



**Rescue. Rehabilitate. Release.**

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, 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 solely on donations of time, funds, and supplies.

# Medina Raptor Center Spring 2019

## From the Director's Desk



softball-sized baby Turkey Vulture! It was nothing more than cotton fluff with a black beak, but the sound she made was loud and scary.

Turkey Vultures can only make a hissing sound. They don't have a voice box, like other birds. With this baby it was a lucky deterrent and probably saved her life.

It was June 1998 I received a call concerning a frightening noise coming from a tree that had been cut down in Berea. The log was now at a lumber company in Wooster waiting to be cut. The foreman said the men were outside and refused to go near the tree. They feared it was a large snake, perhaps one not found in North America. The foreman had requested the services of Medina Raptor Center to help remove the threatening reptile so they could resume their work. Since I am not good with reptiles, I sent a volunteer to take care of the situation. When she arrived, the men were outside and refused to help remove the beast. With the help of a flashlight she crawled inside and saw a small, white,



The loggers had a contract to clear a wooded area for a parking lot. They hadn't seen the baby bird inside the log. Turkey Vultures nest on the ground, cliff or inside a tree, or in an old building. The little fluff ball grew up to be a large black bird with a red head named her named Matilda. At 21 years she is one of our oldest

educational birds. She is my husband's favorite. She's no push over though, you must earn her trust and respect. Quite a few volunteers have felt her wrath if she's not given her due.



Matilda can be seen by the public every March at Buzzard Day in Hinckley as she welcomes her vulture friends back from warmer climates.

We wish Matilda a very Happy Birthday and many more!!!!!!

Laura and Bill Jordan

## Species Watch: Osprey

Ospreys are very large, distinctively shaped hawks. Despite their size, their bodies are slender, with long, narrow wings and long legs. They are smaller than a Bald Eagle but larger and longer winged than a Red-tailed Hawk. They are birds of contrast being brown above and white below. Ospreys can usually be found all over the United States, cruising along shorelines or patrolling waterways with their distinctive kink in their wings, making an M-shape when seen from below.



These are distance fliers, logging more than 160,000 migration miles during its 15-20-year lifespan. Osprey are unique among raptors with their diet of live fish and their ability to dive into water to catch them. They also possess a reversible outer toe that allows them to grasp with two toes in front and two behind. Their feet have barbed pads on the

bottom to help them grip slippery fish. When flying with prey, an Osprey lines up its catch head first for less wind resistance. Excellent anglers, Osprey have been found to catch a fish on at least one of every four dives, often making a catch after only hunting for 10-15 minutes.



Ospreys have adapted well to life with humans. They use many manmade structures such as telephone poles, channel markers, and platforms designed specifically for their stick nests. Of course, this can also get them into trouble since they will build their nests on cellphone towers and light poles as well. These nests can be a safety hazard to both the birds and the humans who use those utilities. Many electrical companies and cell phone companies are working with conservationists to find better solutions to the messy fishy nests. Ospreys were greatly affected by DDT and manmade nesting platforms have been essential in bringing the species back from the brink of extinction.

In the spring, Ospreys will lay 1-4 cream to cinnamon colored eggs in their nests made of piles of sticks. Once the chicks hatch, they grow quickly. Sadly, a growing cause of death for Ospreys is entanglement at the nest: the adults incorporate baling twine and other discarded lines into their nests; these can end up wrapped around a chick's feet and injure it or keep it from leaving the nest.

Ospreys are also extremely susceptible to lead poisoning. A single lead sinker left behind or one lead pellet swallowed by fish can be enough to kill an adult osprey. We worked very hard to bring these birds back from near decimation to a thriving population. We need to continue to work to conserve their environment and clean up after ourselves so they can continue to thrive and be enjoyed by generations to come.



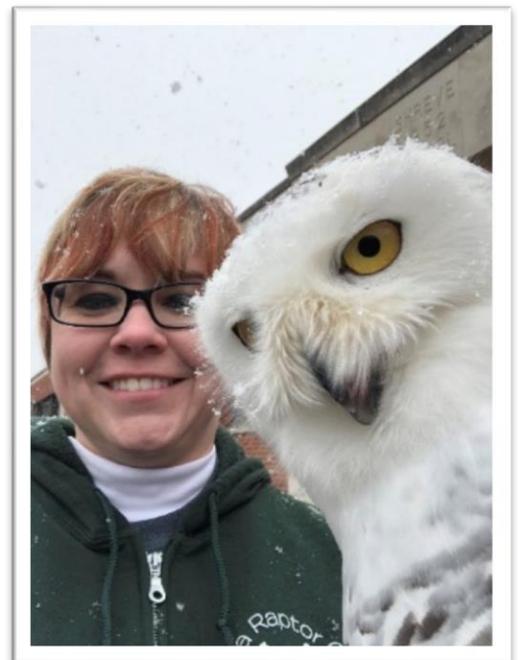
## Volunteer Spotlight

### Meet Jaime Mautz!

Jaime is one of our longest volunteers having been with the center for 11 years. Volunteering at the Center has become a bit of a family affair since she convinced her husband, Austin, to volunteer with her every weekend. Jaime was working at a veterinary clinic when she was introduced to Laura. She holds a degree in Zoology but doesn't get to use it much in her day job, so volunteering at the raptor center was a natural fit. Her degree does come in handy at home with her own personal zoo of dogs, cats, birds, lizards, and fish.

