



RAPTORS OF THE ROCKIES

P.O. BOX 250, FLORENCE, MONTANA

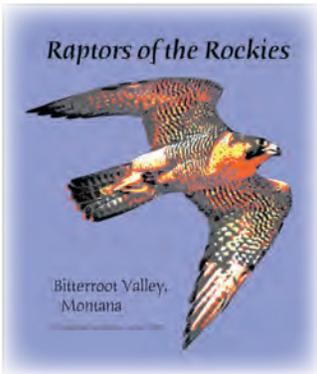
Education Programs since 1988

Raptor Round-Up

www.raptorsoftherockies.org
See a color version of the newsletter
www.raptorsoftherockies.com
Photography and Book web site

NUMBER 55, MARCH 2018

We Did It - *Thirty* Years!



GRAHAM
THE BARRED
OWL 2000



kate Davis photos ©



Our Teaching Team Since the Start

Top left: Sibley the Peregrine graces our most popular T-shirt, 2007.
Graham the beloved Barred Owl and mascot of Franklin Elementary School.
Our first Great Horned Owl Bobo taken in 1989 with slide film. Named not for the species Latin name, but for a friend we had that slept all day, nicknamed "Bobo."
Clive the Red-tail, circa 1988, our first hawk and "he" laid an egg at age five.
Left: Max the Golden Eagle, who accompanied me to every assembly for a dozen years, now age 29, retired from travel, and really cranky.
Crackity Jones the Western Screech, our favorite owl and named for a song by the Pixies.



We did the math and yes, just completed 30 years of Raptors of the Rockies, and a little Round-Up to reflect on the highlights. Looking back at our annual reports from the early 1990's I wonder why and how I managed to keep it together without going crazy - four assemblies in a row, three schools a day, seven birds per program in one of the seven Subarus I've had since the start. And the birds - an Osprey named Flipper,

Cooper's Hawk called Alice (get it?), and the myriad with monikers for Formula One race car drivers (Mika Hawkinen) and jazz musicians like Miles (Davis.) These birds are our family and always so awful to lose a member.

We could tally the miles, mice, quail, squirrels, MEAT and money that this outfit has consumed but would probably scare us to death. I can tell you that we've enjoyed 1676 programs so far, 132,000 people and all thanks to our incredible Teaching Team birds, Raptor Backers, and kind understanding from Tom and Mom!



The first Raptor Ranch was on the Clark Fork River in Clinton, a rental property and remodeled barns and corrals. Then the big move and we bought 10 acres on the Bitterroot River in Florence, all new enclosures constructed with bird comfort and safety as the rule. All of the planted trees, shrubs and vines now provide ample shade, and sure makes me proud.



Raptors of the Rockies
P.O. Box 250, Florence, MT 59833
Educational Programs since 1988

Raptor Round-Up
Number 8 June 2001

www.raptorsoftherockies.org Check out our web site

Raptors Relocates !



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.

Schools Circa 2006

In the olden Days of Overly Ambitious Driving we had a Promo Package for fundraising support. Here was a visual with dots on all of the 120 schools we had visited, from Thompson Falls to Dillon.

I was doing a program for a teachers' conference in Missoula and was asked if we could pay a visit to Stanford, Montana 250 miles away. I said, "Sure. Pick me up in an airplane in Stevensville." Little did I dream it would happen, as the person standing next to that teacher was state pilot, Jeanne MacPherson! She flew over from Helena and off we went with six birds in kennels. Landing on the just-snowplowed runway we were met at the school by 250 k-12 students, their parents, and guests - all of Stanford! Jeanne gave a nice talk on aviation history, then the Teaching Team Rock Stars. Back to Stevi just at dark, a sucker hole in the clouds and home with dreams of being a pilot some day. Could happen...



Program On the Left Coast



The 29th Annual Skagit Flats Raptor Survey, Team 4 with Head of Operations/Hero

In February I was invited to be the keynote speaker for a raptor census on the Washington Coast north of Seattle, and what a thrill. This was the greatest audience EVER for a PowerPoint Raptors of the Rockies program, and thanks Bud Anderson for the invitation and privilege. Bud heads the Falcon Research Group, and I met him at a conference in Veracruz Mexico in 2006, The River of Raptors migration location. Since then we have been the best of friends with my inclusion of his Southern Cross Peregrine Project in my falcon book, radiotagging tundra birds in Chile and following them to breeding grounds in the Arctic Circle. One bird made the loop migration 8 times (!) her transmitter finally quitting as she returned to Chile in November 2016! Absolutely amazing.

