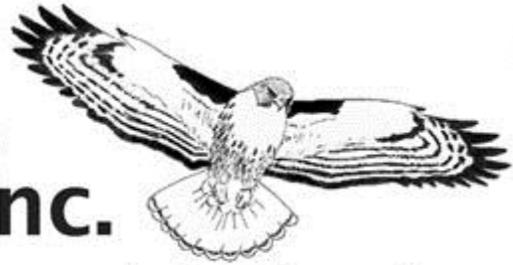


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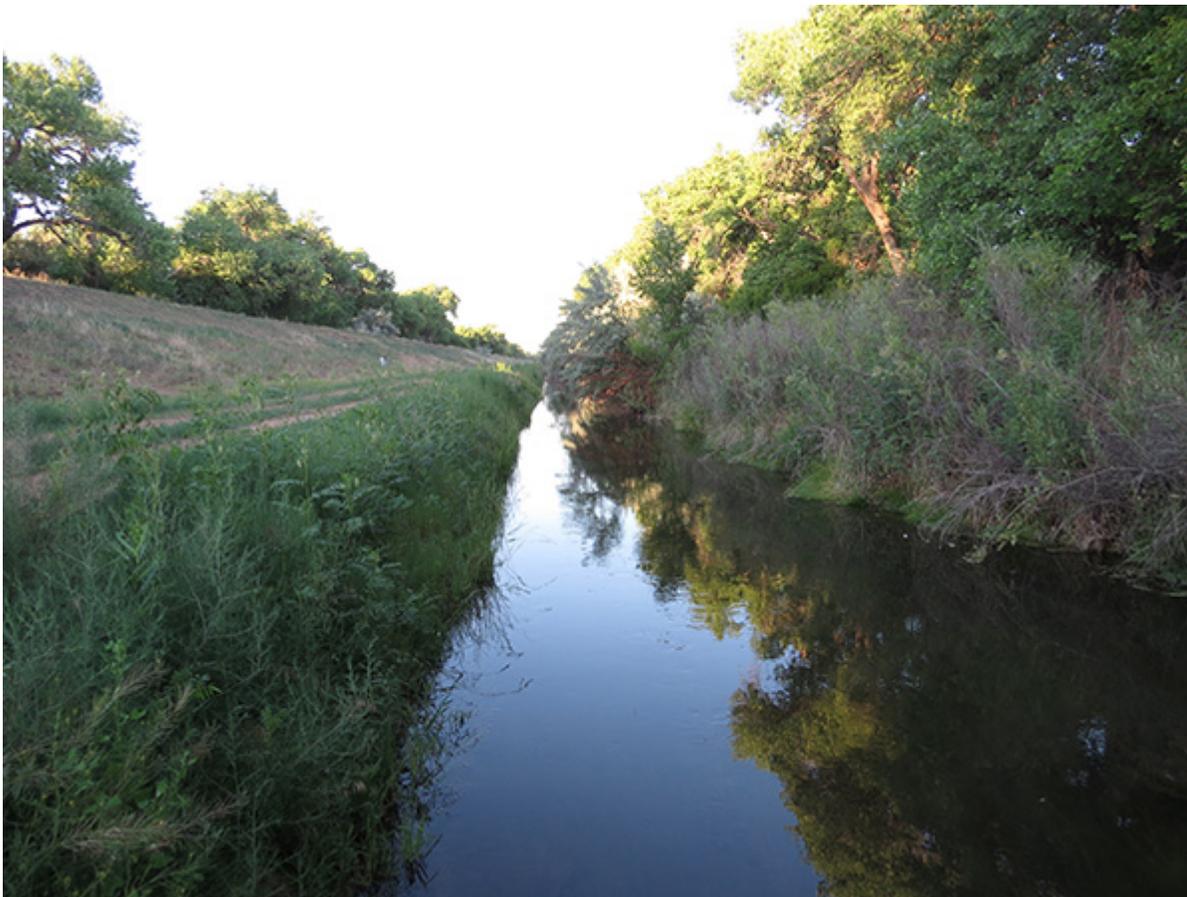
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Conservation, Avian Research & Education

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The Corrales Bosque Saga Continues, by Trevor Fetz, Lead Avian Biologist



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Vegetation along the the main drain (clear ditch) in the Corrales bosque. Image by Trevor Fetz.

In January, I wrote about the threat of thinning/clearing in the Corrales bosque within 8-10 feet of the levee toe (the east side base of the levee) and on the west side of the drain (or "clear ditch" as it is called in Corrales). As of the end of February, the threat remains. The areas under threat support some of the most desirable and heavily populated habitat (in terms of both avian density and richness) within the entire middle Rio Grande and the removal of the habitat in those locations would devastate the avian community in the Corrales bosque.

The clearing from the levee toe was originally thought to be in response to a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) mandate to protect the levee in the event of a catastrophic flood; however, the USACE levee inspection has yet to take place and, to date, no such recommendations have occurred. Because the levee was constructed with federal funds, NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) is required prior to any such action. NEPA documents would have to present at least three alternatives and the projected results, including a "no action" alternative. To our knowledge those documents have not yet been completed. But, the MRGCD apparently still plans to conduct the clearing. In short, our understanding is that this project would remove all woody vegetation--native and non-native, except for mature cottonwoods from the area in question.

