



Established in 1990, The Medina Raptor Center is a leading raptor rehabilitation facility in Ohio. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned raptors. We specialize in birds of prey and treat over 400 birds each year. All receive individual attention, appropriate veterinary care, physical therapy, training and conditioning before returning them to the wild.

MRC is a non-profit 501© (3) organization and permitted by State and Federal Agencies. We operate on donations of time and funds and supplies

Medina Raptor Center

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Winter 2015

News from the Mews

By Laura Jordan

Thank you so much for responding to our plea for help and support. We appreciate your amazing response but the real winners here are the birds. I would also like to extend a thank you to those of you who donated left over deer and muskrat meat to us. We would especially like to thank The Akron Zoo for their continued support.

We will be able to stay open through the winter, taking in injured birds, and when weather allows we will be able to have educational programming here at our center.

This year we saw more birds than ever before. Some of our highlights include:

41 Red-tailed Hawks; 39 American Robins; 25 Great Horned Owls; 8 Peregrine Falcons; 5 American Bald Eagles.

65% of our birds this year came from some sort of collision either with windows or a moving vehicle

22% of our birds came in because they were orphaned, their nest was destroyed, or they were picked up because someone thought they were injured but in reality they were a fledgling learning to fly.

Some Rarities include: Tundra swan, Merlin, Belted Kingfishers, and most recently 2 baby barn owls hatched 9/20/15

This year we took in birds from 17 counties. We continue to work closely with our fellow rehabilitators occasionally transferring birds to places better suited to rehabilitate them. We want to thank those facilities for working so closely with us in our efforts to help all of the wildlife we can.

West Nile Virus was once again prevalent this fall and took the lives of many owls and hawks.

Despite the ban on offsite educational programs we have been working hard to educate the public using social media and through talking and educating the wonderful

people who call with their questions and rescues. We think this effort may have contributed the increase in patients this year. We will continue this effort throughout the next year.

Avian Influenza Update

As a reminder, in June the Ohio Department of Agriculture placed a ban on the movement of all education birds within the state of Ohio due to the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in neighboring states. The current plan from the state includes a reevaluation of the situation in April by the Ohio Department of Agriculture which will hopefully allow us and all the other centers to take our birds off site to programs. We are hopeful the ban will end and have begun to book programs now for any time after April 16th 2016. However, a less pathogenic version of avian influenza was recently diagnosed in a duck in southwestern British Columbia, BC. This is the first reported case in North America for the fall migration season. So far this case is in the far west of North America and only time will tell if this discovery will impact the decisions in April.

Due to the presence of Avian Flu in neighboring states in the spring of 2015 and the potential for it to return in the future, we had to make a very difficult decision concerning our rehabilitation practices. It was recommended by our veterinarians that we no longer rehabilitate waterfowl. Our reasons are simple, there is a risk to our educational birds and volunteers that work and here at the center. Our priorities must be our educational ambassadors. We have limited space and do not have the best facilities to rehabilitate the large number of waterfowl that need assistance every year.

This was not an easy decision but a necessary one. We will continue to take in Herons, such as Great Blues and Little Greens, and Shorebirds, such as Sanderlings, Yellow legs, and Killdeer on a limited basis. If you encounter injured waterfowl, please continue to call us and we will do our best to guide you on what to do and what facilities do take in waterfowl. We are always available for advice and referral. To make our facility safer and more protected from wild waterfowl that fly over our

veterinarians suggested we protect our birds by installing new solid roofs on all our educational bird enclosures. This was completed this past September. It was a great expense but we felt a necessary one.

Due to financial concerns, our ability to leave the center to go on rescues of large raptors outside of our immediate area will be limited in the coming year, though we will continue to accept all of the birds presented to us that we are able to help. This is a practical decision as well as financial. The more volunteers called away from the center on a rescue means fewer birds are getting treatment and care here. We have been very pleased that everyone seems to understand and in following our instructions, are willing to capture and bring the bird in.

As always we will continue to accept most songbirds. Due to the recent information that English Sparrows and Starlings may carry Avian Flu as well as West Nile Virus we will not be able to accept them into our rehabilitation program in 2016 in order to keep our resident birds healthy. English Sparrows and European Starlings were introduced to this country in 1800's. It is not uncommon to see thousands of them in corn fields around the county. Many billions of dollars are spent yearly trying to control the populations of these invasive species.

In 1960 the deadliest plane crash in history was caused by starlings. 62 people lost their lives that day.

Whenever we introduce a non-native species into the environment the balance and destruction is great. The Burmese Python in the everglades, the kudzu vines in the south, the zebra mussels in Lake Erie all have created problems we have to deal with. The English Sparrows and The European Starlings are so common here that I don't feel they need our help. Their bully nature causes a problem for our local woodpeckers by preventing them from nesting in their holes in trees. English Sparrows do the same or worse to Bluebirds by evicting them from their boxes and often killing them. So, because of this we have chosen not to make the problem worse by rehabilitating these birds and releasing them.

