



RAPTORS OF THE ROCKIES

P.O. BOX 250, FLORENCE, MONTANA

Education Programs since 1988

Raptor Round-Up

www.raptorsoftherockies.org
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Photography and Book web site

NUMBER 57, JULY 2019

Sibley the Star!

Sibley the Peregrine's 600th program was June 18th at the Missoula Art Museum, our annual Raptors And Art Camp for kids. Joining our family in 2003 as a little baby from Springhill Falcon Breeders, she's also celebrated 816 tours for a total of 1416 appearances with kids, their parents and the public. She has also starred in 3 television films, so proud, Sib. Here she is standing in Subaru Number Six since we started in 1988, Sonora in the back seat.



Without a Bald Eagle nest to photograph this year, I had my camera ever-ready for hummingbirds and swallows, swifts, turkeys, wrens and Lewis's Woodpeckers. My favorites were a family of Great Horned Owls near-by and here is one youngster's first flight, or nearly so. They "branch" or leave the nest when still downy, so if you find one on the ground, stick it up in a tree. The parents are nearby, guaranteed. (more on page 5)

At MAM Week

Our Star has joined us for art week since she was young and Bev recalls pulling over when Sib got car sick on our trip to Charlo. Plus she skipped one year when she was laying eggs non-stop. Our fine artists are here standing in front of the gallery. My favorite was this portrait of Simon the Great Horned Owl who is posing in the background, created by Jaxson Holloway. Thanks Jax - this and your print are displayed in our house. Other models were Owen the Saw-whet and Sonora the Aplomado, all rewarded handsomely.



Kate Davis photos ©



Longest Winter in Memory

Okay, not really the longest but sure seemed that way with the Bitterroot as the epicenter for snowfall. We are so thankful to pal Mike DeNeve and his expertise on his skid steer, plowing us out repeatedly, and Pat Johnson to the rescue with firewood. With extreme cold we had several birds indoors for days, a mere 15 below outside. Mookie and Nico would beg at the living room window when they tired of playing in the snow. It was a great ski season, anyway.



MISSION STATEMENT

Raptors of the Rockies is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) raptor education project located in Western Montana. Four Federal and State Permits are required. Starting in 1988, our mission has been:

- * To educate schools and the public through the use of live birds - the falcons, hawks, eagles and owls used in raptor education and wildlife art programs;
- * To provide a lifetime of quality care to permanently disabled birds of prey and falconry birds;
- * To instill a sense of respect and admiration for these skilled hunters and to promote wildlife conservation and habitat preservation for our wild bird populations;
- * To encourage everyone to go outdoors.



Falcon meets her namesake, author and artist David Sibley, hero. We were so fortunate to meet up at Pine Butte Guest Ranch on the Rocky Mountain front nine years in a row. A Raptors program, cocktails, dinner, then birdwatching with The Man the following day. *Whew.*

Raptors And Art Camp

Bev Glueckert and I have been teaching this class for about 20 years - two days of drawing live birds then two days of creating life-size paper mâché raptors. We first began working with the Montana Natural History Center, who accidentally scheduled our week of art in a lecture hall at the University. No sweat, we conducted the sculpture section in the parking lot of the Botany building, everyone walking by enthralled and a crowd of fans. One youngster made a Snowy Owl almost as large as she was.

Bev and I drove up to Charlo for a one-day workshop for kids at the school, drawing, painting, and sculptures. It was really tricky getting everything to dry in time and the kids held their paper mâché birds up to the sun in the schoolyard as they ate their lunches. When the Missoula Art Museum was undergoing their major face-lift, we held camp at the Florence Building for two years in a row. Tricky again, with photos of kids and their sculptures taken out on Higgins Ave at noon when foot traffic at lunch was huge. Major kudos from the public and very proud artists.

Since then, the amazing space in the MAM has been perfect with students making everything from Pygmy-owl families to life size Bald Eagles in flight. We have even had one "extinct flightless Hesperornis, swimming the seas of the late Cretaceous Period." We tell the kids that we have been teaching this class for over 50 years and they don't

bat an eye. Several kids have informed me, "You're older than my Mom." I tell the kids that I am going to come and see that they still have their birds in ten years. Recently a 6 foot man at a convenience store said, "You're Kate, right? Sorry but my Mom threw my owl away when I went to college." True story.

