

Raptor Research Foundation 2008 Annual Conference

The Legacy Lives On—A Tribute to John and Frank Craighead

Missoula, Montana
September 24-28, 2008

Conference Report

Prepared by: University of Montana Continuing Education, Technical Assistance and Training Center (UM-TATC)—Bernadette Bannister, Debbra Graham, April Leach with contributions from Dan Varland, Kate Davis, and Erick Greene.

Host: Raptors of the Rockies (ROTR)

Co-Host: The University of Montana Division of Biological Sciences and the Continuing Education, Technical Assistance and Training Center

Location: Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park, Missoula, Montana

Number Attendees: Total = 177
Raptor Research Foundation (RRF) members = 106
Students = 39
Saturday only = 5

Meeting Planning Organization: The University of Montana, Continuing Education, Technical Assistance and Training Center, **Contact:** Debbra Graham

LOCAL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Local Committee

Kate Davis, *Local Committee Chair*

Dan Varland, *RRF Conference Committee Chair*

Deborah Richie Oberbillig

Erick Greene, *University of Montana, Division of Biological Sciences*

Dan Pletscher, *University of Montana, Wildlife Biology Program*

Bernadette Bannister (Director), Debbra Graham, Mikel Robinson, Laura Churchman, Chelsea Thompson, April Leach, *University of Montana, Continuing Education, Technical Assistance and Training Center (UM-TATC)*

Other Volunteers:

Victoria Allen, Whitney Bergum, Bo Crees, Boo Curry, Brittany Dorman, Matt Gould, Garrett MacDonald, Winslow Hansen, Tamara McGinley, Darin Newton, Amanda Ormesher, Ann Piersall, Ahva Potticary, Tom Rogers, David Reynolds, Adam Shreading, John Rohrback, Kristina Smucker, Rebecca Smith, Luke Stappler, and Prairie Wolfe.

Scientific Program Committee

Jim Bednarz, *Chair*

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Special Presentations

Keynote Address: *Raptors, Maniraptoran Dinosaurs, and the Evolution of Flight*
Dr. Ken Dial, The University of Montana (Thursday a.m.)

Life With an Indian Prince film
The Craighheads at the Missoula Children's Theatre (Thursday p.m.)

Raptors—From a Different Point of View
Dr. Erick Greene, The University of Montana (Thursday a.m.)

Swainson's Hawks, Brian Woodridge (Saturday p.m.)

Presentation on the Craighhead Legacy and RRF Awards, (Saturday p.m.)

Evening Workshops

Eagles of the World
William Clark, Professional Ornithologist and Author (Wednesday p.m.)

Raptor Photography
Rob Palmer (Friday p.m.)

Saturday Symposium

Raptor Research and Management Techniques, Saturday September 27th, 8:00 a.m. – 3:50 p.m.,
Convened by Dan Varland

Papers

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, September 25-27

Special Symposiums

Status and Conservation of Short-eared Owls (Friday a.m.), Convened by Geoffrey Holroyd

PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Promotion for the conference began one year prior. The host, Kate Davis of Raptors of the Rockies, began promoting the 2008 conference in the fall of 2007 in her newsletter and on her website. The Save-the-Date announcements designed by UM-TATC were sent out via e-mail through Dan Varland, Raptor Research Foundation. Erick Green and UM-TATC sent news releases to the local press (Lee Newspapers) and the university system (University Relations) to promote the conference to students and faculty.

Kate Davis approached local businesses and sought their assistance in promoting the conference locally. Erick Green and Kate Davis approached NPR to feature the conference on local shows, while UM-TATC promoted the conference on their website and to their contacts.

Conference Registration Circular

Kate Davis and Dan Varland prepared the registration circular and negotiated a discount with FedEx Kinko's for printing. Print costs came to \$519 for 850 copies, which were mailed April 4, 2008, to potential conference attendees based on a mailing list supplied by RRF and supplemented by Kate Davis.

