

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's been a long, cold winter in the Pacific Northwest. Amidst "500 year" floods, hurricane force winds, record snowfall, and my normal duties, I've continued to participate in northern spotted owl recovery planning. As member of the most recent recovery team and as party to ongoing litigation in federal court, last year I recused myself from all RRF decisions related to spotted owl conservation. However, I want to use this message to share some broad, higher level questions that recent experiences have resurfaced: questions that bridge science and policy, and which squarely face RRF as it moves to revitalize its Conservation Committee.

How do we proceed in the face of uncertainty, and how do we weigh opposing risks? How should the levels of risk in a conservation strategy be determined? What safety margins beyond bare minimums should be provided? Does incorporation of the precautionary principle into a conservation strategy represent good science, or rather the injection of personal values and a certain, philosophical point of view? Adaptive management may provide the best path forward, but tough decision making is still needed to set the initial management regime (there must be some sort of management in place to adapt), and in practice deferred decisions seldom become less difficult. To succeed, an adaptive management program must be characterized by relevant experiments and real accountability for timely action in response to experimental results.

In the face of global climate change, to what extent can we rely upon the past to prepare for the future? How will warmer temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns influence conservation solutions? Can we manage habitat risks related to wildfire, insects, and diseases based on historical frequencies and severities? How should we view species range expansions, or even define "non-native" and "exotic" species? Do we need to change our approaches to conservation research?

Should we endorse a lethal control program in the absence of a well-documented, cause-and-effect relationship? What if the presumed aggressor is a closely related, native species? How can science best serve to inform these questions, which contain intertwined ecological, operational, ethical, and emotional considerations?

Stepping a bit further into the policy arena, to what extent should wildlife conservation programs such as the United States' Endangered Species Act shoulder the regulatory burden of countering the causes of climate change? Should endangered species laws be used to control people's activities that lead to global warming, under penalty of a fine or imprisonment? To me, climate change has the potential to crush endangered species programs under a massive weight of problems without traditional, wildlife conservation answers.



I hope these questions stimulate your thinking and prompt you to actively participate as RRF recharges its conservation batteries for the road ahead.

Best regards -- Lenny



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 Vice-president: Ted Swem Treasurer: Angela Matz

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|---|---------------------------------|
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For more information about the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc. (founded in 1966), please visit the RRF website at: <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/>.

Persons interested in birds of prey are invited to join the Raptor Research Foundation (RRF). *Wingspan* is emailed twice each year to all members of RRF and is available on the RRF website. Members also receive *The Journal of Raptor Research* (ISSN 0892-1016), which is published quarterly. For membership and subscription information, please contact: Ornithological Societies of North America, 5400 Bosque Boulevard, Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710, USA; 1-254-399-9636 (phone); 1-254-776-3767 (fax); business@osnabirds.org (email); <http://www.osnabirds.org> (web).

2008 changes in directors (effective 1 Jan 2008)**Election Results**

Director-Southern Hemisphere: Miguel Saggese replaced Nick Mooney
 Director North America #1: Petra Wood replaced Steve Hoffman
 Director-at-Large #1: Jim Bednarz replaced Jemima Parry-Jones
 Director-at-Large #4: Carol McIntyre, re-elected

Many thanks to the out-going Directors for your service to RRF!!!

**Remember to vote in the next RRF election this summer!!
 Make your voice heard!**

Editor's Note – Thanks to the following contributors for this issue of the *Wingspan*: Clint Boal, Kate Davis, Cheryl Dykstra, Wade Eakle, David Ellis, Lindsay Harman, Don Heintzelman, Judy Henckel, Sebastian Hernandez, Stuart Houston, Gene Jacobs, Karla Kinstler, Janet Linthicum, Carol McIntyre, Angela Matz, Ian Newton, Michael Preston, Rich Seaton, Jeff Smith, Ruth Tingay, Susan Toussaint, Dan Varland, Susan Whaley, Lenny Young.

Wingspan welcomes contributions from RRF members and others interested in raptor biology and management. Contributions may be submitted by mail (Petra Bohall Wood, *Wingspan*, PO Box 6125, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506 USA) or email (rrfwingspan@mail.wvu.edu). Email is preferred and for long contributions, please send as an MS Word attachment.

Deadline for the next issue is **18 August 2008**.

**RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION
2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Missoula, Montana 24-28 September

**The Legacy Lives On - A Tribute to John
and Frank Craighead**



(Photo by Kate Davis)

Set your sights on Missoula for the 2008 Raptor Research Foundation annual conference, slated for Sept. 24-28. The conference theme is “The Legacy Lives on—A Tribute to John and Frank Craighead.” “We feel there could be no more fitting theme here in the home community of John Craighead and his family,” said Kate Davis of Raptors of the Rockies, the nonprofit



*Raptors
of the
Rockies*

**The University of
Montana**

organization hosting the event. The University of Montana is co-host, renowned for its research and education programs in ornithology, wildlife, and wilderness management. Kate anticipates that attendees will be thrilled by the reception in a community known for wildlife events like the International Wildlife Film Festival. The Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park will be the venue, with three full days of papers and symposia, evening workshops, and field trips. The Monte Dolack Gallery will hold a Birds and Art special exhibit, with invited artists from around the country.



The Craighead “legacy lives on” theme challenges biologists and students alike to take the next bold steps in the spirit of America’s pioneering biologists and falconers — combining field research, cutting edge technology and communication to conserve raptors around the globe. The public is invited to an evening showing, Sept. 25, of the 1940 Craighead film, “Life with an Indian Prince” at the Missoula Children’s Theater.

The special speaker is raptor researcher Brian Woodbridge, whose discovery of thousands of poisoned Swainson’s hawks on their wintering grounds in Argentina led to banning a toxic pesticide and protection of the hawks. In 1994, he was the first to track the epic 8000-mile migration of Swainson’s hawks using microwave transmitters. He joins us from Yreka, California.



(Photo by Kate Davis)

University of Montana professors Ken Dial and Erick Greene, known for lively presentations and groundbreaking work in bird flight evolution and bird communication respectively, are keynote and plenary speakers.

Woodbridge’s talk on Saturday, Sept. 27, follows a daylong symposium on “Raptors in Education.” Davis hopes this event will attract teachers to learn more about the opportunities to instill a lifelong passion for wildlife and conservation through birds

of prey in and outside the classroom—a fitting part of the Craighead legacy. A concurrent Saturday workshop on the new book *Raptor Research and Management Techniques* will be held, with many authors of the twenty-five chapters presenting, several from overseas. A half-day symposium on Short-eared Owls and Northern Harriers will be also held during the week.

Sunday field trips include trapping and banding raptors on the Rocky Mountain Front, hawkwatching in the Bridger Mountains, and tours of two nearby National Wildlife Refuges, the National Bison Range, and Montana Waterfowl Foundation.

Missoula is a vibrant town where bald eagles and ospreys are a common sight on the Clark Fork River, flowing next to the conference hotel. All events (as well as fine birdwatching) are within walking distance, including the art show, Craighead film, and Friday picnic. Plan time for birding walks along the riverfront trails, in near-by Greenough Park on Rattlesnake Creek, or from the heights of the “M” trail of Mt. Sentinel above the University campus. Missoula is also mid-way between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, with perfect timing for fall colors and bugling elk. September is a fine month for sunny days, cool mornings and migrating birds.



