



Photo © Mack Hitch



Rocky Mountain
RAPTOR
Program
a second chance at freedom

On the WING

RMRP PERSEVERES THROUGH NATURAL DISASTERS *YOU Keep Us Going When The Going Gets Tough*

We've been watching for the locusts. After two years' worth of fire, drought, famine, and flood, we figured we should be on the lookout for another plague to hit. But never fear – YOU have kept us safe through all of the plagues and pestilence that Nature could throw at us.

Caring for Nature's broken and battered creatures is a task that we feel honored to do, and we do this because YOU make it possible.

Life in the wilds of Colorado is certainly unpredictable – especially with climate change issues creating unforeseen challenges. The increase in forest fires and threats of severe floods are facts of life that we must get used to. Natural disasters wreak havoc on wildlife populations. They also result in lower donations to birds of prey. But we know that we can take on Nature's challenges, *as long as you have our backs!*

The RMRP is seeing **record numbers of birds in 2013**. On the one hand, this is exciting, because it means that some nesting populations are having success raising and fledging young hawks, owls, falcons, and eagles. On the other hand, it means that human-wildlife conflicts continue to increase as we lose more wildlife habitat to natural disasters AND development.

As I write this, we have admitted 242 injured raptors in 2013, birds that have found care, solace, nourishment, and healing because **your gifts helped us be here when they needed us**. We have released more than 70% of treatable birds – **an accomplishment that we share with YOU**.

But our work is never done. As development keeps increasing, we need your help to keep us on the forefront, working with energy and development companies to care for the birds injured from methane burners, high voltage trauma, oiling, and wind turbines, and to help develop ways to **mitigate potential injury and death**.

We also are seeing an increase in requests for education programs. We have touched more than 1800 children this year with the **magic of meeting a raptor** from just a feather's touch away. Because of you, 6000 people have met our feathered ambassadors at programs, and hundreds of thousands of people have been inspired at our outreach exhibits. Your support allows us to inspire children to make a difference in their world.

We are excited about our accomplishments – in the face of plague and pestilence – but we know **we cannot do this work without you standing next to us**.

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NEITHER SNOW NOR RAIN CAN KEEP US FROM OUR PATIENTS!

You Keep us Going, Through Rain or Shine

During terrible storms like the ones that saturated Colorado during September, the RMRP keeps functioning – **because of YOU**. Essential staff made their sodden way into the center to care for our charges: injured eagles, orphaned baby owls, Swainson's Hawks and Red-Tailed Hawks battered by late spring snowstorms and early summer hail storms, and patients weak and starving from West Nile Virus.

Our dedication to them never faltered. They still received their food and medication. They still received careful eyes examining them, making sure they weathered the storm in the best way possible. We fielded calls from the concerned public about birds down on the ground, too waterlogged to fly.

We could only be there for them because you are here for us.

Because of you, the eagle with the broken shoulder blade had a



Bedraggled Swainson's survives the rain.

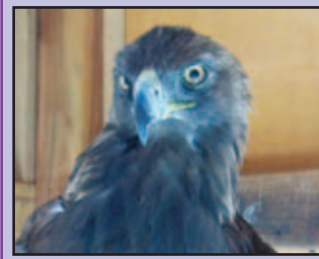
place to weather the storm and continue his path to freedom.

Because of your gifts, a young Swainson's Hawk that came in malnourished and suffering from a broken wing got the food he needed so badly and caring hands to nurse him along.

Because of you, the group of orphaned owlets had another day to grow stronger in preparation for their return to the wild world.

YOU make life possible for those without hope. The over 300 birds we expect to see this year would have had no second chance, no possibility of recovering, if it were not for those of you who believe in our mission.

The RMRP provides a public service for hundreds of raptors in need. **Every gift you give is another brick in our foundation** that enables us to provide that service. Help us maintain our strong foundation.



Golden eagle weathers the storm at RMRP.

Want to add strength to our foundation?

Don't let the water sweep us away. By contributing today, you help keep us strong against any disasters that come our way.

BROUGHT BACK FROM THE BRINK OF DEATH

Determination and the Will to Live Keeps Hawk Alive Against All Odds

He weighed only 863 grams...barely half of a healthy weight. The Ferruginous Hawk, normally one of the fiercest and most aggressive birds we see in rehabilitation, **was weak and dying**. We don't know what happened to him. A victim of violent hail storms? Hit by a car? We will never find out. All we knew was he was painfully thin and barely reacting to the treatment he was receiving. It took days of rehydration and careful feeding – **possible because of your support** - before he started to be aware of the world around him once again.

Slowly, he came back to life under our care. He started eating on his own. He started to stumble around the cage, one exhausted step at a time. Day-by-day we saw little improvements in stability and stamina. His digestive system finally ramped into full gear after going so long without food. **He stubbornly clung to life** and gained weight.

Now, he's learning to fly again. After so long without food his muscles were inadequate to carry him aloft. But every day he

spreads his wings he gets that much stronger and that much closer to being free again.



From having nearly no chance at survival, this Ferruginous Hawk has truly risen from the ashes. **Your support helped this bird regain his strength and will to live!** Because of you, he will make it through the last stages of healing, and we have hope that he will soar whole and healthy once again.

Want to help?

This bird needs lots of resources to finish healing. Help us out at www.rmrp.org by clicking on the "Donate Today" button.