Jaime is involved with all aspects of the center including food prep, educational programs, working in the hospital with new and critical patients, administrative paperwork, and she also trains volunteers on bird handling for programs.

Jaime loves all the raptors at the center, but her personal favorite bird is Ella, a Snowy Owl who is an educational ambassador. Jaime might just be Ella's favorite human too. You can see both Jaime and Ella almost every year at the annual Shreve Migration Sensation.



## Turkey Vulture Fun Facts!

The most common time to see a Turkey Vulture is while driving, so look along the sides of highways and in the sky over open countryside. Sudden changes in topography allow for thermal updrafts that the birds use to carry them into the sky.



Turkey Vultures are also known as Peace Eagles since they do not actively hunt their food but instead eat carrion, which they find largely by their excellent sense of smell.

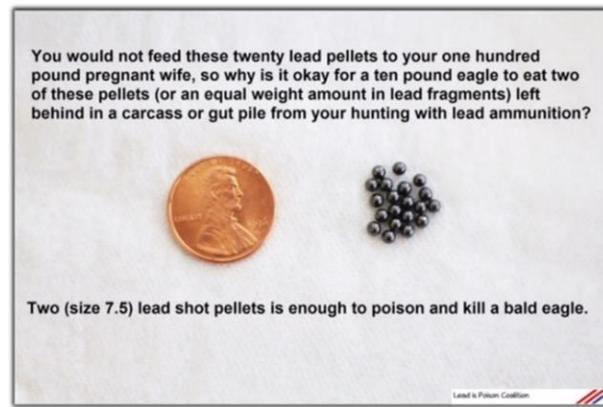
Thankfully for them, vultures appear to have excellent immune systems, happily feasting on carcasses without contracting botulism, anthrax, cholera, or salmonella. Unlike their Black Vulture relatives, Turkey Vultures almost never attack living prey unless they are defending themselves or their young.

Turkey Vultures live in large family groups. There will be multiple generations of birds that look for food and roost together.



Turkey Vultures are solar powered! Not really but you will often find a vulture standing erect, wings spread in the sun, presumably to warm up, cool off, or dry off. Some theories suggest this is also a way to rid themselves of mites or parasites.

Turkey Vultures do have some nifty defense mechanisms for when they are threatened. They can projectile vomit the contents of their stomach or projectile defecate up to 6 feet away from their body. They also will urinate on their legs to warm up or cool off depending on the weather.



## Get the Lead Out

By Taryn

Raptors have many challenges that they face when they are attempting to survive in the wild, and many of them unfortunately come from a conflict with humans in one way or another. Some are direct: they are hit by cars, fly into wind turbines, or get caught in fishing line and it's helpful to show people the impact we have upon them. But when the conflict is indirect it often makes it more challenging because there isn't a true cause and effect. Some indirect conflicts are when we cut down trees and remove a nesting home for owls, we try to get rid of pests around our house by putting out rodenticide, but one of the most devastating ways is lead poisoning.

We typically see lead poisoning through a couple different ways. The first is birds that are eating fish that may have a lead sinker in or attached to its body and it then gets ingested by the raptor or shorebird. The other way is through lead shot that is often found in wounded or dead animals and gut piles that are left by hunters or people shooting at "nuisance" animals. This affects raptors and other wild animals when they ingest the tainted food. Waterfowl, diving ducks and especially Trumpeter Swans are also at risk of ingesting spent shot or even lead sinkers that may be on the ground when they forage for food in sediments.

It only requires a miniscule amount (see picture) to create toxic levels of lead poisoning in the bird's body and it is almost always toxic. Most times, by the time the bird is noticed and brought to a

rehabilitator, their body has been fighting against the poison too long. If they are brought to a rehabilitator in time, the procedure for treating lead poisoning is extremely tough on the body and does not often work because it's most effective when the symptoms are caught early.

But there is hope because we can make a change to help save these amazing creatures from the effects of lead. The first is to change from using lead sinkers to non-toxic alternatives such as tin, bismuth, steel and tungsten-nickel alloy sinkers. These are readily available at most commercial sporting goods stores, making them easily accessible for sporting and recreational use. By asking hunters to change their shot from lead to either copper or stainless steel, this can mitigate the effects of these birds accidentally ingesting tainted food sources. Ammunition companies now make these alternatives readily available and at a price that is comparable to lead.

We can do much to help the world around us, and something as small as picking up fishing line and changing away from lead sinkers and shot have global impacts. If we get the word out to get the lead out, we can save the lives of the animals for generations to come.

*Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.*  
— Rachel Carson

# Medina Raptor Center

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Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

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### Our Wish List

Some of the items we are in need of are: forever stamps, gas cards, gift cards from office product stores, Home Depot gift cards, computer paper, bird seed-cardinal mix for rehabbing songbirds, paper towels, non-latex gloves, and much more. You can find our full wish list on our website or on Amazon.com.

Visit [MedinaRaptorCenter.org](http://MedinaRaptorCenter.org) to learn more about donating.

### How Can You Help?

Our wish list and Bird Sponsorship information are available online at [MedinaRaptorCenter.org](http://MedinaRaptorCenter.org).

Checks should be made out to The Medina Raptor Center and mailed to PO Box 74, Spencer, OH 44275.

Help us save stamps and opt to receive your Newsletter or Sponsorship through email! Or update your address to continue receiving newsletters.

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