Program Book

Kate Davis and Deborah Richie Oberbillig coordinated production of the program booklet. Two hundred (200) booklets were printed. Participants and volunteers were given a program upon registering. Additional program covers were printed at no charge and were available to participants.

SPONSORS AND VENDORS

The minimum sponsorship goal for the conference was set at \$11,600, which would enable RRF to cover a portion of their anticipated conference expenses and conference planning expenses. Actual monetary and in-kind sponsorships greatly exceeded this goal and were in excess of \$21,000. Sponsorship of \$9,205 was raised specifically under the RRF Contract for budgeted conference expenses. The diligence and perseverance of the Planning Team Members (listed below) to raise sponsorship and in-kind donations allowed both ROTR and RRF to split \$9,414 after all expenses were paid. Please note, some sponsorship money received was earmarked for specific expenses (i.e. banquet enhancement, picnic band, conference planning).

Kate Davis, Bernadette Bannister, and Erick Greene took primary responsibility for the recruitment of sponsors and in-kind donations. Kate Davis obtained sponsorships from:

- ◆ Bureau of Land Management
- ◆ Raptors of the Rockies, *Kate Davis, Founder and Executive Director*
- ◆ US Fish & Wildlife Services
- ◆ Kat Imhoff
- ◆ Frank and Marilyn Magid
- ◆ Missoula Bone and Joint
- ◆ Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- ◆ Plum Creek Timber Company
- ◆ Rocky Mountain Eye Center
- ◆ The Wallace Foundation
- ◆ Other private individuals

Erick Greene solicited and obtained sponsorships through The University of Montana from the following:

- ◆ The University of Montana, Division of Biological Sciences, *Dean Charles Janson*
- ◆ The University of Montana, College of Forestry & Conservation, *Dean Perry Brown*
- ◆ The University of Montana, Research, *Vice President Dan Dwyer*
- ◆ The University of Montana, Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit
- ◆ The University of Montana, Research, *Provost Royce Engstrom*

Bernadette Bannister solicited and obtained a sponsorship from the Engelhard Foundation and other private individuals.

Sponsors were acknowledged in the conference program booklet and on the conference website.

In-kind sponsorships included the following:

- ◆ Payroll contribution from UM-TATC/ Bernadette Bannister and payroll contribution of UM-TATC staff for contract coordination, negotiations, research, and conference planning
- ◆ \$500 for a UM-TATC donation of LCD projector and laptop used for RRF board meeting and conference presentations
- ◆ \$1,000+ from Kate Davis for gifts to speakers
- ◆ \$500+ from Keynote Speaker, Brian Woodbridge (declined fee and travel reimbursement)
- ◆ \$500+ from Dept. of Biology/Erick Greene for 16 poster boards and \$140 for the delivery and moving of the poster boards and equipment
- ◆ \$1,600 for Dept. of Biology/Erick Greene's donation of four LCD projectors
- ◆ \$800 for 4 laptop computers
- ◆ \$100 for 2 speaker sound systems
- ◆ Numerous local Missoula communications, radio, print, and TV.

In addition, 26 volunteers recruited by Erick Greene contributed a minimum of 291 hours, for which no value was attributed. No value was likewise attributed to the donated silent auction items. Finally, the Missoula Center for the Performing Arts reduced the rental fee for the theatre, as an equivalent in-kind donation of \$500. An ROTR Board Member donated a keg of beer and Kate Davis received wine donations from local Missoula businesses.

Vendors were invited to use conference exposure as an opportunity to showcase their goods or services to conference participants. Vendor tables were set up in the atrium of the Holiday Inn, which gave participating vendors excellent exposure in the well-traveled space throughout the conference. A total of eight vendors registered and attended:

- ◆ Anne Iverson, Mountain Press Publishing Co.
- ◆ Heather Baer, Wildlife Computers
- ◆ Jack Barclay, Albion Environmental, Inc.
- ◆ Kent Carnie, Archives of American Falconry of the Peregrine Fund
- ◆ Kyla Zaret, Buteo Books
- ◆ Nick Dunlop, Nick Dunlop Photography
- ◆ Rob Palmer, Rob Palmer Photography
- ◆ Sean Walls, Biotrack Ltd.