(Photo by John Jarvis)

A registration circular will be mailed to RRF members in March. For information on the conference and to register online, visit the websites: <http://www.raptorsoftherockies.org/> or <http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/>. Questions? Contact Kate Davis (Local Committee Chair; raptors@montana.com) or Dan Varland (Conference Committee Chair; daniel.varland@rayonier.com) with RRF Conference as the subject.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

2009 RRF ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCOTLAND 29 September to 4 October



The 2009 RRF Annual Conference will be held in Pitlochry, Scotland, hosted by the Scottish Raptor Study Group. This six-day international event includes a full scientific programme, three social events including an evening of traditional Scottish entertainment at a nearby castle, and 11 fieldtrip options to some of the country's premier wildlife hotspots. Space is limited to 300 delegates and places are filling up fast. Delegates from 22 countries have already registered, including those from Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales, USA, Canada, Russia, Kenya, South Africa, Nepal, Japan, Israel, Spain, Italy, Austria,

Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Estonia, Sweden, Finland and Norway. Interested participants are encouraged to visit the conference website for full details:

<http://www.rrfconferencescotland2009.org>

Call for papers: The scientific programme includes general paper sessions and six themed symposia: Scotland; Persecution; Migration & Wintering; *Haliaeetus*; Reintroductions; Conservation Management. Papers/posters on any aspect of raptor biology, including behaviour, ecology, physiology, or conservation, are solicited. Please visit the conference website for detailed information on how to submit an abstract (click 'Programme' then 'Call for Papers'). **Deadline for abstract submission is 1 July 2008.**

Get Involved with RRF!!

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Raptor Research Foundation, please contact an Officer, Board of Directors member, or Committee chair. There are many opportunities with varying levels of time commitments. Elections for Directors and Officers occur every year; throw your name in the hat. Participate on a committee; the RRF committees are always looking for additional members! See the RRF website for committee chairs.

Chair needed for Andersen Student Presentation Award committee

An individual who regularly attends RRF annual meetings is needed to act as chair of this committee. Duties are to identify judges and to coordinate the judging and selection of the student presentation awards at the annual meeting. If interested, contact Clint Boal.

Chair needed for the RRF resolutions committee

RRF seeks a replacement who, through the resolution process, will help express the will of the RRF and its membership. Interested individuals should contact RRF President Lenny Young or Secretary Joan Morrison.

Conference Committee Chairperson Needed: 2009-2013

Dan Varland has served as Conference Committee Chair since 2003 and plans to step down after the 2008 annual meeting in Missoula. RRF is seeking someone to take this position who will serve on the conference committee with Dan through 2008. It is hoped that this individual will serve as chair for five or more years, beginning in 2009 and lasting at least through 2013.

The main responsibilities for the Conference Committee Chair include working with the RRF Board and President to: 1) locate organizations willing and able to host the annual meeting; 2) secure a financial agreement between the host organization(s) and RRF; and 3) work with the local committee to ensure a successful meeting according to RRF annual conference guidelines.

If you are interested in the position or would just like to serve on the committee for a year or two, contact Dan Varland (email: daniel.varland@rayonier.com; phone: 360-538-4582).

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2007 ANNUAL MEETING

By Dan Varland, RRF Conference Committee Chair

2007 Annual Meeting was a joint conference between RRF and the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA). The event was held 12-16 September 2007 at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, Lehigh Valley in Fogelsville, Pennsylvania and was hosted by Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Laurie Goodrich was Local Committee Chairperson and Jim Bednarz was Scientific Program Committee Chairperson. A total of 238 were in attendance, including 89 RRF members, 40 HMANA members and 22 that were members of both organizations.



Pat and Clay Sutton worked together on the keynote address, "Raptors in Time and Space, Cape May Connections". Photo by Dan Varland.



Registration team included HMS staff and volunteers. From left: Janet Modjeska, Joan Ziegler, Linda Ziegler and Susan Wolfe. Photo by Dan Varland.



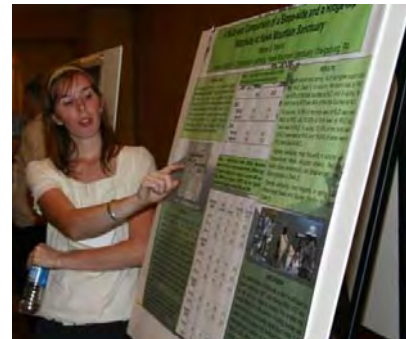
Peter Saenger (left) and Dan Klem of Muhlenberg College Acopian Center for Ornithology hosted an evening tour. Photo by Dan Varland.



Victor Hurley, leader of the Victorian Peregrine Project, traveled the farthest to the meeting, from Victoria, Australia. Photo by Dan Varland.



Hawk Mountain Sanctuary research biologist and intern coordinator Lindsay Zemba (3rd from left) with Hawk Mountain interns (from left): Ana Grau Valenciano, Carlos Gomez Gonzalez, Matias Juhant. Photo by Dan Varland



Megan Melick explains her research at the poster session. Photo by Dan Varland.



HMANA Awards

-- Maurice Broun Awards presented to Laurie Goodrich and Will Weber by HMANA President Iain MacLeod.



Kate Davis (right, in vest) talks with Hawk Mountain Intern Ana Grau Valenciano and others on the trail to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary's South Lookout. Photo by Wayne Nelson.



Wayne Nelson (left) and Dan Varland at South Lookout. Photo by Kate Davis.



Kate Davis and Rob Palmer at South Lookout. Photo by Wayne Nelson.



Mary and Stuart Houston along the trail to South Lookout. Photo by Dan Varland.



Cheryl Dykstra looks for hawks at South Lookout. Photo by Wayne Nelson.



Ian Newton (left) talks about his book *Population Ecology of Raptors* with Drew Panko (right) and Chuck Henny. Photo by Wayne Nelson.



Conference participants at South. Photo by Dan Varland.



Watching a photographer at work. From left: Scott Thomas, Chris Narada, Ed Henckel, Judy Henckel, Pete Bloom, Joel Pagel, unknown, Chris Farmer, and Gary Santolo. Photo by Wayne Nelson.



Peter Saenger makes a point about Maurice Broun's field notes at the Acopian Center for Ornithology. Photo by Dan Varland.



Raptor art show at the Muhlenberg College Science Center. Photo by Dan Varland.

Thanks Jim!!

By Angela Matz, RRF Treasurer

Raptor Research Foundation owes a deep debt of gratitude to our outgoing treasurer, Jim Fitzpatrick. For the last twenty-five or so years, through a succession of presidents and boards, he's quietly and competently taken care of the business of our organization. From paying the simplest of bills to shepherding the establishment and growth of our endowment, Jim has provided services essential to keeping our small but dynamic organization going, and, in doing so, furthered the conservation of raptors and other birds. Jim has devoted an unbelievable amount of time over the last two decades to Raptor Research; he wouldn't add them up, but the thousands of hours he's spent on RRF business are thousands of hours that he didn't spend on looking for birds - a passion which we now hope he enjoys to the fullest. For all of your service, Jim, we (and the birds) extend our deepest gratitude. Thank you.



Jim Fitzpatrick receives a plaque and original painting from RRF President Lenny Young for his more than 20 years of service as RRF Treasurer. Photo by Dan Varland.

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Sarkis Acopian Award

Introduction by Dan Varland, RRF Conference Committee Chair



Ian Newton (center) received the Sarkis Acopian Award for distinguished achievement in Raptor Conservation. Pictured with Ian are Bobby Acopian and Keith Bildstein, Sarkis Acopian Director of Conservation Science at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Photo by Bill Uhrich.

Last September, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary presented Dr. Ian Newton with the Sarkis Acopian Award for distinguished achievement in Raptor Conservation at the joint conference of RRF and the Hawk Migration Association of North America. The Sarkis Acopian Award was given for Ian's lifetime of achievements in research and writing on raptor population ecology. Newton has authored more than 250 papers and a number of books, including the classic *Population Ecology in Raptors* (1979) and, most recently, *Ecology of Bird Migration* (2007). During the conference, Ian presented Hawk Mountain's Rosalie Edge Lecture in Raptor Conservation on his 27-year study of a Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*) population nesting in Scotland.

