

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Spring/Summer 2010

# Raptor Release

## The Raptor Center

Ensuring the health of raptors and the world we share



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**Tales from the Trauma Center:** A Rare Owl

**The American Kestrel:** One Compact Predator

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

College of Veterinary Medicine

Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

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### On the cover And he's off!

After being transported to care via motorcycle in August, Harley was released with a satellite transmitter in January (see story on page 3).

Photo by Brad Johnson

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

A quote, which is often incorrectly attributed to Charles Darwin, but whose author is unknown, sums up quite well what is occurring in today's world: "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

In a rapidly changing world, we are all challenged to adapt. As a veterinarian specializing in conservation medicine and rehabilitation, I am faced with an exponentially growing body of knowledge, yet I struggle with how much we do not know about wildlife health and populations. And as an educator and communicator, I am keenly aware of the way technology has changed the ways in which we send and receive information.

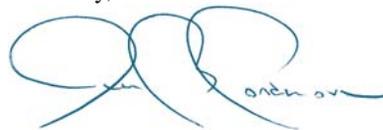
Change is central to our work at The Raptor Center. Our goal is to change attitudes and behaviors through education, to increase knowledge through research and communication, and to promote a more sustainable world for both raptors and humans. One constant in our work, however, is the powerful and compelling stories presented by our patients. Their stories—eagles suffering from lead poisoning, kestrels no longer common in our clinic, and numerous other conditions and situations—drive our work on a daily basis.

Occasionally, change means saying goodbye. During his residency, Dr. Luis Cruz has done exceptional work studying lead poisoning in bald eagles and stress monitoring in owls; both projects have contributed greatly to our body of knowledge. We wish Luis well as he leaves this summer to pursue his Ph.D. in Canada.

The increase in electronic communications has many advantages for non-profit organizations working in conservation. While at times challenging for those of us who are most comfortable with the feel and look of paper, e-communications allow us to connect more quickly, share information more rapidly, and respond in a more timely manner. Electronic communications are also central to our mission, which includes monitoring the health of raptors and other wildlife and being good stewards of the environment we share. The use of e-communications is a more responsible use of our resources, both environmental and fiscal. If you are not already on our e-mail list and would like to be, please send your e-mail address to [raptor@umn.edu](mailto:raptor@umn.edu).

The importance of the support we receive from our generous donors has been one constant in a changing world. Your support helps us provide medical care for wild raptors, feed our adopted birds that serve as educational ambassadors, and connect children and adults "beak-to-nose" with the natural world. Your donations also help support our veterinary training program. With your continued support, we can accomplish great things by responding to issues affecting raptors and creating positive change in the environment we share.

Sincerely,



Julia Ponder, D.V.M.  
Executive Director



## The amazing adventures of Harley

By Julia Ponder, D.V.M.  
Executive Director

Late last summer, on a long stretch of County Highway T near Wascott, Wisconsin, a motorcyclist passed a bald eagle on the side of the road. Realizing the bird was injured, the rider stopped. He wrapped the adult eagle in his leather jacket and strapped it to the back of his motorcycle. Fifty miles later, he arrived at the Duluth Zoo, where he was referred to local wildlife rehabilitator Peggy Farr.

On the trip across town, he was stopped by the police (he did, after all, have a bald eagle strapped to his motorcycle), and then escorted to Farr's. A quick evaluation led to the eagle being referred to The Raptor Center (TRC) for treatment.

At TRC, Dr. Irene Bueno-Padilla, a veterinary intern from Spain, oversaw the case. The eagle was diagnosed with a fractured ulna (wing bone) and lead poisoning. The lead poisoning was most likely the result of consuming prey that had been shot with lead ammunition. The lead was removed from his blood by a process called chelation, and surgery was performed to stabilize the fractured wing as it healed. After his story was published, readers of the *Duluth News Tribune* named him "Harley" after his unorthodox rescue vehicle.

Harley spent almost five months recuperating at TRC. Not only was his wing slow to heal, but he also underwent an intense molt (feather replacement) just when he was ready to begin flight rehabilitation. The molt prevented him from being exercised vigorously. With the help of numerous volunteers, Harley took flight in mid-December. A little over a month later, he was ready to be released.

In partnership with Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center, TRC held a public release for Harley in January. With strong wings, he took to the skies as Brian Baladez, the motorcyclist who rescued



Last August, Brian Baladez strapped an injured bald eagle to his motorcycle for transport to a wildlife rehabilitator (above). Five months later, he released the eagle at Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center. Release photo by Jeff Fischer

him, released him back to freedom to the delight of more than 200 onlookers.