Our understanding of the logic behind this plan is that mature cottonwoods could remain because their already established root systems would not encroach into the levee and thereby increase the threat of levee failure in the event of a catastrophic flood. But, there are a number of "old growth" cottonwoods at the immediate levee toe throughout the Corrales bosque that obviously have roots subverting the levee. In the event of a catastrophic flood that reached the levee (which, in Corrales, could probably only occur if Cochiti Dam failed), fast moving flood waters could scour out the area around these large cottonwoods, cutting into the adjacent levee substrate. And, if the cottonwoods were toppled, their extensive root systems could leave large craters in the base of the levee. But, if we assume the logic about mature cottonwoods not being a threat to the levee is valid, why would the same logic not apply to other mature vegetation? None of the other bosque plants possess root systems that are as large and extensive as those of mature cottonwoods, so they would be even less likely to threaten the integrity of the levee. Additionally, the root systems of smaller plants should actually be beneficial in the event of a catastrophic flood, because they would help hold the soil in place.

In terms of clearing on the west side of the drain, We received a letter from MRGCD in response to our letter of concern (dated 25 January 2017) that stated the following (copies of both available upon request): "The focus of this plan will involve...the rehabilitation of the riverside drain providing maintenance access, a trail, and vegetation planting along the west side of the drain." In regard to the first point, we know that "rehabilitation" of the drain can/has already been accomplished from the east side of the drain for decades. If there were very specific locations on the west side of the drain where maintenance were necessary, limited vegetation removal might be reasonable. But, the general impression is that the plan is to remove all non-cottonwood vegetation along the 4-mile long stretch of the Corrales drain that hasn't previously been cleared. The establishment of a trail in the location of current vegetation hints at that. And, why would a trail in that location be appropriate or even desirable? The distance between the drain and the nearest existing trail to the west is only about 15 meters. The idea that a new trail needs to be established within that 15 meters is, quite simply, absurd. It also seems odd that the MRGCD would enter the trail building business. We are under the assumption that the MRGCD charter is to maintain water delivery systems, not make recreational improvements.

We believe the promise of "vegetation planting" on the west side of the drain is empty. Part of the deal negotiated in 2011 by the Village of Corrales, MRGCD, and other entities (primarily Trees of Corrales) prior to the clearing of vegetation on the west side of the drain north of the Harvey Jones channel was re-vegetation. No re-vegetation has ever occurred there. In fact, MRGCD completely clears re-establishing vegetation in that area at least once a year. Additionally, other than USACE restoration projects (and sporadic cottonwood planting by the City of Albuquerque) none of the land managers in the middle Rio Grande bosque ever follow through on significant re-vegetation following "maintenance work".

It seems likely that these plans in Corrales are primarily elaborate schemes to conduct thinning/clearing, because the logic behind them as stated simply doesn't measure up. Further, it seems likely that there is behind the scenes involvement from the Village. Otherwise, why would the MRGCD go to such efforts in Corrales when they don't do the same elsewhere? Ultimately, the legacy from these projects, if they occur, will fall on the Village and, specifically, the mayor of Corrales rather than MRGCD. There is nothing pressing here for MRGCD, so Corrales could stop these projects cold if they wanted to. Hopefully, they will see fit to do so. Because, as we have seen elsewhere, once the vegetation is removed it is not allowed to come back.

Maggie Grimason, Senior Editor, Educator

Jeannine Kinzer, Raptor Rescue Dispatcher

Lisa Morgan, Raptor Rescue Coordinator & Field Technician

Everett Ogilvie, Statistician

Amanda Schluter, Biologist and Educator

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Reducing Avian Mortalities Due to Electrocutation and Collision with Power Lines, by Gail Garber, Executive Director



It's been an age old problem, or at least as old as the day when electricity was delivered across the country, particularly in the relatively treeless expanses of the American West. Discoveries of large numbers of electrocuted raptors in the early 1970s led to efforts among utility companies and government agencies to identify the causes and develop solutions to the problem. Now, four decades later, numbers of raptor deaths attributed to electrocution have declined; however, some birds still negatively interact with these structures. The [Edison Electric Institute](#) has released two manuals that provide guidance: "Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines – The State of the Art" (2006) and "Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines" (2012).

Regionally, the [New Mexico Avian Protection Working Group](#) formed in 2002 as a result of communications between Terry Thibeaux of the [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#), and Gail Garber of Hawks Aloft. [PNM Resources](#) joined the effort immediately afterward, becoming an integral part of the working group as well as the major funder to initiate educational conferences geared toward bringing the best available science to New Mexico's rural electric cooperatives and other utility companies. We began holding regional educational conferences shortly thereafter, culminating in the 2-day, 8th Regional Conference that took place in early February 2017 in Albuquerque. It attracted 86 attendees from 24 different companies throughout the western U.S.