Ian's acceptance speech made a strong impression on me. I kept thinking about it afterward. A week or so after I arrived home I decided to contact him and see about getting a copy to share with

the membership through *Wingspan*. As luck would have it, he had not tossed it. His hand-written notes were still tucked in his jacket pocket. He graciously typed them up and sent them on to me. Here, with the permission of Dr. Ian Newton and Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, are his remarks.

Acceptance speech of Sarkis Acopian Award, September 2007

Ian Newton

Acopian family, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot tell you what a great and pleasant surprise it was to hear from Keith that I was to be honoured in this way. I feel extremely humbled, as well as thrilled, to be the first recipient of the Sarkis Acopian award. So I would like to start by thanking the Board of Directors of Hawk Mountain for making the decisions they did.

Keith was generous in his comments a few minutes ago. But I know, and you all know, that all of us in the field of raptor research and conservation owe a great debt to those who came before us, and also to our colleagues in the field, as well as to our sponsors: whether government, other funding agencies or private individuals with a shared interest. In my own case, I was greatly influenced by the Craighead brothers, and their book 'Hawks, Owls and Wildlife' which I read – or rather devoured – as a teenager in the nineteen-fifties, and also by the work on Northern Harriers by Fran Hamerstrom, published in the 'Hickey volume'. On the other side of the Atlantic, I owe a great debt to Leslie Brown and Derek Ratcliffe, both of whom became good friends. I have also been fortunate throughout my career in having some excellent colleagues, who gave me the help, encouragement and criticism that every researcher needs.

I would also like to pay tribute this evening to the Raptor Research Foundation. It was an inspirational move of a small number of individuals to form this organisation in the 1960s, for it provided a much needed forum for meetings and discussion among raptor biologists. RRF has been enormously important to me in my own raptor career. Through the Journal, but particularly through the annual conferences, the RRF provided an opportunity to meet, and get to know, others in the field. It helped to foster a community spirit among raptor researchers. I was a regular attendee of RRF meetings in the 1970s and 1980s. For me, this period was a golden age in raptor research, when populations were still sadly depleted by DDT and other organo-chlorines, but when money was available for research. Not a lot, but more than now. It was not unusual then for 800-1000 people to attend these meetings, not only biologists but also falconers and others with a special interest in these birds. And almost everything discovered was new, promoting a sense of purpose and excitement among all involved. In my own field of population ecology, there had only been a handful of relevant studies (including those just mentioned). But at that time most work on birds of prey, it has to be said, was not up to the standard of research on some other kinds of birds. The Federal and State wildlife agencies had shown little or no interest in raptors, putting most of their emphasis on upland game and waterfowl; and academics had studiously avoided these birds for unsurprising reasons. Raptors are difficult to study, living at low densities, and are hard to find in sufficient numbers to provide data for statistical analysis. There is also the problem of accessing the nests, mostly built high in trees or on cliffs. I feel that raptors have always attracted a special brand of biologist: those who enjoy the physical challenge as well as the intellectual one.

It is also good to see how HMANA has developed over the years. I was around at the time it was formed in the mid-1970s, but in the intervening period, it has produced coordinated counts of raptors from many different sites over long periods. These counts are now beginning to be analysed statistically, providing some of the best data we have on long-term regionalised trends in raptor populations. I also find the web site a useful source of information.

It is now more than 15 years since I last attended an RRF meeting, and 25 years since I was last at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, and it is good to see that both still thrive. Long before I went there, I was acquainted with the work at Hawk Mountain, having read the book by Maurice Broun. This pioneering work on raptor migration, starting in 1934, has given us the longest run of counts for any migratory birds anywhere in the world. It is a pleasure to see how Hawk Mountain Sanctuary has developed in recent years, largely with the help of its trustees, particularly the Acopian family. Since I was last there, staff numbers have more than doubled, and the Acopian Centre has been built, providing excellent facilities, and a regional centre for raptor research and conservation which is becoming increasingly known internationally. The intern programme is also impressive, encouraging young people from abroad, and spreading interest and expertise on raptors around the world.

So once again, thank you to Hawk Mountain, to the Sarkis Acopian family, and also to all of you for sitting through my talk this afternoon.

To learn more about what RRF is doing for raptor conservation and for RRF members, check out the minutes from the RRF business meetings. Minutes from the annual business meeting held at the annual conference, as well as minutes from quarterly email agendas, are posted on the RRF website.

News from the RRF Awards and Grants Committee

Submitted by Petra Bohall Wood, Chair

Changes in Chairs of awards committees

Petra Wood, chair of the awards committee since 1993, is stepping down. Clint Boal will become the new chair.

Clint Boal is stepping down after 7 years as chair of the Hamerstrom subcommittee and is being replaced by Brent Bibles.

Patricia Hall, chair of the Koplín subcommittee since 1996, is stepping down and is being replaced by Jim Harper.

Rick Gerhardt, chair of the Anderson subcommittee is stepping down. A replacement is still needed beginning with the 2008 conference.

The 2007 William C. Andersen Student Presentation Award

The Anderson award recognizes students for outstanding presentations and posters at the annual RRF conference. At the 2007 conference, 11 oral presentations and 4 poster presentations were considered jointly. All student presentations and posters were very well done. Recipients were:

First place:

Markus Mika, Barrick Museum of Natural History
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
Population Genetics and Evolutionary History of the
Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*)



Markus Mika receives the Anderson award from Petra Wood. Photo by Dan Varland.

Second place:

Chris Briggs, Dept of Natural Resources & Environmental Science, University of Nevada-Reno
Assortive Mating in Swainson's Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*)

Honorable mention:

Martina Zucchini, Boise State University, Biology Dept
Flight Strategies of Neotropical Migrant Raptors in Panama

Jessi L. Brown, Dept of Natural Resources & Environmental Science, University of Nevada-Reno
Using existing nest box occupancy data to model potential American Kestrel habitat in south-central Florida

Petra Wood chaired the Anderson committee this year. Judges were Jim Bednarz, Cheryl Dykstra, Jim Elliott, Angela Matz, Ruth Tingay, and Petra Wood.

The 2007 Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom Award

Submitted by Clint W. Boal, Hamerstrom Subcommittee Chair

Over a span of 59 years, Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom worked as a team. They had the gift of recognizing and making the most of each others strengths and in so doing, they authored and co-authored over 240 papers and reviews. John Emlen cited the Hamerstroms as on of the closest, most effective research teams in American ornithological history. Ernst Mayr referred to the Hamerstrom's as an American Institution, who through their example and numerous important contributions to scientific knowledge have left a lasting impact on American ornithology, conservation and wildlife management. I doubt there is anyone at this conference that is not familiar with the names of Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom.

The Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom Award was established by the Raptor Research Foundation in 1990 to formally recognize and honour the Hamerstrom's contributions to our understanding of raptor natural history and ecology through their long term ecological studies. The Hamerstrom Award has since been given to recognize individuals for significant research contributions in raptor natural history and ecology.

The Hamerstroms were accomplished scientists in their own rights, but went beyond what they may have accomplished individually through their working as a team. It is in this spirit that, this year, the Hamerstrom Award Committee, consisting of Brent Bibles, Buzz Hull, Marco Restani, and myself, have selected two extraordinarily accomplished scientists to receive the Hamerstrom Award in 2007. These two individuals have each justifiably earned this award, and it is as individual awards that it is presented. However, with the spirit of the Hamerstrom's teamwork in mind, it is especially appropriate that the Awards be presented simultaneously to Mike Kochert and Karen Steenhof.