Prior to Harley's release, the clinical staff at TRC outfitted him with a satellite transmitter. This GPS-enabled device sends regular updates on Harley's location, allowing a rare peak at the post-release movements of an adult bald eagle. After spending a few weeks along the St. Croix River, where large numbers of eagles winter, Harley stopped by the Twin Cities on his way north. He then moved into northern Minnesota before returning to the cities overnight and heading back to Wisconsin. At the time of this writing, he was in the general vicinity where he was found injured last August.

The transmitter on Harley weighs only 70 grams (2.46 ounces), a tiny fraction of his 4-kilogram (8.82-pound) weight. Past experience with these transmitters has shown us that eagles tolerate the harness

well. They preen the harness into their feathers, and then wear it comfortably. Often, one of these solar-powered devices provides more than three years of data. TRC scientists will continue to monitor Harley's post-release movements, and you can, too, at [www.theraptorcenternews.blogspot.com](http://www.theraptorcenternews.blogspot.com).

### Support Harley

Real-time data from Harley's transmitter will be used to monitor his movements and develop classroom curriculum focusing on natural history, challenges eagles face in the wild, geography, and math. In addition to the original equipment costs of \$3,650, ongoing monitoring of Harley will cost TRC \$1,200 per year. You can help support this effort by contributing to The Raptor Center at [www.givemn.org](http://www.givemn.org).

## Decade brings TRC 7,130 patients

By Lori Arent  
Clinic Manager

**D**uring the first decade of this century, The Raptor Center (TRC) admitted 7,130 injured and orphaned raptors. Of those, 663 were admitted in 2009.

While the year-to-year numbers of great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, and bald eagles remained relatively constant, the most notable change was the decline in the number of American kestrels admitted (98 in 1999 to 31 in 2009) and the rise in Cooper's hawk patients (43 in 1999 to 82 in 2009, with a maximum of 117 in 2008). The decade also brought an unprecedented irruption of great gray owls to northern Minnesota in 2005 and 2006 (as well as a record 116 great gray owl patients), and a larger-than-normal influx of snowy owl and boreal owl patients (20 and 11, respectively) during the winter of 2001-2002.

### Bands return valuable information

With the care and dedication of approximately 100 clinic volunteers and 25 flight crew volunteers each week, TRC released 2,326 raptors back to the wild in the past decade. The majority of these birds were fitted with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service bands. While measuring the success of our rehabilitation efforts is difficult, band-return information provides us with interesting feedback an average of three to five times a year. Here are two such cases:

- In April 1997, TRC admitted two adult male bald eagles that were in a territorial fight at Island Lake in Wisconsin. One bird had been banded by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as a nestling in 1979 (making the bird 18 years old at the time of admission). Both eagles sustained soft tissue trauma. The banded bird was rehabilitated and released back at Island Lake two months later. Its body was recently recovered in Rhinelander,



Admitted in November 2009, this northern hawk owl was one of the most unusual patients at TRC in the past decade. Photo by Amber Burnette

Wisconsin. According to the Wisconsin DNR, the eagle holds the longest known longevity record of a wild bald eagle in Wisconsin: 31 years. It survived 13 years after rehabilitation!

- Red-tailed hawk 03-582 was admitted in October 2003 with head trauma and a fractured collarbone after being hit by a car. It was rehabilitated and released at our 2004 Spring Raptor Release at Hyland Lake Regional Park in Bloomington, Minnesota. Four months later, it had yet another collision, this time with a Minneapolis Light Rail train, and unfortunately sustained injuries that proved to be fatal.

### Patient highlight

It's a hawk! It's an owl! No, it's a northern hawk owl!

Named after physical characteristics that resemble both hawks and owls, this elusive bird is a rare visitor to TRC's clinic. Inhabiting secluded, forested areas, often near bogs, in northern Minnesota and Canada, this owl is often shielded from typical human causes of injury. However, this was not the case for one adult male, case number 09-627, who ventured too close to a highway in Hibbing and was struck by a car in November. It suffered a fractured scapula and mild ocular trauma. With the healing touch of Dr. Irene Bueno-Padilla, our veterinary intern from Spain, the fracture healed well. After six weeks of reconditioning and a short wait while the snow cover and ice melted, the owl was released in northern Minnesota in mid-March. 🦉

Lori Arent, clinic manager, oversees the care and rehabilitation of more than 700 birds of prey each year. Her book *Raptors in Captivity: Guidelines for Care and Management* is available at [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).