Topics ranged from Laws and Permits and Electricity 101 to the [APLIC \(Avian Powerline Interaction Committee\) Short Course](#) that included a broad array of presentations that focused on avian safe designs and retrofits to utility structures. Robert Murphy, [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#), presented Eagle Issues and Guidance, covering the most current knowledge about Golden and Bald Eagle populations, and the effects of utility structures on these two species. The presentation also discussed issues relative to wind energy production, and the associated controversial proposed "eagle take". Rick Harness, [EDM International](#), spoke of Cost Effective Avian Risk Assessments Using Mobile Data Collection, followed by Jim Burruss, [Burns & McDonnell](#), discussing the need for Avian Protection Plans to reduce mortalities while at the same time, reducing costs associated with power outages that result from avian interactions.

Each of the presentations from the conference are available on the [New Mexico Avian Protection Website](#). Please visit this site to learn more about these issues and also to [download any of the presentations](#) from the conference. We thank all of our presentors, as well as the steering committee members who worked diligently to produce the 8th conference: Sharon Brown (PNM), Gail Garber and Lisa Morgan (Hawks Aloft), Adam Ringia (Pueblo of Laguna), Dennis Rankin (Rural Utilities Service), Delivan Roper (US Fish and Wildlife Service), Stephen Saletta (PNM), and Yesika Valles (PNM).

We thank all the sponsors for this conference:

[PNM Resources](#) and [Edison Electric Institute](#), both \$5,000 donors

[Kaddas Enterprises](#), [Power Line Sentry](#), [TE Connectivity](#), [Reliaguard](#) and [P&R Tech](#), each \$500 donors.

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Carolyn "Sam" Sanborn

“Status Report” findings on causes of mortality: Golden Eagles

- tagged with satellite transmitters - 1st *unbiased* study
- causes of mortality found for 97 of 139 deaths, 1997-2013
- human-caused mortality: increased from 1/3 of mortality in first-year eagles to 2/3 in adult (5+ years old) eagles
- ***survival rates would be ~10% higher*** without this mortality

Human-caused mortality of Golden Eagles in N. America*

Factor	Total estimated	95% credible interval
Poisoning	1,025	316 - 2,266
Shot	926	336 - 2,046
Collision**	545	133 - 1,509
Electrocution	504	121 - 1,494

* data mainly from western U.S.; other major factors are lead toxicosis and leghold traps

** mainly collision with vehicles, power lines, wind turbine blades

United Way of Central New Mexico

University of New Mexico

Raptor Rescue Team

Shelley Armitage
Anthony Bailey
Donna Borowsky
Sophia Borowsky
Jacquelyn Chacon
Linda Chandler
Charles Cummings
Joanne Dahringer
Julia Davis
John Douglas
Marion Fisher
Tim Florence
Maggie Grimason
Ashley Gurnea
Bill Houston
Kaitlyn King
Jeannine Kinzer
Dean Klassy
Toni Klassy
Rebecca Kraimer
Robert Kraimer
Sara LeTourneau
Maurice Mackey
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Michael Montroy
Diane Moore
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Beth Nelson
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Bruce Sisk
Sue Small
Brek Smith
Mary Smith
Mona Trempe
Frank K. Wilson

Raptor Survey Team

Chuck Brandt
Mary Bruesch
Ed Chappelle

New Peregrine Falcon T-shirt Available Now



We are thrilled with our brand new T-shirt design, featuring Doug Brown's Peregrine Falcon image. This image won second place in an international photography contest and Doug traveled to France (I believe) for the award.

We worked with [Jim Morris Environmental T-shirts](#) this year, and are equally thrilled with the results of our new partnership. The T-shirts are wonderfully soft feeling, made with Earth Friendly Organic Cotton and produced in the USA. We have a wide range of sizes in both short and long sleeves, with both Ladies and Unisex styles. We have no youth sizes. So, pick the one you want, but don't delay! These will be selling quickly!

The price for short sleeve is \$19 and long sleeve is \$25. [Order yours today on our website](#) or stop by the office to try one on!

As always, please call the office at 505-828-9455 to ensure that someone will be there when you arrive. We often are out of the office attending to other business.

Gill Clarke
Gail Garber
Roger Grimshaw
Jerry Hobart
Bonnie Long
Donna Royer
Susan Russo
Sam Sanborn
Martin Schelble
Diane Schlies
Steve Youtsey

Upcoming Events - Please Help

Wednesday, March 8
Time TBD
Desert Ridge Middle School
Single Visit Birds of Prey

Thursday, March 9
1 – 3:30 p.m.
Manzano Day School
Single Visit Birds of Prey

Friday, March 10 – Sunday, March 12
Monte Vista Festival of the Cranes
Outreach Booth and Tours

Tuesday, March 14
9 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
Lowell Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

Wednesday, March 15
9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Dolores Gonzales Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

Wednesday, March 15
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Location TBD
Open House and Book Fair

Thursday, March 16
10 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.
Wherry Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

Friday, March 17

Field Studies Training Class for New Field Volunteers and Refresher Class for Experienced Volunteers

Tuesday, March 14
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
HAI Office
6715 Eagle Rock Ave NE, STE A
Albuquerque 87113

Learn about the Bosque Nesting Raptors Study, ranging from Rio Rancho south to Belen. This class is designed for new volunteers interested in participating and as a refresher for experienced surveyors. All participants must be familiar with GPS technology and own their own GPS units. Lisa and Gail will hold a class to teach survey methods, including keeping accurate data sheets, raptor identification and aging Cooper's Hawks, the most common nesting raptor in the bosque. Experienced surveyors with existing routes are not required to attend, but are invited to refresh their skills.