Karen Steenhof and Mike Kochert receive the Hamerstrom Award from Clint Boal. Photo by Dan Varland.

Over the last 30 years, Karen and Mike have made unparalleled contributions to our understanding of bird of prey ecology and management. They have produced over 75 individual publications and over 50 publications that they have co-authored. These include papers in the most prestigious journals in our field, technical reports, book chapters, two Birds of North America accounts, and articles for the general public. Their work is widely known and widely cited.

As mentors, they are never less than enthusiastic in providing assistance and advice to any who may call upon them. They have been active members of the Raptor Research Foundation since its early day, with Karen taking roles on the Board of Directors and on committees, and Mike serving both on the Board of Directors and as President.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Mike and Karen was guiding the development and protection of the Snake River Bird of Prey Area. They accomplished this largely through having strengths that really complimented each other and facilitated strong field research with quality analytical backing. Through individual and collaborative work, and bringing in other collaborators, research at Snake River Bird of Prey Area progressed from focusing on nest sites and densities to investigations of broad-scale landscape and community ecology. It was through their research and actions that the importance of the Snake River Bird of Prey Area was recognized, and the boundaries were expanded and protection was gained through designation as a National Conservation Area.

Over 30 years Karen and Mike have never lost momentum. Here, at the 2007 meeting of the Raptor Research Foundation, they have moderated 2 sessions, and presented 3 papers and 2 posters. Individually, and as a team, Mike and Karen have truly embodied the spirit of the Hamerstroms and serve as inspirations and role models in our profession. It is my sincere pleasure to present Mike Kochert and Karen Steenhof each with a Raptor Research Foundation's 2007 Hamerstrom Award.

Application instructions and deadlines for RRF grants and awards are available on the RRF website.

News from the RRF EURASIAN COMMITTEE

Submitted by Ruth Tingay, RRF Eurasian Committee Chair

In autumn 2006, the RRF Eurasian Committee proposed the launch of a new initiative called TERMS (The European Raptor Monitoring Scheme). The goal of this project was to oversee and harmonise the collection, regular updating and publication of international population estimates for raptors in Eurasia, using similar protocols to those already well-established in North America. The first TERMS workshop was due to be held at the RRF October 2007 Eurasian Conference in Batumi, Georgia. However, due to the late cancellation of the Batumi conference, the TERMS initiative became temporarily stalled.

In October 2007, the RRF Eurasian Committee was invited to merge the TERMS initiative with a pre-established consortium that was attempting to create a similar initiative, called EURAPMON (European Raptor Monitoring Network), whose main aim was to monitor contaminant levels in raptors as an indicator for ecosystem and human health in Europe. Combining the international expertise of RRF population ecologists with the national expertise of eco-toxicologists from across Europe, EURAPMON has the potential to deliver a broad and effective international monitoring strategy for raptor populations in a region where current monitoring protocols are largely restricted to a national level.

In November 2007, EURAPMON submitted an ambitious funding proposal to the European Social Fund to support the role of a EURAPMON coordinator, a steering committee and several sub-regional workshops. At the time of writing, this funding proposal is still under review.

We owe a large debt of gratitude to new RRF Eurasian Committee members Dr Phil Whitfield (Scotland) and Dr Fabrizio Sergio (Spain), who both spent a considerable amount of time and effort providing expert scientific input into the raptor population monitoring aspects of the funding proposal.

News from the JOURNAL OF RAPTOR RESEARCH

Submitted by Cheryl Dykstra, Editor-in-chief, *Journal of Raptor Research*

Journal of Raptor Research Online -- The editorial staff of the *Journal of Raptor Research* is pleased to announce that JRR is now available online through BioOne.2 (www.Bioone.org). The current and recent issues of the Journal are accessible on this searchable website for anyone with institutional access to BioOne. All RRF members now have free, full-text access to the *Journal of Raptor Research* (2006--current issue) online, even if institutional subscription to BioOne is unavailable.

To access JRR online: Go to the BioOne Web site (www.bioone.org), select Browse from the menu at the top, Current Issues in the drop-down, and navigate to Journal of Raptor Research. You may also use the following direct link to access the full archive:

<http://www.bioone.org/perlserv/?request=get-archive&issn=0892-1016>. When you request access to full text or to download an article, you will be prompted for your UserID and password. Your UserID is RAPT (all caps), 00 (zero zero) followed by your 6-digit membership number, which is located on your address label for *Journal of Raptor Research* or Ornithological Newsletter. Your password is your last name in standard capitalization (example: Bird). A link is provided on the Raptor Research Foundation website for your convenience.

In addition, the entire *Journal of Raptor Research* archive, 1967 – 2005, will soon be available free of charge on the SORA website (Searchable Ornithological Research Archive, <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/>). SORA is an open access electronic journal archive for all the major North American ornithological journals. We anticipate that JRR will be on-line at SORA within 3-4 months.

Special thanks to the Board of Directors of the Raptor Research Foundation for their support, to members who donated issues of JRR, and to Carl Marti for website expertise.

Call for papers on AMERICAN KESTRELS (*Falco sparverius*): The *Journal of Raptor Research* is planning a special issue on the American Kestrel, a species that may be declining in parts of its range. Papers presented at the RRF/HMANA conference special symposium on American Kestrels should be submitted for this issue, but other manuscripts may also be submitted. Authors are invited to send manuscripts on American Kestrels to the Editor of the *Journal of Raptor Research*, at journalofraptorresearch@juno.com with a copy to Dr. David Bird at david.bird@mcgill.ca by **30 June, 2008 (Note extended deadline)**. Manuscripts must meet *Journal of Raptor Research* standards and will be subject to the typical peer-review process. Please notify the Editor of intent to submit.

Call for papers on DISPERSAL: The *Journal of Raptor Research* is planning a special issue on the topic of dispersal in raptors. Invited papers include a discussion of the complexity of dispersal as a multi-step process by Vincenzo Penteriani and María del Mar Delgado, and "Approaches to studies of dispersal behavior in raptors" by Joan Morrison and Petra Wood. Authors are invited to submit manuscripts on this topic to the Editor of the *Journal of Raptor Research*, at journalofraptorresearch@juno.com by **31 May, 2008**. Manuscripts must meet *Journal of Raptor Research* standards and will be subject to the typical peer-review process. Please notify the Editor of intent to submit.

Raptor News

Kèköldi Hawkwatch -- Raptor Migration Monitoring

Submitted by Sebastian Hernandez



Talamanca is one of only three places in the world - together with Veracruz, Mexico, and Eilat, in Israel - where it is possible to observe more than one million raptors migrating in one migration season. For the Bribri indigenous people, raptor migration is part of their mythology; the migrating raptors are dancing gods, the carriers of the seeds of the forest trees. “We owe them the existence and persistence of our forests”, says Mauricio Salazar, one of the local guides. In autumn 2000 the Migratory Raptor Conservation Project began standardized, full-season counts at a single watchsite in the Kèköldi indigenous reserve in southern, Caribbean-slope, Talamanca, Costa Rica. From the beginning of the Migratory Raptors Conservation Project, there has been a strong involvement and participation of young members of the indigenous community, always interested in developing skills that will allow them to take care of their natural resources. Some of them were extensively trained in raptor identification and counting techniques, and are now a fundamental part of our local official counters team.



First month's counts for the 2007 fall raptor migration season at the Kekoldi Indigenous Reserve were over 65,000. October is typically the peak of the season.

Please let us know if you would like to become involved with the Conservation work at the Kekoldi Scientific Center!