Dr. Julia Ponder demonstrates TRC's new digital radiography system to veterinary students.

## New equipment key to saving hawk and other patients

By Irene Bueno-Padilla, D.V.M.

It can be tough to be a raptor during the winter in Minnesota, especially if you've been shot. That is the history of red-tailed hawk 10-020, who was brought to The Raptor Center (TRC) in February. The hawk was starving. Fortunately for this hawk, new equipment obtained by TRC as a result of donations and grants made a significant difference in the bird's outcome.

One piece of equipment that helped was the VetScan VS2, a chemistry analyzer. Blood can be hard to come by in a starving bird, and the VetScan VS2 required only a drop of the hawk's blood. The VetScan VS2 helped us monitor electrolyte shifts, allowing us to make critical changes in treatments on a frequent basis.

Another piece of equipment, the Kodak CR digital radiograph machine, provided greatly improved visible details, enabling us to diagnose an infection in one of the hawk's toes, which required surgery. The new Nonin capnography machine helped a TRC technician monitor the bird's vital signs and provided proper ventilation during the medical procedure.

Thanks to these and other pieces of new equipment, we fully expect to release this hawk, and others, back to the wild.

## New research points to spent lead ammunition as source of toxicity in eagles

By Luis Cruz, D.V.M.

For more than 30 years, The Raptor Center (TRC) has conducted and disseminated its research results in an effort to protect and conserve bald eagles locally, nationally, and internationally.

TRC started researching lead poisoning in bald eagles in 1975. Blood lead levels and other pertinent data were collected on every bald eagle admitted to TRC. By the early 1980s, TRC's research, along with other collaborative work, led to the passage of a 1991 federal law banning the use of lead ammunition for waterfowl hunting.

Sixteen years after the passage of this legislation, TRC's research showed that despite the prohibition of lead shot for waterfowl hunting, the numbers of bald eagles affected by lead had not changed.

Due to a close association of eagles with lead poisoning and the onset of deer season, it was suggested that spent lead from ammunition used for deer hunting might be a source of exposure.



This bald eagle is so weakened by lead poisoning that it cannot stand.

TRC's current research shows a temporal and spatial association between lead-poisoned eagles and deer hunting season and hunting zones. In addition, there is an association between lead and copper levels found in tissues and lead-core, copper-jacketed rifle bullets. We believe spent lead ammunition is a source of ongoing lead exposure in bald eagles in Minnesota, a result of eagles scavenging on the remains of deer carcasses.

## A Minnesota kestrel joins the Air Force

By Gail Buhl  
Environmental Education Manager

When a young American kestrel arrived in the clinic on July 30, 2009, most of his wing and tail feathers were broken off. His talons were very worn down on all of his toes. He wasn't nervous or frightened, which can mean a lot of things. In this instance, clinic staff determined that this bird was a human imprint and therefore not releasable to the wild.

Imprinting happens naturally in the wild when young birds imprint on their parents and siblings. Imprinting helps young birds know who they are, what they sound like, who their parents and siblings are, what to be afraid of, and what to eat.

In this case, humans, not kestrels, took care of the young bird during the critical imprinting period. As a result, he will

never relate completely normally to other kestrels and doesn't react toward humans the way he should.



A former patient at The Raptor Center, Buzz now makes his home at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

After evaluating the kestrel, clinic staff decided to place him in an educational facility after he got some new feathers and grew his talons out. That process took several months. During that time, The Raptor Center also found him a suitable home.

On January 13, the kestrel found a new home with the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where

he joined other falcons in their mews helping educate the cadets and area schoolchildren. The academy, whose symbol is the falcon, is excited to have him and named him "Buzz" after Buzz Lightyear, the space ranger toy made famous by the movie *Toy Story*.

## The American kestrel: *One compact predator*



By Gail Buhl  
Environmental Education Manager

One of the most fascinating raptors in North America is also a very small one. Weighing only 90-150 grams (3.2-5.4 ounces), the American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) is a beautiful little falcon, with males and females displaying different plumage.



Male and female American kestrels display different plumage. The female is on the right. Photos by Gail Buhl

Don't let their size, beautiful colors, or endearing face fool you—these birds are fierce predators. Insects and mice beware! Kestrels are voracious consumers of insects, small birds, and small mammals.