In the photo below Bud's intro and pal Ed Deal is tallying the census numbers for the morning. One group saw 127 Bald Eagles, no fair. Totals for the 100 or so hawkophiles were 706 Bald Eagles, 248 Red-tails, 128 Harriers, 32 Rough-legs, and a surprising 39 kestrels, birds that had been declining in numbers but a good showing that day. And, drum-roll please, 15 Peregrines, Peale's the one I saw. I was signing books at the finale of the program and a man shook my hand and offered, "You should do this for a living." I couldn't tell if he was kidding. I was encouraged to produce a new book with Mountain Press- *Falcons of North America: New and Revised*, the first version out in 2008.



A view out the window, and NOT Mount Rainier in Seattle. Sunday our afternoon flight made it to Missoula, circled high over the airport for an hour and headed back to Seattle. The runway was too icy we were told. I had planned on feeding the birds when I got home, and thankfully Tom took care of that Monday morning. Then an afternoon flight to Portland and home by 8 pm. Flight Attendant of the Year with Alaska Airlines - Jan Bozich who helped sooth my panic attack when I realized the birds were skipping another day of feeding. They were just fine, by the way, But thanks Jan, plus Gretchen and Pat for putting me up a second night. Or putting up with me.



"I'd like to thank the Academy," with presenter Brendan Moynahan.

Communication Award from the Wildlife Society

A whirlwind trip to Butte, America in February for the Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Conference at the Copper King. I was just in time to attend the poster session and the banquet to win this award! Thanks and sure saw lots of and lots of old friends from all around the state. Another surprise award and so thankful. Congratulations to Kristi DuBois, recent retiree from FWP, for the Distinguished Service Award, so deserving.



My plaque isn't really hanging on a tree in the front yard, promise.



Sonora the Aplomado Falcon comes inside every day for a meal, and has several favorite hangouts - a house plant and this metal fish when she's ready to go back outside. Spoiled rotten?

What is Happenin' Here?



Keith Fialcowitz photo ©

(Answer: Sibley flying over photographer Keith's head)

Kate Davis
February 27 at 7:57pm · 🌐 · 📷

Just got thrilled re-visiting this video from 2012 - the Tower of Power at the University of Montana Flight Lab, Sibley our Peregrine flying 28 feet straight up. 5000 frames a second, captured by some folks from the BBC and a clip played at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Host is Dr. Bret Tobalske. She did that flight 8 times in a row. Better yet, look at our YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/raptorsrockies>



7.5K Views
Like Comment Share

Program Numbers

YEAR	Numbers	PROGRAMS	TOURS
1988	500	10	
1989	1087	15	
1990	4615	24	
1991	1340	24	
1992	3737	46	
1993	3214	31	
1994	4052	52	
1995	7655	74	
1996	5707	61	
1997	5920	72	
1998	5062	76	not recorded
1999	7576	77	48
2000	7453	78	48
2001	4962	69	77
2002	5492	73	86
2003	7643	82	61
2004	6666	72	66
2005	4412	52	52
2006	5288	63	64
2007	3926	54	46
2008	5317	60	50
2009	2303	52	45
2010	4405	69	54
2011	5466	72	50
2012	5123	56	60
2013	2664	57	49
2014	2663	51	51
2015	2680	50	42
2016	3025	50	36
2017	1634	48	36
	131,587	1670	1021

Young and old alike

We keep track of all the details for our annual permit reports to the Montana FW&P and US Fish & Wildlife Service.



With Raptors of the Rockies, Osprey platforms were installed at Riverside Health Care of web cam fame, and John and Marna Abbott's (top) plus one up in Frenchtown and Tarkio - all thanks to Northwestern Energy friends. Gratitude especially to NWEnergy Ryan Gibbs who retrofitted the power poles at our property and installed a new one that was accidentally knocked down by a bus with students.

A couple favorite Facebooks featuring Sibley. The most popular was posted last month, video clip currently showing 8000 views. She flew the next day at the MPG Ranch and the film crew asked for "quiet on the set to record the crunching bits," as she ate a quail. Sib also starred in a film for Ducks Unlimited Television and in 550 programs with Raptors around the west.



