



WINGBEATS

The Summer 2022 Newsletter of RAPTOR Inc.

Celebrating 44 Years

Inquisitive Minds

By Ellen Garner Crawford

I have found that it's the little guys who steal the show when we're out on a school program: Rufous, Sirin, and Athena, our Eastern screech owls. For students, the idea that they share a habitat with such a small - and cute - owl is sometimes too much to handle.

This wonder leads to entertaining questions about the habits of Ohio's smallest resident owl species. On a program, we sometimes can't explain as much as we would like to, so here are my favorite student questions regarding Eastern screech owls, with all the extra detailed answers.

Do Eastern screech owls eat worms?

On a school program, we are trying to teach the concept that raptors are different from songbirds. So, a typical response would be, "He'd have to be really hungry to eat a worm. But he would hunt a grasshopper." Again, we want students to understand that this cute owl is a predator.

An expanded answer looks at Eastern screech owl research, which has found that they have the most varied diet of any North American owl. They eat birds, snakes, lizards, fish, and more: over 138 species of vertebrates and at least as many invertebrates.

Do Screech Owls have teeth?

Surprisingly, this question comes up a lot. Eastern screech owls don't chew their food and therefore don't need teeth. Their sharp beak rips food into small pieces to eat, if they cannot swallow their prey whole.

Going a little further: raptor beaks are made of keratin, like our hair and nails. And like our hair and nails, beaks continuously grow. In the wild, eating prey includes biting through scales, feathers, and bones – all of which keep a beak nice and trim. Then, too, the owls would clean their beaks on rocks and branches, with the same result of keeping a beak in top condition.

At RAPTOR Inc., we help our captive raptors by trimming their beaks if they start to overgrow. This doesn't dull their beak. It is a necessary maintenance for their wellbeing, as it would be difficult to eat with an overgrown beak!



Jacki Bray with students at Camp Joy (photo by C. Alverson)

There are no owls near me. I live in a neighborhood.

The idea that cool creatures aren't anywhere near them is a common student misconception. In fact, Sirin was found in a flower bed next to a house before he was brought to us.

While not technically a question, this attitude deserves a closer look. If the student truly lives in a suburban neighborhood without any stands of trees or medium-to-large wildlife, it is easy to assume there aren't any owls. But Eastern screech owls don't need much living space: they inhabit small holes in trees (from broken branches), nest boxes, even abandoned woodpecker holes.

Is she a baby owl?

Another frequent question. "No, Athena is a full grown Eastern screech owl." It's not a bad question, given the fact that our tablecloth has a prominent Great Horned Owl; and the two species of owl do share some features (yellow eyes, ear tufts).

But great horned owls are only screech-owl-sized shortly after hatching, and not for very long after that. One great size comparison is egg size. Great horned owl eggs are about 5.6 cm long, while Eastern screech owl eggs are about 3.4 cm long. That means a great horned owl's egg would be a little smaller than a tennis ball, while an Eastern screech owl's egg would be a little smaller than a ping-pong ball!



Mission: Since 1978, RAPTOR Inc. (Regional Association for the Protection and Treatment Of Raptors) has been dedicated to "the rehabilitation and return of raptors to their natural environment, the education of the public on the importance of raptors, and the preservation of their natural habitat".

New Barred Owl Species Recently Identified

By Danielle Quales

In June 2021, the American Ornithological Society determined that several isolated populations of the Mexican Barred Owl (*Strix sartorii*), or Cinereous Owl, are now an entirely separate species (Devokaitis). The current distribution of the Cinereous Owl is in a few areas of western Mexico, as shown in this map (OwlPages.com).



The determination of this new species came about during the past few years. The Cinereous Owl was documented fairly frequently in the first half of the 20th century, but there were very few sightings after 1950 (Spencer).

Unique call and genetic differentiation

In 2020, researchers compared recently-captured audio recordings of the Cinereous Owl with archive recordings of the Barred Owl (*Strix varia*). Spencer and Pieplow found differences in the “series call” and “rhythmic call” between the two owl species (Pieplow, et al). Additionally, limited genetic research has further supported the designation of the Cinereous Owl as a distinct species from the Barred Owl (Spencer).