### Living on the edge

American kestrels are an edge species. They prefer open areas for hunting and like to rest and nest in trees along forest edges and tree lines. These birds are cavity nesters that depend on dead trees, snags, and human-made nest boxes to raise a family every year.

Some raptors hunt by sitting on a branch and waiting for potential prey to wander by. Kestrels have a few other techniques

“up their wing” to help them obtain an edge when hunting prey. Unlike most birds, kestrels can hover, and they can stay above a particular patch of cropland or grassy area waiting and watching. All raptors have good vision, seeing up to two or two and a half times better than humans. Kestrels certainly use their superior vision to full advantage.

### Secret weapon

One of the secret weapons kestrels use to find mice is their ability to see in the ultraviolet light spectrum. To understand why this is so useful, it is good to know a little about mice. Most mice follow trails to and from where they eat, sleep, find mates, and nest. They can and do use their eyes, but they also follow a chemical trail. The chemicals mice smell are in the urine they excrete along the way. If you have ever had a mouse in your house, you would probably describe them as “dirty” because of the urine and mouse scat along baseboards and in cupboards. Turns out that they use these chemical trails like we use our eyes to find a road or sidewalk.

Enter the kestrel. Mouse urine—actually, all urine—glows violet in the ultraviolet light spectrum. Since kestrels can already see in the ultraviolet light spectrum, they do not need a black light to see the mouse trails laid out below them. They hover in wait, watching the violet grid below them until a hapless mouse appears—and then pounce!

Even though American kestrels are compact lethal predators, they sometimes

need our help. They get hit by cars, hit windows, get caught in chimneys, and their nest trees are sometimes cut down—with babies inside. In 2009, The Raptor Center (TRC) admitted 31 kestrels. Five were adults and the rest were nestlings or “branchers” (just out of the nest but not yet flying). The number of kestrels admitted to TRC has been following a downward trend over the past 10 years.

### Kestrel Watch

In 2009, TRC launched Kestrel Watch in an attempt to gather data on where kestrels are being seen. This citizen science project encourages people to record where they see kestrels and what the birds are doing.

To date, people have submitted more than 400 kestrel sightings, mostly in Minnesota, but this project is nationwide. It will take a few years of data collection before TRC is able to say anything about the numbers, but it's encouraging that so many people are interested in helping out. You can help, too. Whenever you see a kestrel, go to our Web site at [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org) and click on Kestrel Watch. If you want to help kestrels even more, put up kestrel nest boxes, reduce or eliminate pesticide and herbicide use, and improve the wildlife habitat in your yard. 🦅

Gail Buhl is TRC's environmental education manager. Each year, TRC's unique education programs inspire more 200,000 people on ways they can help raptors and the environment we share. Learn more about TRC's programs at [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).

## Want to bowl with a celebrity? Check out our online auction!

By **Bill Venne**  
Chief Development Officer

**R**aptor Bowl, The Raptor Center's annual fundraising event, will be held on Wednesday, July 14, at Brit's Pub & Eating Establishment on Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. Team bowling starts at 2 p.m.

This year, Raptor Bowl V offers fun new twists, and we're asking for your help to make the event a success.

### Bid to bowl with celebrities

The first twist involves the lawn bowling teams. In the past, Raptor Bowl teams have come from mostly corporate connections, but this year, 6 of the 24 teams will be anchored by local celebrities, including Dave Lee from WCCO-AM radio, Sven Sundgaard from KARE-11, Deb Hopp from *Mpls.St.Paul*

*Magazine*, University of Minnesota regent and former Minnesota Senate Majority Leader Dean Johnson, and former Minnesota Vikings Bob Lurtsema and Randall McDaniel. Two slots on each celebrity team will be filled by those with the winning bids from an online auction. In other words, you can bid to lawn bowl with Dave and Sven. Moreover, your winning bid will help support TRC. The online celebrity team auction is already online at [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org), so start the bidding!



Sven Sundgaard



Dave Lee

Then on Monday, June 28, we will go live via the Internet with our first-ever online auction. With more than 30 exciting items—including experiences such as boat rides, weekend getaways, gift cards for some of the Twin Cities' best restaurants and hotels, and tickets to sporting and arts events—you will want to visit our auction Web site often. All proceeds will benefit TRC's important work.

Thanks in advance for helping make Raptor Bowl V the most successful fundraising event ever for The Raptor Center. For more information on Raptor Bowl V, contact me, Bill Venne, at 612-625-8480 or [venne025@umn.edu](mailto:venne025@umn.edu).