This year we had four sets of siblings, all working together with harmony and synergy, mostly. Right is Scout Flores, who made our first ever Peacock sculpture.



Above: Our paper mâché raptors 2019 (plus a Western Meadowlark and Peacock.) A Ferruginous Hawk, two kestrels, two Snowy Owls, an Aplomado Falcon, a Boreal Owl, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, and Sibley the Peregrine.

Right: Lachlan Lurgio made a Turkey Vulture- a, bright red head, pipe-cleaner feet, black feathered wings, and googly eyes. The kids studied all the reference books and skins in plastic cases for realism, but we did have a few birds with mohawks this year; we always do.



Programs for Backcountry Horsemen of Missoula & MUD & MCAT

We had a fun evening for the annual gathering for Horse Packing People, and some history there. In my handwritten-on-yellow-lined-paper program records, pre-computer:

**20 Jan 1989/ Backcountry Horsemen of Missoula/ Mike Chandler
80 adults, 20 children**

Lo and behold Mike Chandler was in attendance, along with pal Smoke Elser and several others that were there in the United Methodist Church 30 years ago! Smoke is a Conservation Hero, instrumental in creating and promoting eco-friendly, low impact horse packing. He has won scads of awards, plus induction in the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame, and Missoula Conservation Roundtable's Lifetime Conservation Award (hey- I won that too in 2017, at Smoke's home!)



MUD - Missoula Urban Demonstration Project had a day of vendors, organizations, and programs for Earth Day at their headquarters off Russell Street, and we finished up the festivities.



Scott Ranf (left) had been here a bunch of times with filmmaking camps and was filming this day. Steve Glueckert was the Host with the Most, the show "Look Before You Speak," interviews with artists in the area.



We have been pals and partners with Missoula Community Access Television (MCAT) for years, starting with young filmmakers camps. Then I filmed and produced 20 minute shows on birds, episodes broadcast twice a week. We've done interviews with General Manager Joel Baird "What's Up Missoula" and Steve Glueckert for his "Look Before You Speak" program.

Steve and Scott Ranf came over in May to film a half hour show about my printmaking and sculptures. I even ran off a monoprint on the printing press. We chatted for over an hour, so might end up as two shows! Sorry about the editing, Scott. Joel was here the following week for a show about Raptors of the Rockies.

Neil Falcon Wells filmed and icon Joel Baird interviewed for his show "Out and About." We had an intro in the office with Sonora then great tour of the facilities and sculptures.



Kate Davis ©

Helena Merlins!

Our friend Dan Ellison invited us to Helena to photograph this Merlin nest in a downtown park. I just drove 2 1/2 hours but Nick Dunlop flew in from Central California, Bruce Haak drove the 8 hours from Boise and they stayed the week. Three young are in an old crow's nest at the top of this spruce tree (check out the cones!) and parents bringing in birds from all directions. Great fun, despite all the darned rain. Really roughing it with a picnic table, access to a rooftop, and breweries right down the road. What a friendly town and thanks for the diligent Merlin observations over these many years, Dan. Bruce has authored a book on these little falcons, finishing touches with some of Nick's photos. Can hardly wait for that title to come out.



Dan, Nick, and Bruce when the rain let up.



Florence Elementary 1st grade

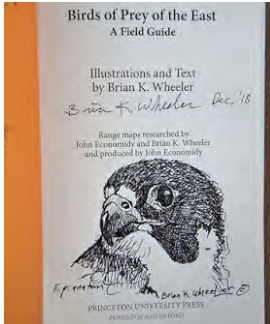


Redux at Florence Elementary twelve years later, remembering our hero 1st grade teacher and "Bug Man" Byron Weber of MTPRadio fame who tragically passed in 2010. A gentleman and scholar. Thanks Mrs. Verlanic and kids.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2018

Brian's Sketch in West

I had Buteo Books mail a copy of *Birds of Prey of the West* to author Brian Wheeler and look what he sketched on the title page! Aplomado? Yep! My favorite title of the last many years. Peregrine in *Birds of Prey of the East*, cool.



SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019

Peregrines for Mom!

We have spent many a Mother's Day up the Blackfoot River, and this time joined by sister Betsy and Jay Sumner. It may have taken a few hours but we were rewarded with the male and female Peregrine flying around. Perplexing because she should be on eggs now and not out gallivanting. Both birds disappeared upstream and we are scratching our heads still. Our guess is that they are "recycling" or nesting again after the first attempt failed. We'll be back - it's a tough job, but someone has to do it...



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2019

Goodbye Evita

Our dark morph Swainson's Hawk had to be euthanized, a very difficult task but had to be done. She had lingering beak problems and somehow broke her lower mandible over the weekend. At 15 years of age, she was a wonderful educator here at the Raptor Ranch. Evita decided "no travel crates for me" a long time ago, and at least skipped that migrating-to-Argentina-and-back thing. That's how she got her name, "Don't cry for me Argentina." She is missed, and a cry for her.



THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2019

Downtown Nigel

Our host Beau Larkin and I had a walk down Front Street on our way to the Florence Building, program for the Kiwanis Club upstairs. Oh, we had Nigel on a glove. "That's something you don't see every day," was one comment we heard. Send a Newsletter to Senator Tester?



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019

My Favorite Songbird

We have an infrequent and unpredictable driveway denizen now, a Northern Shrike - the falcon of the songbirds. I have been "chumming" for House Sparrows, tossing whatever seed the pigeons don't eat in a spot outside the living room window. I had hoped to attract predators to photograph, namely Merlins and Sharp-shinned Hawks. This year a shrike showed up, migrant from the far north. And for some reason terrible, out-of-focus photos taken from inside through an open window. These guys eat birds and mammals all winter, cool. More pictures and news on the way, promise - this is my latest obsession!



TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2019

New Book! Sort Of...

I have begun work on the New/Revised *Falcons of North America*, originally published eleven years ago from pals at Mountain Press Publishing Company here in Missoula and out of print for years. In 2006 I began writing this title, Sibley standing on her perch in the office, jazz on the stereo, books and reference piled high. Now beginning work on the New/Revised version with Mountain Press and layout, a hundred brand new photos from Rob Palmer, Nick Dunlop and me, larger trim size, and new science! The cover won't really say "New and Improved," just kidding, but maybe a new photo.



Great Horned Owl Family



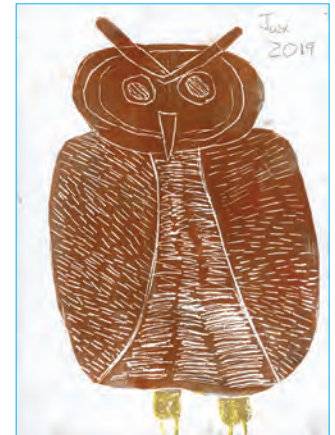
Kate Davis photos ©



This one is in our new 2020 calendar

Tom and I sort of stumbled upon a GHO family and in this first shot I never even saw the adult peeking around the Ponderosa. The adult gave me this fatigued look, then retreated to the forest. We went back to that spot the next day and looks like three fledglings. One flew across a big opening and actually landed on a limb and not on a leaf. They know how to fly, just not how to land. One was sure curious, watching the dogs like a hawk.

The young stick around and beg food from their parents for four, even five months. People often tell me that they have heard Screech-Owls but I suggest it's a beggar begging. Great Horned Owls scream like hawks, young letting their parents know where they are and to indicate stress or danger. Arthur Bent in 1938 described some calls as "weird, hollow-toned and idiotic laughter." They meow like cats, and a few years ago I recorded Jillian barking sort of like a dog, two, three, and four "yups" in quick succession. By September and October they have finally figured out the food-thing and disperse, often driven away by territorial owls. That is if they have survived, as raptors have a very high mortality rate, even 60-70%. I always say, they have to catch things that don't want to be caught!