-- Sebastian Hernandez, President,
Asociacion Wak Ka Koneke-Kekoldi
Indigenous Reserve,
centrocientifico@kekoldi.org

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Turkey Vulture (<i>Cathartes aura</i>) | 46 |
| Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>) | 85 |
| Swallow-tailed Kite (<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>) | 4290 |
| Mississippi Kite (<i>Ictinia mississippiensis</i>) | 59473 |
| Plumbeus Kite (<i>Ictinia plumbea</i>) | 1109 |
| Hook-billed Kite (<i>Chondrohierax uncinatus</i>) | 1 |
| Northern Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) | 1 |
| Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) | 7 |
| Unidentified kite | 318 |
| Unidentified falcon | 1 |
| TOTAL | 65331 |

“Mozart” and Humans From Six Countries Land in Owl Hall of Fame

Submitted by Karla Kinstler

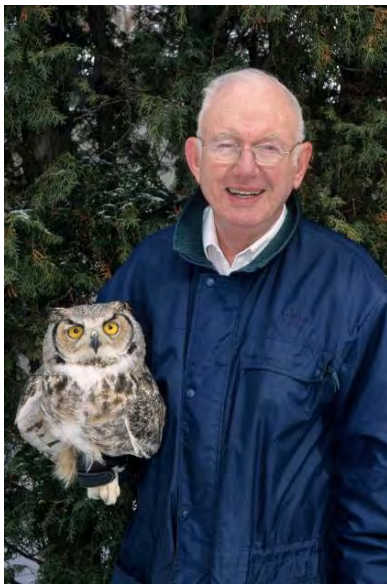
HOUSTON, *Minn.*— Mozart, a 34-year old Eurasian eagle owl from England who has touched the lives of over a million people, was inducted into the World Owl Hall of Fame on February 29, 2008, in Houston, Minnesota as part of the International Festival of Owls. Six people from as many countries on four continents found their place in the hall of fame alongside Mozart. The World Owl Hall of Fame was hatched in 2006 to bring public recognition to the humans and owls who have dedicated a significant portion of their lives to making this world a better place for owls. The Champion of Owls Award is granted to a human and the Lady Gray’l Award, named for a great gray owl from Winnipeg, Canada, is bestowed upon an owl.

Mozart, recipient of the 2008 Lady Gray’l Award, has appeared in a video and several films on owls, as well as “worked” at the National Birds of Prey Centre for most of his life. He was the forerunner of trained owls in the United Kingdom and successfully tried out a new treatment for a yeast infection of the eye. He also patiently allowed scores of blind people to “see” an owl with their hands, which is not something many owls tolerate well. Since he was raised by humans and considers himself to be one, he often courts his adoring public. Dr. Melissa Hughes of the College of Charleston in South Carolina says of Mozart during his few-years’ stay in the United States, “My students were always quite pleased when he favored them with an offer of a dead rat.”



Mozart.

Photo by Linda Wright



Stuart Houston

Photo by Glenn Grambo

The winner of the prestigious Champion of Owls Award was coincidentally the International Festival of Owls’ keynote speaker, Dr. C. Stuart Houston from Saskatoon. Houston has banded more than 10,000 owls of 11 species since 1943, published 51 papers on owls, written reviews for six owl books, and inspired multiple generations of ornithologists, despite being a medical doctor himself. “He always involved other people in his work, from farm lads to grown people,” says Dr. Robert Nero of Winnipeg, a Champion of Owls award winner himself and keeper of Lady Gray’l during her lifetime. “[His wife] Mary Houston is right up there with Stuart. They are a team.” Houston’s Champion of Owls Award will join a long list of other awards on his *curriculum vitae*, including awards from the American Ornithologists’ Union, Canadian Nature Federation, Raptor Research Foundation, and being named an Officer of the Order of Canada, among others.

Due to the strong suite of nominations for the Champion of Owls Award, the Global Owl Project is sponsoring a new Special Achievement Award for humans within the hall of fame for the first time this year. “Developing a Special Achievement Award category was not only necessary, it was easy. Just look what the five 2008 award winners have done,” comments David H. Johnson, Director of the Global Owl Project. Special Achievement Awards were presented to the following individuals:

- Richard Clark, Ph.D. (USA) served as the senior advisor for the Working Bibliography of Owls of the World, which compiled 6,590 scientific citations and required 11 staff years of effort. He also served as editor of the 1987 Northern Forest Owl Symposium proceedings and has published numerous scientific papers on owls.
- Johan de Jong (The Netherlands) has led the Dutch Barn Owl Working Group since its inception in 1986. The group has successfully restored the country's Barn Owl population, with de Jong personally banding more than 10,000 owls. He also chaired the World Owl Conference planning committee in 2007 and created the annual Dutch National Owl Day.
- Paul Muriithi Kibuthu (Kenya) grew up in a culture that stoned owls to death whenever they were seen, but overcame those beliefs by personally observing owls. He now guides tourists to Mackinder's eagle owls, sharing his guiding income with local farmers who own the property surrounding the owl territories, thus changing local attitudes toward owls to a positive one. He also conducts research on the Mackinder's eagle owl.
- Deane Lewis (Australia) found a shortage of owl information on the internet in 1997 when he was researching them for an enormous tattoo to go on his back. He went on to develop www.owlpages.com, the world's mecca of owl information, visited by over 3,000 people from school children to biologists every day.
- Jemima Parry-Jones MBE (England) has published two books and a video on her pioneering techniques for training and care of captive owls and has reached over a million people with her education efforts (which include Mozart, the Lady Gray'l Award winner.) She also helped to develop and enforce captive-care regulations in England.

The 2008 World Owl Hall of Fame is sponsored by the World Owl Trust, Global Owl Project, Center for Biological Diversity, Owl Research Institute, Raptor Education Group, Inc., Hancock House Publishers, Gray Owl Fund, and owlstuff.com. For additional information contact Karla Kinstler, World Owl Hall of Fame and International Festival of Owls Coordinator, (507) 896-4668 or (507) 896-3436, nature@acegroup.cc

Annual Bald Eagle Survey Yields Important Results

Submitted by Wade Eakle

A key annual event in the recovery of bald eagle populations is entering its 30th year this week as hundreds of observers nationwide take part in the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. Observers from federal, state and local agencies, as well as conservation groups and private citizens, will participate in the survey by counting eagles along standard routes from January 2-16. The purpose of the survey is to monitor the status of wintering populations of bald eagles in the contiguous United States by estimating national and regional count trends, said Wade Eakle, the national survey coordinator and an ecologist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This is the first time the USACE is coordinating the survey.

This week, the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) also announces results of a new analysis using the count data from 1986 through 2005. The analysis, based on 178,896 observations of wintering eagles during 8,674 surveys of 746 routes in 43 states, shows counts of wintering bald eagles increasing nationwide at a rate of 1.7% per year. Increases in counts over the 20-year period were

highest in the northeast portion of the United States, with a 6% increase each year. In contrast, counts in the southwest portion decreased 1.2% each year over 20 years. Seventy-six percent of survey routes north of 40 degrees latitude had increasing count trends, but only 50% of routes south of 40 degrees latitude showed increasing trends. Former survey coordinator and USGS scientist Karen Steenhof explains, that the survey is a unique source of long-term, baseline data and is especially useful in monitoring bald eagles following their removal from the U.S. Endangered Species List. The midwinter survey provides information on both breeding and nonbreeding segments of the population at a potentially limiting time of the year. The trends detected with the most recent analysis could be due to many factors, said Steenhof who led the analysis. For example the increases in the north may be due to increasingly warmer winters or they may reflect reversal of some of the declines experienced when DDT was used. Periodic analyses of the counts are a key part of the midwinter survey, said Eakle. This could help us detect effects of climate change or habitat loss on bald eagles.

