



*"Madeline" our education bald eagle 4 years ago*  
Photo by Pat Fisher



*"Madeline" today in adult plumage*

## Hoo's Woods Raptor Center

*Newsletter Fall 2011*

P.O. Box 21, Milton Wisconsin 53563

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### **From the Director:**

It's been a very busy spring and summer with birds admitted to our facility. We were able to release many but unfortunately some were just too badly injured. I'd like to extend a big thank you to our veterinarian Dr. Diane Zilker, Token Creek Veterinary Clinic, and her staff for their service and dedication to helping these birds. We appreciate those individuals who recovered birds in need of medical care and transporting them to our center. Bringing the birds to us helps to reduce the cost of fuel expenses enabling us to utilize funds for other needs.

Thank you to those who attended our annual open house in June. It was a fun filled day with over 200 participants. This event allows folks the opportunity to meet the raptor gang and learn about our rehabilitation and education services we provide for the community. We hope to see you at next years' event.

As I was taking my usual morning walk the other day, I noticed hints of fall in the air. Cooler mornings and the sumac is turning red. Soon many birds will begin gathering to make their journey south for migration. Raptors migrate to follow their food source, not just because of the cold and snow. They use the thermals which are warm columns of air to provide a good lift. Raptors will follow these thermals up and then catch another allowing them to glide through the air without burning excess energy. Some raptors migrate to the southern parts of the U.S., while others go all the way to South America. Raptors mate for life and often pairs will winter in the same location. However some species like the peregrine and osprey will actually winter in different locations. Hmm... maybe they know something we don't!

Speaking of migration, I'll be doing a bit of my own this fall. In late October, I will be traveling to Belgium to spend a week learning about raptors and falconry in their country. I would like to thank those who made this experience possible and will be sure to bring you a full report when I return. From there, our family will be flying to California to attend our daughter Mandy's wedding. I will be wrapping up my traveling for the year attending the North American Falconers Association meet as a board member. Between meetings I hope to get out and take in the scenery and see some spectacular flights with falconers and their birds.

I hope you are able to get out and enjoy the fall season. Remember to keep your eye to the sky and take your camera with you! Dianne Moller

## Rescue Stories

We had many birds admitted this year. Here are just a few stories from recent months. We received numerous young owls and hawks that had blown out of nests during high winds and storms. Many of these birds were able to be relocated or placed with adult birds and later released. One of the more unique birds was this young “merlin” falcon, pictured right. Merlins are a tiny falcon, just slightly larger than the American Kestrel. They are an uncommon species usually found in northern Wisconsin. This merlin had blown out of a nest during a storm and had a broken wing. Folks that live in the area but were vacationing up north found the little falcon and brought it to our center. The merlin made a 100% recovery and is flying to new heights.



A juvenile male broadwing recovered near Whitewater had collided with a window. The homeowners heard a loud bang and found the bird in their yard unable to fly. Fortunately nothing was broken and after a period of recuperation, the hawk was released. Broadwings are generally found in dense forests such as the Kettle Moraine area. They migrate as far as South America in groups of hundreds. This is a spectacular sight to see as you can imagine.



This immature turkey vulture (you can see the downy feathers) was rescued by a policeman. He had been making his rounds and noticed a man with the bird and stopped to ask questions. It was later discovered the man had the bird in his possession illegally for weeks and had been abusing it. As a result the bird had multiple wounds, sprains and strains to its legs and wings. After weeks of treatment his wounds have healed but he is not releasable because he is imprinted (too habituated to humans). Law enforcement has dealt with the individual and the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife will allow us to keep the vulture at our facility as an education bird. He will be a wonderful addition to our raptor education programs.



During the weeks of extreme heat, we were very busy with birds like this great horned owl. The owl was found near Milton and brought to us by former wildlife rehabilitator Tom Wolfram. Although Tom no longer rehabs, he's still an animal lover. This owl had something called Trichomanosis, a fungus that swells and constricts the throat and airways. It is transmitted to raptors by eating pigeons that carry the disease. Pigeons get it from eating moldy bird seed. Fortunately the owl was found in time, successfully treated and released.

## Bird Collisions and Why It Happens



One of the most common questions I get asked is how do birds collide into such large objects like towers and wind turbines? To help answer this question, I'd like to share the following article published by *Science Daily*. This article and others may be viewed at [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com) I hope this answers some of your questions.

### ***Not So Eagle Eyed.....***

The problem of bird collisions is a serious concern for conservationists. Research suggests that bird mortality caused by collisions with human artifacts is

the largest unintended human cause of avian fatalities worldwide.

Collisions with large and prominent obstacles may even threaten the survival of endangered species. In Europe over a 16-year period it was estimated that approximately 25% of juvenile and 6% of adult White Storks *Ciconia ciconia* died annually from power line collisions and electrocutions. "From a human perspective it appears very odd that birds so often collide with large objects as if they don't see them. It is widely held that flight in birds is primarily controlled by vision, an idea captured by the phrase 'a bird is a wing guided by an eye,'" said Professor Graham Martin from Birmingham University. "However birds live in a different visual world to humans."