*Bill Venne, chief development officer, has over 20 years of special event fundraising experience, including many walks and galas, but has never worked on a lawn-bowling event before. He is thrilled to be trying something new with the online auction and lawn bowling.*



## Midwest Peregrine Society visits more than 200 nest sites a year *Number of peregrine cliff fledglings likely to increase this year*

By Patrick T. Redig, D.V.M., Ph.D.  
Cofounder

Over 500 feet high, Queen's Bluff, located in Great River Bluffs State Park in southeastern Minnesota, is arguably the most massive and imposing cliff on the Mississippi River in the region between the Twin Cities and Dubuque, Iowa. This region holds the historic and now a good share of the existing peregrine falcon population.



Located along the Mississippi River in southeastern Minnesota, Queen's Bluff is a peregrine falcon nest site. Photo by Chet Ellingson

Back in the day when peregrines were beginning to make something of a comeback, the experts repeatedly said that Queen's Bluff would be the first cliff to be reoccupied when the peregrine reclaimed the natural cliff sites on the river. Was it the first to be reoccupied? No, other imposing structures along the river actually lay claim to that title. Nonetheless, after a more than 30-year absence, it is gratifying to once again have peregrines as part of the natural fauna that add character to this cliff.

Peregrines began reoccupying the river cliffs in about 2000, 14 years after they had successfully nested for the first time in 25 years on the City Center skyscraper in Minneapolis. After a number of years of population expansion in which they occupied the available building and bridge sites, they "spilled over" onto the cliffs along the river. Part of this spillover was facilitated by the placement of nest boxes on several of the smokestacks located at various power plant sites along the river,



Two of the four chicks banded at Queen's Bluff this year. Photo by Chet Ellingson

including ones hosted by Xcel Energy, Dairyland Power, and Great River Energy. From these familiar nest boxes in which they had been produced, the falcons made the next jump to the cliffs.

While a great sense of fulfillment accompanies the return of the falcons to the natural cliffs, it is not to be assumed that cliff nesting is more likely to ensure success. Exposed to elements, vulnerable to both avian (great horned owls), and mammalian predators (raccoons), peregrines nesting on the cliffs realize a lower level of success than those nesting in the more protected metro sites. However, since its occupancy in 2000, Queens Bluff has fledged 26 young in 8 attempts (3.25/attempt) compared to a population average of 2.8.

In a way, the experts were perhaps right about the preeminent role of this cliff in peregrine biology. In concert with all of the other cliffs on the river and along the North Shore of Lake Superior, and buoyed by a burgeoning urban population, the Midwest peregrine population is now five times larger than what was known in the early part of the 20th century. Nearly 5,000 young falcons have fledged in the last 25 years.

Removed from the federal endangered species list in 1999, the peregrine falcon is still regarded as a threatened species

by most states, pending longer-term observations on its population stability. To monitor this process, The Raptor Center and the Bell Museum of Natural History—who, along with the Minnesota chapter of the Nature Conservancy and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, laid the groundwork to reestablish the peregrine—formed the Midwest Peregrine Society. Annually, all known and accessible

nest sites in the upper Midwest and two adjoining Canadian provinces are visited by biologists and climbers who temporarily remove the young birds from the nests (eyries), apply marking bands, and collect blood samples for DNA analysis.

Led in Minnesota by Jackie Fallon, the effort involves private individuals and agency personnel. Greg Septon of the Wisconsin Peregrine Society and Bob Anderson of the Raptor Resource Project in Iowa, along with Jackie, conduct the bulk of the banding and sampling along the Mississippi River. The number of sites visited annually is in excess of 200 and continues to grow by about 10 percent each year—although the rate of annual increase appears to be slowing as the population begins to approach a level of saturation. In 2008, 244 territorial pairs produced 429 young, two thirds of which were banded. Similar numbers were realized again in 2009. Given the unprecedented early spring and mild weather of 2010, all indications are that we are on tap for a substantial increase in the number of young produced and fledged this year.

*Dr. Patrick Redig, cofounder of The Raptor Center, served as TRC's director until 2007. He has since focused his attention on conservation and ecology. Redig was also instrumental in founding the Midwest Peregrine Society (MPS). For more on the MPS, go to [www.midwestperegrine.org](http://www.midwestperegrine.org).*

## How we allowed the extinction of six species

By Sue McCarthy

### Hope is the Thing with Feathers, A Personal Chronicle of Vanished Birds

By Christopher Cokinos  
Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 369 pages,  
\$16.95

“Heathcocks...[are] common,” wrote William Wood in 1635. But by 1791, the New York State Legislature had passed a law protecting the vanishing Heath hen, which had once been abundant on the Long Island plains. Other Atlantic states considered protection of the bird, but law enforcement of hunting limits was virtually nonexistent at the time, and the birds were readily found for sale in food market stalls in many eastern cities.