New Additions:

As most of you know we love bluebirds! This past Summer we worked with Dale Rabung to establish a new bluebird trail. Dale is the local representative of the Ohio Bluebird Society. With his help we updated our old Bluebird Trail and updated the boxes and recreated some new habitat. We have been seeing lots of bluebirds this Fall so we are anticipating a good breeding season this Spring. This coming spring we hope to open new trails for birdwatching. The trails are located in old pasture land with some young trees for perching. No pesticides are being used. Since we have nesting warblers, Yellow, Common Yellow Throat and Blue Wings along with many towhees, and indigenous sparrows, we will need to be careful not to disturb these areas so these tours will be guided.



Snowy sightings already! Ella is so glad cool weather is finally here!



Fun Facts

- Studies have shown the American Kestrel can carry up to 140% of its body weight.
- There are around 10,000 bird species in the world.
- Flamingos can only eat when its head is upside down.
- The hummingbird is the only bird that can fly backwards.
- More than 70 different bird species have been observed drinking nectar from hummingbird feeders.
- Robins are often considered the first sign of spring, but not all robins leave their home range in winter, so their appearance is not really a sign of spring.
- Ospreys almost always carry fish parallel to their bodies to improve aerodynamics and in-flight handling, despite the handicap of the heavy and awkward load.
- Birds don't fall off of a branch when they sleep because their toes automatically clench around the twig they are standing on. Because the grabbing action is done by tendons rather than muscles, the birds can sleep without danger of falling.
- Great Horned Owls are among the earliest nesters starting their pair bonding in December and nesting as early as January.

Babies and Imprinting

Each year, Medina Raptor Center takes in hundreds of nestlings and juvenile birds. They come for many different reasons; from falling out of the nest to making a bad grab on their first kill. All of these birds need to be raised and healed before they can be released, but volunteers must be careful not to allow these young birds to imprint on humans.

Imprinting occurs when a young animal in the care of humans misidentifies people as parents. If this happens, the bird cannot be released because they are not afraid of people.

At MRC, we take extensive precautions to prevent imprinting. If a baby bird must be hand fed, we carefully conceal ourselves by feeding them from somewhere out of sight. Sometimes we place the baby birds in a box and feed them through a hole with tweezers. Other times, we have to go to greater measures by dressing in a camouflage poncho before going into the flight cage to feed older birds. Raising nestlings and fledglings is expensive and sometimes difficult, but it is a labor of love and we are all happy to don the camo poncho if it means that one more bird gets to fly free.



Return of the Bald Eagle...to Northeast Ohio!

Have you recently experienced the thrill of seeing a bald eagle soar through the sky? That used to be a rare occurrence but, it's happening more and more in Northeast Ohio. The bald eagle has really made a comeback in our area!

Although the bald eagle is native here, we almost lost our entire population of eagles. Due to increased use of the pesticide, DDT, the eagles' food supply was becoming contaminated. This was causing their eggshells to be very thin and they would crack when the adults were incubating the eggs. The eagles were also at risk of being shot (because they were perceived as a threat to livestock) and they were losing their habitats. Our eagle population plummeted. By 1979, we had only 4 confirmed bald eagle nests in all of Ohio – a record low. Eventually, DDT was banned and Ohio Dept of Natural Resources developed a plan to restore the bald eagle through artificial nest building, fostering, hacking and the use of volunteer nest monitors. The number of nests started to grow and, by 2014, we had an estimated 200 active bald eagle nests in Ohio. Those nests hatched an estimated 279 eaglets. The bald eagle was back!

Some of the best eagle viewing in Ohio continues to be at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Magee Marsh, Killbuck Marsh and Pickerel Creek Wildlife Area. We also have 4-5 confirmed nests in Lake County and 5 confirmed nests in Geauga County. But you don't even have to travel that far to see bald eagles. We have several "local" nests:

- Sandy Ridge in Lorain County Metroparks (since about 2001)
- Rocky River Reservation in Cleveland Metroparks (since 2006)
- Chippewa Lake
- Cuyahoga Valley National Park (since 2009)
- Avon Lake (newly established in 2015)

Even if you don't want to leave the comfort of home, you can follow 2 of our local eagle nests on your computer. The Sandy Ridge eagles will have an active, solar powered webcam for the 2016 nesting season. It is not yet up and running, but to get the latest information, go to the Lorain County Metroparks Facebook Page or their Website. The Avon Lake eagles will also have an active webcam that you can follow on "YouTube" by typing in AvonLakeEagleCam.

2016 looks like a promising year for bald eagles in Ohio. Please remember that, if you go to see a bald eagle nest, you need to maintain a respectable distance from the nest. Getting too close to the nest or disturbing the eagles in any way may cause them to abandon the nest and their young. As exciting as it is to see nesting eagles, please do NOT do anything to disturb those eagles. Their very survival and the survival of their young depend on that.





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Sponsoring Makes a Great Gift!

Our wish list and Bird Sponsorship information are available online at MedinaRaptorCenter.org. Checks should be made out to The Medina Raptor Center and mailed to PO Box 74, Spencer, OH 44275.

Visit MedinaRaptorCenter.org to donate by *PayPal* also.
Thank you for your support!



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THANK YOU FOR CARING