Two vendors (Sean Walls and Kent Carnie) had vendor fees waived. Vendor fees totaled \$875. The costs attributed to providing tables and space to the vendors was budgeted for \$35 per table, per vendor; however, UM-TATC negotiated with the hotel to have these fees waived including no additional charge for the atrium space.

REGISTRATION

The goal was to cover all conference costs with registration fees and sponsorships. The registration fee structure was based upon a collaborative decision of the Planning Team. An income analysis was prepared by Debbra Graham, which took into account the number of registrants for past conferences and the anticipated income and approved expenses for this year's conference. There were three deadlines for registration, before July 15, before August 15 and after August 15. RRF members received a discount, as did students.

The registration fee covered admission to all scientific sessions, a program booklet, local Missoula information, a tote bag and mug (designed by Kate Davis), all coffee breaks, and the Wednesday and Thursday night receptions. A Saturday only registration fee was offered, which covered events for that day. Friday night's Picnic in the Park and Saturday night's banquet required an extra fee. An additional fee was also required for field trips.

During planning meetings leading up to the conference, it was decided that keynote speakers and some vendors would receive registration fee waivers; Dan Varland made the local committee aware that lifetime RRF members also receive registration fee waivers as a benefit. Student volunteers were allowed to attend sessions if they were not needed during that scheduled time. Participants were encouraged to donate/purchase a ticket for student volunteers to attend the Picnic in the Park. Two "supervolunteers," Adam Garrett and Kristina Smucker, were invited to attend the banquet free of charge as a way of thanking them for the extraordinary amount of effort and time they donated. Erick Greene felt the banquet and the picnic presented a valuable opportunity for these students to network, observe firsthand the culture, and become even more motivated and inspired biologists likely to contribute to the field in the future.

Registration Desk

UM-TATC staff and volunteers assisted participants, vendors, guests, speakers, and other VIPs with on-site registration, payments, and general questions. The registration desk was equipped with extra agendas, conference materials, message boards, general office supplies, cash box, and a secure area for storing program booklets, totes, and mugs. Additional Missoula information was easily accessible outside of the session rooms and registration area. A laptop computer was also available in the registration areas for presenters to view, edit, and download presentations. UM-TATC staff secured a dedicated room with four laptops and audiovisual equipment (including LCD projectors) for presenters to download, view, and edit their presentations. The registration desk staff organized and was responsible for the sale of t-shirts, additional mug, and totes. One-hundred t-shirts, 252 mugs, and 194 tote bags were purchased.

Please see the Financial Details section for sales income totals.

The following attendees received registration fee waivers:

- ◆ Brian Woodbridge
- ◆ Ken Dial
- ◆ David Bird
- ◆ Erick Greene
- ◆ Peter Bloom
- ◆ Rob Steiner
- ◆ Jay Sumner
- ◆ Geoff Walsh
- ◆ Diana Whittington
- ◆ Kristi DuBois
- ◆ Kent Carnie
- ◆ Deborah Richie Oberbillig

UM-TATC received and processed all registration fees, which were received in three ways: online, mail-in, or in-person. Debra Graham set up a conference website through the UM-Continuing Education website with a direct link to online registration, which was available to the public beginning May 2, 2008. Chelsea Thompson managed the registration, which included emailing confirmations to all registrants, creating and managing a database, reporting weekly to the Planning Team, tracking field trips, and the processing of all credit cards and payments. All

registrants received receipts in person at the conference. Each night UM-TATC staff processed that day's receipts.

A number of refunds were issued, primarily because field trips became full. While the initial policy was that vendors would have to pay both a vendor's fee as well as registration fee if they desired to attend the conference, it was decided that vendors would be allowed to attend sessions free of charge, but would be charged for evening social events. Therefore, a refund was given to one vendor who had paid a full registration fee prior to implementation of the new policy.

Of the 177 registrants, 124 registered online, 30 registered by mail or fax, and 23 registered on site at the conference.