❖ Upcoming Public Raptor Programs:

Saturday, June 02 Ninepipes Museum of Early Montana, Charlo: How about a photography exhibition at one of our favorite museums - Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge in the Flathead Valley? Great idea and First Saturday Artist Visit from 2:00-4:00 pm with Sibley the Peregrine. Free, in the Gift Shop and books for sale as well. Hey, bookmarks for our friends and see you there. A bunch of new framed photos, birds galore.

Monday, June 11-15 Birds And Art, Missoula Art Museum: Kids! Our annual week of drawing live birds for two days, then paper mâché sculptures for the next two days, finishing with printmaking on Friday. Me and Bev Beck Glueckert each day, starting at 10 am 'till noon at the museum. Sign up soon as this class fills quickly.

Saturday, June 23 Grand Opening of Milltown State Park: After removing the dam, a Superfund clean-up, and new plaza and overlook, the Grand Opening. I'll be on hand with a few birds, and details to come.

Saturday, July 28 Bannack State Park: Return to our favorite Ghost Town! Program in the campground starting at 2 pm sharp, birds and books on hand. In the beautiful Big Hole Valley near Dillon (sort of) and open to everyone.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017

Colleen Tells Her Tale

We just had an evening gig for the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club/ Bitterroot Audubon in Hamilton, packed crowd. Right after my PowerPoint, Colleen Powell spun the yarn about picking up our new Red-tail Simone on East Side Highway back in June. The main problem was the hawk nailed her in the hand and had to be extracted in the emergency room in Hamilton an hour later! The 87-year-old Colleen made a grab for her legs, so I pretended that we were going to re-enact the event right then and there when I got Simone out of her kennel. Colleen didn't go for that idea. A fun program and almost finished for the year, one more on Thursday on Montana Public Radio from 4-5 pm.



SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 2018

Storm from SnowBowl

Yesterday a huge storm rolled in about 2 pm, Tyler Roady, Kim Thomas (photo credit) and I were watching thinking it would just hit the Bitterroot, but it struck the Bowl with a fury and thunder, shutting down the lifts. We were looking for a ski I lost on Sunday. Yep, popped off near the bottom of Longhorn and never could find it, probably in

the trees on skiers right. A futile search and it looks like I'll have to come back in the spring, bummer. On Sunday as I walked by all of the masses watching the Gelande jumping from the deck at the bar, everyone shouted,

"Where's your other ski?" then even more in the lodge and locker, the same question. I explained that I lost it and the top responses were, "Where is it?" and "Why don't you go get it?" Lost means it's lost. Nowhere to be found. Like in a Lost and Found. The "found" things aren't lost anymore. I felt like Jerry Seinfeld!



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2018

Peanut The Golden Retriever!

Running like a young gazelle and rolling in the snow, with Sibley flying all over One Horse Creek this afternoon. They are both 15 years young!



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2018

Eagle Magnet

Look what's been hanging out here all week, waiting to be fed (won't happen.) This young Bald Eagle may be from the nest just across the river, as every year the fledglings come and hang out in the yard for a few weeks. Max the Golden Eagle doesn't seem to mind, just a bit curious. This shows the differences between Bald (great big beak, white spattering through the plumage) and Golden (smaller beak, gold on back of head and shoulders, and a lot smarter.)



Kate Davis photo ©

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2018

Suet Feeder Scores

We have lots of bird feeders and definitely aren't targeting House Sparrows (seed) and magpies (suet) but hopefully the good species learn as well. Although magpies are native and cool, we have Eurasian Collared Doves in droves. Here's a nice Pileated Woodpecker in the front yard.



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2018

Hey, Cool Harris's Hawks

Spent last weekend with Gretchen Albrecht, Pat, Don and Jerry hunting with these hawks, chasing non-native Eastern Cottontails that were introduced in the Seattle area in the 1940's as game. Industrial parks with thick thorny bushes seem to be falconry on Sundays! Very much fun and quite different than the falcon hunts over water for ducks that I am used to. It's been a while since I've hunted with Harris's Hawks, three birds at once with my friend Randy Scanlon.



Some Highlights, Slides From the PowerPoints

Speaking engagements around Montana, Idaho and Washington, plus trips to Chicago, Boston, Salt Lake and St. George Utah, a couple in Boise... some coming up in Detroit and Pennsylvania.



