



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings!

And here goes another year for Raptor Research Foundation. A year for celebration, as we commemorated our 50th anniversary in conjunction with our annual meeting in Cape May, NJ. What an incredible experience we had! The local committee and the RRF's conference committee, assisted by many volunteers, were responsible for preparing an amazing program. During the meeting, we did not only learn about cutting edge research on raptors but we reviewed the history of our Foundation and the challenges, successes and stories of the many men and women that wrote it. We learned how everything started 50 years ago, who were the falconers, researchers, and conservationists that built the pillars of what RRF is today, and how our journal transformed from a few pages' bulletin to the top quality, highly reputed, international scientific journal that make us so proud. We also had a plenary session about the role of women in Raptor Research, and several symposia that provided space for sharing knowledge and discuss important cutting edge ideas and advancements in raptor research.

The past meeting was unique also in the amazing composition of the list of plenary speakers (Drs. Ian Newton, Carol McIntyre, and Yossi Leshem) who shared their knowledge and expertise. And do not forget several field trips, workshops (sponsored by the Early Career Raptor Research Committee), an Evening Dinner Cruise on the waters of Cape May Harbor, a Banquet with Awards and a special Banquet presentation by one of our past Presidents, Dr. David Bird. After the now classic Awards ceremony, we closed a fantastic week with an after-banquet party. No other conference gives you so much!

Without a doubt, this past conference raised the bar for what to expect from our meetings. The local committee, which included Lillian Armstrong, David La Puma, Rene Buccinna, and a legion of members and volunteers from the local host at the New Jersey Audubon Society, Cape May Bird Observatory and the Cape May Raptor Banding Project, together with the several RRF committees, including the Early Career Raptor Researcher, the editorial offices of the *JRR* and *Wingspan*, and the 50th Anniversary Committee,



Directors and Officers were key in organizing this program for our delegates. Please, join me in thanking them for all their efforts and dedication. And of course, thank you so much to **you**, RRF member, for all your support along these 50 years.

This past year has been a year of challenges for RRF and other Ornithological Societies of North America, as we started the difficult transition from the Schneider Group managing our members' service to a new provider, MemberSuite. We thank the Schneider group and all its representatives for accompanying us along this journey for so many years. We couldn't have done it without you. And we welcome MemberSuite for the years to come. This transition, working together with other societies, would have been a more winding road without the hard work of our President-Elect Libby Mojica. With the help of Michael Collopy, we are working in making this transition go smoothly and I am confident the change will be of real benefit for all the societies.

As many of you may have already noticed, this change in OSNA membership management from Schneider Group to MemberSuite has caused some expected delay in the start of individual membership renewals for 2017. This also means the March 2017 issue of *JRR* will go out to members who haven't had a chance to renew yet. We expect renewal emails to be sent to members in very soon. RRF is contacting members about the delay in membership renewals through email and Facebook. Furthermore, members will receive emails from OSNA announcing the launch of MemberSuite and inviting them to go to the MemberSuite Portal to set up their account and renew their memberships. We anticipate that renewals will begin very soon, thank you for your understanding and patience.

There are many other challenges today for RRF, as they are for other ornithological societies, besides transitioning managing services. The times we live now are very different to what used to be. Communication styles, the way information is disseminated, conservation problems, and members' expectations of what RRF should do are not necessarily the same as those faced by our founders in 1966. We keep our traditions, values, mission and goals, but the mechanisms to continue making an organization evolve and being successful in achieving its mission and goals need to adjust to the modern times we all live in. One way to address these changes is by amending our By-Laws, a process currently being in place. While this is a long and sometimes tedious process, amendments to the By-Laws are necessary to respond to these changes and challenges we face today. Once a final draft becomes available, and per our current By-Laws members will need to approve (or not) the proposed amendment. We hope to have a final draft by the 2017 annual meeting.

Other important questions for us are what RRF is doing well and what can we do better? To answer these questions and prepare for the future we need to hear from our members. The RRF Board of Directors recently approved a motion to begin work on a Strategic Plan for our Foundation. A strategic plan can only be formulated by a careful revision of the past, identifying and predicting as much as possible the challenges the future presents, and by elaborating goals and strategies that can be achieved but also revised and modified as needed. A task force has been created to work on this endeavor, so if you want to be part of it or want to contribute to the early development of this Strategic Plan please contact RRF's President. Membership participation will be essential in this process. Please, even if you can't be part of the task force you still can help us by

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**, 1400 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60546, USA; 1-312-883-4670 (phone); OSNAMembers@gmail.com (email); <http://www.osnabirds.org> (web).

Editor's Note – Thanks to the following contributors for this issue of the *Wingspan*: Jim Bednarz, Kate Davis, David Ellis, Erin Katzner, Jeff Lincer, Libby Mojica, Gerald Niemi, Jemima Parry-Jones, Miguel Saggese, Gary Santolo, and Dan Varland.

