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Rocky Mountain
RAPTOR
Program
a second chance at freedom

On the WING

WAIT A MINUTE...

It's already late summer???

Where has the year gone? 2016 has flown by in a blur of patients needing our help, education and outreach programs keeping our Educational Ambassadors on the road, and research projects needing samples and data.

Already this year, our Education and Outreach Department has provided 97 days of learning all over Northern Colorado. Our permanently disabled, non-releasable Education Ambassadors are working hard to inspire the love of raptors everywhere.

As of mid-July, 117 patients have come through our doors, comparable to last year. Our 24/7 on-call phone is a resource heavily relied upon by the public. Without a non-raptor wildlife center in the Fort Collins area, many concerned citizens call us about other injured creatures such as song birds, waterfowl, and even a moose! We do our best to help find these creatures the help they need.

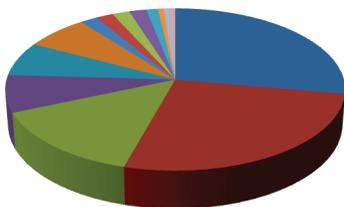
2015's massive influx of baby Great Horned Owls was thankfully absent this year. Last year, three nests of young owls had to be removed from areas that made them dangerous to the public due to aggressive parents. We were able to work with the property owners to find ways to exclude the parents from the problem areas – this year the parents chose much safer and out-of-the-way spots to raise their young. Instead of baby great horneds - this year we have many more trauma victims, plus 9 baby barn owls!

Despite our busy schedule, we wanted to take a moment to thank every one of our donors. Without your support, our efforts to save and conserve wildlife couldn't happen. We continue saving and changing lives because you believe in our mission. Thank you to everyone who supports the RMRP!

2016 Raptor Admission Injuries

January - July 21, 2016

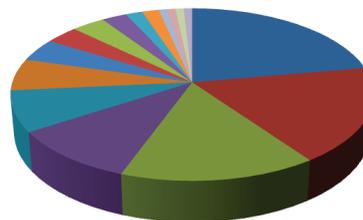
Note: Injury Categories are not mutually exclusive.



- Fracture - 45
- Immature - 43
- Head/Spinal Trauma - 23
- Hit By Car - 12
- Window Strike - 11
- Emaciated - 11
- Gunshot - 3
- High Voltage Trauma - 3
- Leg Hold Trap - 3
- Lead Positive - 3
- Caught By Cat - 2
- Oiled - 1
- Methane Burner - 1
- West Nile Virus Positive - 1

2016 Raptor Species Admitted

January - July 2



- Red-tailed Hawk - 26
- Great Horned Owl - 21
- American Kestrel - 18
- Common Barn Owl - 12
- Cooper's Hawk - 9
- Sharp-shinned Hawk - 7
- Swainson's Hawk - 5
- Eastern Screech Owl - 4
- Long-eared Owl - 4
- Bald Eagle - 3
- Burrowing Owl - 2
- Rough-legged Hawk - 2
- Merlin - 1
- Mississippi Kite - 1
- Saw-whet Owl - 1
- Osprey - 1

The raptors in our care come to us with many different types of injuries

Red-Tailed Hawks are topping the charts so far in 2016

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Burrowing Owl Battles Severe Injury

The Burrowing Owl seemed to have come away from being hit by a car relatively unscathed. He was a bit battered and bruised. We treated him for his pain, and gave him several days to rest. However, during his recuperation it became obvious that he had more than just a headache from banging his noggin on a car bumper: he was blind.

An exam showed that there was nothing wrong with his eyes, so the problem was in his brain. The impact with the car had caused major trauma inside his brain, and now only time would tell if he would regain his sight once he healed.

The owl's recovery seemed painfully slow. At first he couldn't even move around the critical care cage for fear of running into objects, and he couldn't find his food to eat it. We had to hand feed the little owl so he didn't starve as he healed. Ever so gradually, we saw him moving about the cage, finding perches, and eventually he could see well enough to find his food and eat on his own.

He was moved outside to a larger space to test his abilities. The Burrowing Owl still had obvious vision deficits, but we were hopeful he would continue to improve. And, day-by-day, he did. Three weeks after nearly losing his sight was the final test of his now-healed little body: could he hunt?

The answer was YES! He passed "Mouse School" with no hesitation.

It's not every day a creature that weighs less than a cup of coffee can overcome the devastating effects of being hit by a car, but this little guy wasn't about to give up. He was returned to the Sterling area to pick up where he left off...hopefully staying away from the highway this time!



This little Burrowing Owl survived being hit by a car and was returned to the wild.

SURVIVAL OF THE TOUGHEST

Red-Tailed Hawk Endures Against Dire Odds

Many of our supporters have been following the story of a Red-tailed Hawk that was rescued on March 9th. This hawk is one of the strongest patients we have ever cared for: after being hit by a car (already a serious predicament), he was attacked by another Red-tailed Hawk. A Good Samaritan luckily found this hawk right after he was hit by the car and while he was being attacked by the other bird.

The RMRP responded immediately, but the damage to the bird was severe. Deep, serious punctures from his fight, head trauma, a

dislocated hip...his future seemed bleak. It was twenty days before he was strong enough to attempt surgery on his terrible wounds.

Through it all, he kept fighting. Even during his most bleak hours, he showed us he wasn't done just yet. He had more life left to live.

It took days of hands-on intensive care, expensive surgery and medications, and lots of rest, but he miraculously healed from his grave injuries. Three months after he nearly died, he was healed, whole and strong once again.

His will to live left an impression on everyone who helped care for him. This remarkable creature had survived the worst odds imaginable, and was now ready to return to the wild. A second chance at freedom, a second chance to live, was this hawk's reward as he flew away on a clear, sunny spring day.

It took the extraordinary efforts of staff, volunteers, and you, our supporters, for this life to be saved. The RMRP depends on the generosity of our donors to give us the resources we need to do right by our patients. We can't thank you enough for your compassionate contributions that keep our mission alive.



This Red-Tailed Hawk took many helping hands to heal.

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.

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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
Carrie Laxson, Rehabilitation Associate
Jessica Miller, Education Associate
Bonnie Cleaver, Education Associate

Board of Directors

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

ANNUAL BIRDS OF PREY COURSE STARTS IN SEPTEMBER

Limited Seating - Reserve Your Spot Now!

Why do Swainson's Hawks migrate to Argentina? How do you tell the difference between and Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Cooper's Hawk? What does a Saw-whet Owl eat?

The Birds of Prey Course, taught by RMRP Executive Director Judy Scherpelz, is an intense immersion into the world of raptors. Six, five-hour classes 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. plus a field trip are designed to give interested birders more information about birds of prey, how and why they do what they do, and how to identify them, focusing on the raptors of Colorado. Taught since 1989, the course has been significantly revamped with new material, and offered for shorter class times. The classes “stand alone” – so you can register for only one or two – or all six. Live raptors will help students learn the fine points of identification.

•**Class 1: Sept. 10th.** Anatomy and physiology of raptors – how they work on the inside – to better understand why they do what they do.

•**Class 2: Sept. 24th.** Behavioral topics including breeding, migration, and conservation issues.

•**Class 3: Oct. 8th.** Identification and natural history of hawks, eagles and vultures, and osprey.

•**Class 4: Oct. 22nd.** ID and natural history of accipiters, falcons, kites, and harriers.

•**Class 5: Nov. 5th.** ID and natural history of the secret world of owls.

•**Class 6: Nov. 12th.** Field trip! A guided tour of northern Colorado will help you find and identify birds of prey.

These classes are \$50 each, or you can attend all six for a discounted price of \$275. Registration is open and seating is limited! You can sign up today by calling us at 970-484-7756, or send an email to Judy Scherpelz at Judy@rmp.org.



Learn how to identify this bird as an immature Swainson's Hawk, and much more!

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RAPTOR LOVERS



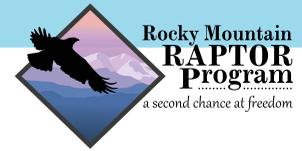
It's always wonderful to hear that the RMRP's education efforts have touched someone's heart. A lovely family visited our Open House in May, and shortly after we received this lovely note: "We really enjoyed the open house. Nathan was inspired by what he learned at the open house and when we got home he gave all the [stuffed] raptors an exam with his doctor kit. The bald eagle unfortunately ate too many mice and had a tummy ache and a heart ache. Fortunately, a band-aid was able to fix him right up. Hope your treatments are as easy as that this week!"

TINY TERROR

Saw-whet Owls may stand only a few inches tall, but they are every bit as fierce as the comparably giant Great Horned Owl. This Saw-whet was found in Wyoming along the side of the road, ruffled, bruised, and dazed after probably being hit by a car. He was only in RMRP's care for a couple of weeks while he recovered from his tumble. He returned to the wild to terrorize mice and insects...instead of our fingers.



join the
conversation...



INTERNATIONAL VULTURE AWARENESS DAY

Have You Thanked a Vulture Today?

The most unsung heroes of a healthy environment are certainly vultures. Often viewed as ugly or diseased, vultures are anything but!

Turkey Vultures are found in Colorado from spring to fall. They migrate to warmer climates during the colder months. These environmental clean-up specialists are essential to keeping disease from spreading, and often keep other animals from getting ill.

These amazing creatures have a very hardy and acidic digestive system that can tackle very serious diseases often found in rotting meat; everything from flesh-eating bacteria, cholera, botulism toxin, and even anthrax are destroyed by a vulture's digestion. Not only are they cleaning up unsightly carcasses, they are protecting other creatures from possible disease!

Although some find them ugly, anyone who has met the Educational Ambassador Turkey Vulture here at the RMRP knows that vultures are just as beautiful as any other raptor. Their black feathers shine iridescent blue and purple in the sunlight, and their eyes are full of clever mischief.

Next time you see vultures soaring overhead with their wings in that so classic V-shaped formation, give them a wave and say thanks!



September 3rd is International Vulture Awareness Day. Celebrate by thanking a vulture!



THE 2017 RMRP RAPTOR PHOTO CALENDAR GOES ON SALE SEPTEMBER 2016!

Check our website at www.RMRP.org for winning photos

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

August

13-14th – Loveland Art in the Park @ West Lake Park, Loveland

27th – Open House @RMRP

September

2-4th – Thunder in the Rockies @ Thunder Mountain Harley Davidson

9-11th – Scottish/Irish Highland Festival @ Estes Park Fair Grounds

10th – Birds of Prey Class Part 1 @ RMRP

14th – Raptors at the Library @ Old Town Library

24th – Birds of Prey Class Part 2 @ RMRP

October

1-2nd – Elk Fest @ Downtown Bond Park, Estes Park

8th – Birds of Prey Class Part 3 @ RMRP

12th – Raptors at the Library @ Council Tree Library

15-16th – Harvest Festival @Harvest Farm

22nd – Birds of Prey Class Part 4 @ RMRP

29th – Owl-O-Ween @ RMRP

November

5th – Bird of Prey Class Part 5 @ RMRP

9th – Raptors at the Library @ Harmony Library

19th – Birds of Prey Class Part 6 @ RMRP

December

6th – Colorado Gives Day!

17th- Holiday Open House @ RMRP