The new results are available on an updated website (<http://ocid.nacse.org/nbii/eagles/>) developed by the Northwest Alliance for Computational Science & Engineering based at Oregon State University, with funding from the National Biological Information Infrastructure. Users can retrieve actual count data used in the analysis as well as summary information for individual survey routes. They also can obtain estimates of count trends for different regions and states.

The National Wildlife Federation began the survey in 1979, and the USGS organized and coordinated it from 1997 to 2007. In 2007, the USGS established a partnership with the USACE to maintain the long-term, national coordination of the survey, data analysis, and reporting. The transition has been seamless due to decades of refining the process, according to Eakle. Questions about the survey itself should be addressed to Eakle. Questions about the trend analysis should be addressed to Steenhof.

Steenhof, 208-426-5206, karen_steenhof@usgs.gov

Wade Eakle, 415-503-6577, Wade.L.Eakle@usace.army.mil

News Items from the Peregrine Fund

Submitted by Susan Whaley

The Peregrine Fund to hold conference on lead ammunition – The conference will explore the effects on wildlife and humans of lead poisoning from lead ammunition May 12-15, 2008, in Boise, Idaho. The goal of the conference, “Ingestion of Spent Lead Ammunition: Implications for Wildlife and Humans,” is to promote a better understanding among biologists, scientists, health professionals, hunter groups and sporting industries of lead bullets as a source of contamination.

Recent attention has been sharply focused on endangered California Condors, scavengers that become ill or die of lead poisoning after feeding on carcasses and gut piles of deer killed by hunters. Research shows the birds ingest lead from bullets that fragment and leave hundreds of tiny pieces of lead several inches from the entry point in animal tissue. Is the condor an indicator of danger to humans as well as wildlife? The possibility that humans also ingest these lead fragments is currently being investigated and the results will be discussed at the conference. No

amount of lead is considered safe, especially in fetuses, babies and children, whose intellectual and behavioral development may be impaired. For more information about the conference, see our website at: http://www.peregrinefund.org/Lead_conference/default.htm

Working with hunters -- Three years ago, The Peregrine Fund and Arizona Game and Fish Department began working cooperatively to encourage hunters in condor territory to voluntarily switch to copper bullets, which are less likely to fragment. So far this year, 80 percent of hunters have taken part in the non-lead ammo program, up from 60 percent in 2006. Arizona hunters' acceptance of non-lead ammunition has been encouraging. Generally they are enthusiastic about condor restoration. A questionnaire sent by the Arizona Game and Fish Department revealed that 90 percent who used non-lead bullets regarded them as good as or superior to lead ammunition. More information about the Arizona Game and Fish Department's lead reduction program is available at: http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/california_condor_lead.shtml In California, where a second, geographically separate population of condors is being established, a ban on lead bullets in condor territory was approved by the California Legislature and signed by the governor in October 2007.

Study shows high lead levels in ravens during hunting season – Ravens in the Greater Yellowstone area have greatly elevated levels of lead in their blood during the hunting season, according to a report in the January edition of *The Journal of Wildlife Management*. The ravens became poisoned with lead after scavenging on gut piles left in the field by hunters who shot deer, elk and other big game with lead-based ammunition, said researcher and author Derek Craighead, executive director of Craighead Beringia South, a non-profit science and education organization in Kelly, Wyo. The report is co-authored by Bryan Bedrosian, a biologist with Craighead Beringia South. "The implications of our study are that lead contamination should be suspect in all species, including humans, that feed on hunter-killed animals," Craighead said. "Fortunately, using non-lead bullets is one relatively easy solution to curb this form of lead contamination." Craighead has unpublished data showing an even worse problem with Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles, whose blood lead levels can reach fatal levels. Craighead will present this information at the conference sponsored by The Peregrine Fund in May.

The Peregrine Fund expects to release the results of its own continuing studies on lead in hunter-killed animals at the conference. Research shows that lead bullets fragment into dozens or hundreds of tiny pieces that disperse through hunted animals when they are shot. These tiny particles can be ingested when the animal is consumed. Craighead's team tested common raven blood lead levels during a four-year period during and after the elk-hunting seasons in Jackson Hole, Wyo. The median blood lead level in ravens (10.2 micrograms per deciliter) was more than five times higher during the hunting season than during the non-hunting season, according to the report. The median blood lead level also was five times higher than what would be regarded as safe for humans (2 micrograms per deciliter), the authors said. One microgram per deciliter equals 10 parts per billion.

The effect of lead poisoning in animals is well-documented, Craighead said. Animals that don't die of lead poisoning can experience a variety of mental and physical ailments, including an inability to compete well for food, more collisions with power lines and other obstructions, anemia, decreased weight and muscle mass, higher blood pressure, lower bone density and paralysis of the nervous system. The implications of lead poisoning in wildlife are evident in California Condors, an endangered species that The Peregrine Fund is helping to recover. Because

condors eat only carrion, they often feed on game animals shot by hunters or the gut piles that remain after the animal's internal organs are removed and left behind. Currently every condor in the wild must be captured at least once a year and tested for blood lead levels. Many require treatment. In 2007 five condors in Arizona died, all but one attributed to lead poisoning.

In California, where a geographically separate population of condors is being established, a ban on lead bullets in condor territory was approved by the California Legislature and signed by the governor in October 2007. In December, the California Fish and Game Commission adopted hunting rules to further safeguard condors from the effects of exposure to lead. Also in December, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation announced that its officers and rangers would switch to "green ammo" from lead-based ammunition during training to reduce the environmental impact of lead at firing ranges. Grand Teton National Park currently is considering a change in its regulations on the use of lead bullets in the elk reduction program that occurs in the park each fall. In 1991 the federal Fish and Wildlife Service banned lead shot for waterfowl to address a die-off of ducks, geese and other water-based game birds that ingested the toxin. Lead bullets are legal for hunting upland birds and mammals, such as deer and elk, and for target practice and trap shooting. In Yellowstone Park, where hunting is prohibited, anglers cannot use lead sinkers and anchors when fishing within park boundaries.



Condor release scheduled March 15 in Arizona – Four California Condors will be released to the wild in the Vermilion Cliffs Monument in northern Arizona at 11 a.m., Saturday, March 15. The public may observe the release from a viewing area where spotting scopes will be set up and experts will be available to answer questions. The young birds were bred and hatched in captivity at the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and BRIEF NEWS ITEMS

Announcements

Address change -- The address for HawkWatch International has changed to 2240 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, Utah 84106. No staff phone or email changes accompany the address change. - Jeff Smith

Kittatinny-Shawangunk National Raptor Migration Corridor -- The Center for Biological Diversity is now partnering in the effort to secure federal designation of a Kittatinny-Shawangunk National Raptor Migration Corridor. David Johnson, who directs the CBD's Global Owl Project, is the contact person for that organization's important collaboration. In addition, we are currently developing a small working group of key non-profit organizations to move the effort forward to success. These key organizations include the Center for Biological Diversity, Hawk Mountain

Sanctuary Assn., The Nature Conservancy in New Jersey, and the Wildlife Information Center, Inc. We plan on holding our first meeting soon at the Acopian Center for Conservation Learning at Hawk Mountain. There also is solid interest in this raptor corridor effort on the part of some biologists in the National Park Service.

As of today, 125 endorsement letters have been received from organizations, companies, and persons worldwide and more are coming. If you belong to an organization, company, agency, or are simply a private individual and have not yet sent an endorsement letter please do so as soon as possible. This is a unique raptor migration corridor effort. It coincides very nicely with a growing movement within the USA, and abroad, to create national migration corridors for terrestrial mammals and cetaceans, and now raptors and other birds, that are long distance migrants. This is innovative 21st century wildlife conservation, and you can be an important part of it. Please send endorsement letters to me at the postal mailing address below. Do not make it longer than one side of a letterhead and be sure to sign and date it. Thanks very much.