Declining population

The Cinereous Owl was once common and widespread throughout the mountains of mainland Mexico. However, research efforts from 2015 to 2017 and 2019 found that the species has largely disappeared from most previously documented sites (Pieplow, et al). Logging of large pine trees used as nest sites by the Cinereous Owl has likely led to their population decline.

Another species, the Fulvous Owl (*Strix fulvescens*), now inhabits areas once inhabited by the Cinereous Owl. As a smaller species, the Fulvous Owl requires smaller tree nest sites and thus has flourished in these areas.

Researchers believe that the Cinereous Owl may be classified as vulnerable or endangered. Experts encourage additional research of the Cinereous Owl to gather more data on its current distribution, its habitat needs, and risks associated with continued habitat destruction.



Cinereous Owl (photo by Antonio Robles)



Barred Owl (photo by U.S. Geological Survey)

Sources

Devokaitis. <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/elusive-cinereous-owl-gets-species-status-in-2021-taxonomy-update/>
Pieplow, et al. https://westernfieldornithologists.org/publications/journal/journal-volume-51-3/v51-3-pieplow_et_al-cinereous_owl/
Spencer. <https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/species/barow13/cur/introduction>

Volunteer Spotlight: Carol and Tom Wick

By Cindy Alverson

Volunteers are special people who form the backbone of RAPTOR Inc., as they help to fulfill our mission of conservation of birds of prey. In all kinds of weather, day or night, year around, volunteers are dedicated. They perform all kinds of duties: such as, transporting injured birds, cleaning bird areas, rehabilitation, education, grounds maintenance, and fundraising events (to name a few).

If you ask Carol and Tom Wick why they volunteer at RAPTOR Inc., they will say that they enjoy being outdoors, helping the environment, and seeing the impact of their good works. Being volunteers with RAPTOR Inc. allows them to do just that.

Carol and Tom have been working as a rescue team transporting injured or orphaned birds of prey to the Raptor Center since 2014, as well as releasing the healthy birds back to the wild. Already on January 1st of this year, the Wicks transported the first red-shouldered hawk to our facility. Two weeks later, after the hawk recovered from its injuries, Carol and Tom enjoyed the celebration of returning the hawk back into the wild. Seeing the impact of their work, drives their passion of conserving wildlife.

Working as transporters also satisfies their love of meeting people (and the different experiences that come from that). Their very first transport was a rescue of a bird which had been hit and remained stuck in the grill of the car. On another occasion, Carol and Tom transported a bird which had wrestled with a skunk. It was an exceptionally-long 24-mile trip from the location where the bird was found to the RAPTOR Center, even with the car windows rolled down the whole way. It took 24 hours for the skunk smell to dissipate from the car. These were some of their more unique experiences, to say the least.

Being retired offers Tom and Carol the opportunity to travel and visit new places, even volunteering while on vacation. They make an effort to visit other raptor centers, thus



Carol and Tom Wick (photo by Alverson)

making wildlife a part of their travels. While visiting at the Wildlife Center of Virginia, they have been able to witness several eagle releases and special behind-the-scenes events.

Volunteering at RAPTOR Inc. does not end their environmental efforts. They are very active with river cleanup and testing the water quality of the rivers. Whether it be at the Oxbow or with Rivers Unlimited, they enjoy getting dirty. Clamoring down cliffs to get to the river and then dragging out tires and debris has really cleaned up the river over the years. Carol and Tom can see the impact on the river quality: with the improved water quality, the fish now can move up the Ohio river to the mill creek. Paddling on the river for clean-ups also gives Carol and Tom the opportunity to watch raptors—bald eagles and barred owls—right from their canoe.

Rivers and raptors: what a winning combination of their favorite passions.

Owls in Unusual Places

by Marc Alverson

Kim Williams spotted this little Eastern Screech Owl in a hole in a concrete retaining wall facing the Ohio River (along Mehring Way) near downtown Cincinnati. Its coloring does seem to go with the fungus hanging out of the hole.

This past December, another Snowy Owl was spotted over several days hiding out in the Bengals' stadium parking garage.

Who would have thought to see either of these owls in the concrete city environment? It pays to keep your eyes (and your mind) open for unusual raptor sightings.



