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Rocky Mountain  
**RAPTOR**  
Program  
a second chance at freedom

*On the*

# WING

## A BALD EAGLE'S TALE

### *Her Final Chapter is Not Yet Written*

Her story began on the 14th of March. A park ranger at Seminoe Reservoir State Park near Rawlins, Wyoming responded to reports of a young Bald Eagle acting very strangely in a parking lot. Upon arrival, the ranger found the bird perching on cars and not flying away from people. Very odd, indeed.

Why wouldn't she fly away? Her behavior was so bizarre, the ranger knew that something must be wrong. He wrangled her into a pet carrier, and transported her to the Snowy Range Animal Hospital in Laramie, Wyoming. From there, she was transported to the RMRP for assessment.

Her problem was soon discovered: she had an old fracture of her left coracoid (shoulder). The injury had already healed, but her muscles were weak and atrophied, so that she could not fly. Since she could not hunt, she was scavenging food from fisherman – which explained her atypical behavior.

She wouldn't have lasted much longer in the wild, but now she has all the time she needs to finish her recovery. Her body needs time to remodel the healed bone – she needs to regain the lost muscle mass and become strong again.

Today, she was moved into a flight training complex to begin working on her range of motion and strength. Only a few hours after being released into the complex, she was seen perched on one of the highest perches. Her stubborn nature will surely allow her to survive – just like your support has given her a second chance at freedom.

Without your support, she would still be scraping by, slowly starving, as she became weaker and weaker. But her story didn't end there, in the parking lot of a state park. She has a whole new chapter to add to her story, and hopefully the next will start with the words, "She was free again."



[www.rmrp.org](http://www.rmrp.org)  
970-484-7756

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Volunteer Becca, with  
educational male Golden  
Eagle

## TWO YEARS TO FREEDOM

### *Red-Tailed Hawk Finally Flies Free!*



*This Red-Tailed Hawk returned to the wild after two years of rehabilitation.*

Most of our patients are in our care for less than a year. Some may have to be with us for a bit longer, but this Red-tailed Hawk needed our help for over two years. He was found in a manure pit, dirty thin, and his feathers destroyed. How he suffered such a misadventure is a mystery, but after a few baths and some time to gain back the weight he had lost, all that was left was a good molt to regrow the broken feathers. So we waited. And waited...and waited.

Sadly, all the feathers he grew in for the next two years were weak, damaged, and easily broken. For two years he molted, and molted and molted. Every molt brought stronger and stronger feathers. During his recovery, he acted as a foster parent to orphaned and injured young hawks that came into our care. Every young bird he saw came and went on their own path to freedom whilst he slowly, but surely, grew in yet another set of feathers. Birds that need more than 180 days of treatment require special permission from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Thanks to them and their belief in our efforts, the Red-tail got the time he needed!

Two years after his admission, this Red-tailed Hawk finally got the chance he had been waiting for: freedom.



## LEAVING A LEGACY

### *Event to Honor RMRP's Legacy of Freedom Society*

The RMRP is excited to announce our very first annual Legacy of Freedom Society celebration. We will be inducting the charter members of our planned giving society on June 4th, 2016 from 10am to 12pm, under the tent at 720 E. Vine Drive.



*It's easy to leave a legacy. Join our Legacy of Freedom Society to leave your mark on the future.*

- Planned giving is an easy way to have a significant impact for the future of the RMRP. By including the RMRP in your will, you are ensuring that your legacy will live on in every raptor that returns, healed and whole, to the wild.
- Everyone joining the Legacy of Freedom Society before June 4, 2016 will be considered a charter member. Please let us know if you have included us in your plans so we can thank you now and invite you to the June 4th event.

If you are interested in attending the event, or would like to become a part of the Legacy of Freedom Society, please contact Judy Scherpelz at 970-484-7756 or [Judy@rmp.org](mailto:Judy@rmp.org).



**HILLSIDE**  
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**970-567-1821**

*Thank you to Hillside Construction for your support of the 23rd Annual Gala!*

The Rocky Mountain Raptor Program is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. We strive to inspire the appreciation and protection of raptors and the spaces where they live through excellence in rehabilitation, education, and research. We are supported by donations from caring people like you who want to make a difference in the world.

**Mailing address: 2519 S. Shields St. #115 Fort Collins, CO 80526**

**Physical address: 720 E. Vine Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80524**

**970-484-7756 info@rmp.org www.rmp.org**

Thank you to Bonnie Cleaver, Lynsey Reed, Mike Tincher, and Judy Scherpelz for contributing to this newsletter.

