

Farewell *(Continued from page 1)*



ATHENA, our Eastern screech owl, was admitted to our facility in November of 2012, making her at least twelve years old – which is old for an Eastern screech owl, considering their longevity in the wild is approximately five years. With her increasing physical difficulties, Athena retired from off-site presentations, but thrived as a foster mom. Each year, fluffy young owlets were admitted to our facility when trees were cut down and Eastern screech owlets were left as orphans. Athena was Supermom and took these owlet orphans under her wing (literally) and raised them till they could fly. *(Photo by Marc Alverson)*



Sadly, **SIRIN**, our male grey phase Eastern Screech Owl Ambassador passed away on June 25, 2024, after 6 wonderful years of educating the community. RAPTOR Inc. admitted Sirin on May 6, 2018, from Martinsville, Ohio as a fledgling after a homeowner found him in a flower bed next to their house.

Along with his brain injury, he had compromised vision in both eyes; and so, we were happy to give Sirin a home. Even with his disabilities, he was able to navigate his enclosure with surprising skill. Sirin was such a special owl; as a consequence of his brain injury, he was able to give guests the opportunity to always see an Eastern Screech Owl during the daytime, even trilling for them as they approached.

We miss Sirin deeply – he was just so darn cute. Removing him from his carrier at presentations, we were sure to hear “ooohs” and “aaahs” from the guests he greeted. He was a favorite for programs and events, beloved by the educators who worked with him.

(Photo by Marc Alverson)

Earl, Athena, and Sirin are greatly missed and leave a hole in our hearts. Their memories make us smile and now they are able to fly free.



Tributes



IN MEMORY OF

Joan Carey from Gayle Pille
Sue Gutzwiller from Ann Geise, Linda Crank (“The Chickadees Plein Air Painters”), Clem Robins
Linda Huey from Gayle Pille



BIRD(TH)DAY TRIBUTES

Jordan West from Sarah Baughman

Education or Entertainment?

By Mary Landis

With well over 300 hours of presentations last year, that is an excellent question to raise. No one comes with a notebook. Yet many people, both young and old, are seeking knowledge. It is evident in their questions. How long does a species live? Where can they be found? How many feathers does an owl have?

As any educator knows, if you want to keep your audience engaged, you need to provide something other than a list of facts. A sense of humor, engaging personality, and an awesome bird on your glove -- all contribute to providing a program that will hold the attention of the audience.

I think many people attend out of curiosity. What does an owl or hawk look like up close? A turkey vulture? Are you kidding? Do these birds live around here? You mean you have an EAGLE??

More than 20,000 people attended one of our raptor presentations last year. I have found that whether it be a program in a school, at a retirement community, at a wedding reception, part of a birthday celebration, or to enhance a church service, most everyone in attendance comes away with a new nugget of knowledge. It may be as simple as seeing the beauty and intricacies of their feathers, or learning how common raptors are around us, or understanding how important raptors are to our ecosystem. Rarely does anyone leave untouched.

So, those 300+ hours of presentations help shape attitudes about raptors, help spark interest in budding young scientists, or even give meaning to the inner-workings of a sometimes hidden and unseen world.

Repeat visitors to our open houses, continued requests to visit the same teacher's classroom year after year, calls about finding an injured raptor, and ever-increasing calls to book programs, attest to our success at RAPTOR Inc.

Our ambassador raptors do a great job of helping the public to understand and provide support for our wild raptors. Those 300+ hours of presentations (combined with attendance at open houses) help spread the word: RAPTORS ARE AWESOME AND IMPORTANT.



Veteran educator Noah, an American kestrel, has logged more 155 presentations during his RAPTOR career. (Photo by C. Alverson)



3rd Annual RAPTOR

5K

run/walk

9am, Saturday, Sept. 14, 2024
(rain or shine)

Miami Meadows Park, 1546 SR 131, Milford, OH 45150
Check-in & Registration: 7:30-8:30am

Save the Date!

The proceeds from this event support the mission of RAPTOR Inc. to conserve our local birds of prey via rehabilitation, education, field research, and community service.



SCAN ME

YOU can help by becoming a sponsor, making an in-kind donation, or signing up to run.

Scan the QR code for more information.

Thank you for your support!

Spring-Summer Rehab Recap

By Cindy Alverson

In one month's time, our rehab personnel admitted a record-setting 79 birds! Spring is always our busiest season, with the owlets and chicks hatching. Young birds begin to experience some harsh realities of nature, such as spring weather with strong winds and rain blowing nests out of trees. Or perhaps the nest was poorly made by adults who are building a nest for the first time. Or, maybe a great horned owl took over a hawk's nest which was too flimsy to support a growing owl family.

Fortunately, in all of these scenarios, an artificial nest can still be installed while the adults are still there to hunt and feed the young.