Red Phase Eastern Screech Owl (photo by K. Williams)

Avian Influenza Update: Back to Normal

by Cindy Alverson

Avian influenza occurs naturally in bird populations and is routinely monitored by the U.S. Geological Survey. Waterfowl carry this virus, but is usually asymptomatic; however, it is fatal to raptors. Carnivorous eaters such as eagles and vultures are especially susceptible to avian influenza as it can be transmitted by eating birds which have the virus, as well as, transmission through the shedding of the virus through excrement.

This spring, a new strain of avian influenza was discovered in Ohio in March. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources confirmed two bald eagles and one herring gull with the highly pathogenic avian influenza. These birds were found in northwest Ohio and are deceased.

The concern was that as the waterfowl or other diseased birds migrate, avian influenza would be spread

to susceptible wild birds through contaminated excrement. Since our avian ambassadors are housed outside, precautions were taken to keep the water bowls under shelter where birds passing over could not contaminate the bowls.

RAPTOR Inc. decreased the possibility of cross-contamination between our patients and avian ambassadors and expanded its already strong on-site biosecurity to protect our avian ambassadors as well as our avian patients undergoing rehabilitation in the following ways:

- Changes in staffing and workflow were made so volunteers working in rehabilitation did not enter the education bird area.
- Footbath disinfectant was upgraded to a brand that was specific to kill avian influenza.

- Care was taken so guests entering our building walked through a disinfectant mat.

Off-site changes were also made regarding volunteer transporters. Volunteers with falconry birds or backyard poultry were temporarily suspended from their duties till the threat passed. Changes were also made to the birds we accepted, to decrease the possibility of bringing the deadly virus into our facility.

With the warmer weather and migration season over, the threat of avian influenza has passed at this time and biosecurity operations are back to normal.

Source: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, www.ohiodnr.gov

Thank You to our Auction Supporters!

We wish to THANK all of our sponsors, in-kind donors, and bidders for your generous support of our Spring Online Auction. Donations are a vital resource for RAPTOR Inc. The funds raised will help us purchase essential items such as food, medications, medical supplies, and maintenance equipment necessary to fulfill our mission to conserve our magnificent local birds of prey. Please consider patronizing the following businesses and thanking the individuals for their support!

Sponsors:

Carole Lambert
Margi Hopkins, Pepper Portraits
Newtown Feed & Supply
Bethel Feed & Supply Pet & Garden Center

gomery
FC Cincinnati
Geraci Fine Jewelry
Good Green Earth Farm
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Tuned In Coach
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Whistle Stop Clay Works
Xavier Athletics

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Tributes

In Honor Of:	From:
Bob Dahlhausen, DVM	Lafeber Company
Steve Olden	Deborah & Pete Olden
In Memory Of:	From:
Jerry Meyer	Steve Maslowski Dwaine Brown Lora Lewis Monterey Baptist Church
Bird(th)day Tribute	To:
From:	
Stephen Chan	Eliza Godfrey

Hawk Hatchlings!



Red-shouldered hawks perched inside a mew. When they are young, they often sit as if in a nest. These were able to be returned to the wild with adults, until it is time to disperse to find their own territory. (photo by C. Alverson)

Upcoming RAPTOR Public Appearances

Date	Time	Event	Location
16-Jul	2-3p	Little Miami Conservancy River Center	211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140
17-Jul	10-11:30a	OVCC Photo Shoot at RAPTOR Inc.	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
19-Jul	10:15a-12:15p	MidPointe Library West Chester	9363 Centre Pointe Dr, West Chester Township, OH 45069
23-Jul	11a-1p	Fairfield Lane Library	1485 Corydale Dr, Fairfield, OH 45014
24-Jul	2-3p	Sharonville Branch Library	10980 Thornview Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45241
26-Jul	2-3p	Symmes Township Branch Library	11850 Enyart Rd, Loveland, OH 45140
31-Jul	1-4p	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
1-Aug	1-2p	Elmwood Place Branch Library	6120 Vine St, Cincinnati, OH 45216
2-Aug	3-4p	Miami Twp. (Hamilton Co.) Branch Library	8 N Miami Ave, Cleves, OH 45002
3-Aug	3-4p	Norwood Branch Library	4325 Montgomery Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45212
4-Aug	1:30-2:30p	Harrison Branch Library	10398 New Haven Rd, Harrison, OH 45030
6-Aug	2-3p	Greenhills Branch Library	8 Enfield St, Cincinnati, OH 45218
10-Aug	2-3p	West End Branch Library	805 Ezzard Charles Dr, Cincinnati, OH 45203
12-Aug	10:30-11:30a	St. Bernard Branch Library	10 McClelland Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45217
13-Aug	3-4p	Corryville Branch Library	2802 Vine St, Cincinnati, OH 45219
20-Aug	2-3p	Little Miami Conservancy River Center	211 Railroad Ave, Loveland, OH 45140
28-Aug	1-4p	RAPTOR Inc. Open House	961 Barg Salt Run Rd, Milford, OH 45150
11-Sep	9a-12p	RAPTOR RUN 5K Fundraiser	Miami Meadows Park, 1546 OH-131, Milford, OH 45150