#### **RMRP Staff**

Judy Scherpelz, Executive Director  
Lisa Winta, Assistant Director/Volunteer Coordinator  
Gail Kratz, Rehabilitation Director  
Carin Avila, Education Director  
Mike Tincher, Rehabilitation Coordinator  
Lynsey Reed, Administrative Associate  
Jessica Miller, Education Associate  
Bonnie Cleaver, Education Associate

#### **Board of Directors**

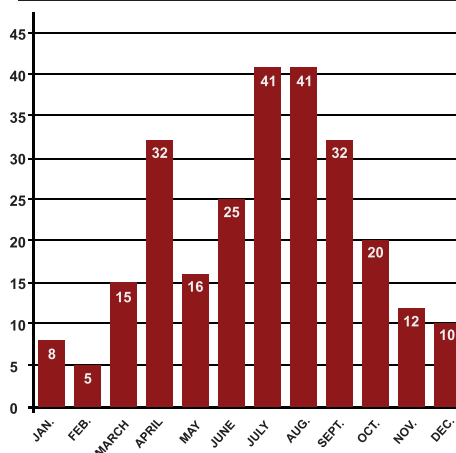
Judy Scherpelz  
Rick Snow  
Jerry Craig  
Todd Kerr  
Dyanne Willow  
John Reed

# THE RESULTS ARE IN!

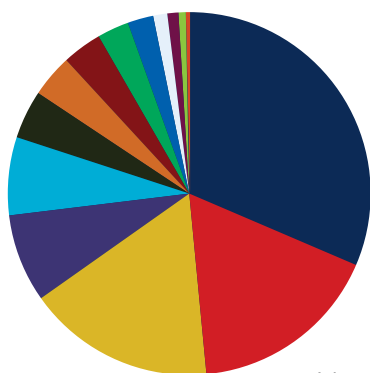
## 2015 Rehabilitation Recap

In 2015, the RMRP admitted 257 raptors into our care. The majority of our patients are admitted during the summer season. Luckily, not every bird we receive a call about needs our help. Summertime is baby time, and just like human babies, raptor babies are great at getting into strange situations as they learn about the world around them.

### 2015 ADMISSIONS BY MONTH



### 2015 BIRD ADMISSION INJURIES



FRACTURE	98
EMACIATION	53
HEAD/SPINAL TRAUMA	52
HIT BY VEHICLE	24
ORPHANED (NO INJURY)	22
WINDOW STRIKE	13
HIGH VOLTAGE TRAUMA	12
WEST NILE VIRUS	11
BARBED WIRE	9
CAUGHT BY CAT	7
LEAD POSITIVE	4
GUNSHOT	3
OILED	2
METHANE BURNER	1

*Injury Categories are not mutually exclusive.*

We receive hundreds of worried phone calls each year, mostly about young birds. About one out of ten is actually injured or orphaned, others just need time to learn or to be gently extracted from dangerous situations; like a young Kestrel getting itself caught in a window well, or a young hawk choosing to perch in a back yard with a large dog on the prowl. For those that are injured or orphaned, we are here to help them.

The most common injury we see is impact injuries, such as being hit by a car or flying into a window. Note that birds may come in with more than one type of injury; for example a bird with a broken wing may also be emaciated from being unable to hunt.

### 2015 SPECIES ADMITTED

Species	Total
Great Horned Owl	91
Red-tailed Hawk	44
Swainson's Hawk	33
American Kestrel	29
Common Barn Owl	12
Cooper's Hawk	11
Ferruginous Hawk	6
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5
Bald Eagle	4
Burrowing Owl	4
Merlin	4
Osprey	3
Prairie Falcon	3
Mississippi Kite	2
Eastern Screech Owl	1
Golden Eagle	1
Long Eared Owl	1
Peregrine Falcon	1
Rough-legged Hawk	1
Short eared Owl	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>257</b>

The most common species admitted in 2015 was the Great Horned Owl. Great Horned Owls are very common in almost all areas of the United States. They are very adaptable creatures, able to live in almost every environment, as well as in either rural or urban areas.

Every single one of these patients was cared for because of the support of YOU, our donors. Your generosity allows the RMRP to give the very best of care to the raptors that need us. Thank you so much for helping us help wildlife!