To get a clearer understanding of how birds view the world Professor Martin turned to sensory ecology, a field of study which investigates how sensory information underlies an animal's behavior and it's interactions with the environment. "Previously most proposed solutions to bird collisions only consider a human perspective of the problem," said Martin. "Put simply, it has been a matter of finding a solution to bird collision problems based upon making the perceived hazard more conspicuous to human observers, not birds." The research reveals that a subtle set of interrelationships exists between a bird's visual capacities, the interpretation of sensory information and the behavior of birds when flying in open airspace. "When in flight, birds may turn their heads to look down, either with the binocular field or with the lateral part of an eye's visual field," said Martin. "Such behavior results in certain species being at least temporarily blind in the direction of travel." Dr Martin also explores how avian frontal vision is tuned for the detection of movement, rather than spatial detail. When a bird is hunting this detection may be more important than simply looking ahead into open airspace. Birds also have a restricted range of flight speeds, for many birds it is simply impossible for them to fly slowly, making it difficult to adjust the rate of information they gain if visibility is reduced by rain, mist or low level lights. "Armed with this understanding of bird perception we can better consider solutions to the problem of collisions," said Martin. "While solutions may have to be considered on a species by species basis, where collision incidents are high it may be more effective to divert or distract birds from their flight path rather than attempt to make the hazard more conspicuous."

It may also be best to assume that birds are more likely to be looking down and laterally rather than forwards, meaning a signal placed on an obstacle may also be missed. Instead alerting sounds or signals placed a suitable distance from the hazard may be more efficient. "The human viewpoint provides just one way of appreciating and understanding the world. Yet such is the difference between human and birds' eye views that a human perspective on the problem of bird collisions is quite misleading," concluded Martin. "The evidence outlined in this study explains why some species are more vulnerable to collisions with obstacles than others, and helps to inform the development of guidelines for reducing collisions."

## "Tidbits"

### *A Lot of Life in an Old Tree*



This tree was hit and destroyed by lightning on the edge of our neighbor's property. The trunk was split wide open and the entire tree came crashing down. In my previous newsletter, I wrote a story about kestrels nesting on our property. This tree was their favorite place to perch. Attached to a limb was an old rope from a tire swing and ladder rungs still nailed in the trunk. I felt a sense of sadness as I thought about all the years that old tree provided use for animal and man. As I walked around to investigate I saw a nest of three

fledgling robins completely unharmed. They had been nesting inside the trunk. As soon as they saw the camera they took off flying as the parents were scolding me. I'm pleased to report that all three remained in the area while their parents continued to care for them.

### **Hoo's Woods Awarded Grant by the Wisconsin Energy Foundation**

On behalf of our board of directors, I want to thank the Wisconsin Energy Foundation for the generous grant awarded to Hoo's Woods. This grant will enable us to continue efforts in raptor education and preservation. Grants such as this are very needed and appreciated. Thank you for your support.

### **Projects Taking Shape**

Thanks to the grants we received this year from Alliant Energy Foundation, Wisconsin Energy Foundation, Vitech Int'l, and your contributions we were able to build a new flight cage for eagles (see photo next page). We were also able to purchase a new security system including a camera to observe patients from outside of the hospital room, storm windows for inclement weather, new upright freezer and print new education materials. We continue to seek funding for future projects to expand our raptor education display, new hospital cages, continuing education for staff and building new cages.

### **Booking Now: Fall and Winter Programs**

If you have enjoyed one of my raptor programs in the past please refer me to your friends and co-workers. You can help to expand our audience by downloading our new flier from our website [www.hooswoods.org](http://www.hooswoods.org) Another idea to consider would be to sponsor a membership for Hoo's Woods for your local Chamber of Commerce or Visitors and Convention Center. Let me know if you are interested.

## Look at Those Dirty Birds!

The Janesville Noon Rotary hosted the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Corn Roast and Mud Volleyball Tournament with fifty teams participating. Hoo's Woods and Lunatics Tackle and Bait jointly sponsored a team for this benefit fundraiser. Several of our volunteers, including our son David and his wife Alissa, made up part of the team. Although they didn't place in the finals, they gave it their all and showed good sportsmanship. Thanks guys and gals, we couldn't be more proud!



Pictured from left: Aaron, Alissa (our daughter-in-law) Ryan, David (our son), Sara, Nate, Travis, and Naomi

## Eagle Cage Addition



Thanks to our sponsors and your donations, we have been able to complete a much needed addition to our eagle cage. The construction of this project is credited in large part to my husband David. The existing structure was originally built by Eagle Scout Jacob Oldenburg with the help of his father Rod and several other scout volunteers. This addition will allow more space for our education eagle and other eagles admitted for rehabilitation. It will also provide a better viewing area for participants during our on-site tours.

## Hoo's Woods Wish List

Some supporters prefer to donate items. They feel it creates a more personal connection to our work and the birds. Here a few things you can donate to help:

### **Items needed immediately**

Gas Cards  
Menards Gift Card (building materials)  
Home Depot Gift Card (building materials)  
Staples or Office Max Gift Card  
Paper towels  
Freezer baggies

### **Medical Needs**

Syringes 1cc or 3cc  
Pedialyte – clear  
Topical Antibiotic  
Sterile electrolyte fluids

Please check back at our website as items vary throughout the year. Thank you!

# Sponsor a Raptor Program

This sponsorship program would make an ideal gift for that special person. The sponsorship packet includes: a professional photo of the raptor of your choice, an informational sheet and personalized certificate of sponsorship. 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, screech owl, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, American kestrel, red-tailed hawk, rough-legged hawk, merlin falcon or vulture.

Thank you for supporting the Hoo's Woods education program through a donation or by Sponsoring a Raptor.

## Costs in maintaining these raptors include:

**Utilities and 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, 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

## **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 inform and educate in the schools, scouts, community organizations, and general public regarding wildlife and habitat.
- To represent well our wildlife, those that cannot speak for themselves.
- To make education both meaningful and fun, while creating an atmosphere that fosters respect and stewardship of all living things.
- To provide an understanding and appreciation between man and wildlife and the need for co-existence.

**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**

**\*\*Newsletter articles and photos by Dianne Moller unless otherwise specified**