Donald S. Heintzelman

6345 Ridge Road, Apt. 2, Zionsville, PA 18092 USA dons@enter.net

The Peregrine Fund has Won a Grant from Zoo Boise to Help the Andean Condor in Ecuador -- Zoo Boise recently awarded a \$16,025 grant to The Peregrine Fund for a project to study Andean Condors, whose numbers are declining in Ecuador, Colombia and other regions in the northern Andes Mountains. The grant money raised by Zoo Boise came from 25 cents of every zoo admission and a portion of each membership. No more than 65 condors are believed to be living wild in this region. Historically, the species was widespread but after 1970 it declined in range and abundance, probably due to human persecution, insufficient food supplies and loss of habitat. The grant will be used to:

- Conduct the first systematic census of condors in the region.
- Determine group and family dynamics in the population.
- Identify main threats to survival.
- Train two Ecuadorian university students in census and ecological monitoring techniques.

Assistance Requested

Unique Feather Patterns: I am seeking information on studies which have used details of color patterns in feathers (normally these would be molted feathers) to identify raptors (normally these would be breeding adults) from year to year. For an example of the technique, see Ian Newton's 1986 book, *The Sparrowhawk*, Figure 8. Please contact David H. Ellis; dcellis@theriver.com or HC 1 Box 4420, Oracle, AR 85623

Workshops

RAPTOR WORKSHOP: Two 3-day workshops entitled "*Introduction to Raptor Field Techniques*" will be offered in Stevens Point, Wisconsin by Eugene Jacobs of the Linwood Springs Research Station and Loren Ayers of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Sessions are scheduled for **11-13 and 18-20 June 2007**. Receive first hand experience

working with live raptors: capturing, handling and banding techniques, broadcast call surveys, tree climbing and rappelling, video surveillance and more. This course can be taken for credit through the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Registration is \$350 and space is limited so call early. For more information and a registration form visit <http://www.RaptorResearch.com>

For Sale

RRF Publications, Pins, and Decals – Back issues of *The Journal of Raptor Research* (TJRR) Vol. 1-30, all Raptor Research Reports, and RRF pins and decals may be purchased directly from RRF (Jim Fitzpatrick, Carpenter St., Croix Valley Nature Center, 12805 St. Croix Trail S, Hastings, MN 55033, USA; email: jim@carpenternaturecenter.org). Some older issues are not available. See <http://biology.boisestate.edu/raptor/JRR.htm> for details and prices. Orders for 4 or more issues receive a 30% discount. Vol. 31+ of TJRR may be purchased from Ornithological Societies of North America (5400 Bosque Blvd, Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710, USA; phone: 1-254-399-9636; email: business@osnabirds.org; web: <http://www.osnabirds.org>).

Raptor Books and Publications



Edited by David M. Bird and Keith L. Bildstein,
Hancock House Publishers, Blaine, Washington USA
8.5" x 11", softcover, 464 pages,
> 66 photos, > 47 illustrations
\$70. Available from many natural history booksellers.
Order from Hancock House online at
www.hancockhouse.com. Until April 1, RRF members
will receive a 10% discount if they identify themselves
as RRF members in the comments field of the Hancock
House website order form.

Raptor Research and Management Techniques (2007)
is the much anticipated and thoroughly updated
version of the popular but long out of print
Raptor Management Techniques Manual (1987).

Produced by the Raptor Research Foundation, this is a comprehensive work designed for use by raptor researchers and conservationists and natural resource managers around the world. Each chapter has been authored by experts in the field and has undergone rigorous review. Not an all-inclusive manual or detailed "how-to" book, this new work reflects the state of the art in raptor research, with up-to-date information on various field and laboratory techniques and management tools. Beginning with a general review of the field of raptor research, it includes insights into field-study techniques, information on the energetics, physiology, pathology, and toxicology of raptors; it covers reduction of management and researcher disturbance, mitigation, population monitoring and migration watchsites, captive breeding, the augmentation of wild populations, and rehabilitation, and concludes with chapters on public education and legal considerations. *Raptor*

Research and Management Techniques will enhance standardization in the field, speed improvement in techniques and help those who study and manage birds to better protect them.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CALIFORNIA BURROWING OWL SYMPOSIUM, edited by J.H. Barclay, K.W. Hunting, J.L. Lincer, J. Linthicum, and T.A. Roberts (vii + 197 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9800011-0-5) has been published as the premiere volume of **Bird Populations Monographs (No.1)** by The Institute for Bird Populations and Albion Environmental, Inc. Price \$25 U.S. (includes tax and shipping). Contains 20 papers about burrowing owl regional status, research, management, policy, and reference information (a bibliography of the Burrowing Owl in California) from the two-day California Burrowing Owl Symposium held in Sacramento, CA during November 2003. Visit www.albionenvironmental.com to view the table of contents and to order or can be ordered by calling (831) 469-9128 or emailing info@albionenvironmental.com. **Bird Populations Monographs**, published by The Institute for Bird Populations, is an occasional journal of dynamic avian demography and biogeography that publishes major works, collections of papers, and proceedings of symposia focused on changes in the numbers, distribution, and ecology of bird populations. Authors interested in publishing a monograph in this series should contact David G. Ainley, Editor, *Bird Populations*, at dainley@penguinscience.com. Editors interested in publishing the proceedings of a symposium or other collection of papers in this series should contact David F. DeSante, Managing Editor, *Bird Populations Monographs*, at d-desante@birdpop.org.

Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies – Publication Announcement

The Biodiversity Centre for Wildlife Studies (BCFWS), a non-profit, charitable organization based in Victoria, British Columbia, was established on 31 August 2004. The formation of BCFWS was founded on the recognition that no registered society or government agency in British Columbia was presently compiling and archiving historical and current information on all wildlife in the province. By recognizing the need for a centralized data and information repository to assist with wildlife conservation and management needs, BCFWS was formed to fulfill this need by way of a comprehensive collection of wildlife information. A significant product of BCFWS is *Wildlife Afield*, the society's bi-annual journal that focuses on the natural history, conservation, and management of wildlife in the province. Since 2004, BCFWS has published 17 articles in *Wildlife Afield* that RRF members may find useful. Some of the species covered include: Great Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, and American Kestrel. A 20-page treatise on the status of Turkey Vulture in British Columbia was published in 2005. To view articles, or to obtain hardcopies of the journal, please visit the BCFWS website at www.wildlifebc.org.

RECENT THESES ON RAPTORS

Seaton, R. 2007. Ecological requirements of the New Zealand falcon (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) in plantation forests. Ph.D. dissertation, Massey University, Palmerston North, 126pp.

Commercial pine plantations made up of exotic tree species are increasingly recognised as habitats that can contribute significantly to the conservation of indigenous biodiversity in New Zealand. Encouraging this biodiversity by employing sympathetic forestry management techniques not only offers benefits for indigenous flora and fauna but can also be economically advantageous for the forestry industry. The New Zealand falcon (*Falco novaeseelandiae*) or Karearea, is a threatened species, endemic to the islands of New Zealand, that has recently been discovered breeding in pine plantations. This research determines the ecological requirements of New Zealand falcons in this habitat, enabling recommendations for sympathetic forestry management to be made.

