

WINGBEATS

The Winter 2022 Newsletter of RAPTOR Inc.

Celebrating 44 Years

Save the Date for Denver Holt

RAPTOR Inc. is pleased to announce that Denver Holt will be presenting a talk, "Adaptations in Owls," on Monday, March 7, 2022 at 7 PM at the Sharon Centre in Sharon Woods Park.

Denver Holt is a wildlife researcher, biologist, and one of the, (if not the) world's most renowned owl expert. Holt is also a graduate of the University of Montana. He is founder and president of the Owl Research Institute and the Ninepipes Wildlife Research Center, a nonprofit organization located in Charlo, Montana. As a dedicated field researcher, Holt believes that long-term field studies are the primary means to understanding trends in wildlife populations and key to wildlife and conservation management.

Since 1978, Holt's research focus has been owls and their ecology. He has published over 100 papers and technical documents, including four species accounts for the Birds of North America project. He was team leader for the Strigidae Family owl species accounts for The Handbook of the Birds of the World, volume 5, covering 189 species of the world's owls. In collaboration with elementary school teachers, Holt has co-authored two children's science books on owls: Owls Whoop Are They, and Snowy Owls Whoop Are They. In 2006, he was a chapter author on owls for the book; Arctic Wings, highlighting the birds of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska. The forward was written by former United States President, Jimmy Carter.

In 2000, Holt was named Montana's "Wildlife Biologist of the Year," by the Wildlife Society of North America. Holt's research was the cover story for National Geographic Magazine in December 2002. His work has been the subject of many television segments on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, and Disney, as well as featured on Audubon's Up-Close Series, PBS's Bird Watch, and David Attenborough's Life of Birds, among others. His research on Snowy Owls has been showcased on documentaries for National Geographic Explorer, NHK Natural History Unit of Japan, and the Norwegian Broadcasting Company's Natural History Unit. Holt's Snowy Owl research has been the focus of the British Broadcasting Compa-



ny's (BBC) documentary series, Frozen Earth, a sequel to the Planet Earth series. In May 2011, Holt's research was featured in the New York Times (www.nytimes.com).

In 2011, Holt worked closely with a PBS Documentary film crew featuring the breeding ecology of the Snowy Owl at his research site in Barrow, Alaska. The film, which is called, "The Magic of the Snowy Owl" aired in 2012. The New York Times again cited Holt's research in January 2012, highlighting the 2012 Snowy Owl Irruption Migration to the United States. Also in 2012, Holt was inducted into the World Owl Hall of Fame.

In 2014 Holt advised and assisted on the BBC Natural History film project, which was looking at predator-prey relationships in Snowy Owls. In March 2015 GEO Magazine of Germany (considered the National Geographic of Europe) featured Holt's Snowy Owl research.

Above and Below: Denver Holt with young snowy owl. (Photos by ORI.)



See Denver on page 4



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".

Engaging Learning for All at RAPTOR Inc. Open Houses

By Danielle Quales

While getting an up-close look at our ambassador birds and learning all about the RAPTOR Inc. mission are important parts of our monthly Open Houses, providing engaging education opportunities for all members of our local community is truly the hallmark of these events. Open House attendees of all ages learn fascinating information about raptor adaptations, their role in our local environment, their biology, and more.

One of the key education stations at our Open House events is known as the “Biofacts station.” Staffed by one or two Educators, this table allows attendees the opportunity to see and touch real raptor wings and talons, as well as model raptor eggs. At this station, Open House attendees can feel the sharpness of a red-tailed hawk talon, hear the near-silence of a great horned owl wingbeat, and notice the rough, Velcro-like quality of the underside of an osprey talon.

The Educators are wonderfully effective in engaging attendees by asking incisive questions about the physical items on the table, and then encouraging attendees to make keen observations about raptors, based on these items and their unique qualities. “My favorite thing about the biofacts station is being able to really interact with the kids and adults and teach them something while providing a tactile experience,” says RAPTOR Inc. Educator Carly Dovale. “It’s very rewarding for me that the biofacts station provides a way for both kids and adults to feel like they can ask questions freely and talk about their personal experiences with all birds, including raptors.”

By engaging with these physical objects and making observations, attendees often make personal connections with their own experiences in the natural world and share stories back with the Educators. This symbiosis is often a wonderful learning experience for Open House attendees and RAPTOR Inc. Educators alike, spurring intriguing dialogue and meaningful personal storytelling.