Wingspan welcomes contributions from RRF members and others interested in raptor biology and management. Please submit contributions via email to Brian Washburn, *Wingspan* Editor, at rrfwingspan@gmail.com. For long contributions, please send as a MS Word attachment. If you are submitting photos, please include them within the MSWord document with a caption and photo credit. Contribution deadline for the next issue is **15 February 2017**.

All issues of *Wingspan* and content guidelines are available at: <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/publications/wingspan-newsletter/online-newsletters-pdfs>

“Hatchlings and Fledglings”

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2016 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Submitted by Miguel Saggese (President)
and Jim Bednarz (Nominations Committee Chair)

We are happy to announce in this issue of *Wingspan* the results for our recent election. We are very grateful to each one of the members who ran this year for Officers and Directors, and for those that were not elected please consider running again in the next years. We have a wonderful time ahead to be part of the changes our organization needs, and we welcome all of you to work hard with us.

As with any dynamic organization, changes within the RRF Leadership Group occur each year. At the RRF Annual Business Meeting, the 2016 election results were announced:

- ✦ **DIRECTOR NORTH AMERICA #1: Joel (Jeep) Pagel** – serving Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2019
- ✦ **DIRECTOR AT LARGE #1: Juan Manuel Grande** – serving Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2019
- ✦ **DIRECTOR AT LARGE #4: Lucia Liu Severinghaus** – serving Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2019
- ✦ **DIRECTOR SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE: Munir Virani (Re-elected)** – serving Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2019

- ✦ **PRESIDENT-ELECT: Elizabeth (Libby) Mojica** – serving Oct. 2016 – Nov. 2017
- ✦ **VICE-PRESIDENT: James Bednarz** – serving Oct. 2016 – Nov. 2018

Jessi Brown kindly agreed to continue on and serve a second term as the RRF Treasurer (Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2019).

Joan Morrison kindly agreed to serve as the RRF Secretary (Mar. 2016 – Mar. 2018).

We are indebted to all of those who serve the RRF in all of these capacities!!!

Congratulations and huge thanks to all of those involved in these essential positions. Understanding that everyone has a “day job”, the dedication and commitment of all RRF members is truly fantastic! The 2016 RRF Conference was a showcase of this.

We remind all members that selected Director and Officer positions are open for election annually and that you are encouraged to serve the RRF in such a capacity or to volunteer and participate on RRF committees. If you are interested in helping the RRF fulfill our mission, please do not hesitate to contact a Board member, Officer, or the Nominations Committee.

Some unforeseen issues arose and were addressed prior to and at the Board of Directors meeting in Cape May. In regard to the election process, we learned that for many years the call for nominations didn’t use all the instruments our Bylaws indicates. We realized that the call for nomination was not always reaching each one of our members as it should have occurred, perhaps preventing some of you from nominating yourself or another member for an Officer or Director position. This caught almost all of us (Officers and Directors) by surprise, except for one of our newest Directors, who identified a long-term mistake in our procedures. We apologize to the RRF Membership for this mistake. The Board learned about it once the election process was already in place and decided that suspending the elections and starting over was not the best option. However, we are implementing all the necessary measures to rectify this problem in the future.

Another concern regarding the election process was raised about having the Chair of the Nominations Committee running for Vice President. Some perceived this as a conflict of interest. Along the years, one of the most difficult challenges we faced as a society has been the recruitment

of members committed to serve either as Officers and/or Board Directors. To find qualified and committed individuals to serve has not been easy, these positions demand several hours per week of hard work, sometimes for several years. For this past election, we only have one member running for President, and no one offering to run for Vice President - a position that is just as important as any other. Under these circumstances, our Nominations Chair, after multiple debates and deliberations, and with the President's support, volunteered to place his name on the ballot for this position. While the Board of Directors recognized that a potential conflict of interest may exist, they also recognized that everything was done in good faith, the candidate for the Vice Presidency nominating himself with the only purpose of serving our society and our members when no one else offered to do it. As result of these concerns and to address them properly, the Board of Directors addressed the issue through a Discussion Forum and Vote (DFV), a unique agenda item presented to the Board for a vote that cannot wait for the time regular E-agendas. A motion was made to cancel the ongoing 2016 elections, send a new call for nominations by email to the membership, and conduct a new election with a new deadline before the annual conference in October. After considerable discussion and debate, the Board made its informed decision and voted. The motion did not pass (10 Directors voted against, one Director voted in favor, and one Director abstained), but several recommendations were made to prevent this problem from repeating in future elections, including informing the membership of this situation and the decision made by the Board of Directors. Furthermore, a Conflict of Interest Policy and a RRF Election Procedures and Guidelines will be created to assist this process in the future.