Plantation forests that create a mosaic of pine stand ages across a plantation, offer suitable habitat for breeding New Zealand falcons by providing abundant nest sites, promoting high abundances of avian prey and creating favourable conditions for hunting. The diet of falcons within pine forests consisted primarily of birds, of which the majority were exotic passerines. Prey abundances were highest along pine stand edges. Both sexes preferentially hunted along pine stand edges between stands less than four years old and stands more than 20 years old. Pairs also preferentially nested along these borders, particularly within and along the edges of pine stands less than two years old. Within pine stands, nest sites were always located on the ground. Introduced predators and some forestry operations negatively affected breeding success. Nevertheless, productivity was higher than recorded for other habitats and female falcons were recorded successfully breeding in their first year for the first time. High prey densities and availabilities are suggested as the primary explanation for this. The extent of juvenile dispersal strongly suggests that pine plantations supplement populations in surrounding areas where falcons are in decline. This research demonstrates that changes to the existing forestry operational practices can influence the success of the breeding population. This research establishes that if commercial pine plantations are suitably managed, they can support extremely high falcon densities. Plantation forests therefore have a significant role to play in the future conservation of this species.

The U.S. Geological Survey's Richard R. Olendorff Memorial Library greatly appreciates receiving a copy of each thesis abstracted in *Wingspan*. This allows the Library to make theses available to scientists and managers worldwide through its Raptor Information System (RIS, see *Wingspan* 7(1):16). Please send theses to: Olendorff Memorial Library, U.S. Geological Survey, Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, Snake River Field Station, 970 Lusk Street, Boise, ID 83706, USA.

Raptor Information System (RIS) User Survey

Submitted by Susan Toussaint

Thank you to everyone who participated in our user survey! One hundred sixty six responses were received over a six-month period. Satisfaction with the database was 82% overall compared with 7% that were dissatisfied (11% had no opinion). The RIS was used 70% for research, 20% for resource management and 10% for education. Approximately 48% said that they use the database at least monthly and another 30% used it at least once a year. Users identified themselves as affiliated with federal agencies 20%, state agencies 7%, private organizations 23%, university/colleges 23%, as private individuals 16%, and miscellaneous or no answer 11%.

The survey asked how the user utilizes the database. Most said that they use it to do a literature search on a topic for a research article or report or for management issues such as environmental

assessments, environmental impact statements or migratory bird regulations. It is used to check for citations for articles, reports, theses and dissertations. What users like the best about the RIS is its scope of raptor literature. The RIS includes an extensive list of citations not available in other online databases. Other positive features mentioned are its free accessibility on the Internet and that it is regularly updated with current literature. Many thought that the search interface is quick and easy to use.

Suggestions to improve the database are to add links to pdfs of full text documents or at least to abstracts. We will begin to add links to non-copyrighted documents as we identify them. We will also expand the collection's scope to include more foreign and regional ornithological journals. Some suggestions related to the design of the RIS search interface and we will consider them for our next database upgrade. The information from the survey will help improve our services to the raptor community and will determine the continued growth of the database. We welcome feedback anytime at fresc_library@usgs.gov

Susan Toussaint, Librarian
Richard R. Olendorff Memorial Library
USGS/Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center

Memorials to RRF Members

PAUL F. SPRINGER

Born in Chicago, 25 April 1922, Paul grew up in nearby La Grange, Illinois. He attended the Universities of Illinois and Wisconsin, then obtained his Ph.D. in Wildlife Conservation from Cornell University. Beginning in 1947, he worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Maryland, North Dakota and California and became a leading authority on the Aleutian Canada Goose. He discovered their staging grounds, and was part of the recovery team that rebuilt their population from about 800 in 1975 to about 100,000, allowing their removal from the Endangered Species List. In charge of the Wildlife Research Field Station near Arcata, CA (affiliated with Humboldt State University), he retired in 1984, but kept up his memberships in the AOU and RRF to the end. He died of pulmonary fibrosis on 2 May 2007. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Virginia, four sons and five grandchildren. -- Stu Houston



JEFF WATSON

Long-term RRF member and one of Britain's leading ornithologists, Dr Jeff Watson died of cancer at his home in the Scottish Highlands in September 2007, aged 54. He had recently been awarded the conservation medal by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in recognition of his outstanding work in nature conservation.

Raised in Galloway, south-west Scotland, Jeff was inspired by his father, bird artist and ornithologist Donald Watson, who wrote the Poyser monograph *The Hen Harrier* (1977). He attended the local primary school at Dalry, followed by Edinburgh Academy, and then went to Aberdeen University to take a degree in zoology, graduating in 1974. Moving to the Seychelles, he spent four years researching the Seychelles kestrel, for which he was awarded his doctorate by Aberdeen University in 1977. On his return to Britain, he worked for a short time as development officer with the Scottish Wildlife Trust. In 1981 he landed a dream job with the Nature Conservancy Council researching golden eagles, and in particular the impacts of land uses such as forestry, farming and red deer management on these birds. This became a pioneering study of golden eagles in nine ecological regions, which set the highest of standards for understanding the effects of land uses on raptors and led to the development of a conservation framework for this species. Jeff is probably best known amongst eagle biologists for his Poyser monograph *The Golden Eagle* (1997).

During the last 10 years, he was Director of Operations for the government's nature and conservation advisory body, Scottish Natural Heritage. He had lead responsibility for the designation, conservation and management of Scotland's special protection and conservation areas. He led the programme that overhauled Scotland's nature reserves and was in charge of an ambitious scheme monitoring habitats, species and landforms. The recent series of protected areas classified for raptors are an especially fine legacy. He also worked closely with the Scottish Executive in support of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, giving rise to wildlife conservation legislation which has set new standards for the rest of Europe. Jeff was particularly pleased that the RRF 2009 annual conference was to be held in his home country of Scotland and he worked tirelessly, right up to his final week, to help secure sponsorship funding for this event.

He is greatly missed. -- Ruth Tingay



Dr Jeff Watson
conservationist & ornithologist
born December 24 1952
died September 19 2007.

Photo legend: L-R - Mike McGrady (Natural Research), Dominic Morrough-Bernard (Atholl Estate) and Jeff Watson collecting DNA and fitting a satellite tag to a young golden eagle in Scotland, June 2007. Photo by Wendy Mattingley.

Raptor Research Foundation, Inc. CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominations are open for the **2008 RRF Election**

1. Officers:

- President-elect:** After one year as President-Elect, the incumbent shall assume the Presidency, and serve a 2-year term, beginning at the end of the Annual Meeting in 2009.
Vice president: Serves a 2-year term, beginning at the end of the Annual Meeting in 2008.

2. Directors: serve a three year term beginning on January 1, 2009.

- North American director #3 (must be a resident of North America)
 Eurasian director (must be a resident of Europe or Asia)
 Director at large #3 (no geographic restrictions)
 Director at large #6 (no geographic restrictions)

Qualifications for each position:

- Current regular, honorary or life member
- Resident of the representative geographical district (if applicable)
- Communicate and vote on official business by email
- Attendance at the annual board meeting during the annual conferences (President and Vice President), and as often as possible during the term (Directors)

Terms and duties of Directors are described in the bylaws at the RRF website:

<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/>

Please note: If you are nominating someone other than yourself, please receive the candidate's approval before you submit their name.

Please send all nominations, including contact information for each nominee to Carol McIntyre, nominations committee chairman, online at Carol_McIntyre@nps.gov or by mail: National Park Service, 4175 Geist Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709 USA by **1 May 2008**. Candidates interested in these positions need to submit a short summary (250 words) describing their background, RRF affiliation and the primary reasons that they want to serve as a RRF officer or director. To be included on the ballot, the candidate must submit a summary for the position to the Nomination Committee Chairman, Carol McIntyre, by **May 15, 2008**.



WINGSPAN

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