Monoprint by Jaxson Holloway

NO EAGLES THIS YEAR



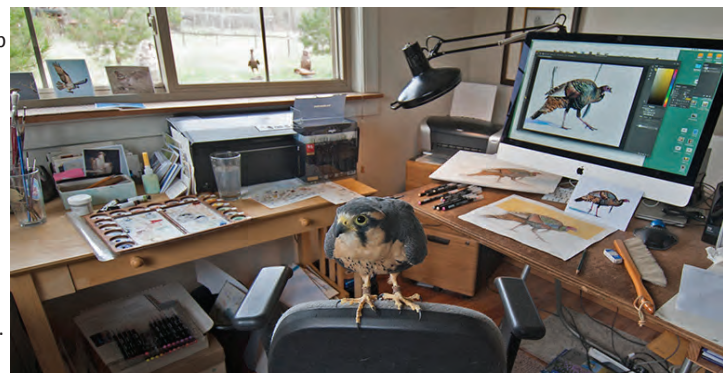
We lucked out for six years in a row with a Bald Eagle nest in the backyard, a six minute walk from the house to the beach on the Bitterroot River. Beginning in 2012 the nest has fledged young, even three eagles for three years, once on the 4th of July, how patriotic. I've taken thousands of photos, very humorous to one friend, Barry Gordon. HA! But last spring - nothing, even though they were hanging around. This year was a productive nest...of Canada Geese. It was funny to see the long neck, a goose peering up from the sticks like a periscope and mate perched in the tree. The babies bail from there all at once, and Ospreys can still use the nest after they have evacuated. Eagles, however, nest earlier, first part of March over here and these have disappeared, maybe nesting elsewhere. Hope they come back (the eagles, that is.)



Ospreys are Everywhere



My new print was inspired by a trip through the bird refuge with Tom, who suggested that I stop for a little flock of Wild Turkeys in the deep snow. My painter friend Hans Peeters thought that one of the photos was "my finest work," mistaking it for an etching! So here goes: dry-point on plastic and rolled on ink background. Colored with gouache paint, iridescent watercolors, and finishing up with Arteza Real Brush Pens. I made an edition of eight, and Sonora supervising the process in the office. After that I made a Peregrine on a cliff, still fine-tuning that one.





Simon, a 2-year-old great horned owl, poses for an art class at the Missoula Art Museum on Saturday morning. Kate Davis of Raptors of the Rockies teamed up with Bev Beck Glueckert to offer a "Raptors and Art for Adults," a drawing and monoprint-making day at the museum.

Raptors and Art for Grown-ups

The Missoulian Newspaper joined us for a story entitled **Talons and Ink: Missoula Art Museum hosts unique class with live raptors**. Three hours of drawing and bird talk, excellent artists in attendance and we'll do that again, Bev Glueckert and me + Sib and Simon. Hank Smith sketches on a colored background, which happened to be paper shopping bags. He told me that way he has an unlimited supply and doesn't need to scrimp! Lots of mediums and photos for reference. And printmaking on the big press. A perfect Saturday in March.



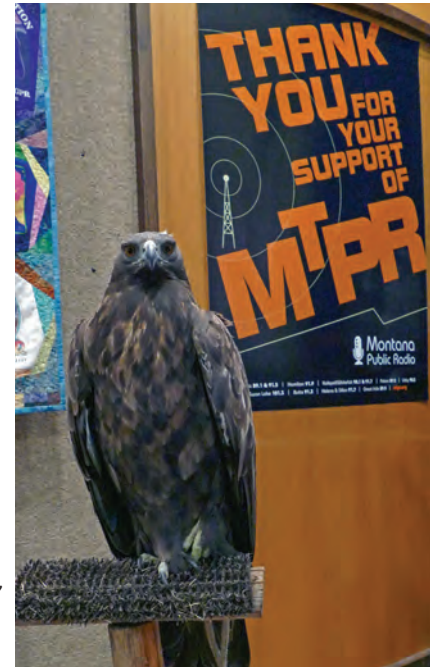
Montana Public Radio



Kate Davis photos ©



About the most fun I have ever had on the radio (almost always with birds) was guest hosting Jazz Sessions on Montana Public Radio with Annie Garde, Terry Conrad's Thursday show. I used to tape it on cassettes when I was in college! We had a pile of CD's and played Monk, Mingus, Blakey, Hubbard, Turrentine, Getz, Henderson, and Oscar Peterson, for sure - Porgy & Bess! We even featured some Joe Zawinul "My People" world music, Catherine Russel, and Lee Morgan, Annie finishing up with an excellent jazz Doris Day, no kidding.