## I-25 INTERVENTION

### Great Horned Owl Rescued From Busy Interstate



*It takes more than being hit by a car to keep this owl down!*



I-25 along Colorado's Front Range is one of the busiest, and most dangerous roads for raptors to hunt along. Unfortunately, a Great Horned Owl found out the hard way why you don't cross the street before looking both ways. This beast of an owl didn't let the collision bring down her attitude, although she suffered severe head trauma and a broken leg near the hip.

This owl had defiance down to an art, making it hard to keep her quiet while her injuries healed. Just a few weeks later, she was flying again and starting live prey testing to see if her leg has healed well enough to allow her to catch her food. And she excelled!

On a crisp blue-sky day in late February, she stretched her wings as she flew to freedom – hopefully in time for the breeding season. She is DEFINITELY a bird that should reproduce the next generation of Great Horned Owls: they'll be indestructible!

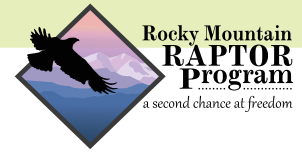
# CHANGING THE WORLD

## One Child, One Family, One Person at a Time

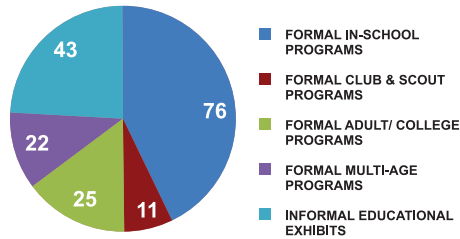
The RMRP spends many days of the year spreading our message of conservation. We go to schools, scouts, libraries, and fairs all over Colorado to reach as many people as possible. In 2015, we spent 177 days on the road with our Educational Ambassadors.

We hope that for every child we inspire, for every adult we remind of their love for wild creatures, and every family we encourage to enjoy the outdoors we are changing the world. Hopefully everyone who had met us at an outreach event or seen our highly trained interpreters in the classroom took away something new to renew their joy of the great world we share.

join the conversation...



### 2015 NUMBER OF EDUCATION DAYS



You can see our education in action. Check out our website at [www.rmrp.org](http://www.rmrp.org) to find our next public appearance.

## CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS!

The RMRP is once again hosting a raptor photography contest, with the winning photos to appear in the RMRP 2017 Raptor Photo Calendar. Your participation helps us raise funds to care for injured birds – and YOUR photo may end up on the cover! Submission details are on our website at [www.rmrp.org/news](http://www.rmrp.org/news)

**Deadline for submissions is July 1, 2016.**

For more information, please contact [judy@rmrp.org](mailto:judy@rmrp.org).

## THE AERIE SOCIETY

### Help Us Build a Solid Foundation

The Aerie Society is made up of a dedicated group of donors that make a solid foundation on which the RMRP can thrive. Donors of \$1000 or more are included in the Aerie Society, named for the safe site where a raptor makes its nest.

This year we have something new to offer our Aerie Society members: private birding trips with RMRP Executive Director, Judy Scherpelz. This summer and fall, we will be scheduling raptor watching tours of Northern Colorado to offer to our amazing Aerie Society supporters. We will be in contact with you about details, dates and times available!

Are you interested in joining the Aerie Society? Please contact Judy Scherpelz at 970-484-7756 or [judy@rmrp.org](mailto:judy@rmrp.org) to learn more.



Our Aerie Society members allow birds like this American Kestrel A Second Chance at Freedom!

## UPCOMING EVENTS (Come see us in action!)

### May:

- 14<sup>th</sup>** RMRP New Volunteer Orientation  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.
- 21<sup>st</sup>** Hot Rods & Hawgs  
Thunder Mtn. Harley Davidson, Loveland CO
- 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>** Boulder Creek Fest  
Boulder, CO



Come visit us and hear about the birds' stories, take photos, and talk to their handlers.

We love answering questions!

### June:

- 4<sup>th</sup>** Legacy of Freedom Society Celebration  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.
- 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>** Taste of Fort Collins  
Downtown Fort Collins
- 18<sup>th</sup>** Pancake Breakfast  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.
- 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>** Scandinavian Festival  
Estes Park, CO

### July:

- 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>** Art in the Park  
Steamboat Springs, CO
- 16<sup>th</sup>** Perennial Gardener  
Downtown Fort Collins

### August:

- 6<sup>th</sup>** RMRP New Volunteer Orientation  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.
- 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>** Art in the Park  
Loveland, CO
- 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>** New West Fest  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.
- 27<sup>th</sup>** RMRP Open House  
RMRP 720 E. Vine Dr.