- This year, we were able to install artificial nests for two Cooper's hawk's families, resulting in three nestlings returning to the care of their parents.
- Two young great horned owlets from Kentucky jumped from a tree cavity when Public Works employees were cutting down a tree the day before Easter. Both owlets were able to be re-nested in their "Easter basket" at their nest location.

If the parents are no longer at the nest site, then we shift to fostering young raptors by placing them into a nest site of the same species and age. In this situation, foster parenting is the next best alternative. Or, for fledglings (young birds who are learning how to fly) who no longer have parents, releasing them at an active nest location with other fledglings can be successful. For example:

- Three red-shouldered chicks jumped out of their nest on three different days. One adult was found dead and the chicks were not being fed. All three were able to be fostered into three different active nests.
- A young fledgling red-tailed hawk was released with other red-tailed fledglings in Kentucky. A few weeks later, the young bird was photographed soaring, sporting its metal band.

Besides young ones needing assistance, adult raptors themselves can experience difficulties, for example, when they collide with hazards. Here are five such examples:

- An adult barred owl flew into a golf net at a private residence and got tangled. Fortunately, it suffered only slight bruising and minor feather damage, and the owl could be released in a few days.

- An adult red-shouldered hawk got tangled in a doubled-sided triple hook fishing lure and required sutures to close the wound, as well as a course of antibiotics. This hawk was able to heal and be released within a month.
- An adult red-shouldered hawk was found glued to a 10" x 12" sticky mat, which had been placed in a construction area to get rid of snakes. The glue residue was removed and the hawk only lost two major feathers; it then was able to be released.
- Two sooty barred owls had to be extracted from chimneys after they were stuck there for a few days. Both were able to be released after being treated for dehydration.
- An adult great horned owl got his whole body tangled in a soccer net. After removing the netting from around his neck and body, there was little damage, since the wings had been wrapped to his sides. This owl was released after a few days of rest.

Our team of 90 volunteers has been busy taking care of the birds admitted in the spring; and these folks continue in the summer to care for birds as they arrive. To manage the massive amount of work required to have successful outcomes, the rehabilitators and our volunteers provide the daily care of feeding the birds multiple times a day, cleaning crates, weighing birds, providing treatments, and dispensing medicine. The veterinarians then provide the anesthesia, x-rays, and surgical skills. This is not to mention our other helpers: for example, the bird bander and tree climber, who re-nests and fosters the chicks and owlets. And the many transporters who receive calls from our dispatcher to transport the birds to our facility and, after treatment, who help to release the healthy raptors back into the wild.

Working together, all of these component teams and individuals ensure that RAPTOR Inc. is able to provide the best care possible in a compassionate manner for each and every bird. Our supporters make all of this human endeavor possible. Thank you for your support.

Information about what to do if you find an injured raptor, or see a bird that you think may be in distress, is located on our website at raptorinc.org.



*A barred owl entangled in a soccer net
(Photo by Joe Lucas)*



*A juvenile red-tailed hawk after release
(Photo by Frank Renfrow)*



*A Cooper's hawk re-nested with its family
(Photo by Jeff Hays)*

How We Can Help Raptors

1. Follow all game laws. Improper trapping or baiting can cause severe injuries to unintended species, such as bald eagles and vultures. All birds of prey are legally protected, and game law violations can carry severe penalties.
2. Dispose of trash in appropriate receptacles and pick up trash around roadways. Raptors are attracted to the small mammals which eat the morsels of food left in litter. Removing litter along roadways reduces the chance of raptors colliding with vehicles while hunting.
3. Take down sport netting when not in use. Nocturnal animals, like owls, often get tangled in sport netting, causing serious injuries.
4. Properly dispose of fishing line or kite string to prevent raptors from becoming entangled in them. Use care when hanging Christmas lights, making sure lights are tightly secured to the structure with no hanging loops that can cause entanglements.
5. Do not release helium balloons or flaming sky lanterns into the environment. Entanglements can cause life-threatening injuries, and lanterns can cause devastating fires.
6. When hunting and fishing, switch to lead-free sinkers and ammunition, and bury gut piles. Even a tiny amount of lead can cause fatal poisoning in raptors. Raptors can consume lead from scavenging on carrion, or from eating birds or fish that have accidentally ingested lead. (Lead is highly toxic to humans too.)
7. Do not use poisons to eradicate weeds or pests, such as rodents and insects. These substances often enter the food chain and indirectly poison raptors and other wildlife. Use snap traps (inside only) and install nest boxes instead.
8. Observe and photograph raptors responsibly and ethically. Many people enjoy watching and photographing raptors, but it is important to enjoy them without disturbing them. Disturbance can cause a thin bird to waste valuable energy, or it can cause an adult to leave vulnerable eggs or young unattended, or it can cause stress leading to nest abandonment. Maintain adequate distance to prevent displacing a bird or disturbing their habitat. Protect the habitat around nesting or roosting sites. Do not bait or use call recordings to draw in birds.
9. Keep cats indoors. Cats kill large numbers of birds, reptiles, and mammals when cats are left outside.
10. Cap chimneys. Animals that nest in cavities, such as barred owls, often get trapped in uncapped chimneys.
11. Plan your tree work for the fall, after birds leave the nest, but before owls nest in the winter. Leave up dead trees if it is safe to do so.

