



Hoo's Woods Raptor Center

Newsletter April 2010

Photo: Dianne Moller (holding a merlin falcon) with her mother Ruby Scoviak at the Harbor House Assisted Living in Clinton, Wisconsin

A Mother's Inspiration

After a long cold winter, spring is sure a welcome breath of fresh air as temperatures begin to rise and tulips begin to bloom. Many people ask me, "How in the world did you ever become interested in raptors?" The credit would have to go to my mother. As a young girl growing up in the city limits of Beloit, I would sometimes complain of boredom. My mom would tell me, "Go outside and look around at what nature has to offer. If you are still bored we'll take a walk to the mall." Funny, I can't remember a single occasion of us ever walking to the mall. My mother would take my brother and me to a nearby creek to catch snakes, frogs, and fish. Sunday mornings she would wake us up early and we'd head to Carver's Rock or Big Hill's Park. We'd help mom cook bacon and eggs over an open fire before exploring the woods and wading through the streams.

I can still recall the days when it was a rarity to spot a hawk or eagle. This was mainly due to the ill effects of an insecticide (DDT) banned since 1972. When taking an afternoon drive, mom always kept an eye to the sky and made sure to point out a hawk or eagle. I've been fascinated with birds of prey ever since.

For years my mom donated her time with feeding, caring, and handling birds until three years ago when diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. She now resides in a nearby assisted living facility, Harbor House, in Clinton. Some days when visiting my mother, I bring an education bird to share with the residents and staff. Her favorite continues to be the American Kestrel. Tiny but mighty; just like my mom. It's amazing how the birds can inspire people, just as my mom inspired me. I'd like to dedicate this newsletter issue to my mother, Ruby Scoviak, who taught me to care, to appreciate, and embrace all living things.

Sincerely,
Dianne Moller
Director of Hoo's Woods

MISSION STATEMENT: Hoo's Woods is a non-profit 501(c)(3) raptor education project located in Southern Wisconsin. Active since 1998 our mission is:

- To make education both meaningful and fun, while creating an atmosphere fostering respect for our land and the stewardship of all living things.
- To educate schools and the public through the use of birds or prey and falconry birds
- To provide an educational opportunity to understand and appreciate the co-existence between wildlife and man and the importance in preserving the world in which we live.

Hoo's Woods News Update:

Your financial support allows us to move forward with our goals and objectives. We ask for your continued support in order that we might further our environmental education and quality care for the birds.

Here are a few of our goals for 2010:

- **To construct two additional cages.**
- **To seek opportunities to expand my knowledge by attending various conferences offered across the nation. Some of these would be very beneficial to enhance our programs, further my rehab skills and aid in conservation efforts.**
- **Purchase a projector compatible with laptop computer for programs**
- **Purchase two new freezers**
- **Develop new education materials for the classroom**
- **Have available two raptor education traveling trunks filled with mounted specimens, hands on tools and raptor education materials**

Raffle Winners: In December 2009 we held a fund raising raffle to benefit our center. Prizes were awarded to two lucky winners. Congratulations to winners **John Kordatsky** and **Bob Kimball**. John: winner of a behind the scenes tour of our facility for ten guests, Bob: winner of a beautiful golden eagle print. Thank you to those who participated in this event.

E-Newsletter: Hoo's Woods believes it is important to consider our environmental impact. We would like to begin providing a full color newsletter in email format to reduce our use of paper. You can go green with Hoo's Woods by signing up for our email newsletter. This will allow more of your donated money to go directly to helping the birds. Signing up is easy. Simply send an email to Dianne at falco5@ticon.net stating you would like to sign up for an electronic copy of our newsletter. Please include your full name and email account(s) you would like added. For those that prefer the paper newsletter form in black and white, we plan to continue this service as well.

Landfill Burned Hawks: I'm pleased to report there have been no further occurrences of burned raptors reported at the Janesville Landfill since modifications were made to the methane burners.



It's That Time Again - Leave Babies Be!

Just last week we admitted our first Great Horned Owl chick of the season. It was likely the young bird blown out of the nest due to high winds. Fortunately the location of the nest was identified and the young owl was safely reunited with its parents. It is inevitable as spring arrives, some of you will find infant wildlife. Always make sure infant wildlife really need you to intervene. Wild parents are not with the young at all times. Like humans, they need to get to the grocery store too. Watch and observe before you take the young bird or mammal away from its home territory. We ask that you please do not attempt to raise infant wildlife yourself. Wild

animals do not make good pets and it's illegal. Imprinting can occur within the first two weeks of an animal's life. This critical period is when they learn to recognize their own species by focusing on their parents. An imprinted bird or mammal will never recognize its own species and often will never breed, display aggressive behaviors and never understand the dangers of predators. It is also important for young raptors to learn to use their feet so they can kill for themselves. If a nest is destroyed you can simply use a plastic container or basket similar in size and place it in the tree or bush where you found the nest. Be sure to securing it safely. It is a myth that once you touch a baby bird or mammal its parents will reject it. For more information please contact us or a wildlife center, local humane society or a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources office near you.