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Submitted by Brian Washburn

Membership with RRF (and other scientific societies) is a fundamental supporting element for our Foundation. Membership funds, along with monetary contributions from our scientific publications (primarily the *Journal of Raptor Research*) and other sources of revenue provide the budgetary capacity for RRF to function. A number of recent changes have occurred with the Ornithological Societies of North America (OSNA), the organization that manages our memberships and provides other benefits to RRF. During the past few months, OSNA has sent numerous emails to RRF members regarding the new cloud-based member management system, MemberSuite, and (unfortunately) delays in the ability of RRF members to renew their memberships – or for new RRF members to submit their membership application. However, you will soon (if you haven't already) receive an email from OSNA stating that MemberSuite is now functional. I was able to renew my RRF membership with the new system without difficulty. I am including the pertinent portions of these emails for you here:



The new OSNA Member Portal is now open and available for you to renew your society memberships. Renewing online is fast and convenient for you and helps us gather information to better serve you.

The first step is to login to the new Member Portal and set up your account.

1. Visit the new **OSNA Member Portal**.
2. To set up your account on your first visit to the **OSNA Member Portal**, click on *Forgot Password* under the Login boxes. Next, enter your Login ID, which is the email address where you received this message. You will receive an email to reset your password. When you click on the link in the email, this will take you to a page to enter a new password. Once you have done that, you will go to your personal *Profile* page (this is your home page).
3. If you have already set up your account, enter your Login ID, which is the email address where you received this message, and your password. You will go directly to your personal *Profile* page.

If you still need assistance logging in, contact **Scott Gillihan, OSNA Membership Manager:** OSNAmembers@gmail.com; phone 312-883-4670.

Now that you've signed into your *Profile* page, you will see the option to "Join/Renew" in each of the four societies. Immediately below this, you can "View" all of your 2016 membership types.

Next step, Join/Renew/Subscribe.

1. On your *Profile* page, click "Join/Renew" or the respective society in the *My Membership* section of the Member Portal homepage. You will have the opportunity to make donations and add additional society memberships later in the renewal process.

If we do not hear from you in January (by updating your profile, making selections, and renewing), we will mail you a printed copy of the OSNA renewal form. As in the past, OSNA sends out several reminder emails and printed renewal notices during our Renewal Season if you have not yet renewed.

Your OSNA Membership Benefits

Your membership in any of the OSNA societies entitles you to the full benefits of those societies, which can be found on the society websites (links to all websites are on the [OSNA Member Portal](#) page). Membership in any of the OSNA societies also entitles you to the OSNA electronic version of the *Ornithological Newsletter* and the online version of the membership directory, *The Flock*. Members can access the current and historical electronic issues of the *Ornithological Newsletter* anytime, and download PDF copies from the [OSNA Member Portal](#), by clicking the "OSNA Newsletters" tab at the top of the page. During the OSNA transition, Ornithological Jobs will not be available on the [OSNA Member Portal](#) or on the [OSNA website](#). Please use the job postings on [Ornithology Exchange](#) to post or search for jobs in ornithology.

For questions about logging-in, your membership, missing journals and other issues contact **Scott Gillihan, OSNA Membership Manager**: OSNAmembers@gmail.com; phone 312-883-4670.

For questions about OSNA, contact **Bonnie Bowen, OSNA Executive Director**: OSNAexec@gmail.com; phone 520-558-0038.

Thank you in advance for your support and continued participation in OSNA societies. We look forward to serving you in 2017.

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 50th ANNIVERSARY 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE Submitted by Brian Washburn

In mid-October, the Raptor Research Foundation gathered for an unprecedented event, the 50th Anniversary of the RRF and our annual conference. All of this taking place in a foundational location for raptor ecology – in addition to being a quaint and truly iconic seaside community – Cape May, New Jersey. To make it even more magical, the Local Committee arranged for bluebird skies and warm temperatures; not so great for migrating raptors but very much appreciated by the attending raptorphiles!

Although it is nearly impossible to select the true high points of the meeting and 50-year celebration of RRF, I believe the plenary sessions certainly rank near, if not at, the top of the list. The life-long knowledge and experiences provided by Ian Newton, Carol McIntyre, Yossi Leshem, Jimmy Parish, Richard Clark, and David Bird was nothing short of awe-inspiring and fantastic. Also, the personal and professional experiences kindly shared by the "Women in Raptor Research"

panelists – Laurie Goodrich, Pat Kennedy, Karen Steenhof, Joan Morrison, and Jemima Parry-Jones – not only showed the challenges and triumphs of these pioneers, but helped to provide us all guidance and inspiration for increasing the professionalism of all RRF members.