The Heath hen, cousin to the greater prairie chicken, was an easy target for hunters, and with increased development around cities, the bird also suffered from the loss of its favored habitat. Naturally occurring fires were suppressed, which in turn, hindered the growth of scrub oak, which the bird sought out. By 1870, the Heath hen no longer existed on the mainland Atlantic Coast.

The story of the vanished Heath hen does not end there, however. A flock of birds had flown to Martha’s Vineyard, an island off the coast of Massachusetts. Christopher Cokinos, in *Hope is the Thing with Feathers*, tells the story of the efforts of citizens and the local and state government to try to save this population of birds.

The Heath hen’s story is a nail biter. In 1896, there were fewer than 100 birds on the island,

and then, a disastrous 1906 fire reduced the population to 86. A refuge on Martha’s Vineyard was established in 1908, a breeding program was initiated, a refuge warden was hired, and the race was on against extinction.

Cokinos is a talented storyteller, and his cliffhangers tempt you into thinking that there was hope for this bird. The story continues until 1932, and the reader learns about the people who were involved with trying to save the Heath hens, and also Booming Ben, the last Heath hen to survive on Martha’s Vineyard.

Along with the story of the Heath hen, Cokinos tells the stories of five other vanished birds:



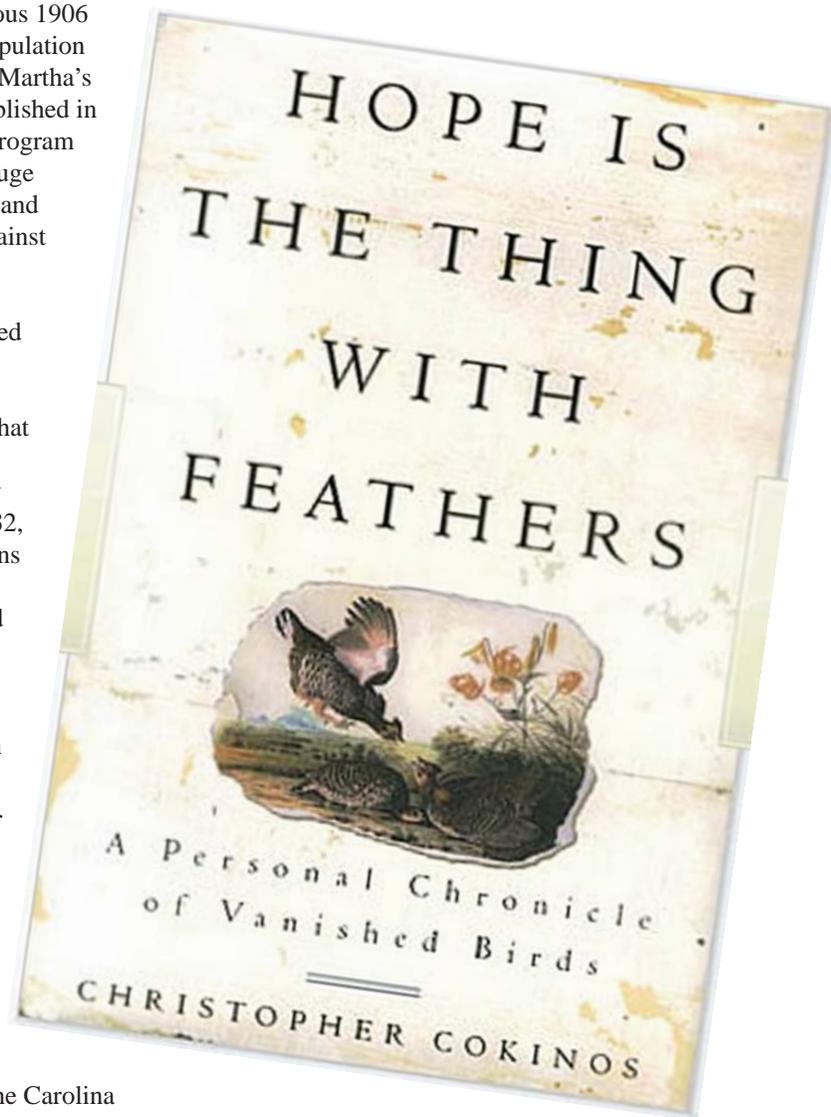
Today, the Heath hen can only be found in museums. This specimen belongs to the New York State Museum.

the Carolina parakeet, the ivory-billed woodpecker, the passenger pigeon, the Labrador duck, and the great auk. The book was first published in 2000. Since then, there have been developments in the quest for ivory-billed sightings, but the history of this bird’s decline is truly another riveting story.