2024 Total Admissions

American Kestrel	22	Short Eared Owl	0
Bald Eagle	0	Snowy Owl	0
Barn Owl	2	Turkey Vulture	10
Barred Owl	26	Northern Harrier	0
Black Vulture	8	Osprey	0
Broad-winged Hawk	1	Peregrine Falcon	1
Cooper's Hawk	17	Red-shouldered Hawk	50
Eastern Screech Owl	5	Red-tailed Hawk	33
Golden Eagle	0	Rough-legged Hawk	0
Great Horned Owl	28	Saw-whet Owl	0
Long-eared Owl	0	Sharp-shinned Hawk	0
Merlin	0	Short Eared Owl	0
Northern Harrier	0	Snowy Owl	0
Osprey	0	Turkey Vulture	10
Peregrine Falcon	1	Total	203
Red-shouldered Hawk	50	2024 DISPOSITIONS Released 58% Euthanized 22% Died 15% Under care 5%	
Red-tailed Hawk	33		
Rough-legged Hawk	0		
Saw-whet Owl	0		
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0		

Venmo Now Accepted

RAPTOR Inc. can now accept Venmo for purchases or donations. Our user name is @RAPTORInc.



RAPTOR Wish List

RAPTOR Inc. needs 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.

- Dog Food (dry, for large dogs)
- Office Max Gift Card
- Duct Tape
- Paper towels
- UDF Gas Gift Card
- Stamps (Forever)
- Latex or Nitrile exam gloves (any size)

Thank you for all of your donations, including those who donate through the Amazon Wish List! Due to changes at Amazon, we unfortunately no longer receive information on the names of Wish List donors.

Amazon Wish List

RAPTOR Inc. is listed on the Amazon Wish list. For a complete listing of all of the items we use for rehabilitation, and to provide our volunteers with all of the necessities they need to care for our birds, please visit our website, raptorinc.org. Click on the tab, Support Us (not the dropdown) and click on the Amazon Wish List Icon midway down the page. This will take you directly to the RAPTOR Inc. Wish list.

If any of these wish list items are purchased, they are shipped directly to our RAPTOR Inc. facility in Milford. How easy is that?

Financial Contributions

Thanks to the following individuals and groups for their financial contribution to RAPTOR Inc. through the 2nd quarter of 2024.

Osprey Level \$1,000

- \$9,999

Bullock, Gay
Cincinnati Bird Club
Eisenberg, Judith
Gast, Alan M.
Kroger Community Rewards
Lucas, Joseph
Miller, Jo & John
Singer, Gary & Mary

Peregrine Falcon Level

\$500-\$999

Aungst, Robin & Pat
Barkalow, David
Crank, Linda
Leach, Robert & Wendy
Lippard, Bruce
McNett, Rachel
Olden, Steve
Puthoff, Harry
Ratliff, Jay
Sellers, Candace
Wood, Michael

Gifts \$100-\$499

Ahrenholz, Teresa
Annal, Eddie

Appel, Marvin
Axt, David & Wilkinson, Susan
Barker, Michael
Behrens, Jonathan
Begley, Robert
Benton, Jim
Bewley, Donalee
Boeckman, Jerry & Jennifer
Bollmer, Kevin
Bowling, Robert
Bressler, Tom
Butler, Heith
Cahall, Eric
Calvert, John & Eilean
Clark, Barry & Martha
Cole, Cathy
Combs, Nick
Conradi, Joanne
Davish, Peggy & Stephen
Dick, Gary
Dolsen, Susan
Driscoll, John
Edelbrock, Jessica
Egan, Elena
Egan, Emily
Einson, Stephenson
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Haemer, Kristine
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Howell, Charlene & Doug
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Kelm, Gary, Dr.
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Labs, Lynn
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Lancaster, Lauren
Lawler, Kathleen
Lisi, Richard & Carolyn
Long, Mary
Lord, Gary & Marianne
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Mancini, Donna
Marks, Neil
McClain, Diane
McFerran, Cindy
McOmber, Lucas
Michaels, Mary Pat
Moreland, Neil & Debra
Nau, Melinda & Donald
Paullin, Gwyn
Pheanis, Emily
Pullen, Joanne
Quilligan, Dave & Janet
Rackley, Suzanne
Rahtz, Michelle & Jim
Rapien, Gary
Royalty, Carolyn & Asimus, Drew
Rudick, Molly
Sanapala, Bhargav
Scallan, Carol
Shadix, Lois
Shoemaker, Mary Jo
Sonoff, Elisabeth & Raymond
Spring Grove Cemetery
Stephenson, Serena
Story, Amy & Leland