Keeping Your Birdfeeders Clean

As the seasons move from winter to spring many bird species begin their long and amazing migratory journeys. Often, they stop at bird feeders for added nutrition along the way. Many of us maintain bird feeders in our yards and enjoy watching our normal backyard birds, as well as some new or unexpected avian visitors. Keeping our bird feeders and bird baths clean is an important ongoing responsibility that is especially significant during times of migration.

If feeders are left unclean, birds can develop Salmonella infection. Birds may contract these bacteria by eating food or water contaminated with infectious feces, through direct contact with infected birds, or by feeding at tube feeders where their eyes can come in contact with a contaminated feeder. While all species are susceptible to these bacteria the most commonly affected species appear to be American Goldfinches, House Sparrows, Common Redpolls, and Pine Siskins. Smaller raptors such as Kestrels, Merlin's and Cooper's hawks that prey on smaller birds such as sparrows can become infected as well, often resulting in death.

Cleaning your feeders regularly can help stop the spread of this activity. Remove old seed and thoroughly wash and disinfect your feeders, letting them completely dry before refilling with fresh seed. .

One suggestion for quick and easy cleaning is to take them along with you the next time you visit the carwash. Doing our part, will allow us to watch and appreciate the beautiful avians that visit our yards this spring.

Adopt a Raptor for A Year

Support the Hoo's Woods educational program through a donation or by Adopting a Raptor. You will receive a receipt for your tax records, and a photo of your raptor with a life history included. Your tax deductible donation of \$50.00 includes adopting one of the following raptor species: bald eagle, golden eagle, barn owl, barred owl, great horned owl, short eared owl, screech owl, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, American kestrel, red-tailed hawk, rough-legged hawk, or vulture.

Costs in maintaining these raptors include:

Food Purchases: whole quail, chickens, mice, rats

Freezer Space: running non-stop

Enclosure Maintenance: perches, screening, heat & fans

Daily Care: 365 days worth of food, butchering , feeding, watering, maintaining a healthy and clean environment

Insurance: to allow for birds in the classroom

Driving to Programs, etc: nearly 10,000 miles last year

Web Site: constant updates, registration of domain name, web-related technical assistance

Paperwork: to maintain four Federal & State permits, program information, budget, and correspondences, special events, solicit sponsorship, magazine articles

YES, I want to sponsor Hoo's Woods with this tax-deductible contribution:

Name _____

Address _____

Contribution amount or Adopted Raptor _____

Please remit to: Hoo's Woods, P.O. Box 21, Milton, WI 53563

Our Raptor programs are available to public and private groups. If you are interested in a raptor program please contact us at falco5@ticon.net or 608-883-2795

We visit many schools, scouts, libraries and community events. Here are a few of the places we've recently visited; *St. John's Vianney School, Evansville Middle School, Beloit Public Library, Dyslexic Children's Benefit Milwaukee, Cassville Eagle Day's, Hoard Museum Ft. Atkinson*

Upcoming Spring Public Raptor Programs:

Earth Day Celebration- UW- Rock County 11:00 am till noon – Janesville Wisconsin

Evansville Energy Fair 4:30- 8:00 pm Evansville High School

Janesville Renaissance Fair – May 15 & 16 Traxler Park Janesville

Thank You Raptor Backers!

Bud and Betty Albrecht
Joanne and John Anderson
David Arbuthnut
Jerry and Dianne Balas
Daniel Belstner
Joyce Blaszczyk
Marlene Brunner
Janice Burgi
Tom Carlson
Frank Court
Mark Davey
Rebecca Diedrick
Walter and Elizabeth Diedrick
Pat Debroux
Alan and Betty Dunwiddee
Ed and Leslie Foster
Jarrett and Ginny Goodman
Allison Halkey
Janet Hedtcke
Angela Hanson
Rodney and Carol Hirsch
Allison and Tom Hokinson
Mary Margaret Hosler
Kerry and Julie Hull
Dave and Patti Kania
John and Rebecca Kordatsky
Jean Kringle
Eileen Krysiak
Warren and Judy Kukla
Eric and Katie Kuznacic
Rick and Sharon Leach