What a good boy, Nigel the Golden Eagle, showing off on the radio Pea Green Boat. I am always amazed at how calm he acts, pulling up a foot to get comfortable, looking around, waiting for me to quit talking bla, bla, bla. It's like he does this for a living.



The trees and shrubs have grown so much that every summer I do a major trim job so that the birds get enough sun. The first few years they just had shade cloth. Jillian's big building is almost totally covered with bushes and vines, all planted when we relocated in 2001, thanks to Mike and Kim Thomas, Jade and Tanner (little kids back then!) and Bitterroot Restoration. That first building on the left for Simon and Sonora was built many years later when we needed space for Chesty the Harris's Hawk.



In January I folded 720 cards, made by Pyramid Printing in Missoula, available from us, Rockin Rudy's and the Good Food Store! Some new ones and 90 images total. Hey, check out the photography web site

raptorsoftherockies.net

Our Stellar Teaching Team with the years they joined us



Sonora the Aplomado Falcon 2013



iPod the Northern Pygmy-Owl 2010



Owen the Northern Saw-whet Owl 2012

Your generosity helps us with EVERYTHING!

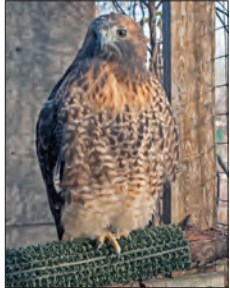
- Daily Care, 365 days/year
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Sonny the Bald Eagle 2011



Jillian the Great Horned Owl 2003



Simone the Red-tailed Hawk 2017



Sibley the Peregrine Falcon 2003



Nigel the Golden Eagle 1999



Ansel the Gyrfalcon/Peregrine 2004

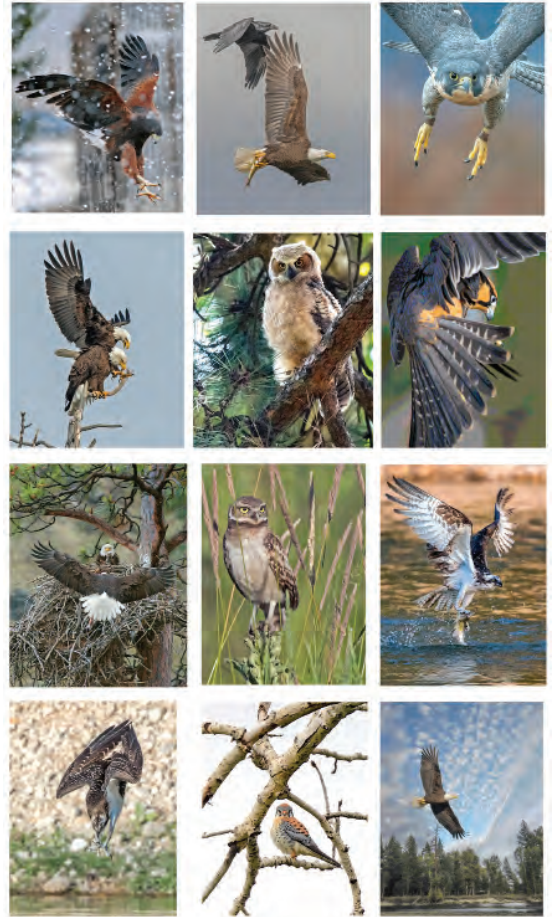


Ella and Wes the American Kestrels 2013 sister & brother



Simon the Great Horned Owl 2017

New Calendar for 2020!



We'll have these available soon by Pyramid Printing. All photos are by Kate, taken nearby the Raptor Ranch. \$15 as a fundraiser for our program

Many thanks to our fine Raptors Friends, and superb Raptor Backers!

www.raptorsoftherockies.org



Books available and a proceed of sales to benefit Raptors of the Rockies.



YES, I want to sponsor the Raptors of the Rockies with this tax-deductible contribution,

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