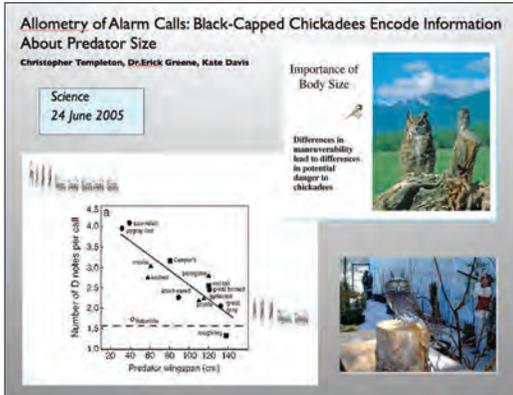
Our favorite venue, since 1993 with Skipper Marcia Dunn and 2003 with Annie Garde



"Communication in the Dark" with Jillian the Owl



iPod appears on 119 Frontier Airline tail sections



Science!



Several times the question, "How do they fit in that little hole?"



Hooters Hosts cocktail hour at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation with Miles the Owl



Mindy and Steve Palmer

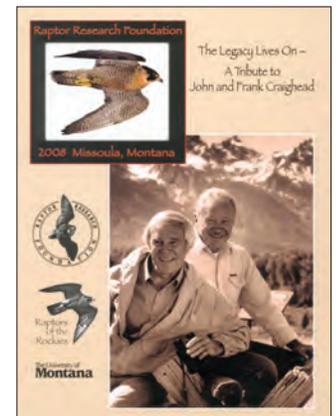
In 1999, Steve asked me what type of digital camera I had and my web site address. I was absolutely dumbfounded. So look what he did, and has been doing ever since, Webmaster and Advisor out of the goodness of his heart. Thanks Steve and Mindy!



Nine years of programs with David Sibley, Pine Butte Guest Ranch near Choteau



Actually, 16 years



International Conference Host in 2008



Some Cover Shots/stories



Lindsey and Kevin Browder and Jack Petty 2006, all now in college

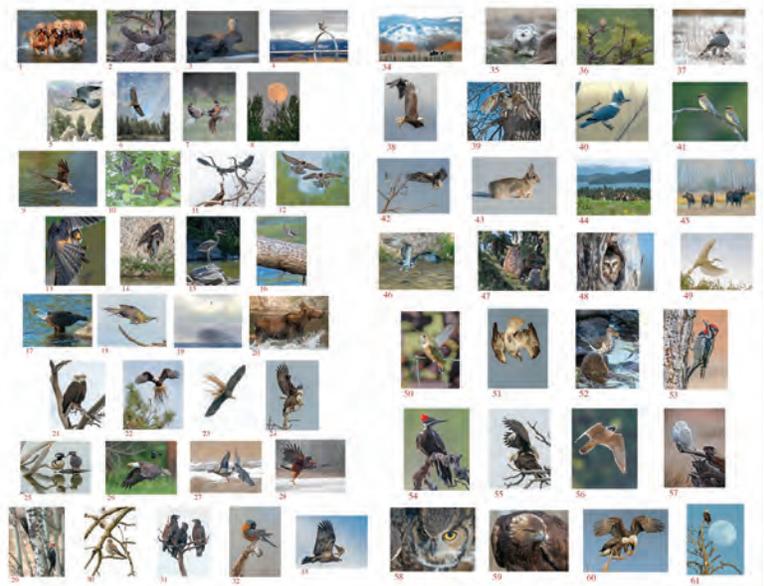
Dastardly Bald Eagles Disappoint



This would have been the seventh year in a row to have an active Bald Eagle nest just a quick walk from the house down at the Bitterroot River. This pair appeared eager to continue the ritual, nearly always near the nest all winter, bringing in sticks, copulating, everything that would say breeding again. We observe the nest from a scope in the living room, no cottonwood leaves this time of year to obstruct the view. Incubation began last year on March 5th and March 12th in 2016, but nothing this year. It sounds a bit nuts, but just picture a white head with yellow flashes of beak a half mile away which meant incubation had begun. A trip to the beach had been an evening ritual all summer and fall, taking dogs and camera and tripod, but perhaps not so frequently in 2018. Instead...PRINTMAKING! Maybe.