Number of Registrants			
	Before 7/15	After 7/15, Before 8/15	After 8/15
Total Registrations Received	77	36	64
RRF Members	61	23	19
Non-Members	16	12	43
Students	9	13	17
Vendors			6
<i>*Note: Students and/or registrants for Saturday only may also be RRF Members</i>			

Cost of Registration & Social Events			
	Before 7/15	After 7/15, Before 8/15	After 8/15
RRF Members	\$165	\$180	\$195
Non-Members	\$190	\$205	\$220
Students	\$105	\$105	\$120
Saturday Only	\$105	\$115	\$120
Guests for Wednesday Evening Ice Breaker			\$15
Guests for Thursday Evening Poster Session			\$15
Friday Night Picnic in the Park			\$25
Saturday Banquet			\$35
<i>*Note: Students and/or registrants for Saturday only may also be RRF Members</i>			

FINANCIAL DETAIL

Income		
RRF Seed Money	\$0	0.0%
Registration Fees	\$27,924	55.3%
Vendor Fees	\$875	1.7%
Sponsorship	\$9,205	18.2%
Icebreaker Guests	\$375	0.7%
Poster Session Guests	\$405	0.8%
Friday Picnic	\$2,800	5.5%
Saturday Banquet	\$4,900	9.7%
Field Trips	\$1,895	3.8%
Silent Auction	\$1,269	2.5%
T-Shirts	\$735	1.5%
Mugs	\$100	0.2%
Movie Donations	\$13	0.03%
Total Income	\$50,496	
Operating Expenses		
Keynote Speaker Fees	\$0	<i>Brian Woodbridge declined \$500 fee, in-kind contribution</i>
Three Additional Speakers	\$0	<i>Kate Davis provided gifts to presenters & VIPs, \$1,000 in-kind contribution</i>
Banquet Presentation & Award	\$0	<i>Engelhard Sponsorship Legacy Lives on Award & Presentation \$2,000</i>
Meeting Room Rental	\$2,000	
Missoula Children's Theatre	\$400	<i>Negotiated reduced rate for theatre, \$500 in-kind contribution</i>
Audio Visual Equipment	\$308	<i>UM Biology Department, Erick Greene provided 4 laptops, 4 LCDs, UM-TATC provided a laptop and LCD, \$3,000 in-kind contributions</i>
Audio Visual Equipment for Board Meeting	\$0	<i>UM-TATC provided laptop and LCD, \$100 in-kind contribution</i>
Vendor Tables	\$0	<i>Negotiated with hotel no charge for vendor or registration tables</i>
Poster board rental	\$0	<i>UM Biology Department, Erick Greene provided 16 Poster display boards, volunteers and truck to move boards, \$640 in-kind contribution</i>
Catering		
Board Meeting	\$233	
Icebreaker Reception	\$2,774	
AM & PM Breaks	\$10,300	
Poster Reception	\$2,297	
Picnic in the Park	\$2,850	
Banquet/Social	\$5,600	<i>Engelhard sponsorship for appetizer and upgraded dinner menu</i>
Fieldtrips-sack lunches	\$975	

Printing and Supplies		
Internal and On-site Reproduction	\$302	
Program Booklet	\$1,900	
Notepads	\$195	
Printing Meeting Circular	\$519	
Supplies	\$375	
T-shirts	\$600	
Mugs	\$1,008	
Totes	\$885	
Communications		
Phone	\$20	
Fax	\$25	
Postage	\$641	
Transportation		
Vans/Vehicles for Field trips	\$1,148	
Travel Reimbursement Speakers		
Hotel	\$0	
Airfare	\$0	
Other Expenses		
Credit Card Processing Fees	\$825	
Technical On-Line Support-Registration	\$500	
UM Continuing Education –Indirect Fee	\$4,402	
Total Expenses	\$41,082	
Total Income	\$50,496	
Remaining Funds	\$9,414	
Refund to Raptor Research Foundation	\$4,707	
Refund to Raptors of the Rockies	\$4,707	

SOCIAL EVENTS

Ice-breaker Reception

Wednesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Atrium

This event was held to welcome and register early participants. At 5,500 square feet, the atrium allowed for social events to be centrally located and easily accessible to an open registration area, session rooms, and vendor tables. This layout allowed attendees to easily access the registration desk and UM-TATC staff and encouraged networking and socializing with others. Hors d'oeuvres (hot and cold) were served and a cash bar was provided. It was very well

attended. There was no charge to conference participants; however, there was a \$15 fee for guests. Vendors were also located in the atrium and had excellent exposure during this event.