(Contact sponsor for details and to see if reservations are required.)

2022 Admissions

American Kestrel	16	Saw-whet Owl	1	Rough-legged Hawk	0	2022 Dispositions		
Merlin	0	Snowy Owl	0	Northern Harrier	0			
Peregrine Falcon	0	Short Eared Owl	0	Turkey Vulture	4		Released	48%
Eastern Screech Owl	12	Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	Black Vulture	2		Euthanized	11%
Barred Owl	24	Cooper's Hawk	21	Osprey	0		Died	11%
Barn Owl	0	Broad-winged Hawk	0	Golden Eagle	0		Transferred	0%
Great Horned Owl	12	Red-shouldered Hawk	40	Bald Eagle	1		Education	0%
Long-eared Owl	0	Red-tailed Hawk	18	Total	151	Under Care	30%	

RAPTOR Wish List

RAPTOR Inc. needs the following items for our bird care facility. To donate any of these items, please email RAPTOR at: raptor@raptorinc.org or call 513-825-3325.

- Dog Food (dry, for large dogs)
- Duct Tape
- Gas Gift Card
- Latex or Nitrile exam gloves (any size)
- Laundry Detergent (he)
- Office Max Gift Card
- Paper towels
- Stamps (Forever)

Thank you for all of your donations, including those who donate through the Amazon Wish List! Due to changes at Amazon, we unfortunately no longer receive information on the names of Wish List donors.

Amazon Wish List

RAPTOR Inc. is listed on the Amazon Wish list. For a complete listing of all of the items we use for rehabilitation, and to provide our volunteers with all of the necessities they need to care for our birds, please visit our website, raptorinc.org. Click on the tab, Support Us (not the dropdown) and click on the Amazon Wish List Icon midway down the page. This will take you directly to the RAPTOR Inc. Wish list.

If any of these wish list items are purchased, they are shipped directly to our RAPTOR Inc. facility in Milford. How easy is that?

Financial Contributions

Thanks to the following individuals and groups for their recent financial contributions to RAPTOR Inc. for the second quarter of 2022.

\$100,000+

Landen Family Foundation, Inc.

Bald Eagle Level \$10,000 to \$24,999

Martha Morse Beck Von Peccoz Animal PLC Foundation

Osprey Level \$1,000 to \$9,999

Bullock, Gay
Hayden, Margaret
Kroger Community Rewards
Lambert, Carole
Maynard, Lily
McNamara, Nathan

Falcon Level \$500 to \$999

Alverson, Tammy
Eller, Jeffrey
Hayden, Tracy
Kreimer, Lucy
Turner-Vorbeck, Tammy
Wood, Michael

\$100 to \$499

Achutan, Chandran
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Head, Louise
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Huber, Randy & Jelina
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Loveland Eagle Riders
Lovins, Ken & Amy
Martin-Hisnay, Michele
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Moore, Luther
Moran, Chris
Nicholson, Steve
Olden, Steve

Pandalai, Sudha
Perry, Robert
Quales, Danielle
Sachs, Bill
Story, Amy & Leland
Sweigard, Chris
Walters, Lindsey

In-kind Donations

Anonymous
Ernst, Linda
Glassmeyer, Matthew
Graves, John
Lucas, Joe
Wright Brothers, Inc.