Audrey Leslie
Donna Love
Jack and Joan Malin
John May
Diane Morea
John Nelson
Rod Oldenburg Family
Dan and Dianne Orth
Linda and Steve Otto
Dunnell Kendrick- Parker
Danny Pickens
Mike and Alice Reynolds
Dr. Eric Ratering
Bob and Ruth Ann Ries
Judy Riesterer
Angela Sanderson
Mark and Carrie Santos
Dr. Joan Schnabel
Betty Schoonover
Robert & Kimberly Simonis
Bernie Staller
Dr. Emily Stoddard
Ken Traxler
Rick and Robyn Tucker
Steve and Randi Vicenzi
Barry and Fran Von Falkenstien
Trisha Wagner
Dick and Carol Wanie
Marsha Watson
Thelma Wells
Nancy Whitney

Antonia Foundation
Basics Food Coop Janesville
Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin
Edgerton Piggly Wiggly- Dave and Sandy Kotwitz
Fair Meadows- Dr. Gary and Dr. Penny Shackelford
Fort Atkinson Wisconsin Conservation
Freedom Plastics
Gehrig Farms-Ray and Audrey Gehrig
Golden Kiwanis – Janesville
Grainger Corporation
Hillside Springs Hunt Club- Andy and Judy Walton
Bob Kimball Builders
Midwest Prairies- Ron and Marti Martin
Rock County Rough Riders
Tallgrass Restoration -Peter Layton
Terry Print Solutions-Mark and Mary Terry
Vitech Int'l Corporation-Steve and Randi Vicenzi
Wisconsin Energy Corporation Foundation Inc.
Steve Wright Agency

Medical Support

Dr. Diane Zilker, Token Creek Veterinary Clinic
Dr. Dean Rasmussen, All Care Animal Clinic -
Wisconsin Rapids

We apologize for any names omitted



Raptor Funnies: Two vultures board an airplane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at them and says, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, only one carrion (carry-on) allowed per passenger."



Featured Bird: Merlin Falcon

Last fall I spent a week banding migrating raptors with my friend Bruce Haak in the beautiful mountains of Idaho. Bruce is a senior biologist for the Idaho Fish and Game and author of *"Pirate of the Plains"* and *"The Hunting Falcon"*. It didn't take much convincing when Bruce invited me to return in February to assist him with his Merlin banding research. We spent several days driving from dawn to dusk searching for these tiny falcons. Several Merlins were located near large dairy farm feedlots where hundreds of starlings would congregate. Perched in a tree about ½ mile from a farm, the Merlin would take flight. In a speedy pursuit, this tiny falcon swoops and dives balling up the starlings until it catches prey in the air. The Idaho Fish and Game and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources permitted me to bring a Merlin to Wisconsin. I am pleased to report "Bon Bon" is flying with great enthusiasm. You can meet "Bon Bon" at our raptor education programs.

"Bon Bon" Merlin Falcon

Merlin facts:

- A small falcon, slightly larger than a kestrel, weighing from 6-7 ½ ounces.
- Habitat: boreal forests, prairies and shrub-steppes of North America and Eurasia.
- Diet: Small to medium birds
- History: In the sport of falconry during the middle Ages, the Merlin was flown in spectacular ringing flights in pursuit of Skylarks by the ladies of the court.

Raptor Lingo! Test Your Knowledge

buteo- large hawk with shortwings and short tails

carrion- road kill

cast- the pellet of feathers or fur disgorged by a raptor after completing the process of digestion

cast- to fly off a fist

cast- to restrain a raptor

cope- to file or shorten the beak or talons

crop-the vascular sac above the breastbone to store food (owls do not have a crop)

eyass- a nestling

fledge- a young birds first flight

hack-to fly free

haggard-a raptor in mature plumage

hallux- back toe of a raptor

longwing – a falcon (long pointed wings)

nares-the nostrils of a bird

nictitating membrane- third transparent eyelid that protects the eye

passage- a raptor less than a year old

shortwing- accipiter(smaller hawks with short wings and long tails)

tarsus- leg of a raptor between the foot and hock

yarak- ready to fly

Did you know a female falcon is called a "falcon" and a male falcon is called a "tiercel" ?

Hoo's Woods Raptor Center

April 2010

% Dianne Moller

P.O. Box 21

Milton, WI 53563

www.hooswoods.org

Inside this Edition:

[From the Director](#)

[News and Updates](#)

[Featured Bird](#)

[It's That Time Again.... and more!](#)

Newsletter Articles: Dianne Moller



Photo: Red-tailed Hawk

Solar powered transmitters can be applied to raptors to track migration routes. A red tailed hawk was reported to have migrated from Idaho to Mexico. Now that's a vacation!