Poster Session and Reception

Poster Session, Thursday, September 25, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Holiday Inn Atrium
This event provided a cash bar and hors d' oeuvres. It was well attended, with 27 paying guests.

Artists Reception and Opening, Birds Art Exhibition, Friday, September 26, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monte Dolack Gallery, Downtown Missoula

Kate Davis organized and hosted the exhibition. This event featured art from 30 local and regional artists displayed throughout the Monte Dolack Gallery. Guests visited and enjoyed complimentary drinks and snacks. Kate Davis served as hostess and guests seemed to thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to visit and discuss artwork. The reception was well attended, but attendance was somewhat impacted by the picnic scheduled at the same time.

Picnic in the Park

Friday, September 26, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park – Patio and Park

The picnic was especially well attended. Since it was not included in the registration fee, participants and guests had to pay a separate fee to attend. There were 112 paying guests. Guests enjoyed a BBQ on the back patio of the hotel, while the Frederico Brothers, a local band, entertained.

Banquet/Craighead Tribute

Saturday, September 27, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park – Ballroom

The theme of the conference—*The Legacy Lives On*—was not only intended to honor the legacy of John and Frank Craighead, but was also intended to challenge attendees to take the next bold steps in the spirit of these two pioneering biologists and falconers. Special invitations were mailed to the Craighead family, many of whom, including John, were in attendance. The evening proved to be an emotional and moving tribute.

In addition to contributing the idea of dedicating the conference to the Craighead legacy, Bernadette Bannister suggested that an unannounced award be presented—*The Legacy Lives On Award*. This award recognized the “scientist in the field” who routinely practices the persistent and tedious field and lab work modeled by the Craigheads. *The Legacy Lives On Award* was presented to Jay Sumner of the Montana Peregrine Institute for his tireless efforts and contributions to the field of raptor research. This award added excitement to the events of the evening, which included the following:

6:00 p.m., Cocktails & Silent Auction

A variety of hors d' oeuvres were served, sponsored by the Engelhard Foundation. A cash bar was also provided at this event, which took place in the Atrium at the Holiday Inn. Ten large, round tables displayed approximately 40 auction items. The items were solicited primarily by Kate Davis. Donations came from Board members, local Missoula businesses, and private individuals. Volunteers manned the tables and collected money for items. This was an especially enjoyable social event. The silent auction closed at 6:45. The auction proceeds amounted to \$1,269.

7:00 p.m., Welcome to the Craighead Family

Kate Davis welcomed the Craighead family and guests.

Bernadette Bannister gave a PowerPoint presentation introducing and welcoming the Craighead family. The following members of the Craighead family attended: John W. Craighead, John and Margaret Craighead, Sophie and Derek Craighead, Shirley Craighead, Sage Craighead, Lance, April and Willow Craighead, Karen and Bob Haynam.

7:05 p.m., Slide Presentation:

Dr. Jay Sumner, Executive Director of the Montana Peregrine Institute, presented a moving tribute to the Craigheads entitled, "The Craighead Legacy."

7:20 p.m., Presentation of *The Legacy Lives On Award*

Adam Shearing, UM Graduate Student in Wildlife Biology, presented the award to Dr. Jay Sumner of the Montana Peregrine Institute.

Adam Shearing won the future researcher award on Saturday at the Banquet, for which he was awarded the "Life With an Indian Prince" Craighead Book, donated by the Archives of Falconry, Peregrine Fund and Kent Carnie.

