

TAKING FLIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF HAWK RIDGE BIRD OBSERVATORY



Adult Red-tailed Hawk over Hawk Ridge

Photo by Erik Bruhnke

RED-TAILED HAWK INCREDIBLE BIRD OF PREY

by ERIK BRUHNKE

While observing the migration of Red-tailed Hawks at Hawk Ridge, you may also witness a variety of other types of Red-tailed Hawks that have been blown in from other areas of the continent

The Red-tailed Hawk is an incredible bird of prey. From its powerful call (often used in television and movies as a “voice over” for Bald Eagles), to the graceful spread of its large open wings, the Red-tailed Hawk is a beautiful master of the skies. It can be seen throughout most of the raptor migration at Hawk Ridge, unlike several other species of raptors that are seen only during brief intervals. Although a mix of ages of Red-tailed Hawks can be found throughout the entire raptor migration, the bulk of the juveniles tend to migrate through in the earlier part of the migration, and adults tend to push through in larger amounts throughout October.

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CALL US

218.428.6209 for general info &
Executive Director, Janelle Long

218.428.8722 for Education
Director, Gail Johnjack

EMAIL US

mail@hawkridge.org

MAIL US

Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory
P.O. Box 3006
Duluth, MN 55803-3006

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COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

by KAREN STUBENVOLL, CHAIR

Another beautiful Duluth summer is behind us, and our favorite time of year is here: fall migration! On behalf of the Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory board of directors, we want to welcome back our returning staff and visitors. If you are new to our organization, then we hope to see you soon up at the Hawk Ridge overlook, one of the best locations in North America to view migrating raptors.

The Hawk Ridge Board was busy over the summer. We conducted our biennial Strategic Planning session in July, re-visiting our mission and vision statements, and developing statements of our values. We also did some constructive "dreaming" for

the future, and discussed our next steps to turn those dreams into reality. Thank you to former board member Frank Berdan for facilitating this all-day session.

Regarding events, we had a fabulous Hawk Weekend festival and would like to thank guest speakers: Dr. Keith Bildstein of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in PA, and Norman Smith of Massachusetts Audubon's Blue Hills Trailside Museum. We also thank raptor expert Bill Clark for returning for a second Advanced Raptor Identification weekend.

Lastly, I want to express a sincere thank you to all our members & donors for ongoing support of our organization!

NEW LOOK, SAME COMMITMENT

We're excited to share the new Hawk Ridge logo with you. We would not have been able to create this logo without inspiration from supporters, visitors and staff. Updating our logo emphasizes the dedication and strength we have shared over the years and represents our ongoing commitment to research and education for both today and tomorrow. The sky is our only limit. Our Northern Goshawk is depicted maintaining a watchful eye over Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory and Nature Reserve. The Northern Goshawk's feathers are designed to subtly represent shimmering waves—giving a nod to our beautiful vista and vicinity to Lake Superior.



The redesign was created by Ken Zakovich, Creative Director at WestmorelandFlint in Duluth, Minnesota. It was important to Ken and Hawk Ridge to maintain everything our supporters have grown to love about Hawk Ridge while at the same time streamlining its overall look for a cleaner and bolder appearance.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

by JANELLE LONG

Hawk Ridge is growing as a non-profit organization. This growth in numbers of members, visitors, programs, and staff is a reflection on our progress and thanks to your support. I'm proud of the steps we are taking to better analyze and evaluate our ways of doing things. This strategic effort is holding us accountable to make sure we are putting our best actions forth to achieve our mission. Our foundation built on passion and dedication for bird conservation remains strong, but for growth to occur, change must take place. I'm very excited and optimistic about what the future holds for Hawk Ridge. So, pardon our dust, we are under construction.



Janelle Long with Black-throated
Blue Warbler

Photo by Karen
Stubenvoll

RED-TAILED HAWK: INCREDIBLE BIRD OF PREY CONT'D



Adult Red-tailed Hawk

Photo by Erik Bruhnke

Red-tailed Hawks use their impressive wings to soar up high, keeping watch over the fields where they live. With the slightest turn of the alula (a small set of feathers on the front edge of the wing where the “thumb” would be), to the slightest rotation of their fan-like tail, Red-tailed Hawks are expert fliers. Red-tailed Hawks can often be seen perched on power line posts, as well as kiting and hovering over fields. Kiting is when a bird holds its wings at an angle into an oncoming headwind, to lock its position in the skies without flapping. Hovering is the act of flapping wings back and forth quickly, while keeping the body fairly stationary in the sky. In addition to adept flying skills, Red-tailed Hawks have extraordinarily acute vision. The combination of these tools makes them excellent hunters. Red-tailed Hawks pursue snakes, small mammals and small birds for the bulk of their diet. Having a vast choice of foods allows them to survive over a wide array of habitats, exploiting many variations of mixed fields and wooded edges throughout the continent.

Found throughout most of North America, this species shows more geographical variation than any other raptor species on the continent. The eastern race is found throughout much of Minnesota and the upper Midwest. This variety has gorgeous undersides of creamy-white, often accented with an aggregation of spots forming a

brown belly band. Juvenile Red-tailed Hawks often have yellow eyes, whereas adults have dark brown eyes. Juvenile Red-tailed Hawks don't have a red tail, but one gorgeously marked with dark gray and brown bands. Adult Red-tailed Hawks sport an impressive, rufous-colored tail, sometimes marked with black bands.

THE DARK MORPH RED-TAILED HAWKS ARE SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS MELANISTIC, WHICH MEANS THAT THERE IS AN EXCESS OF A DARK PIGMENT CALLED MELANIN WITHIN THEIR FEATHERS

Red-tailed Hawks seen at Hawk Ridge typically have two main field markings that differentiate them from other raptors seen here. In the “wrist” area of the wing, is a patch of darker feathers that forms a small comma-shaped patch. At Hawk Ridge we call this field mark the wrist comma. On the underside of the “shoulder” area is a band of dark feathers, called the patagial mark.

While observing the migration of Red-tailed Hawks at Hawk Ridge, you may also witness a variety of other types of

Red-tailed Hawks that have been blown in from other areas of the continent. The western race of Red-tailed Hawk tends to show deeper colors of orange and rufous throughout the underside and sometimes on the dark-brown head. Within the western race are three color varieties; light, intermediate and dark. The dark morph Red-tailed Hawks are sometimes referred to as melanistic, which means that there is an excess of a dark pigment called melanin within their feathers; this gives them a beautifully-rich dark brown appearance. Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk, a unique form, shows up from time to time at Hawk Ridge. This form breeds throughout the northwestern tier of Canada and throughout Alaska. Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks often show a streaked breast, and have a very cold-brown coloration throughout their body. They have varying amounts of rufous, white, and red scrawled throughout their tails, giving each bird a unique and stunning tail pattern. Sometimes strong west winds blow in a Krider's Red-tailed Hawk from the western prairies. This open grassland-dwelling variety is extremely pale, many of the markings fading into pure white.

Although they are found year-round throughout the state of Minnesota, some Red-tailed Hawks head south during the winter months; their abandoned territories may be taken over for the season by Rough-legged Hawks.

Observing raptors is an amazing treat. The mass movement... the sheer beauty... the challenge of finding the raptors in the sky... Are you ready to witness Red-tailed Hawks migrating past Hawk Ridge this fall?



Juvenile Krider's Red-tailed Hawk

Photo by Erik Bruhnke

EDUCATION CAPACITY BUILDING

by JANELLE LONG

Thanks to an Education Capacity Building grant in 2012 from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, we were able to make some significant improvements to our education department. We were able to maintain continuity of our current education programs and fall public operations through adequate training for our new Education Director, by providing an educational internship, and furthering our naturalist substitute program. These steps made the most out of limited time and resources during this new transition of staff and duties. We were also able to improve our current education program offerings for school groups, such as Experience Hawk Ridge, by adding state standards and evaluative tools. The sustainability of our environmental education program was impacted by building new partnerships and piloting several new education programs with other community groups. Some examples of these new offerings are the Raptor Activity Booklet and the kid's activity cart. We are grateful for this funding opportunity, which truly made a difference.

**NEW OFFERINGS
ARE THE RAPTOR
ACTIVITY
BOOKLET AND
THE KID'S
ACTIVITY CART**

HAWK RIDGE EDUCATION, FALL 2013

by GAIL JOHNEJACK

My focus this fall is again to do what works. We had great success last year with our public and private education programs, owl evenings, the Kid's Cart and the Raptor Activity Booklet. All of these programs are continuing. I have found some new activities for the Kid's Cart and we have added a few more owl evenings. We have been able to provide weekend passerine banding education programs, due to a generous donation from Myron & Holly Peterson. We have many school programs, such as Experience Hawk Ridge, already scheduled for this season. We thank the Donald M. Weesner Foundation for getting the busses filled with enthusiastic kids to and from Hawk Ridge during the week. If you have or know of a group that might be interested in a private program at the Ridge, please call 218-428-8722 or email me at gjohnjack@hawkridge.org.

We have many returning staff this fall. Margie Menzies and Matti Erpestad are back as Naturalists and Passerine Banding Educators. Erik Bruhnke has returned for his 6th season as the Count Interpreter. Sarah



Passerine banding demonstration by Hawk Ridge Naturalist, Matti Erpestad

Photo by Karen Stubenvoll

Glesner continues to teach the evening Owl Programs. We also have a great group of substitute naturalists including Brian Scott, Kaitlin Erpestad, Jenni Stafford, Kati Kristenson, David Stieler and Beth Miller. They are helping out especially on the weekends. Only one person on this whole list is new to Hawk Ridge. I am so glad to have so many great returnees this year!

I am especially excited to be working with

Katie Swanson again, as the new Volunteer Coordinator and Naturalist, and with Jessica Chatterton, as the new Operations Director. You will always see one of us managing the main overlook at the Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve this fall.

We will be at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve every day from 9am-4pm through October 31st! We look forward to your visit!

EVENING OWL PROGRAMS

Evening Owl Programs are held every Saturday in October at 8pm at the Hawk Ridge Education Lecture Area. Due to the popularity of our evening owl programs and limited capacity, tickets are required. Tickets can be purchased beginning the Monday prior to that weekend's program by calling 218-428-6209 or at Hawk Ridge between 9am-4pm. Dress warmly and meet at Hawk Ridge Main Overlook.

BANDING STATION TOURS

This year at Hawk Ridge we have expanded opportunities for banding station tours. Scheduled tours are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Check with Hawk Ridge staff or volunteers to find out the tour schedule. Cost is \$15/person for a one-hour tour. To sign up for a banding station tour or for more information, please call 218-428-6209 or email kswanson@hawkridge.org.

PEREGRINE WATCH 2013 SUMMARY REPORT

by KATIE SWANSON

Thanks to Lisa Dayton and other kind contributors, we were able to run another season of Peregrine Watch in downtown Duluth. With the help of staff, Miranda Durbin, Frank Nicoletti, Gail Johnejack and I, we had a successful year monitoring and sharing the falcon's story with the people of Duluth and beyond. To recap the season, we had 4 eggs in the nest resulting in only 3 hatching on May 29th. All of the young were banded and named at around 20 days old. We ended up having 2 females and 1 male. The names and band numbers of the birds were: Roger E/33, Faith A/33 and Dani A/34.

All of the young fledged on the weekend of July 12th-14th. Two of the birds ended up on or near Superior Street. With the help of the public, I was contacted to help the birds. The birds were guarded, while I was on my way, and then were taken up to the top of the Greysolon Plaza building to get another chance at flying and not ending up near traffic. After this, all the birds started flying and stayed out of trouble. We watched the birds develop their flying and landing skills, as well as play with each other as they chased and dove at one another. As it got later into July, the birds started to fly farther away and were harder to find. This is a good sign because this is what they are supposed to do, as they get older.

We staffed Peregrine Watch 5 days a week for 4 hours a day, from June 5th to July 28th. During the season, we recorded 2,039 visitors, who were able to view the adults perching and flying, see the young in the nest, watch adults bringing food to the young, and watch the young get ready to fly or take some of their first flights. We had a great crowd this year and the falcons put on an awesome show. We hope to continue this work next season to touch the lives of people through getting a sneak peek into the lives of the Greysolon Plaza, Peregrine Falcons.



Katie helping rescue young Peregrine, Roger, in downtown Duluth Photo courtesy of Katie Swanson

HAWK RIDGE EDUCATION BEYOND THE FALL SEASON

by GAIL JOHNEJACK

We provided educational programming throughout the past year. First, I met with 4th and 5th grade students from St. Michael's School at the Ridge once a month throughout the school year. The students learned about songbird migration, birds that stay through the winter, tracks in the snow, and habitat. We also played fox and goose on snowshoes - everyone loved it! The teacher and I worked together to provide programming from different angles. The students wrote haikus about Hawk Ridge, and we all wrote riddles about birds and quizzed each other. We spent approximately 135 student hours together at Hawk Ridge. It was a very successful program that is continuing this year.

We partnered with the Lake Superior Zoo to provide 12 Raptors in the Classrooms programs for area 4th graders. This involves a program that I taught about owls, and then the presentation of a live owl by Zoo staff. We also participated in Science Day at Cromwell-Wright Elementary school and



Kids learning about bird banding with their own bands!

Photo by Gail Johnejack

provided separate lessons for grades K-5, along with two Raptors in the Classroom programs. Through all of these programs, we reached approximately 425 students.

Our biggest project was planning and executing a Bird Day at Lakewood Elementary School. This program was designed to bring songbird banding to the Lakewood school forest, so that every student in the school could see the banding process and a bird in the hand. Each

class also received lessons that ranged from learning how birds are different from mammals (including a fun little song) for kindergarteners, to how research works and how bird banding contributes to our knowledge of birds for 4th and 5th graders. The day even included the older students 'banding' the younger students to go through the process themselves and to create a data set that they could use for math. This program reached all 250 students at Lakewood Elementary School.

Overall, it was a very successful year that we hope to build upon in the future.

FALL BANDING UPDATE

by FRANK NICOLETTI

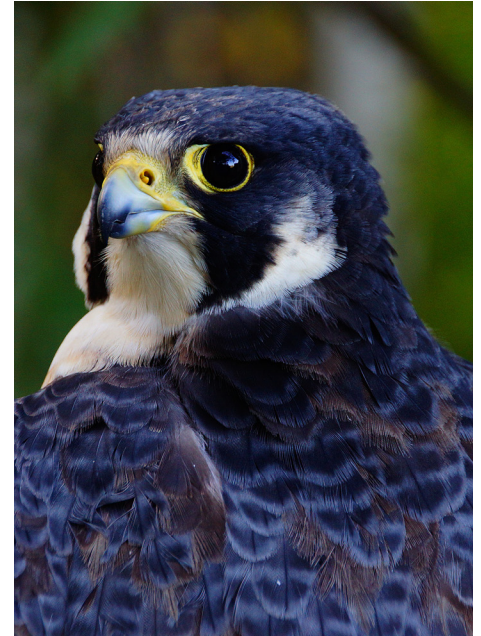
This is my third season as the Hawk Ridge Banding Director and I'm excited to continue work on banding birds. We are also happy to have back Nova Mackentley (fifth season) and Chris Neri (third season) as raptor banders. Longtime banding volunteer, Annmarie Geniusz, is working her first season as the owl bander. Thanks to great volunteers and staff, the banding project continues to be a success. The large numbers of birds banded and diversity of species makes the Hawk Ridge Banding Research project among the top in the country. We continue to make changes for improvement. The big project for this year was clearing and planting the overgrown field in front of the Hawk Ridge main research blind. Special thanks to John Gephart, Wes Johnson, Kim Ellerman and Bob Owens for funding the completion of this project. This open field has already proved its success with more opportunity for larger bird species to be banded, such as the two Bald Eagles and record number of Peregrine Falcons.

Under the volunteer supervision of Dave Alexander (Hawk Ridge Board Member), the passerine banding program is continuing.



Hawk Ridge Banding Director, Frank Nicoletti, releasing banded adult Bald Eagle Photo by Chris Neri

Thanks to a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation Biodiversity Fund in 2012, Hawk Ridge was able to establish a formal passerine banding volunteer training program. Due to this, we now have several returning volunteers, as well as a few new banding volunteers in training. Highlights for August and



Adult Peregrine Falcon banded at Hawk Ridge Photo by Amber Burnette

September, included banding several Black-throated Blue Warblers, Golden-winged Warbler, and a Black-billed Cuckoo. Thanks to all of those who helped in setup for the two stations. It's going to be a great fall season.

FALL COUNT UPDATE

by KARL BARDON



Merlin in flight

Photo by Karl Bardon

The official bird count at Hawk Ridge has been off to a great start this fall 2013 season. Although raptor numbers have been lower than average, non-raptor numbers appear to be mostly well above average. The weather in August and September has been much warmer than average, with very few cold fronts and a lot more south and east winds than usual, which probably accounts for the lower than average raptor numbers, especially Broad-winged Hawks, which have had their lowest season in 15 years. Peregrine Falcons have been putting on a record show, however, with 120 for the season already, and a new record daily count of 33 on 30 September 2013. Songbird migration appears to be less influenced by strong cold fronts than raptors, which is perhaps why a total of over 155,000 non-raptors have already been counted this season. There have already been some very significant mass migration events, including an amazing flight of 30,874 Common Nighthawks on 21 August, a major flight of neotropical migrants on 11 September including over 2,000 warblers and a state high count of 107 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, another huge flight of 10,642 birds on 20 September (including 4,270 warblers) and 8654 birds on 21 September (including 5599 Blue Jays), and an even larger flight of 17,548 birds on 29 September including 11,674 warblers and 1641 American Robins. No doubt October will bring some more amazing flights to Hawk Ridge!

Note: Count Director, Karl Bardon, is back for his seventh season with Hawk Ridge. We are also grateful to have Cory Ritter return for his third season as the counter. They continue to count both raptors and non-raptors.

CREATING MIGRATION PHENOLOGY BENCHMARKS FOR HAWK RIDGE

**PHENOLOGY IS THE
STUDY OF CYCLIC
AND SEASONAL
NATURAL PHENOMENA,
ESPECIALLY IN RELATION
TO CLIMATE AND PLANT
AND ANIMAL LIFE**

Hawk Ridge was granted funding from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation Biodiversity Fund to analyze both the hawk and passerine datasets for migration phenology. Phenology is the study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, especially in relation to climate and plant and animal life. With this funding, metrics and graphics will be produced to be available for other research activities related to climate change. The Hawk Ridge raptor data have been used for research in population trends through HMANA's Raptor Population Index (<http://rpi-project.org>). With the exception of one species, the Sharp-shinned Hawk, raptors have not been analyzed well for migration phenology based on the way migration counting is done at Hawk Ridge. The passerine data have been analyzed to show the magnitude of the migration at Hawk Ridge in recent years in contrast to the North Shore migration at Lakewood over a time series of three decades (Bardon, K. J. 2012. Fall Diurnal Migration of Passerines and Other Non-raptors at Hawk Ridge and Lake Superior, Duluth 2007-2011. The Loon 84:8-20). The results will be placed under the Research tab on the HRBO's web site with a narrative to explain their derivation and importance for climate-change studies.

SPRING OWL MONITORING PROGRAM

by JULIE O'CONNOR



Northern Saw-whet Owl Photo courtesy of Michael Furtman.com

Once again, our Spring Owl Monitoring program sent dozens of volunteers out into the far reaches of Minnesota to survey for breeding owls. Each volunteer is assigned a pre-established 9-mile route in their area and must become certified through our

online program. They spend one evening in early April driving their route, stopping at one-mile intervals and listening passively for calling owls for five minutes at each stop. They record observations such as GPS coordinates, weather/snow conditions, wind speed/direction, cloud cover and owls heard, for each stop onto data sheets.

I was fortunate to be able to run an owl route with Debbie (Waters) Petersen in north central Minnesota this spring despite all the April snow! We heard several Barred Owls and a couple packs of coyotes yipping and howling, and we actually SAW a couple Barred Owls on our way to the survey start point. Committing to run an owl route is a great opportunity to get out into the woods and just be still and quiet – not something that most people do very often in this day and age!

In 2013, 130 of 160 routes were assigned to volunteers. Without these

If you're interested in participating in this survey, please contact our volunteer coordinators for more information:

MINNESOTA

Julie O'Connor
218-348-2291
joconnor@hawkridge.org

WISCONSIN

Ryan Brady
715-685-2933
Ryan.Brady@Wisconsin.gov

dedicated volunteers, we would NEVER be able to capture so much information during the spring breeding season! The data recorded is being entered and analyzed – you can look for the annual report on our owl monitoring website: <http://www.hawkridge.org/research/springowl.html>

BIRDBITS

On October 2, Hawk Ridge Count Director, Karl Bardon counted 3,585 American Goldfinches at the mouth of the Lester River in Duluth, MN. This is the new state record for MN. The previous high counts for this species in Minnesota were 1,323 in 2012 and 877 in 2010, both at the same Lester River location.

NEW HAWK RIDGE BLOG

We are happy to introduce our new Hawk Ridge blog. It offers a new perspective on the happenings at Hawk Ridge and behind the scenes. Each day a different staff member is the author. You will find weekly summaries of the count & banding, education program news, meet our volunteers, and learn about raptor identification, special events, and more! You can find our blog by going to <http://hawkridgeblog.blogspot.com/>, so be sure to check it out this season!

MOVING ON

by JULIE O'CONNOR

It's almost like I was destined to be at Hawk Ridge...

When living in Alaska in the mid-70's, people would bring injured birds to my dad for help. He'd do his best to find out what they were, what was wrong with them, and what they needed to recover. A Great Horned Owl who had lost a leg to a leg-hold-trap lived in our front porch for several months before it 'self-released' out a window on a Sunday morning, and I remember seeing Hawk Owls and Sharp-shinned Hawks recovering from injuries in mews in my dad's classroom. A baby American Kestrel was delivered to our house in the early summer of 1976, and my dad raised and released it on our farm. We chose to believe that the kestrels we saw at the farm from that summer on were his family.

Seeds were planted then, but my interest in raptors did not blossom until adulthood. I'd heard of Hawk Ridge, and my dad took me along with him to Hawk Weekend programs in the mid-80's. Critter Man and Dr. Avian Guano stand out in my mind as

TO WORK WITH BIRDS OF PREY; TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY MEMBERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE AS VOLUNTEERS; TO TEACH PEOPLE ABOUT MIGRATION; TO SHARE THE WONDER OF BIRDS WITH KIDS; TO ENGAGE WITH SOME OF THE BEST BIRDERS IN THE COUNTRY... IT'S BEEN A WONDERFUL JOURNEY!

very effective Hawk Weekend speakers... I was an uninterested teenaged girl, but I found them to be entertaining. I also remember a slide show one year, probably facilitated by Kim Eckert, explaining the field marks of raptors in flight. They all looked the same to me!

It wasn't until I met Debbie (Waters) Petersen in 2001 that I really engaged with Hawk Ridge. Debbie encouraged my interest and patiently taught me about raptor identification in flight and in the hand. Debbie's enthusiasm was contagious, and pretty soon I was organizing volunteers to help out at the overlook.

The past 10 years have been a dream!
To work with birds of prey; to provide

community members the opportunity to participate as volunteers; to teach people about migration; to share the wonder of birds with kids; to engage with some of the best birders in the country... it's been a wonderful journey!

My life is rich with Hawk Ridge acquaintances!! Our volunteers, staff and visitors have seasoned my life with good things. I have learned much from the people associated with Hawk Ridge, and I have been blessed to watch hawks with people from all walks of life. Every few years, a young person came along that I really connected with... Danny B., Jackson B. and Ben G. are 3 young men who will change the world someday, and I got to cross paths with them because I happened to be at Hawk Ridge at the right time. I am fortunate.

And now, it's time for me to move on. I have given Hawk Ridge the best I have to offer for the past 10 years, and it's time for me to step aside. There are people out there with fresh energy and a new perspective who will take what I have done and improve upon it in ways that I can't imagine! I am so excited to see the new people coming onto the staff; they are high-quality people who are dedicated to the organization; who will connect well with our visitors; and who will improve the programs and outreach at the main overlook in new and creative ways.

I'll be around though... look for me at Summit Ledges or leading banding station tours! I know that I'll be drawn to the Ridge during September and October, but this year, I'll be able to spend time doing the things that weren't part of my job descriptions that I love so much!

Thank you all for ten years of great experiences, memories and relationships.



Julie O'Connor and Peregrine Falcon connecting before their journeys ahead

Photo by Andrew Longtin

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM UPDATE

by KATIE SWANSON

I am very delighted to take on the Volunteer Coordinator role with Hawk Ridge. As you may know, I have been involved with Hawk Ridge for 4 years now. I started out as a volunteer in 2010, then in 2012 completed a 600-hour internship with Hawk Ridge, which provided a great transition into accepting the Volunteer Coordinator position this season. I am excited to continue to develop the wonderful volunteer program that is in place at Hawk Ridge already.

As always, we are looking for new volunteers to help further build our wonderful team and for return volunteers to help keep that foundation strong. Volunteers are such an important part of Hawk Ridge and we would not be able to function in the same capacity, without them. Volunteers are really key to making what we do at Hawk Ridge possible. Equally, we strive to make sure the volunteer experience is fun and fulfilling for everyone. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for Hawk Ridge, please contact me at kswanson@hawkridge.org or call 218-428-6209. With the help of our volunteers, staff, members and community, we will make this fall season another success through education and research on these magnificent migrating birds.

HAWK RIDGE VOLUNTEER WORK DAY

by KATIE SWANSON

With the help of awesome volunteers and staff, we had a successful pre-season work day. On Saturday, August 10th, the Hawk Ridge banding station was the focus of these efforts.

One crew worked on setting up the blind and the other worked on preparing the banding station field. Neither of the jobs were easy tasks with heavy lifting and hot sun. The banding station field was cleared out for better maintenance and volunteers were needed to help pick rocks, roots, and sticks for seeding and mowing. With this work finished, there is now better visibility to see birds flying to the banding station and easier future maintenance.

Without the help of volunteers to set up the blind every year and do other tasks, like this, we would have more backaches and less time to spend on other important needs.

Here is a special thanks all that helped this day:

- Gary Leeper
- Don Pierce
- Grace Glick
- Annie Bracey
- Miranda Durbin
- Dave Carman
- Todd Burnside
- Sandy Roggenkamp
- David Alexander
- Steve Wilson,
- Bob Owens
- Frank Nicoletti
- Jessica Chatterton
- Katie Swanson

We truly appreciate the help of all our volunteers!



Banding Station Work Day

Photos by Gary Leeper

VOLUNTEER VOICES

by GENE & SUSAN BAUER

Birding just north of Sanliurfa, Turkey in early May this year, we thought what we were seeing in the distance was a Short-eared Owl when Soner Bekir began shouting, "Black-shouldered Kite!" There are only a handful of records for this raptor in Turkey, so hearts were really pounding when during the next hour we observed nesting behavior. The first attempted nesting record for Turkey was confirmed through observation during the next two weeks.

This excitement for raptors is what draws Susan and me to Hawk Ridge as volunteers. We appreciate HRBO's program to share knowledge and affection of these birds of prey and are delighted to add our time and interest to this effort. Learning about raptor natural history, sharpening ID skills, and working with the well-trained staff and interested visitors tips the benefit equation in our favor. To learn and share in this way is a privileged advantage for us.

We have been coming to Hawk Ridge yearly since 1977, but only since we retired two years ago did we feel in a position to get involved as volunteers. For the past 37 years we have lived and worked in Northfield, MN. Susan was on the faculty of St. Olaf College where, through dance, movement studies and academic writing, she taught students to think creatively and critically employing the process of perception, description, interpretation and evaluation. I worked with second language students at Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges,



Photo courtesy of Gene and Susan Bauer

where I taught academic writing to students from more than 40 language groups.

Susan describes herself as a tagalong birder, but in joining me in some 40 years of serious birding all over North America and the rest of the world, she has an enviable lifelist of her own. While many of these sightings please her, an even more serious attraction is observing birders. This interest in people, especially learners, draws her to work with the young children who visit the Ridge. She has found the kid's cart to be an effective tool for bringing them into the lives of raptors.

Years ago I asked Frank Nicoletti what he was seeing that allowed him to ID raptors when they were still specks in the scope. After thinking a minute, he said, "If I could put that in words, I'd have been

a writer." Because of rare talent like this, we have acquired great respect for the knowledge and skill of the staff at HRBO. After our weeks of volunteering we are left with visions: the gentle, knowing hands of the naturalists who present raptors to the visitors; the calm, deliberate moves of the banders; the endless attention and expertise of the counters; the always passionate enthusiasm of the count interpreter; and the quiet and respectful manner in which the directors and coordinators keep volunteers on track.

Our dream would be for Susan to "band" all of the children in the Midwest, for me to ID raptors like Frank and all the counters on the platform - and for both of us to share the joy of this with all the visitors to the Ridge.

HAWK RIDGE SUMMER SOCIAL



A lovely evening at the Hawk Ridge Duluth Social: Hawk Ridge Board Chair, Karen Stubenvoll (left) and Hawk Ridge Volunteer, Stephen Bockhold (right)

Photo by Bob Owens

On Tuesday August 13th, Bob & Mary Ellen Owens hosted the 3rd annual summer social event for Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory at their home. Approximately 50 were in attendance and enjoyed the lovely evening. Board, staff, and committee members were introduced. Highlights about board strategic planning, grants, and the research, education, and stewardship activities of Hawk Ridge were shared by Board Chair, Karen Stubenvoll, and Executive Director, Janelle Long. The new Volunteer Coordinator, Katie Swanson, presented her story in coming full circle with this position and expressed her passion in engaging others in the Hawk Ridge Volunteer Program. Thank you to all that attended and contributed.

HAWK WEEKEND FESTIVAL - A SUCCESS!

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW
TO SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT
YEAR - SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2014**

We celebrated the annual Hawk Weekend Festival over the weekend of September 20th-22nd. Over 100 were in attendance for evening events held at the Spirit Mountain Grand Avenue Chalet. A lovely venue and staff created a warm atmosphere for gathering together at dinners and speakers on both Friday and Saturday evenings. On Friday evening, Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory held its annual membership meeting, in which several board members were re-elected, annual highlights were shared, and the 2013 Hawk Ridge Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Julie O'Connor. Dr. Keith Bildstein of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary presented a phenomenal talk: "The long and short of raptor migration: recent studies of Turkey Vultures and Striped Caracaras". Saturday evening was a fundraiser benefit for Hawk Ridge to further the three main components of our mission of protecting birds in the Western Lake Superior Region through research, education, and stewardship. We truly thank the nearly 75 organizations, businesses, and individuals that donated items and services for both our silent auction and raffle. Attendees on Saturday night also delighted in hearing Norman Smith of Massachusetts Audubon present his entertaining, educational talk: "Snowy Owls to Saw-whet Owls". Great birding field trips and workshops were offered as part of this special weekend. We appreciate all those who attended and all those who helped in making this a great event (guest speakers, field trip/workshop leaders, volunteers, board members, festival committee members, venue staff, and Hawk Ridge staff). Mark your calendars now to save the date for next year - September 19-21, 2014!



Janelle Long (left) presenting Julie O'Connor (right) 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award

Photo by Jessica Chatterton

IN MEMORY OF DAVID ANDERSON

by SUE ANDERSON



Photo courtesy of Sue Anderson

Dave loved Hawk Ridge. In his working life he was a salesman. Part of his territory was southern MN and eastern SD. He started noticing hawks on his long drive down I90. Soon he was bringing binoculars and pulling over the side of the freeway to watch hawks perching, diving and flying. Dave was a very social person and soon learned of other places to go and see birds. Dave

turned me on to bird watching. He bought me my first binoculars. We built a home on Chisago Lake, MN and after a few years were fortunate to watch an eagle's nest being built across the lake from our house and enjoyed many years of nest watching and eagle rearing. A business associate told Dave about Hawk Ridge. That was over 30 years ago. When we first went to the Ridge it was not as famous as it is now. The counters stood by the road and called out birds of interest. We slowly absorbed all this fantastic information. We met Kim Eckert and Molly Evans and later, Frank Nicoletti. We met so many interesting people, from all over, novice birders, like we were. We became members, adopted birds, dragged everyone and anyone that wanted to go with us to the Ridge; kids, siblings, in-laws, godchildren. Dave told everyone about Hawk Ridge. When his work or vacations took us to different parts of the country, we always focused on birding and he always bragged about Hawk Ridge and urged people to go

there if they had a chance. We were not "hard core" chasers or listers and we didn't get up at the crack of midnight; but we still saw and delighted in "seeing what we see". Dave had chronic illnesses, but it didn't slow him down until a couple years ago and in 2012, after an absence of two years, we were able to go again to the Ridge. Met up with our favorite Count Interpreter, Erik, and had another wonderful adventure in being "up North". Dave had a birder's soul and delighted in all God's creation.

From Hawk Ridge: Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory truly thanks the family of Dave Anderson and those that gave donations in memory of Dave. He will be missed.



MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTION

PLEASE

☐ BEGIN

☐ RENEW

MY HAWK RIDGE MEMBERSHIP

\$15 Student (Vulture)

\$30 Individual (Osprey)

\$50 Family (Hawk)

\$100 Sustaining (Owl)

\$250 Soaring (Harrier)

\$500 Supporting (Falcon)

\$1000 Steward (Eagle)

Additional Donation:

HELP FUND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Fall Public Education Programs at Hawk Ridge \$

Hawk Ridge Volunteer Program \$

"Peregrine Watch" outreach at Lake Place Park \$

"Raptors in the Classroom" school outreach \$

"Experience Hawk Ridge" school lesson at

Hawk Ridge \$

HELP FUND RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Fall Count \$

Raptor Banding \$

Songbird Banding \$

Spring Count \$

☐ I want to volunteer, please contact me

☐ Check here if you'd like to be added to our e-mail list* for Hawk Ridge information and updates

*We do not rent, sell, or trade mailing lists

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HELP US MEET OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory depends on the generous contributions made by its members and friends. You'll receive special member discounts and behind-the-scenes tours as well as knowing these funds go to support education and research. Your membership contribution is tax deductible! Please make checks payable to Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory.

SEND FORM & PAYMENT TO:

HAWK RIDGE BIRD OBSERVATORY

P.O. Box 3006
Duluth, MN 55803-3006

CREATE YOUR LEGACY WITH HAWK RIDGE

You can support the work of Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, and create a legacy for the future, by remembering us in your estate plan.

The simplest way to accomplish this is to include a bequest in your will or trust. We should be named as "Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, a non-profit registered in the state of Minnesota."

You can also designate Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory as a beneficiary of your life insurance or your retirement plan.

There is no set amount that one is required to donate in order to leave retirement plan

assets (for instance 401K or IRA), but it is usually best to designate a percentage rather than dollar amounts.

For expert advice, consult an estate planning attorney.

Through the generosity of our members, donors, and supporters, we will continue our research, education, and stewardship for years to come.

NEW HAWK RIDGE MERCHANDISE

by JESSICA CHATTERTON

Check out the great new merchandise we have at the Ridge! This year we are offering a new custom hat with a silhouette of Lake Superior and a kettle of hawks swirling up and around the top of the hat in the familiar spiral formation that we see so often at the ridge in the fall.

We also have new cinch style bags that to compliment the new hat design. Our 2013 t-shirts features a Boreal Owl design modified by Sarah O'Connor from a photograph taken by our Banding Director, Frank Nicoletti. We decided on this particular bird in honor of the large numbers of this species that had been observed all over northern Minnesota last winter. Finally, a big thank you to Myron and Holly Peterson for their donation for special Hawk Ridge promotional merchandise!



MEET THE NEW HAWK RIDGE OPERATIONS DIRECTOR!

by JESSICA CHATTERTON



Jessica Chatterton with Rough-legged Hawk

Photo courtesy of
Jessica Chatterton

I am honored and delighted to accept the position of Operations Director at Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory for the 2013 season! Following in the footsteps of Julie O'Connor and Debbie Waters, who were both instrumental in creating the organization as it exists today, is a privilege and a challenge that I am definitely looking forward to. Working closely with Julie last fall in my position as a Naturalist and volunteering in the office with our Executive Director, Janelle Long, over the last two years have helped to prepare me considerably for this position.

Spending most of my childhood in Lakeside has made Hawk Ridge a very

special place for me. My first distinct memory of the ridge is from the fifth grade. Each year Lakeside Elementary fifth and sixth grade classes took a day long hiking field trip all the way to the main overlook. This was quite a walk for us back then! We packed bag lunches and made our way from the school upward through neighborhoods and along paths and eventually stopped to lunch with a beautiful view of Lake Superior in the background. This hike made the place seem so remote to my adventurous young mind. Migration was the focus of the field trip and we may have seen some distant hawks but that isn't what struck me. At the time I was more drawn to the beauty of the autumn forest and tried to identify every plant and tree as I walked. Around this age I began to really appreciate the natural world and spend more time walking in the forests and fields of the Duluth area.

After moving away to Minneapolis for ten years I decided to return to Duluth for school and in 2010 received my Bachelor of Science degree in biology from UMD. While my primary focus at UMD was plant biology, my fascination with birds began with an elective course in Ornithology. The instructor, Anna Peterson, expressed such an enthusiastic and infectious love for raptors that I couldn't help but admire them as well. I began volunteering at Hawk Ridge in 2011 with the intention of working on my identification skills. The staff and volunteers impressed me so much with their dedication and knowledge that I decided

to become more involved throughout the year. After that first fall season I began volunteering weekly in the office and became a Naturalist the following year. The questions asked during bird demonstrations were often very difficult yet they grew to be my favorite part of the job. These questions challenged me to keep learning and prompted me to research answers in my free time. Informing the public about raptors, migration, and the importance of research continues to be my favorite part of working here.

Growing up in the shadow of Hawk Ridge, I never fully realized why this place was so unique and why such enormous numbers of birds passed over during fall migration. While working and volunteering here, I have come to appreciate how important this place is in the scope of North American bird migration and as the new Operations Director, I plan to bring that awareness to the general public. I am excited for the opportunities and experiences presented by my new position. I hope to make my own unique impression on the organization, as Julie and Debbie have done before me.



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City of Duluth Parks & Recreation

Eagle Optics

Miller Hill Subaru

Naturally Avian (Erik Bruhnke)

@michaelfurtman.com (Michael Furtman)

FALL 2013 RAPTORS RAFFLE

The 5th annual Raptors Raffle is being held this fall to help raise proceeds to benefit the research, education, and stewardship activities of Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory. \$5 raffle tickets are being sold until the raffle drawing being held at the Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve Main Overlook at 1pm on Sunday October 27th. You do not have to be present to win! Thank you to the prize donors.

PRIZE #1

Duluth Pack Scout Pack (Duluth Pack Store)

Atlas Optics 10x42 Intrepid ED Binoculars (Eagle Optics)

Binocular Strap & Hat (Eagle Optics)

Crossley Raptors ID Guide (Princeton University Press)

Lens Cleaning Kit (Swarovski Optik)

PRIZE #2

Guided Sax-Zim Bog Birding Tour for 3 (Naturally Avian)

PRIZE #3

Customized Hawk Ridge Fleece Jacket & Hat (Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory)



Atlas Optics 10x42 Intrepid ED Binoculars



Duluth Pack Scout Pack