Another Education station at many of our Open House events is for owl pellet dissection. At this station, attendees have the oppor-



Owl pellet dissection
(Photo by D. Quales)

tunity to dissect pellets (undigestible regurgitation) from an owl. The contents of the pellet – typically bone fragments and fur of prey items – reveal important details about the owl’s diet and biological processes.

When working this station, RAPTOR Inc. Educator Charlene Howell says that she discusses what an owl pellet is, many times getting the chance to correct misconceptions about how and where the pellets are produced. “Everybody likes to hear owls have two stomachs!” Charlene says. “Of course, the treasure that all want to find is a skull, but sometimes even part of a jaw with teeth is just as exciting.” The Educator working at the owl pellet dissection table uses a chart to help dissectors match up their pellet finding to the bone that they’ve found.

For most Open House attendees, the longest part of the event is touring the mews of our resident ambassador birds. During the mews tour, attendees want to hear the stories of each bird and learn how the bird came to be at RAPTOR Inc. Charlene shares that Earl’s and Ollie’s stories are typically fan favorites. “Visitors delight in looking at the birds up close to see the beautiful feathers, sharp beak and talons, and the size of each bird of prey,” says Charlene. “They especially like the cuddly-looking Sirin, exotic Isis, Showgirl Earl, and the stern stare of Ollie.”

When asked what is her favorite part of being an Educator during the RAPTOR Inc. Open Houses, Charlene explains: “One of my personal goals as a docent is to instill an appreciation of the benefits of raptors in our environment. But, as an added bonus, to have visitors leave our facility knowing that vultures are truly remarkable and beneficial to people, is truly an accomplishment for me.”



Biofacts station
(Photo by D. Quales)

Body Language of Birds

By Danielle Quales

The photo of Ruby (right), our education ambassador, and a red-tailed hawk undergoing rehabilitation, were both noticed to have their legs extended in positions not usually seen when perched in the wild. A volunteer working in the facility noticed Ruby with her leg extended out from the perch and was concerned – she thought that perhaps there was a potential medical problem to address. From a remote camera inside the facility, a red-tailed hawk was also noticed to have its leg extended over the perch.

However, as a raptor expert, Ruby's leg position is truly heartwarming. A bird will sit in this position when they are at ease with their surroundings. When a bird is in a situation in which they are preparing for flight, both of their feet will be solidly on the perch, in preparation for pushing off. In this photo, Ruby appears to be comfortably at rest.

As far as the red-tailed hawk, the purpose of the cameras is to be able to access their flight and behavior while they are unaware of a human presence. Had someone been physically in the mew with a bird undergoing rehabilitation, this position of comfort would not have been observed. For the same reason, if anyone would have started to enter Ruby's mew, her foot quickly would have returned to the perch in a more alert position.

We all wish that all the birds we have undergoing rehabilitation can be released. But if that can't be the case, seeing an education ambassador exhibiting this body language is the next best thing. It tells us this bird has adjusted well to its home here at RAPTOR Inc.



Ruby at ease in enclosure.
(Photo by Alverson.)

Let it Snow

By Jordan West

Will it be a snowy winter? This is a question that holds two meanings for a naturalist, birder, and wildlife photographer. There could be snow on the ground or snowy owls on the ground.

I always look forward to a cold, snowy, and white winter. So far, we haven't had much luck with winter weather locally, as temperatures have been staying much higher than usual for this time of year. However, I do hope that we begin to see snowfall as the season progresses.

The winter season brings us many unique viewing opportunities for a variety of migrant species, such as sandhill cranes, numerous waterfowl species, dark-eyed juncos, northern harriers, and so many more. There is one winter species that birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts alike always hope to see: the snowy owl.

Fortunately, Ohio has already had many sightings across the state of that special arctic visitor. These captivating, large snow white owls will sometimes migrate south into our area and spend a portion of their winter in search of prey. This southern migration tends to happen when the lemming population (their favored prey item of the tundra) has been plentiful, thus providing a successful breeding season among the owls up north.

See Snow on page 5



Snowy owl rousing.
(Photo by J. West..)

Merlin App Update

By Danielle Quales

Attention, birders! The Cornell Lab has recently updated their Merlin mobile app with the helpful ability to identify bird songs and calls through audio recordings. The update is called Sound ID, and it listens to the birds around you and provides instant suggestions for the birds who may be making those calls. You can then listen to the suggested bird calls on the Merlin app to confirm if Sound ID correctly identified the bird calls around you.