RAPTOR Inc. Leadership, Staff, and Communications

RAPTOR Inc. Board

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RAPTOR Inc. Staff

Cindy Alverson, Executive Director
Jackie Bray, Associate Director

The Board of Trustees generally meets the third Wednesday of each month, at 7:00 P.M. All RAPTOR members are welcome to attend.

Contact Marc Alverson at marcalverson@cinci.rr.com for meeting time and location.

Thank You To Our Veterinarians!

Bob Dahlhausen, D.V.M.
(513) 576-1990
D.J. Haeussler, D.V.M.
(513) 374-3963
J. Peter Hill, D.V.M.
(513) 793-3032
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(513) 561-0069
Paul Levitas, D.V.M.
(513) 871-8866
Ann Manharth, DVM
(513) 248-0904

Communications

Gary Young, Newsletter Editor
To submit articles or pictures for consideration in Wingbeats, email the article to:
raptor@raptorinc.org
or by mail to:
RAPTOR Inc.
961 Barg Salt Run Road
Milford, Ohio 45150
To report an injured raptor in the Greater Cincinnati area call RAPTOR Inc.: (513) 825-3325

Mission

Since 1978, RAPTOR Inc. (Regional Association for the Protection and Treatment Of Raptors) has been dedicated to "the rehabilitation and return of raptors to their natural environment, the education of the public on the importance of raptors, and the preservation of their natural habitat".

1ST ANNUAL RAPTOR 5K RUN/WALK

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022

Check-in & Registration: 7:30-8:30am

Race Starts at 9am (rain or shine)

Miami Meadows Park, 1546 SR 131, Milford, OH 45150

Registration is \$40.

Registration (or mail-in form if you prefer) and additional information is available online at <https://runsignup.com/Race/OH/Milford/RAPTOR5KRUNWALK>.

The top 3 male and top 3 female participants will receive a prize.

Also, a beautiful 2022 collectible finisher medal and t-shirt will feature images of a Great Horned Owl. Each year a different local bird of prey will be featured. Plan to collect them all!



A Family-Friendly Celebration Party will immediately follow the race. Snacks, drinks, amazing raffle prizes, fun nature-friendly activities, and visits from RAPTOR Inc.'s LIVE Avian Ambassadors will be available!

RAPTOR Inc. Membership

Renewal notices are sent out at the end of the year for annual collection for the following year. Dues paid after September 1 will be credited for the following year. Please use the form below to become a member or update your contact information. You can also become a member online at our website: www.raptorinc.org.

If you don't need the membership form, pass it on to someone who might be interested in becoming a member of RAPTOR Inc. Your membership dollars provide for care, treatment, and feeding of our birds as well as the continuation of our education programs.

Mark the membership level you request. All membership levels include electronic (default) or postal delivery of the newsletter, as well as an invitation to the Fall Picnic. Members are also invited to attend Board meetings and may nominate candidates to serve on the board.

\$10 Student Membership
(1 year - up to age 18)

\$25 Hawk Membership
(1-year)

\$50 Owl Membership
plus receive a stunning Raptor note card set

Eagle and Lifetime Memberships (below) also include perks from the levels above.

\$100 Eagle Membership
plus receive a Charley Harper designed T-Shirt

\$500 Lifetime Membership
plus personalized tour for 5

Eagle and Lifetime Memberships, please indicate T-Shirt Size: (S, M, L, XL, XXL) _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check if you prefer postal delivery of Wingbeats

I would like more information about making a planned gift to RAPTOR Inc. Please call me | Please email me

I have already included RAPTOR Inc. in my will or estate plan. Please call me | Please email me

Mail this completed form with your check or money order to:

RAPTOR Inc., 961 Barg Salt Run Road, Milford, Ohio 45150

Attn: Membership

Thank you for your support of RAPTOR Inc.!

RAPTOR Inc.
961 Barg Salt Run Road
Milford, OH 45150

2022 RAPTOR Inc.

Member's Meeting & Picnic!

Saturday, September 10, 4 pm till dark

Member's meeting at 4:30 pm | Food served at 5 pm

961 Barg Salt Run Road, Milford, Ohio 45150

Raptors will be on display!



RSVP to: raptor@raptorinc.org by Sep. 4 | Please bring a dish to share; we will provide grilled food, drinks, and the RAPTOR Inc. cake

Even if you can't make the picnic, join us any time on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter!