WHY DO WE NEED YOU? *Continued from page 1*

Your gifts allow us to provide the necessary care 24/7 so that birds can fly again, so that development activities don't result in dead and dying birds, so that children can learn about the importance of the wonders of our world.

Your ongoing support gives us the stability we need to keep saving lives!

Help us help them. Send us a check today. Donate online. Make a difference. Today.

*2014
Calendars Are
Hot Off the
Presses!*

Order yours today!



“JAIL BREAK!”

Nineteen birds released in two weeks!

It started with Swainson’s Hawks.

These hawks migrate to Argentina for the winter in big groups called “kettles”. The young of the year need to follow the adults on their first migration, so when we get filled to the brim with young birds that are ready for release we start searching for groups of adults. Once spotted, action is immediate. Each young bird is carefully banded and transported to the group gathering on the plains.

This year, fourteen young birds were released into an adult group, joining them for the many thousands of miles of migration ahead.

A young Burrowing Owl healed well from a broken wing, and just in time! Although Burrowing Owls don’t migrate as far as Swainson’s Hawks for the winter, this young one still needed to join a group of adults for the trek south. After a few days of scouting, a suitable group was found and the little owl rejoined the wild creatures he belonged to.

And finally a group of four Great Horned Owls tasted freedom again. These birds were orphans, growing up with us to become strong, fierce hunters. These birds spend a lot of time with their parents in the wild, so they were given what is called a “soft release.”

In the wild, the young birds would depend on their parents as back up to unsuccessful hunting well into the fall. Since these



Freedom!

birds could not be rejoined with their parents, we step in and help them out.

While in captivity, they are taught to go to a “hack box” for food. Once they are confident in their hunting skills, completely decked out in their big-kid feathers, and have learned where their “back up” food comes from, they are released on the property. When they have a bad hunting day they can come

back to the hack box, where we leave food at each night, to have a snack. Just like they would with their wild parents. This gives them the support they need as they hone their hunting skills and adjust to life in the wild.

And so they went...hours upon hours of care, feeding, and worrying had paid off. Nineteen birds went home. Nineteen creatures now grace the wild with their spirits again.

YOUR support gave nineteen lives a second chance!



Want to help us with our mission?

You can give today at www.rmrp.org to help us give hundreds more raptors a second chance at freedom!

You keep birds soaring in the skies.

THE AUCTION IS COMING! THE AUCTION IS COMING!

Don't Miss this Special Event!

Help us celebrate the work that YOU support – at the 21st Annual “A Second Chance at Freedom” Gala Dinner on February 22nd at the Fort Collins Hilton. Preparations are already underway to make sure the evening is the most magical yet!

Want to donate an item? Submissions will be accepted until February 7th, 2014. Want to be a sponsor? Call us or email judy@rmrp.org.

Stay tuned to our website (www.rmrp.org) and Facebook (Rocky Mountain Raptor Program-RMRP) for auction items as they start rolling in!

Help the birds – get your tickets early!

Tickets will go on sale January 1st, 2014:

- Early bird tickets – January 1st to January 31st... \$50
- Advanced tickets – February 1st to February 17th \$55
- Tickets at the door.....\$60



RMRP Staffer and local artist Bonnie Cleaver displays painted ostrich egg at 2013 Gala Event.

RMRP thanks
Rebecca and Rod for
their great support!



Rebecca and Rod Fishkin
Keller Williams Realty Northern Colorado

970-449-2978

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Rocky Mountain
RAPTOR
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a second chance at freedom

proudly supported by:



“THE GREATNESS OF A NATION AND ITS MORAL PROGRESS CAN BE JUDGED BY THE WAY ITS ANIMALS ARE TREATED.”
— Mahatma Gandhi

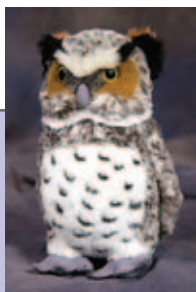
Calendar OF EVENTS

Come See Us!
Fall/Winter 2013 Schedule

December 8:
Open House, 11am-3pm
at RMRP

December 10:
Colorado Gives Day

February 22, 2014:
**Annual Gala Dinner
and Benefit Auction, 5 pm**
Fort Collins Hilton



Remember...
do your
Holiday Shopping
at www.RMRP.org/store!!

join the
conversation...



Did You Know...

TAX CREDITS AVAILABLE!

The RMRP is a designated Colorado Enterprise Zone agency. Your gifts of \$100 or more can qualify for up to a 25% credit on your state income taxes in addition to your gift deduction. A social security number or Colorado taxpayer ID number **is required** in order to receive your credit. Please consult your tax advisor if you have any questions. You can also contact the Enterprise Zone Administrator Jacob Castillo at 970-498-6605 or jcastillo@larimer.org.

PENCIL IN SOME GENEROSITY

Your Online Gift Will Help Wings Touch the Sky

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, December 10, Colorado Gives Day. This online initiative encourages EVERYONE to support the nonprofit of your choice. You can help us qualify for incentive funds awarded to those nonprofits in Larimer County (That's US!) who have the highest number of donors and the highest amount in donations. Just 150 donors or \$20,000 will break last year's Larimer County record. Help us continue our mission of saving lives and enriching lives. Go to www.NoCoGives.org to make your donation on Dec. 10th – or schedule your Dec. 10th donation ahead of time!! And don't forget – your donation through NoCoGives.org still qualifies for Enterprise Zone Tax Credits and state and federal deductions. For more information, email judy@rmp.org or call 970-484-7756.

