Our new normal: More eagles

We have set a record for the number of eagle patients in our clinic at one time – 31. In 2015, we saw a dramatic increase in eagle admissions, which has continued. We have not found a specific reason for the sustained increase. Since eagles require more housing, handlers, and food, our resources are stretched.

New staff veterinarian at TRC

Thanks to the generosity of donor Bob Wilder, The Raptor Center added a full-time staff veterinarian: Dana Franzen-Klein, DVM, MS. She meets the needs of our swelling caseload and leads our interns and volunteers. This frees her predecessor, Michelle Willette, DVM, to focus on teaching, while Franzen-Klein is fully devoted to our clinic.

Expanding education

Raptor Academy staff designed a new online, instructor-led course: Young Raptor Management and Release. The program also offered three new webinars in 2019, reaching over 120 participants.

Due to increased demand, TRC offered two care and management workshops in 2019, reaching 44 attendees from 22 different states. Each four-day, hands-on workshop provided intensive training for those working with raptors in educational settings.

A record-breaking barn owl

On October 18, a barn owl was admitted from Douglas County, Minn., the first ever juvenile barn owl for The Raptor Center. The bird was also from the northernmost barn owl nest in the state, based on 50 years of recordkeeping.

The Cargill Foundation has awarded TRC with funding for Raptor Lab’s Outdoor Investigator, an initiative to train teachers in Minneapolis and the West Metro to reach underserved audiences through TRC’s formal STEM programs.
Could sound deter eagles from wind turbines?

While wind turbines provide sustainable energy solutions, they also pose a threat to wildlife, including eagles. Could turbines emit sounds to deter eagles from approaching? With federal funds and University partners, The Raptor Center investigated that question by first mapping the hearing ranges and sensitivities of eagles and red-tailed hawks. We found that the easier-to-study hawks have similar hearing to eagles. With new funding, the team could explore the frequency, intensity, and pattern of different sounds that will move eagles and hawks away from turbines.

Partners for Wildlife (P4W), an initiative to improve rehabilitative care across all species, partners with rehabilitators and rehabilitation centers in seven pilot states to strengthen their capacity for top-quality care. In 2019, P4W staff made 15 site visits, awarded almost $380,000 in grants, "graduated" its first cohort of fellows, trained two veterinary interns, collected data on the welfare of animals undergoing rehabilitation, and fostered better leadership and collaboration within the rehabilitation community.

ROOKIES OF THE YEAR
The Raptor Center welcomed three new education birds in 2019—Palisade, a female peregrine falcon; Spruce, a female northern saw-whet owl; and an unnamed red-tailed hawk.

Watch our Facebook page to learn more and vote in a naming poll.

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