Pre-registration is required. Register by [sending an email to Gail](#).

Hawks Aloft 2017 Raffle Quilt - Tickets Available Now

Get your tickets now! They are \$1 each or 6/\$5. You can purchase them [on our website](#). We will draw the

winning ticket on December 2, 2017, at our annual Holiday Party.

Image by Steve Elkins.



11:15 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Dennis Chavez Elementary
School
Single Visit Birds of Prey

Monday, March 20 –
Friday, March 24
Silver City School
Programs
Living with the Landscape

Saturday, March 25
7 – 9 p.m.
New Mexico Museum of
Natural History
Education Outreach

Tuesday, March 28
10 am – 1:45 p.m.
Dolores Gonzales
Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

Wednesday, March 29
9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Dolores Gonzales
Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

Thursday, March 30
10:15 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
Wherry Elementary School
Living with the Landscape

January Rescues

- Cooper's Hawk -
Soft tissue
damage -
Released
- Northern Saw-
whet Owl - Hit by
car
- Western Screech
Owl - Emaciated
- Western Screech
Owl - Hit by car

January, and the other winter months usually see birds in the most dire conditions, and last month was not an exception. For the birds that were unable to be rehabilitated, we sincerely thank the homeowners, passers-by,

A Month of Learning, by Angela Green, Office Manager

February has been a month filled with new experiences. The most exciting part for me was meeting some of our Avian Ambassadors while at the New Mexico Avian Protection Conference early on in the month. I'll never forget standing at the Hawks Aloft table, not realizing I was mere inches from a little Western Screech-Owl named Kenna. She was camouflaged so well on her perch! It was also great to be able to sit in on some of the presentations, which addressed a multitude of topics, like designs for avian-safe utilities, regulations, and laws regarding birds in the Southwest.

That same week, I attended the docent training, meeting even more birds and some new volunteers as well. Next up will be a raptor handling class!

In addition to all this excitement, I've just started a fundraising for nonprofits class through UNM Continuing Education. The topics include raising annual funds, running special events, major gifts, and capital campaign management. I hope to be able to put this knowledge to work very soon at Hawks Aloft.

Image of Kenna, the Western Screech-Owl, by Angela Green.



rehabilitators, veterinarians and volunteers that cared enough to help these birds in their time of need. The rescuers' heart-felt care undoubtedly made their passing much more peaceful and comfortable.

Wish List

- AA Batteries
- Coffee (for the office)
- Toilet Paper
- Paper towels
- Bleach for bird laundry
- 8.5 x 14 copy paper
- 8.5 x 11 copy paper
- Digital camera
- Clear shower curtain
- Laminating materials
- Foam board
- Binoculars
- Nature-themed children's books
- 8' wooden closet rods
- Gift cards for Home Depot, Lowe's, Target or Staples
- "Forever" postage stamps
- GPS units (even old ones)
- Spotting scopes and tripods
- 4WD Vehicle, minivan, or station wagon
- Ink cartridges (920) for HP Officejet 7000

Amazon Adventure - With Hawks Aloft and Wildside Nature Tours



**Amazon Adventure
with Hawks Aloft and Wildside Nature Tours
February 3-11, 2018**

Birding, photography, fun and relaxation, all from our 165 foot deluxe riverboat! A host of leaders for your trip will include Kevin Loughlin, bird photographer and owner of Wildside; Edison Buenano, South America's top birding guide; Gail Garber, Director of Hawks Aloft, plus two local naturalist guides.

Our cruise will include afternoon lectures on birds, wildlife and photography. We enjoy multiple excursions by



motorized skiff each day, designed to reveal the incredible wildlife that calls the rain forest home and with any luck we'll spot sloths, monkeys, toucans, macaws, pink dolphins and so much more!

The cuisine on-board is regional and provides a unique and delicious window into local culture. Gain a rare glimpse of how life 'on the river' is lived and experience the magic of the Amazon on this once-in-a-lifetime riverboat adventure.

Focus and Highlights:

The Peruvian Amazon offers fantastic birds, monkeys, sloths, frogs and other great wildlife. We will explore rivers, creeks and forest trails in search of all we can find! On board the ship we will offer daily lectures on birds, wildlife, photography, art and the local culture.

[Click Here for full details.](#)

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Black-collared Hawk and Hoatzin images by Kevin Loughlin, Wildside Nature Tours.

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Black-collared Hawk, Hoatzin, and riverboat images by Kevin Loughlin, Wildside Nature Tours.





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[Click Here for full details.](#)

Black-collared Hawk, Hoatzin, and riverboat images by Kevin Loughlin, Wildside Nature Tours.





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When West Nile Virus Comes to Call, by Lisa Morgan, Raptor Rescue Coordinator/Field Technician

When I think of West Nile Virus (WNV), the grim reaper comes to mind, showing up at the proverbial doorstep of its next intended victim. In this case, the grim reaper came for the Northern Saw-whet Owl I wrote about last month.

WNV first reared its ugly head in the early 2000's with immeasurable avian deaths, mainly among corvids (crows, ravens, jay, etc.) and owls. The virus led to the almost complete decimation of the California Scrub Jay as it raced across the country. Educational facilities scrambled to find ways to save their beloved educational ambassadors as these winged beings started dying off in large numbers. Unfortunately, the equine vaccine that veterinarians, rehabilitators, and educational facilities began using to curb the threat was less than 60% effective on birds of prey. Any birds that did recover from the virus did so only due to extensive nursing care and a miracle. Most of the birds that did recover suffered from permanent neurological damage.

Eventually, nature adapted to this mosquito-borne



illness, and avian deaths began to decline. As a wildlife rehabilitator, WNV is always in the back of your mind. However, it was the last thing on my mind when we recovered the little Northern Saw-whet Owl in the middle of winter.

As you may recall, the owl presented with thinness and dehydration after being found in a garage far from her home range. She quickly regained her strength and began eating voraciously within a week after being admitted. She had a feisty attitude when presented with the company of another Saw-whet Owl, and guarded her mice as if they might be her last. The only thing odd about her was that she was almost always rather lethargic.

A few hours before her symptoms appeared, she slowly munched away on a little mouse. The next morning, I found her and her half-eaten mouse on the bottom of her crate. Quickly placing her in an incubator she soon became neurological—quivering uncontrollably and barely able to stand. What could possibly be wrong? Certainly she couldn't have been bitten by an infected mosquito in the middle of winter! Giving fluids and nutritional supplements throughout the day proved futile. By that evening she wasn't conscious enough to take anything orally. Fluids were given under her skin; still she was terribly dehydrated. No matter what "trick" I pulled out of my hat, she continued to decline. By the next morning she was in constant seizure. Feelings of utter helplessness overwhelmed me as she passed before my eyes.

Pathological studies were conducted soon after she died. WNV had invaded every part of her tiny body. The incubation period for WNV is typically 6-14 days—about the time we had a warm spell, and mosquitoes were reported to be seen during that time. My hope is that, with all of the Northern Saw-whet Owls that have irrupted to lower elevations this winter, they are not also overtaken by this terrible virus.





Welcome Jeannine Kinzer, Now our Raptor Rescue Dispatcher

After 23 years at Intel, I decided to semi-retire. As of now, I am working as a volunteer coordinator for the Galloping Grace Youth Ranch, building a foundation and program for recruiting and retaining volunteers. I have been a volunteer for HAI almost 2 years now and worked closely with all aspects of the rescue program. So when the opportunity came up for someone to help ensure that we always have coverage for the rescue phone I jumped on the chance. I will be working closely with staff members to improve the reliability of the program and ensure long term success of the project. I look forward to working with everyone!!

We are quite excited to announce the return of Jeannine Kinzer, a longtime volunteer and our office manager for 6 months. She is back in a new role, one that is near and dear to her heart - rescuing injured raptors and ensuring that they get the care that they need. Further, Jeannine is participating as a volunteer for the Rio Grande Gorge Raptor Monitoring Project and Raptor Monitoring at El Segundo Mine.

Image by Amanda Schluter.

Welcome back Jeannine!!!

Stories from Silver City, by Julia Davis, Education and Outreach Coordinator



During the week of Valentine's Day, Hawks Aloft was able to share the appreciation and love we have for our Avian Ambassadors with the students of Silver City. During our first trip there this school year, we visited with three schools: Bayard, Jose Barrios, and Harrison Schmitt Elementary Schools. We focused our efforts on the older grade levels and between Carol Fugagli and myself, we completed 18 programs for students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

Bayard is a small mining town about seven miles east of Silver City, which we also visited last school year. I was amazed at the amount of information students retained and recalled from the previous programs. My fifth and sixth grade classes were able to recall the name and injuries of the birds they met in 2016, the five types of raptors, and the characteristics of raptors.

The next day (Wednesday) we went to Harrison Schmidt. The teachers at this school are excited about the birds, and share that excitement with their students. We met with all fifth and fourth grade classes at this school. Fifth graders, who had the program last year, were able to recall with ease the information they absorbed in 2016--again, I was amazed! This was also the day one of our cars, a white Explorer, got a flat tire. Thankfully, Carol's husband, Mike Fugagli was able to get the tire patched up while we were teaching. Thank you, Mike!

Our last teaching day was with a new (to us) school in Silver City, Jose Barrios Elementary School. The staff and students were excited to meet us and the birds. Meeting the school librarian was a very special treat. She has great admiration for birds of prey, and in her library she live streamed a Bald

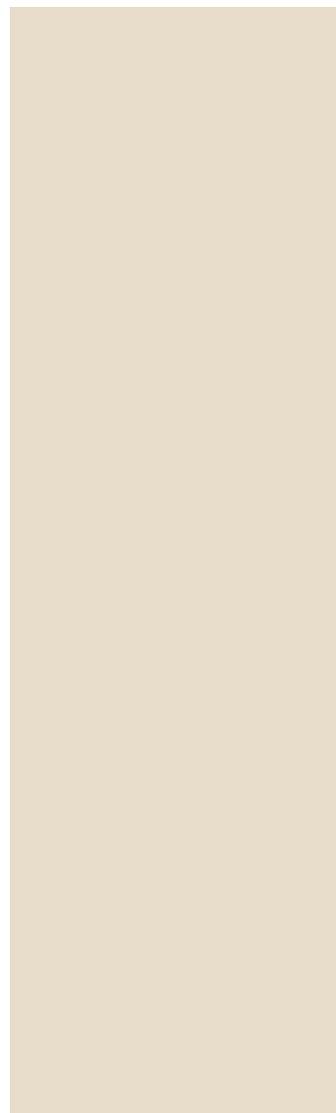
Eagle nest for students to observe as they picked out library books. As we sat and ate lunch in the library, I was able to watch a Bald Eagle baby explore its nest as its parents brought it food.

Out of town programs means hotel stays with the birds, and we again chose to stay at the Silver City Econo Lodge. In our little hotel room there were two humans (Mary Bruesch and myself) and six birds! Celeste, our Barn Owl, took up residence in the bathroom, Sunny, a Prairie Falcon, got a front row seat to the TV, our Red-tailed Hawk, Lilla, had a whole spacious corner to herself, and Western Screech-Owl, Shadow, and American Kestrels, Tori and Waldo, took up space on the hotel desk. It was a full room and interesting to observe the birds. I was lucky to see Lilla do some vocalized preening on our last night in Silver City! She made many unusual noises and spent about 15 minutes combing through her feathers with her beak.

It was a great week, and we will be heading back down to Silver City at the end of March. March will be extremely busy with school visits and the annual crane festival in Monte Vista, Colorado. This is the final sprint of the school year and school programs (which typically run March through May). The calendar fills fast, but there is still availability in both April and May for school visits and public outreach. If you'd like to bring the birds out to an event, just contact me at julia@hawksaloft.org.

We thank PNM Resources Corporate Giving for funding the programs for Silver City schools! We also thank Mary Bruesch, volunteer extraordinaire, who accompanied me and assisted with programs during this week.

Shadow, the Western Screech-Owl, above, by Julia Davis. Celeste, the Barn Owl, below by Larry Rimer.



Things are Picking Up Around Here! by Everett Ogilvie, Statistician

This past month, I worked with several people in the office to finish up a report for our Bosque Nesting Raptor Study. This report summarizes our surveys from 2004 through 2016. I won't go into detail, but it is significant to note that over the entire study our employees and volunteers tracked 4,915 nests, which provides an idea of the scope of the project. One more item of interest: Of those 4,915 total nests, 899 were considered "active" with incubation activity, and of those 899 active nests, 718 were successful (meaning they fledged young).

The next project I will be part of is the upcoming Upper Rio Grande Gorge Raptor Monitoring Study for the BLM. Several of us spent a day in northern New Mexico getting a glimpse of the study area, which basically covers the gorge from the Colorado line southward to Pilar, a distance of approximately 53 miles. This will be a very challenging task due to the terrain, accessibility and, of course, the weather. The study will require several multiple day trips to the area over the course of the breeding season.

Several of us in the office are also starting to generate a report on the songbird surveys conducted in the Valles Caldera. I spent a short time in the area last summer—which gave me insight into the surveys—and I spent considerable time this past fall working on the data. We hope to generate this report in the very near future.

After the above, I hope to begin working on some historic Ferruginous Hawk and Golden Eagle studies which were done in the late 1990's to 2005.

I'm not sure the above activities will allow much time for my annual motorcycle trip around the Southwest—but hopefully I can squeeze it in this year!

Image of Everett Ogilvie, by Amanda Schluter.



Smart Apps for the iBirder, by Maggie Grimason, Senior Editor/Educator

In recent years, there has been a proliferation of bird identification apps available for download on any stripe of smartphone. Each can provide instruction, tips, guidance and general insights for both experienced and novice birders. Here's a rundown of some of the apps that have been well received and endorsed by myself, by reviews across the internet, and by organizations like Audubon.

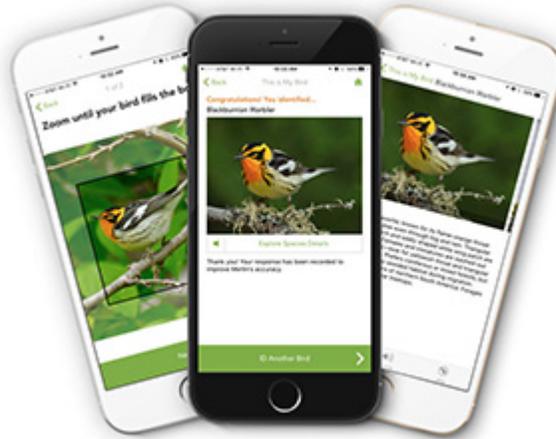
Handy for the true novice is the [Merlin Bird ID](#) app, the main focus of which is to assist in identifying (rather than confirming) a bird species. This app leads through a series of questions that indicate the location, date, size, color and behavior of the bird in question. The app then generates a list species that fit the bill, along with high-res photos, so you can let your eyes do the identifying from there. After the last update, this app sports more than 650 bird species in its catalog.

A new app on the scene—released in late February for iPhone—comes in the shape of [Song Sleuth](#), an app that promises to record bird song through the mic in your smartphone, and identify the bird through an algorithm that took years to develop. While similar programs do exist, this is the first that is geared for North American bird identification, and boasts a catalogue of more than 200 species of bird, paired with Sibley references. The app is downloadable, so it can be used even in the remotest of locales, and comes equipped with the ability to identify even sounds that are commonly mistaken for birds, such as humans, several species of toads and a variety of squirrels. Song Sleuth is currently available for purchase on iPhones for \$9.99. An Android version of the program is slated for release later in the year.

There's also [Birdseye](#), which sources most of its info from eBird, a frequently updated online database of bird sightings and other observations, providing great insights to users in real time. Birdseye is a traditional identification app, mostly based in imagery (although it does contain a lot of text, and bird calls, too), yet its access to eBird data means that it also can indicate bird species recently seen in your area and provides detailed maps of bird sightings nearly anywhere in the world. Reviews suggest that Birdseye is better for seasoned birders who don't need to identify a bird so much as confirm what they're looking at.

One indisputable classic (can an app be "classic" yet?) is the [National Audubon Bird Guide](#) app, which for some time was only available at the cost of a few dollars. Now, the app is free on both iPhone and Android. Developed by an authority in the bird and guide book world, this app is an essential download for those at any skill level. With the features of a basic guidebook, it is most useful for confirming an ID, but it does help you narrow down a field of options with a series of identifiers like family, shape, region and color.

Each of these apps is downloadable, so they can be used offline. Yet, for this reason, they can take up quite a lot



What birds live near here? Where can I find new birds to add to my life list? BirdsEye is the only field guide that gives you an instant answer to this question, from your phone at home or around the world

of space. This isn't an issue for newer phones, but old ones may not be up to the task. Any of these apps, however, will add some equipment to your arsenal when you head out into the field.

Merlin Bird ID App, top right, BirdsEye Bird Finding Guide, below.

March Madness, by Amanda Schluter, Biologist and Educator

February was a busy month of work. With the shorter month, I didn't feel like I had enough time to do everything that needed to get done. I was able to complete all my winter songbird surveys for the Middle Rio Grande Songbird Study. Along with surveying most mornings, I also completed reports for a few projects and started planning for the upcoming field season.

March also is going to be busy. The raptor nesting season has begun and Hawks Aloft is monitoring breeding raptors in both the Upper Rio Grande Gorge and for Peabody Energy at their El Segundo Mine, located northwest of Grants, NM. Our group of volunteers had planned a trip to the upper Rio Grande gorge to begin surveys in late February, but the weather did not cooperate and we were forced to delay the trip. It is essential to observe the early nesting behavior of raptors, including Golden Eagles, to get an accurate count of nests. If the project starts too late, we will not observe the nest failures and the productivity we observe may appear higher than what actually occurred. Our group is hoping for better weather in March.



Along with my breeding raptor monitoring, I am also excited to attend the Monte Vista Crane Festival on March 10 to 12. I was able to attend last year and had an excellent time. It is going to be a fun weekend with great birding and great people during a very busy month.

Support Hawks Aloft by Shopping at Smith's!



Did you know there are plenty of ways to support Hawks Aloft without spending a single extra dime or changing any little thing about your daily schedule? In addition to registering to support Hawks Aloft with your Amazon purchases via smile.amazon.com (you've already done that, right?), now you can kick back a few extra dollars to Hawks Aloft just by shopping at your local Smith's.

We recently enrolled in [Smith's Community Rewards Program](#), a program that allows individuals to enroll online

and support their favorite nonprofit with their purchases. At the end of each quarter, Hawks Aloft will receive a percentage of the total dollar amount spent by shoppers who have selected us as their preferred local nonprofit. Signing up is easy and makes a big difference in our budget.

Signing up is a simple, three-step process:

- 1). With your Smith's Reward Card handy, log on to [Smiths Community Rewards](#)
- 2). Enter your rewards card number and your preferred Smith's shopping location
- 3). Search for Hawks Aloft by entering our name or our Community Rewards ID number: 16635

It's as easy as that! Then, next time you buy your groceries, all you have to do is use your Rewards Card for discounts, fuel points, and to provide additional revenue to Hawks Aloft!

Thank you for supporting us so we can continue to care for injured wild birds, educate the community about raptors, and conduct research that provides meaningful insights about the health of our local ecosystem.