The annual conference was filled with workshops, symposiums, contributed papers, poster presentations, and field trips that highlighted the fantastic array of topics and issues on-going work associated with raptor ecology and conservation around the world. In trying to sum it all into one word – I believe “Diversity” might fit the best. This conference and the 50th Anniversary celebration of RRF was truly a reflection of what makes RRF wonderful – the vast diversity of people that comprise it. RRF (and thus our conferences) is a true mixture of international cultures, career stages, specialties, interests, and passions – with the common binding theme of raptors. This is exemplified by the contributions of our Late-career Raptor Researchers (the LCRRs “leakers”), the Mid-career Raptor Researchers (MCRRs “meekers”), and the Early Career Raptor Researchers (ECRRs “eekers”). No matter where you fall into the spectrum, your contributions to RRF are whole-heartedly welcomed and appreciated. Our annual conferences are the best reflections of this.



PHOTOS FROM THE 2016 RRF CONFERENCE
Graciously provided by Kate Davis and Libby Mojica



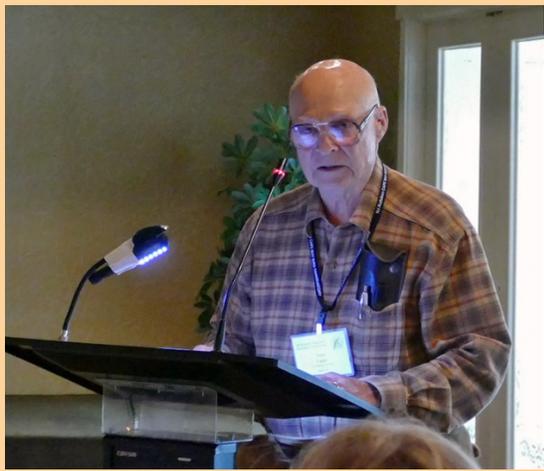
Conference attendees enjoying Ian Newton’s plenary



**The RRF “Dynamic Duo”:
Julio Gallardo and Miguel Saggese**



**Aiden Branney with his Andersen
Award winning poster**



**Tom Cade providing another
excellent presentation**



**Yossi Leshem thrilled and inspired
us all with his plenary presentation**



Watching for migrating raptors!



Joan Clark (JRR Editorial Assistant) and Cheryl Dykstra (JRR Editor). Joan has been proof-reading JRR for over 35 years! Thank you Joan for all of your hard work and efforts!



Tom Cade and Jeep Pagel



"Wrangling" the President into...???

Having a great time on the Evening Dinner Cruise!



Pete Dunne and Bill Clark

Upcoming Conferences

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**8-12 November 2017
Salt Lake City, Utah USA**

The 2017 Annual Conference of the Raptor Research Foundation will be graciously hosted by HawkWatch International. This exciting event will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in beautiful Salt Lake City, Utah. We anticipate yet another great scientific program! Presentations on any aspect of raptor biology, ecology, research techniques, conservation and management are invited. Symposia are already being planned and certainly additional symposium topics are welcomed and encouraged.

Conference Information may be viewed at:

<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/current-conference>

RRF 2017 CALL FOR SYMPOSIA

The Raptor Research Foundation invites symposium proposals for our annual scientific conference. The conference will be hosted by HawkWatch International, 8th-12th of November 2017, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. Presentations are invited on any aspect of raptor biology, ecology, research techniques, conservation, and management.

The deadline for submission of symposium proposals is **15 May 2017**. Early submission is welcome and highly encouraged. Chairs of symposia selected for inclusion in the conference will be notified as submissions are received and approved. Successful symposia at previous RRF meetings have included species-specific and genera-specific foci, interactions of raptors with anthropogenic influences, and topics of general interest to raptor ecologists. Symposia are already being planned on 1) Raptor science for educators and delivering science to the general public, 2) Conservation and ecology of under-studied open land raptors, and 3) Raptors and the energy sector.

Symposium proposals should include:

1. Symposium title for the RRF conference website.
2. Name and contact information for symposium chair for the RRF conference website.
3. A 3-5 sentence rationale for the symposium's topic for the RRF conference website.
4. Names of authors the symposium chair has recruited to participate in the symposium, and general title or description of each senior author's oral presentation.
5. A picture for use on the RRF conference website to represent the symposium.

Successful symposia should include at least 6 related papers, or enough papers to fill at least a half-day session; they will run concurrent with general scientific sessions or other symposia. Prospective symposium chairs are encouraged to suggest symposia even if they have recruited fewer than the minimum number of speakers because relevant abstracts received through the general submission process may be used to complete symposium schedules.

RRF 2017 CALL FOR PAPERS – GENERAL SESSIONS

The Raptor Research Foundation invites abstracts for oral and poster presentations at our annual scientific conference. The conference will be hosted by HawkWatch International, 8th–12th of November 2017, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. Presentations on any aspect of raptor biology, ecology, research techniques, conservation, and management are invited.

Abstract submission:

You may submit more than one abstract. Submit all abstracts via the conference website at: <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/current-conference>. Cover letters are not needed. Follow the format explained and exemplified in the Sample Abstract below. Failure to properly format abstracts may result in rejection or return to authors for reformatting.

The deadline for submission of papers is **15 June 2017**, concurrent with the deadline for extended abstracts for Andersen Award candidates (<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/grants-and-awards/awards/william-c-andersen-memorial-award>). Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified via email by **15 Aug 2017**. Andersen Award candidates will be further notified via email whether their papers will be included in the Andersen Award competitive oral session, in a general oral session, or in the Andersen poster competitive poster session. Prior to the conference, all authors will be provided with a follow-up email with links specifying the room, date and time of their presentations.

Questions regarding symposia and general abstracts should be directed to Scientific Program Committee Chair Beth Wommack (email: ewommack@uwyo.edu).

AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY 2017

**31 July – 5 August 2017
East Lansing, Michigan USA**

The joint meeting of the American Ornithological Society (135th Stated Meeting) and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists (35th Stated Meeting) will be held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan, 31 July – 5 August, 2017. This is the inaugural meeting of the American Ornithological Society, the new society formed in 2016 by merging the American Ornithologists' Union and Cooper Ornithological Society.

For more information, please visit: <http://aossco2017.fw.msu.edu>

10th ASIAN RAPTOR RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION NETWORK SYMPOSIUM

**18 – 22 October 2017
Davao City, Philippines**

The 10th Asian Raptor Research and Conservation Network Symposium will be held on 18-22 October 2017 at Ateneo de Davao University, Roxas Avenue, Davao City, Philippines. Hosted by the Philippine Eagle Foundation in partnership with the Asian Raptor Research and Conservation Network and co-organized by Ateneo de Davao University, City Government of Davao City, Department of Tourism Region 11, and the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines – Raptor Group.

Please check www.philippineaglefoundation.org for more information about the symposium. For inquiries and for those requiring official invitation, please send contact details like name of participant, designation, address and email to: arrcn2017@philippineaglefoundation.org



News from the RRF

2016 Raptor Research Foundation Awards

Submitted by Gary Santolo and Jeff Lincer (Awards Committee)

The Tom Cade Award

The Tom Cade Award is a non-monetary award that recognizes an individual who has made significant advances in the area of captive propagation and reintroduction of raptors. The 2016 awardee was **Robert B. Berry**. Although it has never been his profession, Bob Berry has a long history of participating in and supporting raptor research and captive propagation. He participated in early Peregrine Falcon surveys on Assateague Island and was among the first raptor breeders to employ the technique of voluntary artificial insemination using imprinted raptors. He was also a major catalyst in the development of radio-telemetry tracking technology for the use in falconry and raptor research. He is a founding board member and long-time supporter of the Peregrine Fund and was the founding president of the North American Raptor Breeder's Association (a post that he held for 28 years). For the past 2½ decades, he has directed The Peregrine Fund's Orange-breasted Falcon (*Falco deiroleucus*) program, focusing on the propagation and release of the Orange-breasted Falcon in Central America.

The Leslie Brown Memorial Grant

The Leslie Brown Memorial Grant is given in memory of one of the most inspired and productive raptor conservation biologists of recent decades. This grant provides financial assistance to promote the research and/or the dissemination of information on African birds of prey. The 2016 awardees were **Chaona Phiri** – “Movement, recruitment, and threats to vultures in Zambia” and **Rebecca Garbett** – “Investigating sources of lead for vultures and wildlife: is lead ammunition the cause of lead exposure in African vultures?”

The Stephan R. Tully Memorial Grant

The Tully Grant supports research and conservation of raptors specifically to students and amateurs with limited access to alternative funding. The 2016 awardee was **Paula Maiten Orozco Valor** – “Effects of agricultural intensification on the demographic and health of a typical raptor of agroecosystems, the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), in the center of Argentina”.

The Dean Amadon Grant

The Amadon Grant assists researchers working in the area of distribution of and systematics of raptors. The 2016 awardee was **Michaela S. Brinkmeyer** – “Using high resolution genetic markers to reveal American Kestrel connectivity: towards understanding kestrel population declines and the impacts of climate change on raptor monitoring and management”.

The William C. Andersen Memorial Award

The Andersen Award is given to both the best student oral and poster presentation at the annual RRF Conference. The 2016 awardees were: [Oral]: **Christopher Vennum** (Univ. of Nevada Reno) – “Demography and ecoimmunology of recruitment in Swainson’s Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*)” and [Poster]: **Aiden Branney** (Boise State Univ.) – “Burrowing Owls, Common Ravens, and power transmission lines in the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area, Idaho”.

The James R. Koplín Travel Award

The Koplín Award supports travel costs for students who are a senior author and presenter of a paper or poster at an RRF Conference. The 2016 awardees were: **Christopher Vennum** (Univ. of Nevada Reno) – “Demography and ecoimmunology of recruitment in Swainson’s Hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*)” and **Sara Pourzamani** (Boise State Univ.) – “Vocalization and nest defense of Burrowing Owls in the Snake River Birds of Prey Area”.

RRF President’s Award

This Award is given in recognition and appreciation of exceptional service to the Raptor Research Foundation. In 2016, President Miguel Saggese awarded it to **Ruth Tingay**.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE WINNERS AND NOMINEES!!!!

Raptor News

Neotropical Birds

Submitted by Tom Schulenberg

Neotropical Birds (<http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/>) is a counterpart to the older, and better known, Birds of North America (BNA) series (birdsna.org/): together, the goal of Neotropical Birds and BNA is to offer comprehensive life history information for all bird species of the Western Hemisphere. Important differences between the two series are that Neotropical Birds is open access (BNA is subscription-based, although many members of the Raptor Research Foundation may have access through their home institution, or through membership in the American Ornithological Society); and Neotropical Birds, being much newer, still is incomplete. We welcome anyone with an interest in Neotropical raptors to contribute to our species pages, as primary contributors to species accounts that currently are incomplete, or as revisors, to improve any of our existing raptor accounts. See, for example, the NB account of Ornate Hawk-Eagle: http://neotropical.birds.cornell.edu/portal/species/overview?p_p_spp=129556

Researchers can volunteer to write the complete account for a species, or even of a group of species. Or, you can offer information on selected topics (for example, Food or Behavior or Conservation) for a species or a set of species.

Anyone who wishes to contribute to Neotropical Birds should contact the content editor, Tom Schulenberg (tss62@cornell.edu) or, for contributions of photos or videos, our managing editor, Brooke Keeney (bkk37@cornell.edu).

Gulf of Mexico Avian Monitoring Network

Submitted by Randy Wilson

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill directly impacted birds and their habitats at an unprecedented scale within the Gulf of Mexico. Early efforts to determine pre-spill baseline conditions for avian resources highlighted the lack of adequate data to inform decision-makers, as well as the lack of a comprehensive, integrated approach that would permit evaluation of realized damages or response to future on-the-ground restoration efforts. However, this environmental disaster also resulted in an equally unprecedented focus on the Gulf ecosystem and resources to support its restoration and

recovery through the creation of many new partnerships and forums. Related to birds, one new partnership is the Gulf of Mexico Avian Monitoring Network (hereafter Network). The Network in simple terms is a “Community of Practice” working collaboratively to leverage existing resources, capacities and expertise to develop and implement a Gulf-wide, coordinated and integrated avian monitoring program to address contemporary and long-term conservation needs of avian populations and their habitats within the Gulf of Mexico region. More specifically, the mission of the Network is to facilitate and enhance integrated and complementary data collection for bird populations and their habitats that results in scientifically robust: (1) status assessments; (2) evaluation of management and restoration actions; and (3) evaluation of ecological processes affecting bird populations and their habitats in the Northern Gulf of Mexico.

To facilitate realization of the mission, the Network established seven taxa-based working groups (marshbirds, seabirds, shorebirds, wading birds, waterfowl, landbirds, and raptors). Within each working group, experts are striving to identify the key management actions and ecological processes/mechanisms impacting populations, as well as translating these into influence diagrams to explicitly articulate and prioritize monitoring strategies and metrics to guide development of a coordinated and integrated monitoring program.

Specific to raptors, the key species being considered include Aplomado Falcon, Southeast American Kestrel, Bald Eagle, Swallow-tailed Kite, White-tailed Hawk, Florida Burrowing Owl, Short-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Everglade’s Snail Kite, Osprey, and Short-eared Owl. Furthermore, members of the Network quickly realized that raptor expertise is lacking within the working group and that a more concerted effort to engage the broader raptor community was warranted. As such, if you have expertise with any of these species and/or a desire to participate in the raptor working group, please reach out to Michael Seymour (mseymour@wlf.la.gov), chair of the raptor working group. The Network is open to any professional interested in advancing and implementing bird monitoring within the northern Gulf of Mexico region. Participation is voluntary and subservient to the participant’s agency/organization/institution mission, authorities, and budgetary capabilities. For those interested in more information regarding the Network, possibly attending an upcoming Workshop, or simply wanting a better understanding of avian conservation issues in the Gulf of Mexico, please contact:

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**The International Centre for Birds of Prey,
Newent, Gloucestershire, UK**

Submitted by Jemima Parry-Jones

Just back from two trips, one to India and Nepal, we go yearly to check up on things see if we can help, look at any problems and solve where possible and make everyone understand that we are still there and still care about the project. In India all is going very well with the breeding, in fact possibly too well as until we are at the stage of release, which is close but not yet quite there, the more vultures we breed the more food we need for them and the more space to house them. So here is where success can make for problems. However I am confident that we can do it all and get it right. As soon as we have permission for satellite tagging and surveys tell us the environment is safer we can go ahead.

Last spring, one of the staff from India went over to Nepal and taught people how to sex the vultures using DNA from blood taken the previous year. Fifty-seven samples were done and lists made of which bird was which sex. Needless to say when it came down to catching them all up this September and checking the bird against the sexing record not all went absolutely at it might. Some rings were missing and a couple of microchips had failed, however we sorted them all out and now have a balanced paring for the future with seven spare females for the first release. It was a tough trip but well worthwhile.

Our cider apple orchards Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) nest box project is going well with more people interested in having boxes, we hope to have 50 up by the end of the year. As with all programmes, not all goes to plan as can be seen by the inhabitant leaving the photo (below)!

We have now started to involve zoos in the UK in a Kestrel nest box scheme. Taking into consideration Todd Katzner's talk on Red Footed Falcons (*Falco vespertinus*) at the recent RRF meeting, and our experiences with man-made nest boxes and hot summers we are going to try some with insulation in the rooves. We have found that where wild birds are nesting in manmade nest boxes, in very hot summers we seem to get more young birds that have bailed out of the nest early, possibly because of



overheating. So it seems sense to try a slightly different approach. Of course our nest boxes are woman-made!

We are now coming up to our 50th anniversary next year, so plans are afoot for various celebrations, it seems that there are a lot of 50th's around at the moment. 50 years of RRF, 50 years of BIAZA and more to come I suspect, it must have been a busy time 50 years ago!



Autumn is properly here now with wonderful autumn colour and my favourite visitors – the grey pound! Although this week it is half term so lots of children as well. Pigeons are now flocking, the Jays are coming into the field for the acorns and we have had some glorious bright autumn days. There is an Osprey on one of the lakes in the Forest of Dean, it has been there for about three weeks now, so a very late bird, hope he makes it to Africa. It was great to see the migrating Ospreys at Cape May.

A request please! We are looking into wing tags on species of raptors that are at risk from predation by larger raptors. In this case we are thinking about Harriers, however any of the smaller species that are being wing tagged are of interest. Our question is do wing tags make vulnerable species more liked to be noticed and predated upon? We have records of Hen Harrier wing tags in Peregrine and Golden Eagle nests. Does anyone have any information that might help? With good Darvic type rings and a decent pair of binoculars some feel that these are enough without the added risk of wing tags. This does of course mean to researchers rather than citizen Scientists. Please email any comments to: ipj@icbp.org



The Peregrine Fund

Submitted by Erin Katzner

Aplomado Falcon project adjusts focus to habitat restoration after wild breeding population stops growing

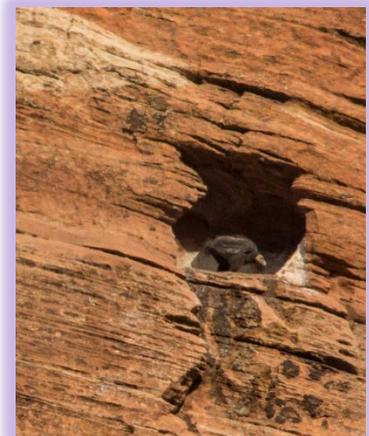
The 2016 Aplomado Falcon (*Falco femoralis*) survey shows the population has remained steady with roughly 37 territorial pairs and 93 individual falcons. While this seems to be nearing the target of the 60 self-sustaining pairs needed to down-list the species from Endangered to Threatened, the population has hovered around this number for over a decade.

To combat the apparent stasis, The Peregrine Fund will focus efforts toward finding or creating suitable habitat in collaboration with land owners. For the past several years, the US Fish and Wildlife Service has done a good job of treating habitat on Laguna Atascosa NW Refuge to maintain open qualities to benefit Aplomado Falcons. The Peregrine Fund and partners are turning to adjacent private lands to identify least cost/highest benefit options for eliminating brush and creating additional territories for an expanding Aplomado Falcon population. In addition to creating new suitable habitat, The Peregrine Fund will also consider assisted dispersal of juvenile birds to novel areas. This consists of removing juveniles from wild nests and rearing them to a suitable age for release in a new location. This technique has worked very well with the Ridgway's Hawk in the Dominican Republic and is likely suitable for the Aplomado Falcon as well.

To achieve these goals, the Fund is currently seeking funding to hire a field representative responsible for developing voluntary landowner agreements to improve rearing and breeding habitat for the species.

California Condor chick hatches in Utah's Zion National Park

California Condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) have had their eyes on Zion National Park for years now, but have been unsuccessful in nesting attempts until this season. Five years ago a male condor, M227, paired with a female in the park. He and the female attempted to nest but she died of lead poisoning that year. M227 re-paired and nested with a new female. However he died of lead poisoning later that season and the nest failed. Losing those two breeding birds two years in a row was a blow to California Condor population expansion into Utah.



**Photo Courtesy of
John Sherman**

Fortunately it seems that the third attempt may be the charm. A pair nested in Zion again this spring and a chick hatched around the 14th of May (we don't have access into the cave, but we have estimated based on adult behavior). Unfortunately, in June the adult male died of lead poisoning. As of now, the chick is being raised by the solo female with the help of our biologists who are providing clean carcasses nearby. The female Condor is utilizing the extra, lead-free food, and the chick is now 3 months old.

There is a good chance the first successful fledging of a California Condor in Utah in the past 100 years will happen this fall. The photo (above) shows the first photograph ever taken of a California Condor chick in Utah.

Long-time senior executive of The Nature Conservancy, Russ Hoeflich, appointed president and CEO of The Peregrine Fund

On 1 July 2016, Russ Hoeflich began service as the new president and CEO of The Peregrine Fund. Prior to joining the Fund, Hoeflich served for 27 years as the state director of the Oregon Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), before promotion to vice president and senior policy director for TNC's national Restore America's Forests Program in 2014.

"Most of my career has been focused on The Nature Conservancy, where I have developed wonderful relationships with colleagues, trustees, donors, elected officials, volunteers and conservation partners," said Hoeflich. "However, throughout my career, a deep passion for birds has driven my commitment to conservation of habitat, and so this next step seems completely natural and absolutely right."

As vice president and senior policy director for the Restoring America's Forests TNC Program, Hoeflich has gained a unique view into the politics, science, economics, and diverse relationships that determine forest policy and effective restoration.

In 1987, Hoeflich was named director of TNC Oregon Chapter in Portland with a staff of 10 and a budget of \$500,000, serving as its director for 27 years. By 2014, there were 80 employees in eight offices across the state, supported by 32,000 members and a \$16 million budget; and the Chapter had protected 505,000 acres and 425 miles of rivers and streams, including 47 nature preserves managed directly or cooperatively by TNC.



Russ Hoeflich

ANNOUNCEMENTS and BRIEF NEWS ITEMS

For Sale

RRF Publications, Pins, and Decals – Hard copies of *The Journal of Raptor Research* (Vol. 1-30), most Raptor Research Reports, and RRF pins and decals may be purchased directly from RRF (Jessi Brown, RRF Treasurer; email: treasurer@raptorresearchfoundation.org). See http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/back_issues_jrr.htm for details and prices. Orders for 4 or more issues receive a 30% discount. Hard copies of *The Journal of Raptor Research* (Vol. 31+) may be purchased from Ornithological Societies of North America (1400 South Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60546, USA; 1-312-883-4670 (phone); osnamembers@gmail.com (email); <http://www.osnabirds.org> (web). Some older issues are not available in hardcopy; but all issues from Vol. 1-39 are available on SORA (<http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/jrr/>) for free download.

Announcements

TIOF Endowment Fund Proposal

The International Osprey Foundation (TIOF) is seeking applicants for its 28th annual grant program to support research activities of graduate students primarily focused on Osprey. However, research work with other raptor species will also be considered. The award recipient will be expected to provide a report of his or her research and the use of the funds within one year of receiving the grant. To apply, send a project description of no more than two pages, an itemized estimate of expenses, and the name and address of the graduate supervisor. This project description and estimated budget, along with a cover letter giving whatever personal data you wish to furnish, will serve as your grant application. No further documents are required. Applications must be submitted by 31 Jan. 2017 to: TIOF Endowment Fund, P.O. Box 250, Sanibel, FL 33957. Grants will be awarded by 31 March 2017.

Raptor Management and Techniques Manual Available On-line!

The 2nd Edition of the *Raptor Management and Techniques Manual* – Edited by David Bird and Keith Bildstein – is now available for download (as a PDF) on the Raptor Research Foundation's website

<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/publications/techniques-manual>

JRR and Wingspan now available in Biodiversity Heritage Library



The editorial staff of the *Journal of Raptor Research* (JRR) and the *Wingspan* Newsletter are pleased to announce the availability of RRF publications in the Biodiversity Heritage Library's (BHL) online database. The BHL is a consortium of natural history, botanical, and research libraries from around the globe (see list of library members below). This gives RRF the opportunity to expand JRR and Wingspan readership through this free library service. The BHL wrote a blog post about the new acquisitions available here:

<http://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2016/08/the-raptor-research-foundation.html>



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