We'll still see the eagles and perhaps they won't chase every single Osprey away in nest defense over the summer. No reason by the way, just eagles overreacting plus stealing Ospreys' fish. As my friend Barry Gordon asks me all the time, "How many Bald Eagle pictures do you need, anyway?" Maybe more otters and kingfishers, love the Spotted Sandpipers and Killdeer. My Happy Place even has a Pileated Woodpecker nest that was occupied by a Bufflehead (duck!) the last few years. There will be something to "shoot" with the Nikon D810.

Kate Davis photos ©



New Cards!

See anything you like? Cards to benefit the program and can't believe I used to print these myself, cut and fold... Now Pyramid Printing produces these excellent items, available from us plus Rockin' Rudys and the Good Food Store.



Simon the Problem Child/Owl



Simon the imprint Great Horned Owl was raised in the house, in a kennel and with run of the large office. Then an alarming trend after moving outside for several months – he began biting and snapping off his own flight feathers and getting unfriendly. Veterinarian buddy Dr. Jamie Bellah, Director of Southeastern Raptor Center at Auburn, Alabama University was recently visiting. After a quick exam he found nothing physically wrong. We guess that this problem is associated with his "adolescence" as a teenager and temporary, behavioral and a quirk we very much hope. After all, feathers grow back and he seems fine now, just minus those feathers. Happy to report after some nervous weeks. Fingers crossed.



Our Facilities in 2010 - Bitterroot Mountains

Rest in Peace our dear friend and neighbor Bob Tavares who sadly passed after a long illness that he beat for over 20 years. We miss you very much, Bob.

"When I get old enough to have a job I want to be a raptor" Leonard

"I liked how you told us if you shot an owl you would go to jail with your parents" Jamie

Portraits of Owls & the Bird Lady

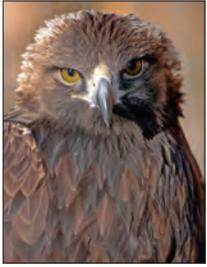
I like you! (SM)

from Mark's owl

"Let's hope there are no raptors around my house because I have a mouse." Colleen

Greetings from the Teaching Team

with the years they joined us



Max the Golden Eagle 1992



iPod the Northern Pygmy-Owl 2010



Evita the Swainson's Hawk 2004



Owen the Northern Saw-whet Owl 2012

www.raptorsoftherockies.org



Sonora the Aplomado Falcon 2013



Sonny the Bald Eagle 2011



Jillian the Great Horned Owl 2003

Your generosity helps us with EVERYTHING!
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Sibley the Peregrine Falcon 2003



Nigel the Golden Eagle 1999



Ansel the Gyrfalcon/Peregrine 2004



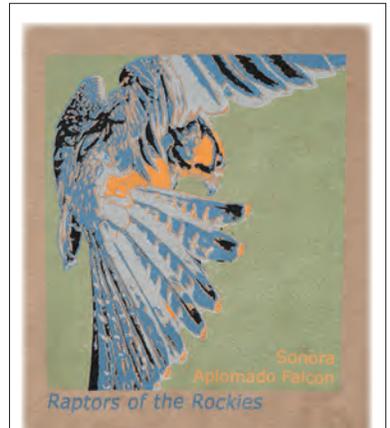
Ella and Wes the American Kestrels 2013 sister & brother



Simon the Great Horned Owl 2017



Simone the Red-tailed Hawk 2017



Might be time for a new T-Shirt and Brochure...

We have certainly had an interesting last 30 years, some of our wonderful Raptor Backers by our side from the start and new ones jumping on board all the time. It's always a trip to have a family introduce me to their young children and say, "I first saw you when I was this age. Do you still have that eagle?" Yep, but he's retired. No way we can ever do that with young birds that can live *another* 30 years. No complaints here!



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,

Name _____

Address _____

Contribution amount _____

Thank you Raptor Backers!

sponsors since our last newsletter

Tom Davis
Sally Phillips
Steve & Mindy Palmer
Dale Simmons
H & H Meats
Larry Weeks
McLaughlin Research Institute
Dr. Michael Kavanaugh
U of M Laboratory Animal Resources
Candace Klein-Loetterle - every month on PayPal!
Dan Fruechte
Fred Luety
Tom & Lois Hooker
Carmen Bassin
Libby Mojica
Rojene & Kim Lemke
Jean Woessner
James & Claudia Diefenderfer
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Special thanks to
Pyramid Printing, Missoula
and our pals Jodi and Brad!

Raptors of the Rockies

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