Portions of this book will horrify and anger you as you read about how logging, unregulated

hunting, bird collecting, urbanization, the millinery trade, political posturing, and thoughtless practices contributed to the demise of six species. Cokinos brings the reader right into the drama, and you feel as if you are an observer to their extinction. And yet, we know that sometimes history repeats itself, and if we follow the history of the California condor, we might wonder if that bird will be the next chapter in Cokinos’s text.

Sue McCarthy is a volunteer at TRC. For volunteer opportunities, see [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).



# AROUND THE RAPTOR CENTER

## Staff news

**Dr. Paula A. Castaño**, a veterinarian from Colombia, joined TRC as an intern in October 2009. She received her veterinary degree from the National University of Colombia, where she developed an interest in wildlife medicine and conservation. She worked in a breeding and reintroduction program for white rhinos in Uganda for two months and did her university practice in a wildlife rehabilitation center for high mountain species in Colombia, where she worked for a year and a half after she received her degree.



Dr. Paula A. Castaño



Dr. Luis Cruz

**Dr. Luis Cruz** will complete his veterinary residency in June. His association with TRC began in the summer of 2004, when he completed a six-week externship as a senior veterinary student. The externship led to a two-year

clinical internship, after which he began a three-year residency program, which combined clinical and teaching duties with coursework and a research-based master's degree program. His research projects included investigations of lead exposure from ammunition sources in bald eagles and stress hormone analysis in great-horned owls.

"My experiences at TRC have provided me with a strong knowledge base in clinical avian medicine, surgery, and research, and a deeper understanding of the principles and applications of conservation medicine," Cruz says. "This knowledge base provides me with a solid background for future work in conservation that can be applied anywhere." Cruz will continue his studies in a Ph.D. program in ecotoxicology at the University of Calgary this fall.

**Dr. Irene Bueno-Padilla**, a veterinarian from Spain, is scheduled to complete her internship at TRC this summer.

"I had always wanted to come to TRC to learn from the world's experts on raptors, but my time in Minnesota has proven to be much more rewarding than I ever expected," she says. "When I started my internship in July 2008, I had no clinical experience with birds, limited surgical knowledge, and my English was only fair. During these past two years, thanks to the wonderful team at TRC, I have not only learned tons about raptor medicine, but I am now able to perform surgery and conduct research in a variety of topics. Being at the University of Minnesota has also given me the opportunity to attend courses and expand my education. I plan to keep working closely with raptors and the concept of One Health—where wildlife, the environment, and human health meet."



Dr. Irene Bueno-Padilla

**Susanne Patashnick**, a fourth-year student from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, completed her externship at TRC in May.

## New faces

Three new people joined the staff in May:

- **Alex Bauch** is TRC's newest marketing student worker.
- **Ellen Orndorf** joined the staff as a part-time development staff member.
- **Brittany Schatz** is now one of TRC's education scheduling coordinators.

In April, two new people were hired to staff the front desk. **Judy Moran** and **Joanne Peterson**, both education volunteers, joined **Judy Haworth** in greeting the public, taking phone calls, and providing administration assistance to the staff.

## Publications and presentations

**Dr. Julia Ponder**, executive director, gave several presentations at the North

American Veterinary Conference in Orlando, Florida, in January.

**Dr. Michelle (Mitch) Willette**, staff veterinarian, attended the Foreign Animal Diseases Training workshop in Chicago in January. She has also been developing the Clinical Wildlife Health Initiative, which is building a standardized database for wildlife rehabilitation centers.



Dr. Michelle Willette

Veterinary intern **Dr. Irene Bueno-Padilla** and Dr. Olga Nicolas, a former TRC intern, made a presentation on the history and current operations of TRC at a conservation and wildlife conference in Zaragoza, Spain.

**Laura Freeman**, environmental naturalist, attended the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators conference in New Mexico in March, speaking on the Midwest Peregrine Project and presenting a poster.