7:35 p.m., Annual Awards: Raptor Research Foundation 2008

Clint Boal, RRF Awards Committee Chairperson, presented the following awards:

- Tom Cade Award
- Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom Award
- The James R. Koplín travel Award
- The William C. Anderson Memorial Award

7:55 p.m., Buffet Dinner

Sponsorship from the Engelhard Foundation was provided to enhance the buffet dinner.

The following menu was served:

Carved New York Sirloin with Horseradish Sauce

Broiled Halibut over Creamed Potatoes, Garlic and Leeks

Cheese Tortellini with Fresh Marinara or Alfredo Sauce

Served with:

Fruit salad, tossed salad, rolls with butter, oven roasted Yukon gold potatoes, chef's choice seasonal vegetable, assorted cakes and tarts, coffee, tea and ice water

RRF Board Meeting

RRF conducted a board meeting on September 24th. There was no charge for the room. Coffee, tea, soda, water, and light snacks were provided.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips associated with the conference were held Sunday, September 28, and included the following options:

- ◆ Bridger Mountains Hawkwatching, Bozeman, *Steve Hoffman*
- ◆ Golden Eagle Trapping and Banding on the Continental Divide, *Rob Domenech*
- ◆ Montana Waterfowl Foundation/Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge/National Bison Range, *John Grant and Pat Jamieson*

- ◆ Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge/Montana Peregrine Institute/Raptors of the Rockies, *Bob Danley, Jay Sumner, and Kate Davis*

Volunteers helped drive participants to the field trip sites. Sack lunches were provided to participant and volunteers. There were some last minute changes to field trips and some field trips were so popular that people had to be turned away. All in all, these trips were hugely successful.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

Scientific Program Committee

Jim Bednarz, *Chair*

There were 80 oral presentations: 59 in the general sessions, six in a symposium on Short-eared Owls, and 15 in a symposium on chapters from the book, *Raptor Research and Management Techniques*. In addition, there were 19 posters in the poster session. Geoff Holroyd and Dan Varland lined up the speakers and set the preliminary schedule for the short-eared owl symposium and techniques symposium respectively. Scientific Chair Jim Bednarz and his committee of Travis Booms, Libby Mojica and Amber Overfield, communicated with presenters, edited their abstracts, scheduled the papers, recruited Session Chairs, and transmitted via email the final Scientific Program and abstracts to Kate Davis for inclusion in the Program Book.

Laptop computers and LCD projectors were provided by The University of Montana at no charge. The Department of Biology provided four laptops and four LCD projectors and the Technical Assistance and Training Center provided an LCD projector. Under the guidance of Erick Greene, volunteers from the university manned the lights and ran the projectors.

A preview room was available for reviewing talks from Wednesday afternoon through Saturday morning. Authors were instructed to load their presentations prior to their sessions on the session computer in the ½ hour before morning sessions began or at breaks between sessions.

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES

The conference as a whole was a success, with many enthusiastic comments offered by participants, presenters, sponsors, and vendors throughout the entire conference. Vendors were pleased with the exposure and interactions they were afforded, visitors were very enthusiastic about having the chance to enjoy all that Missoula has to offer, and the venue very nicely met the needs of all involved.

The overwhelming participation from the local community and sponsors throughout western Montana was due to the passionate efforts of Kate Davis, Founder and Executive Director of Raptors of the Rockies and Bernadette Bannister, Director of UM-TATC at the University of Montana. These women not only donated countless hours of their own time to ensure the success of the conference, but also tapped their personal networking sources to go above and beyond the standard conference management roles and tasks. It was their personal quest to make the Raptor Research Foundation 2008 Annual Conference the most successful gathering to-date.

The success reflected a culmination of Bernadette Bannister's years of conference management experience, combined with the expertise of Kate Davis, well-known educator and researcher in

raptors. Considering the voluminous extra time, resources, and personal contacts both women contributed to this endeavor, as well as their own vested interest in the topic and success of the conference as a whole, it would be difficult to reproduce another RRF conference of this caliber without similarly skilled and committed individuals.