To download the Merlin app, visit merlin.allaboutbirds.org and select your app store from the top of the page. After the app has installed on your mobile device, tap “Get Sound ID” to activate the new Sound ID feature. If you already have Merlin downloaded on your mobile device, simply visit your app store to download the latest version. Be sure that you have enabled the microphone on your device to allow the Merlin app to access sound recordings.

Sound ID currently identifies over 450 birds in the United States and Canada – and that list is growing. According to their website, The Cornell Lab is planning to continue to build out Sound ID with more species and calls soon. You can help support their efforts to continue to expand the Sound ID library by uploading bird call recordings and correctly identifying the birds you hear. Get birding today!

Tributes

In Honor Of:	From:	In Memory Of:	From:
Ben Von Handorf	Autumn Von Handorf	Red	Deb & Tuck Krebiel
Bob Dahlhausen, DVM	Lafeber Company	John Burkhardt	Catherine Menke, Susan & John Eby, Gwendoline Finegan, Teresa Hoelle, Karen Holy, Ray Marthaler, Sharon & Lowell McMillin, Jim Pfaller, Jesse Rogers, Janet & Kenneth Williamson Jr., Melissa & Dan Lubrecht
Mike Wood	Ruth Sherbon		
RAPTOR In. Volunteers	Steve & Kathy Biedenbach	Liz Marksteiner	Cathleen Marksteiner
Ruth & David Lahey	Joseph Wickman	Mary Lou Della Bella	Beth Della Bella
Tom & Carol Wick	Chris Adamson	Timmy the Cockatiel	Allan van de Wall
		Vernon Tragesser	Vicki Wright
		Wolfgang Olson	Doug and Tatja Schneider

Denver *(continued from page 1)*

In April 2015, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology featured Holt’s research on Snowy Owls in its prestigious [Living Bird Magazine](#), and in December 2015, Holt’s research was featured in [The Financial Times, London](#). In October 2018, Holt’s research was featured in [Smithsonian Magazine](#). In 2018, Holt was the recipient of the prestigious Chandler S. Robbins Award, given by the American Bird Association, for his lifelong dedication to owl conservation, education, and research. In

2020, Holt was selected as a TEDx speaker in Montana, and he’s been the keynote speaker for several major bird festivals in the United States, and abroad.

When not researching owls, Holt is involved in wildlife watching tourism as a natural history tour guide and co-owner of Wild Planet Nature Tours (www.wildplanet-naturetours.com). He also guides private natural history tours and is a part-time trip leader for the Victor Emanuel Nature Tour Company (www.ventbird.com), one of the

largest nature tour companies in the world.

To learn more about Denver Holt and his efforts in wildlife research, education, and conservation, visit www.owlresearchinstitute.org.

Please save the March 7th date and join RAPTOR Inc. to enjoy Denver Holt’s fascinating talk about the owls of North America.

(This article was provided by the Owl Research Institute.)



Rehab in Review: A BIG Year

By Cindy Alverson

A big year can mean many things to many people. To a sales person, it could mean being the top sales person in a calendar year. But, to a birder, it could mean the competition of trying to identify as many species of birds as possible in a single year. At RAPTOR Inc., 2021 was a big year, as we admitted more injured raptors than any other year in our 43-year history.

Admitting 387 raptors in a year is a bittersweet accomplishment to our organization. We are thrilled that we can assist so many people helping the injured birds of prey, and we are thrilled to be given the opportunity to treat the birds so they can be rehabilitated and released back into the wild. On the other hand, it is tragic to see these beautiful birds in such sad shape and to know that many

of their injuries were a result of human interference in their lives. Regardless of the number of patients admitted, we are happy to help and provide the best care we can for each bird.

Besides an astronomical number of admissions, it is understandable that we also received record highs of individual species. Records were set for the highest number of admissions for Cooper's hawks, red-shouldered hawks, red-tailed hawks, black vultures, and turkey vultures. Mid-June through mid-July, 23 fledgling Cooper's hawks were also received (compared to our usual admission of one) with fatal, unexplained seizures; government testing has not been able to identify a cause.

The chart below highlights the record-setting admission of species. With the record-setting year of admissions,

there accompanied it a record-setting year of veterinarian assistance in treatment of the injured birds. Many times a bird would require multiple vet evaluations to monitor the progress of the treatment. We would not be able to give our birds the care and expertise they so richly deserve without our veterinarians' time and talent.