**Gail Buhl**, manager of environmental education, spoke at the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association Symposium in Bellevue, Washington, in March. She gave two presentations, "Bird Training 101" and "Education through Entertainment: How to Engage your Audience in Ways They Will Never Forget!"

**Dr. Luis Cruz** presented his final master's thesis defense seminar, "Spent Lead from Ammunition: a Source of Exposure for Bald Eagles," in April. His advisor was TRC cofounder Dr. Pat Redig. Cruz also presented a talk on lead poisoning in bald eagles at the Hawk Migration Association meeting in Duluth in April.

## Web redesign

TRC's Web site is undergoing a redesign. In the next few months, it will sport a new look, with easier navigation, slide shows, and current information on research and other programs. In time, TRC also hopes to offer interactive games. Visit [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR/CONTACT US

## Upcoming events



### Raptor Bowl V

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

2:00-7:00 p.m.

Brit's Pub & Eating Establishment

1110 Nicollet Mall, Downtown Minneapolis

Join the fun and support The Raptor Center!

For details, see page 7 or visit

[www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).

## Kids' University Raptor Day Camps

### Crazy About Owls

July 26-30: ages 6-7

August 2-6: ages 6-7

August 2-6: ages 8-9

### Enraptured with Raptors

July 19-23: ages 6-7

July 19-23: ages 8-9

July 26-30: ages 6-7

### Raptor Vet

June 21-25: ages 10-11

June 21-25: ages 12-15

July 12-16: ages 9-11

July 12-16: 12-15



For details and to register, visit  
[www.recsports.umn.edu/youth/kidsu\\_2009.html](http://www.recsports.umn.edu/youth/kidsu_2009.html)



## Fall Raptor Release Saturday, September 25, 2010

10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Carpenter St. Croix Valley  
Nature Center

Celebrate the release of  
raptors back to the wild.  
Participate in children's  
activities and educational

displays and observe live eagles, hawks, owls, and falcons. Free  
and open to the public.

## Duke Lecture

Friday, October 1, 2010

4:00-5:00 p.m.

215 Pomeroy Student-Alumni Learning Center,  
University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus

### Topic: Tracking Apex Predators

Presented by Mark Martell, director of bird conservation,  
Audubon Minnesota, and Dave Mech, founder and vice  
chair, International Wolf Center, and senior research  
scientist, U.S. Geological Survey

The lecture is free and open to the public. Reservations are  
available. Visit News and Events at [www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org).

## Donations

Endowment gifts, estate gifts,  
and grants

Bill Venne, 612-624-8480

or [venne025@umn.edu](mailto:venne025@umn.edu)

Gifts and Adopt-a-Raptor  
program

Amber Burnette, 612-624-3391

or [burne018@umn.edu](mailto:burne018@umn.edu)

## Educational programs

Field trips, outreach programs,  
and events

612-624-2756

[raptored@umn.edu](mailto:raptored@umn.edu)

## Front desk

Injured raptors; general  
information

612-624-4745

## Volunteer opportunities

Volunteer positions and  
upcoming training sessions

[trcvol@umn.edu](mailto:trcvol@umn.edu)

## Web site

Raptor facts, information  
about upcoming events and  
educational programs, plus  
hours, directions, and more  
[www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org)

## E-mail

[raptor@umn.edu](mailto:raptor@umn.edu)

## Fax

612-624-8740

## Mailing address

1920 Fitch Ave.

St. Paul, MN 55108

## Clinical Wildlife Health Initiative launched

By Michelle "Mitch" Willette, D.V.M.

Ecosystem health is the integration of human, animal, and  
environmental health. One of The Raptor Center's strategic  
goals is to advance ecosystem health through the study of  
emerging issues reflected in the health of raptors. We've recently  
taken another step toward this goal with the formation of the  
Clinical Wildlife Health Initiative (CWHI).

The long-term goal of CWHI is to create a network of  
professionally staffed wildlife rehabilitation centers tracking  
population and health data of wild animals on a Web-based data  
management program. Other goals include establishing a network  
for addressing emerging issues in wildlife rehabilitation medicine  
and to serve as a liaison among wildlife rehabilitators and  
regulators, individuals, institutions, and organizations that deal  
with wildlife in the area of clinical wildlife health.

## Raptor Release The Raptor Center

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## The Raptor Release

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# Support The Raptor Center Raptor Bowl Online Auction

## Bid to support The Raptor Center

For details, visit  
[www.TheRaptorCenter.org](http://www.TheRaptorCenter.org)



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