Throp, Judith
Uible, David
Van de Wall, Allan
Walters, Lindsey
Waske, Owen
Wauligman, Wayne
Weber, Patricia & Kirk
Wiggs, Peggy

In-Kind Donations

Alverson, Marc
Barbour, Kelly
Bingham, Fred
Bray, Jackie & Thomas
Deuer, Beth
Dahlhausen DVM, Bob
Hayden, Margaret
Keiter, Karen
Lamb, Shelley
Leach, Robert & Wendy
Owens, Jen & Family
Powers, Tom
Shupe, Eli
Spring Grove Cemetery
Strating, Susan
Terlan, Tim
Wright Brothers, Inc.

RAPTOR Inc. Leadership, Staff, and Communications

RAPTOR Inc. Board

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RAPTOR Inc. Staff

Cindy Alverson, Executive Director
Jackie Bray, Associate Director
Michelle Rahtz, Administrative Assistant
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 Marc Alverson at marcalverson@cinci.rr.com for meeting time and location.

Thank You To Our Veterinarians!

Bob Dahlhausen, D.V.M.
(513) 576-1990
D.J. Haeussler, D.V.M.
(513) 374-3963
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
Ann Manharth, DVM
(513) 248-0904

Communications

Gary Young, Newsletter Editor
To submit articles or pictures for consideration in Wingbeats, 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

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".



Date	Time	Event	Location
25-Aug-2024	1pm-4pm	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
7-Sep-2024	10am-1pm	AJ Jolly Park	1501 Race Track Rd, Alexandria, KY 41001
14-Sep-2024	9am-11am	5K RAPTOR Run/Walk - Miami Meadows Park	1546 OH-131, Milford, OH 45150
17-Sep-2024	4pm-5pm	Mason County Public Library	218 E Third St, Maysville, KY 41056
18-Sep-2024	6:15pm-7:45pm	Mason Public Library	200 Reading Rd, Mason, OH 45040
21-Sep-2024	2pm-3pm	Little Miami Conservancy River Center	211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140
22-Sep-2024	1pm-4pm	Ault Park Pavilion	5090 Observatory Cir, Cincinnati, OH 45208
29-Sep-2024	1pm-4pm	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
5-Oct-2024	11am-1pm	Newtown Feed & Supply	6876 Main St, Newtown, OH 45244
19-Oct-2024	2pm-3pm	Little Miami Conservancy River Center	211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140
19-Oct-2024	6pm-9pm	Miami Twp Community Park Harvest Fest	5951 Buckwheat Rd, Milford, OH 45150
20-Oct-2024	11am-12pm	Wild Birds Unlimited West Chester	7712 VOA Centre Dr, West Chester Township, OH 45069
27-Oct-2024	1pm-4pm	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
2-Nov-2024	1pm-4pm	Stanbery Park	2221 Oxford Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45230
16-Nov-2024	1pm-2pm	Lebanon Public Library	101 S Broadway St, Lebanon, OH 45036
24-Nov-2024	1pm-4pm	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150

RAPTOR Inc. Membership

Renewal notices are sent out at the end of the year 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: www.raptorinc.org.

If you don't need the membership form, pass it on to someone who might be interested in becoming a member of RAPTOR Inc. Your membership dollars provide for care, treatment, and feeding of 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. Members are also invited to attend Board meetings and may nominate candidates to serve on the board.

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

☐ **\$25 Hawk Membership**
(1-year)

☐ **\$50 Owl Membership**
plus receive a stunning Raptor note card set

Eagle and Lifetime Memberships (below) also include perks from the levels above.

☐ **\$100 Eagle Membership**
plus receive a Charley Harper designed T-Shirt

☐ **\$500 Lifetime Membership**
plus personalized tour for 5

Eagle and Lifetime Memberships, please indicate T-Shirt Size: (S, M, L, XL, XXL) _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

☐ Check if you prefer postal delivery of Wingbeats

☐ I would like more information about making a planned gift to RAPTOR Inc. ☐ Please call me | ☐ Please email me

☐ I have already included RAPTOR Inc. in my will or estate plan. ☐ Please call me | ☐ Please email me

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.!

RAPTOR Inc.
961 Barg Salt Run Road
Milford, OH 45150

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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

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



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.!

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email: