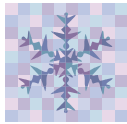


Medina Raptor Center Newsletter

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Winter 2008

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Farewell to Sierra (1997 - 2008)

We are dedicating this newsletter to "Sierra" a very special little screech owl. Sierra came to us in 1997 a very young and incorrigible little owl. She had a bad fracture that would not allow us to let her go back to nature. Even though she was a small bird she had a huge presence and great personality. Many children and adults were graced by her presence over the years. The last few years were difficult on her. She has lived with liver and kidney failure. We kept her comfortable and retired her from active duty. She never missed a meal. We will miss her trill at night and her feistiness. She was a wonderful teacher for us all.



FROM THE DIRECTOR,

It was an extremely busy summer. We have seen nearly 380 birds and animals through mid-October. We have seen more birds this year than we did in the entire year of 2007 so far. Fortunately we were blessed to have two interns from Hiram College to assist us. We presented on 140 programs and tours this year, too. We saw some unusual birds such as two Broad Wing hawks, two baby Barn Owls and a Black-Backed Gull from the Gulf Coast. We had six young Peregrines, thirty-two Red-Tail Hawks, fourteen Cooper's Hawks, fourteen Great Horned Owls and many more. We raised six Hummingbird youngsters and released three, one unfortunately died and two will be spending the winter with us and will be released this coming spring. One of the highlights was the raising and releasing of three Chimney Swifts. These birds are total insectivores and were very difficult to keep healthy. With lots of effort by our wonderful staff and lots of bugs and the luck of finding a nearby flock for them to join, they were able to be released and the experience was a total success.

Even though it is the fall season, we are still seeing many young birds; ducklings, a young Grebe, baby Cedar Waxwings, doves and others. We even saw and released forty-one bunnies this season. We rehabilitated two young Great Blue Herons and released both. They totally depleted our fish supply. To all you fisherman, WE NEED FISH! One of our released herons is still hanging around on our pond and getting occasional handouts from our staff. We call him "Freddy the Freeloader". You would not believe how many fish it takes to make them happy.

All the nestling and fledgling songbirds that came into the center were raised and released successfully. We are also happy to report that we have several new birds joining our educational staff this year. Captain Jack, our Barn Owl, was rescued from a nest at five weeks old with an eye injury. Boris, a Barred owl, joined us last December with a wing fracture and Aurora, our resident Barred Owl couldn't be happier to have a cage buddy. Our Snowy Owl came in last November with head trauma from a car accident; she was released in March but came back in April with a badly fractured wing. "Paris" a young Vulture, came to us under horrible conditions but was successfully brought back to health.

**Thank you for your support,
Laura Jordan**

Keeping Our Raptors Safe



This year proved to be troubling times for a handful of our area raptors. August 26th two wonderful Cleveland policeman showed up at our doorstep with a badly injured baby vulture that had been stoned out of a tree by two young people. "Paris" (so named because they found her on Paris and West 33rd street) was in very bad shape. She wasn't given much of a chance with the injuries she sustained. My first objective was to alleviate her pain. The veterinarian was not optimistic about her future. Weeks later we noticed only slight improvement but she didn't seem to be getting that much better. A volunteer wanted to try something – take her out into the sun and see what happens. Like a miracle, she came out of her depression, opened her wings, lifted her injured neck and head and began eating on her own.. Now as many times as we can, she gets out for walks in the sunshine. She still shows some balance issues and maybe eyesight problems but those will be worked on continually. Considering how devastating her

injuries were she has made a remarkable recovery.

We also saw a duck and a wild turkey with arrows through their necks. There were also a few hawks with gunshot wounds and an eagle with a fishing line wrapped tightly around its' leg. These are just a few examples of how unthoughtful individuals can be and the results of their harmful actions. It is our constant duty to keep educating people about the value of our native wildlife.

THIS NEWSLETTER QUESTION: *What does the diet of the Chimney Swifts consist of?*

Finish Your Holiday Shopping & Help Our Raptors

We all end up with people on our holiday list who are impossible to buy for. Maybe MRC can help out! Do you know any bird lovers, owl and/or eagle fans, back-to-nature types? If so, then consider sponsoring a MRC raptor in that person's name. This holiday season you can lift two spirits with one gift. Medina Raptor Center will be able to keep helping injured birds of prey and your loved one will know that his gift made that difference. If you decide to purchase a sponsorship for your someone special, they will receive a certificate and a picture of their bird. So if you're looking for a unique gift for that hard-to-buy for special someone, this is it! Contact the Medina Raptor Center today and finish up your holiday shopping in record time.



Migisi Updates



On October 8th I received a call from Dr. Lindstrom that he had a juvenile eagle from Lake County that needed a blood transfusion. He needed Migisi there as soon as we could to save this very anemic eagle. We were happy to bring Migisi up to help. She donated blood to save the other eagle. The young eagle went to back to Lake County Metro Parks for rehab. Migisi came home hungry and thirsty but just fine. Migisi's training is continuing and she is doing very well. We hope



to be able to take her to her first program in February.

Migisi has been very busy giving programs to interested people on the weekends. She is quite the "Diva" and is looking forward to being on T.V. or in a movie soon. (The Diva Eagle, Story of Miss Migisi). She has her own personal trainer you know. It has been a pleasure working with Migisi and learning all about eagles.

Migisi now has a brand-new cage constructed just for her with her own pond and waterfall. Several people would like to rent this cage for the weekend without the eagle, of course. The new cage gives her more room to exercise and is made like the natural habitats found in the wild. She has even started fishing and has broadened her diet to include delicacies such as venison and muskrat.

Good News

The American Bird Conservancy reports that on May 29th, 2008, the EPA announced a decision to control the sale and use of rat poison in the United States. This is great news since so many of our birds of prey suffer the consequences of eating rodents that have been poisoned. For more information, go to their website: www.abcbirds.org.

Visit With Another Very Special Bald Eagle

Laura Jordan and 2 of her volunteers, Karen Napoli and Annette Piechowski, had the wonderful opportunity of visiting The American Eagle Foundation in Tennessee this past spring.

The American Eagle Foundation was founded in 1985 and is dedicated to conducting bald eagle recovery programs, caring for injured & orphaned eagles and educating the public about bald eagles. The AEF is also home to "Challenger" who is the first bald eagle in U.S. history to be trained to free fly during the national anthem and he has been doing this for over 14 years.

The trio from the Medina Raptor Center spent the day with one of Challenger's main trainers. They toured the facility which is home to over 60 birds of prey and were able to gain considerable insight into the care and training of bald eagles. The knowledge gained from this visit has already been immensely helpful in caring for eagles at The Medina Raptor Center including our own bald eagle, Migisi. Challenger's background is very similar to Migisi's. They were both blown out of their nests as young chicks and both became highly "human socialized" or imprinted on humans. This can make a bird extremely difficult to work with. The information gleaned from Challenger's trainer has been instrumental in the training of Migisi.

The highlight of the visit was when all three of the MRC representatives got to "catch" Challenger as he was put through some training flights. He flew to each of them and landed perfectly on their fists. What an awesome way to end a visit with a very special bald eagle...and his very special trainer. For more information on The American Eagle Foundation and Challenger...and to see beautiful video footage of Challenger free flying, go to www.eagles.org

Introducing Our Rehabilitation Partner

Wild4Ever is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping wildlife worldwide and here at home. The organization is run by Dr. Gary Riggs and his wife, Denise. Dr. Riggs is the Director of Veterinary Services for the Akron Zoo and owner of North Coast Avian Sanctuary. Dr. Riggs and his staff provide the majority of the medical care for our injured raptors. The value of donated staff time, surgeries and medications run into the thousands of dollars every year. To learn more about Wild4Ever, visit their website at www.wild4ever.org. The scope of our operations would not be possible without their help of this wonderful organization.

Interesting Patient At The Center This Summer



Probably brought in by the hurricane Ohio suffered this season, a Great Black-backed gull needed our services because he became disoriented and bruised from the storm. Mostly a bird of the North Atlantic, it has been expanding its breeding and wintering ranges farther south along the East Coast. This gull is the world's largest gull. They are about 28-31 inches tall with a wingspan of about 57-63 inches long.

The Great Black-backed Gull is one of the many species whose feathers were used for fashionable clothing in the 1800s. After the demise of the feather trade in the early 1900s, Great Black-backed Gull populations increase and the species spread farther south. Young Great Black-backed gulls do not fly away from the nest area until they are about 50 days old. They return to the nesting area to rest and be fed for another 50 days. Some may even remain with their parents for months after leaving the colony, but most join congregations of other immature gulls in places where food is easy to find. In winter, large numbers of young Great

Black-backed gulls eat fish driven to the surface by humpback whales. We are happy to report that this Great Black-backed gull was successfully released in Lake Erie in Lorain, Ohio.

Chart Showing the Types of Birds Seen This Year at The Medina Raptor Center:

Type of Raptor/Bird	# Came Into Center
American Kestrels	6
Eagles	2
Peregrine Falcons	6
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	1
Cooper's Hawks	15
Broad wing Hawks	2
Northern Harrier	1
Red Tail Hawks	32
Red Shouldered Hawks	13
Great Horned Owls	14
Snowy Owl	1
Barn Owls	2
Barred Owls	4
Screech Owls	5
Vultures	7
Other Birds	178



More Facts About Wildlife

We are still receiving calls concerning nuisance animals, not birds. We try to resolve these conflicts in a humane manner or send these calls to the proper people but most of the time, the answers given are not the answers that the people wish to hear. Skunks cause problems for people when they spray or dig around the foundations of barns, outbuildings and houses. They dig up lawns in search of insect larvae and grubs. Skunks have the ability to release an obnoxious odor when frightened or threatened. Skunks are placid creatures that are very near sighted. They eat bugs, larvae and small rodents, but they can get used to a free meal of garbage and cat or dog food. So put your garbage in very tight lid containers. They are nocturnal and they live in a den or burrow. Babies are born in April and the average litter size can be 6 to 8 young. They do not truly hibernate but will sleep through the winter waking up only when hungry.

It is important to remove your cat and dog food at night so that skunks and raccoons don't take advantage of the free food. They sometimes get rabies so they are not an animal that you would want to approach.

They are helpful in that they are eating things we don't want around us but at the same time are very annoying with their smell. If you encounter a skunk, you can back away slowly, with no sudden moves and you should be fine. There are ways of discouraging skunks without hurting them. We have put our homes in their territory which can be up to 30 or 40 acres.

For more information on discouraging skunks, I recommend the following book: "Wild Neighbors" by the Humane Society of the United States. If you need a skunk removed from your property, please remember the time of year before doing that so that the babies are not left motherless. You can get more information on that from the ODNR website. There are also recipes on the internet that can help you remove skunk smell from your clothes and your pets.

How You Can Help . . . Sponsorship Programs . . . Unique Holiday Gifts!



Want to become directly involved in the rehabilitation of injured and orphaned birds? You can by becoming a sponsor of one of our twenty program birds. Our program birds consist of the following:

The Owls (Mischief, Captain Jack, Aurora, Boris, Snowy, Aspen and Cricket); the Hawks (Lazarus, Sky, Red, Cloud and Orion); the Others (Matilda and Paris, the Turkey Vultures; Henrietta the Great Blue Heron; Victory and Pitt Stop, the Peregrine Falcons, Feathers, the Kestrel and Migisi, the Eagle) and let us not forget our retired program bird (Victoria the Barred Owl). For a \$50.00 annual sponsorship, you will receive a certificate of sponsorship

with a photo of the bird of your choice. For a \$100.00 annual sponsorship, you will receive a certificate of sponsorship, a photo of the bird of your choice except the eagle and will have the opportunity to come to the Medina Raptor Center to be photographed with the adopted bird. For a \$200.00 annual sponsorship you will receive a certificate of sponsorship and a photo with our eagle, Migisi.

Visit us on the web at www.medinaraptorcenter.org and view our wonderful program birds. Your gift will go toward the purchase of food and medications for your bird. All contributions are tax-deductible. By sponsoring one of our program birds for yourself, your group or school, or as a special gift for someone else, you are personally involved in our rehabilitation and educational efforts. You can download a sponsorship form from our website for your convenience.



Medina Raptor Center

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