A big "thank you" goes out to Dr. Bob Dahlhausen and Dr. Cummings of the Avian and Exotic Medical Center, Dr. Ann Manharth of Day Heights Animal Hospital, Dr. DJ Haeussler of the Animal Eye Institute, and Dr. Peter Hill of PetCare Animal Hospital. We thank all of our veterinarians from the bottom of our hearts.

2021 Admissions

American Kestrel	24	Saw-whet Owl	0	Rough-legged Hawk	0	2021 Dispositions
Merlin	1	Snowy Owl	0	Northern Harrier	0	
Peregrine Falcon	0	Short Eared Owl	0	Turkey Vulture	21	
Eastern Screech Owl	31	Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	Black Vulture	17	
Barred Owl	28	Cooper's Hawk	61	Osprey	1	
Barn Owl	2	Broad-winged Hawk	5	Golden Eagle	0	
Great Horned Owl	43	Red-shouldered Hawk	65	Bald Eagle	1	
Long-eared Owl	1	Red-tailed Hawk	85	Total	386	

Snow *(continued from page 3)*

When the owls arrive to the lower 48 states, they can usually be spotted scanning over farmland, perched atop a hay bale, farm equipment, and light poles. At other times, the snowy owls can be seen on beaches, rocky dams, and shorelines.

Locally, Clermont County hosted a snowy owl for a few days. This owl chose to hunt and roost in the woodlands near a ravine, a rather unusual preference and setting for this species. It is important to

note that many of the owls that visit our area are highly inexperienced first-year owls; they are moving into new territory for the first time in search of prey. They need more than enough rest for their journey and also to be given plenty of space to hunt.

More than 50% of these young owls (like other birds or prey) will not survive their first year, and we need not contribute to that mortality statistic. We can help

sensitive species like snowy owls by simply keeping the above in mind, cutting visits shorter than normal, and not posting exact owl locations on social media.

The next time that you find yourself driving through the back roads and farmlands, try to carefully examine those white spots out in the fields. You never know -- that plastic bag that you thought you saw out in the distance, might just be one of these truly amazing owls.

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)
- Duct Tape
- Gas Gift Card
- Latex or Nitrile exam gloves (any size)
- Laundry Detergent (he)
- Office Max Gift Card
- Paper towels
- Stamps (Forever)

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 recent financial contributions to RAPTOR Inc. for the fourth quarter of 2021.

Osprey Level \$1,000 to \$9,999

Castleberry, Anne
Johnston, Laurie
Kroger Community Rewards
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Wood, Michael

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Morsbach, Donna
Smith, Zan
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Wight Brothers Air

\$500 to \$999

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Cortright, Bruce
Doering, Jeff
Graves, John

\$100 to \$499

Amazon Smile
Berger, Judith
Biedenbach, Kathy & Steven

RAPTOR Inc. Leadership, Staff, and Communications

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RAPTOR Inc. Staff

Cindy Alverson, Executive Director
Jackie Bray, Associate Director

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
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(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".

Upcoming RAPTOR Public Appearances

Date	Time	Event	Location
28-Jan-2022	5-6pm	Middle Creek Park	5655 Burlington Pike, Burlington, KY 41005
19-Feb-2022	1-3pm	Krohn Conservatory	1501 Eden Park Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45202
5-Mar-2022	6-8:30pm	Spring Grove Cemetery Norman Chapel Owl Prowl	4521 Spring Grove Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45232
6-May-2022	6:30-7:30pm	W.M. Johnson Hills Park	7950 Bridle Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45244
7-May-2022	7:30-9:30am	Bird Walk at Spring Grove Cemetery	4521 Spring Grove Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45232
14-May-2022	1-2pm	Grant's Birthplace State Memorial	1551 OH-232, Moscow, OH 45153
1-Jun-2022	5-8pm	Rhinegeist Brewery RAPTOR Inc. Fundraiser	1910 Elm St, Cincinnati, OH 45202
8-Jul-2022	10-11am	Beech Acres Park Amphitheater	6910 Salem Road, Cincinnati, OH 45230

(Contact sponsor for details and to see if reservations are required.)

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, 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.

\$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

\$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) _____

Eagle and Lifetime Memberships also include perks from the level(s) above.

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.!

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:

- 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.!