Adopt an Educational Ambassador



Help support our non-releasable raptors through our Adopt-a-Raptor program. Hawks Aloft houses and cares for 25 permanently disabled raptors (and one corvid!). Our Avian Ambassadors travel throughout the Southwest,

helping us to educate the public about how to help protect these beautiful animals. We provide them with top-quality housing, food, and medical care for their entire lives. It costs an average of \$2000/mo. just for their food. When you adopt a raptor, you help feed our birds, make home improvements, and provide veterinary care for one avian ambassador of your choice. Prices range from \$35-\$100 depending on the species.

[Click here to Adopt a Raptor](#) - such as Celeste, our female Barn Owl.

When you adopt a Hawks Aloft raptor you will receive:

- A one-year Hawks Aloft membership
- An Adoption Certificate
- An information sheet about the individual bird you have adopted
- Exclusive access to video updates about your bird
- Your choice of:
 - A professional 8x10 photo of your bird, or
 - A stuffed Audubon Bird with realistic vocalizations

[Click here to learn more about our Avian Ambassadors](#)

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You shop. Amazon gives.

Thank You to Our February Volunteers

Kariana Atkinson, DVM - Veterinary care
Dorothy Apodaca-Newbill - refrigerator/freezer for rehab
Greg Basco - Photographs
Keith Bauer - Photographs
Jim Battaglia - Raptor rehabilitation, raptor handling class
Emmitt Booher - Photographs
Doug Brown - Photographs
Kristin Brown - Photographs
Mary Bruesch - Data entry, mews cleaning, outreach
David Buckley - Raptor care
Ed Chappelle - Raptor care
Mary Chappelle - Raptor care
Linda Contos, DVM - Veterinary care
Cottonwood Rehabilitation Center - Raptor rehabilitation
Mikal Deese - Raptor rehabilitation
Brigitte de Saint Phalle - Raptor mews cleaning
Desert Willow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center - Raptor rehabilitation
Steve Elkins - Graphic design
Eye Care for Animals - Veterinary care
Tony Giancola - Photographs
Maggie Grimason - Outreach
Jerry Hobart - Project management
Bill Houston - Outreach
Ray Hudgell, DVM - Veterinary care
Ryenne Hoogeboom – Outreach
Jennifer Jeffery - Data entry
Karen Jeffery - Data entry
Bob Kipp - Taos Gorge Raptor Surveys
Gavin Kennard - DVM, DACVO - Ophthalmic veterinary care
Jeannine Kinzer - Taos Gorge Raptor Surveys
Daniel Levenson, DVM - Veterinary care
Molly Lord - Outreach
Maurice Mackey - Outreach
Art Martinez - Mews materials and mews construction
Rick Martinez - Mews construction
Evelyn McGarry - Data entry, Outreach
Mike Mello, DVM - Veterinary care
Alan Murphy - Photographs
New Mexico Wildlife Center - Raptor rehabilitation
Bob Peiffer, DVM, PhD - Ophthalmic veterinary care
Petroglyph Animal Hospital - Veterinary care
Jeff Porter - Raptor care
Chellye Porter - Raptor care
David Powell - Photographs
Rail Runner - Raptor transport
Kathleen Ramsay, DVM - Rehab bird care
Kim Rimer - Raptor Rescue
Larry Rimer - Photographs, Raptor Rescue, Taos BLM raptor surveys
Lizzie Roberts - Raptor care, raptor handling class
Santa Fe Raptor Center - Raptor rehabilitation
Anita Sisk - Data entry
Bruce Sisk - Data entry
Southwest Veterinary Medical Center - Veterinary care
Rebecca Szymanski - Raptor and corvid care



Tony Thomas - Photographs
Sammie Uhrig, DVM - Rehab bird care
Steve Vender - Photographs
Ventana Animal Clinic - Veterinary care
Katie Wade-Matthews - Education bird permits
Christie Wilcox - Liaison with UNM

Volunteer, Bob Kipp, surveys for raptor activity in the Upper Rio Grande Gorge. Image by Amanda Schluter.

Photographers Monthly Gallery - Keith Bauer, a Master Photographer in Many Arenas

We are pleased to present four images that represent just some of the range of expertise of Keith Bauer, a longtime photographic contributor to Hawks Aloft. Keith specializes not only in bird photography, but also landscapes, flowers, and art photography. Keith is an outstanding teacher and mentor, with a number of workshops, both locally and abroad.

[Ultimate Chile - From Sand to Stone with Greg Basco and Keith Bauer](#)

October 20 - October 30, 2017

Join Greg and Keith for an amazing trip to Chile. We'll start our trip in the beautiful city of Santiago. We'll then fly north to the Calama airport. Upon arrival, we take our private bus to our hotel in a beautiful colonial town on the edge of the Chilean altiplano. We'll spend a few days in the altiplano photographing geysers, vicunas, flamingos, and a magical salt lake where the crystals have formed patterns and blooms that offer us myriad compositional choices.

We'll then head south to Patagonia for the remainder of this photographic workshop. We'll spend time in this amazing part of the world with stunning mountain views, rivers, wildlife and jaw dropping landscapes. We'll also have a fair chance at photographing Andean Condors, pygmy-owls, and Lesser Rhea (an ostrich-like flightless bird).

[Bosque Del Apache 2017 with Keith Bauer, Doug Brown and Greg Basco](#)

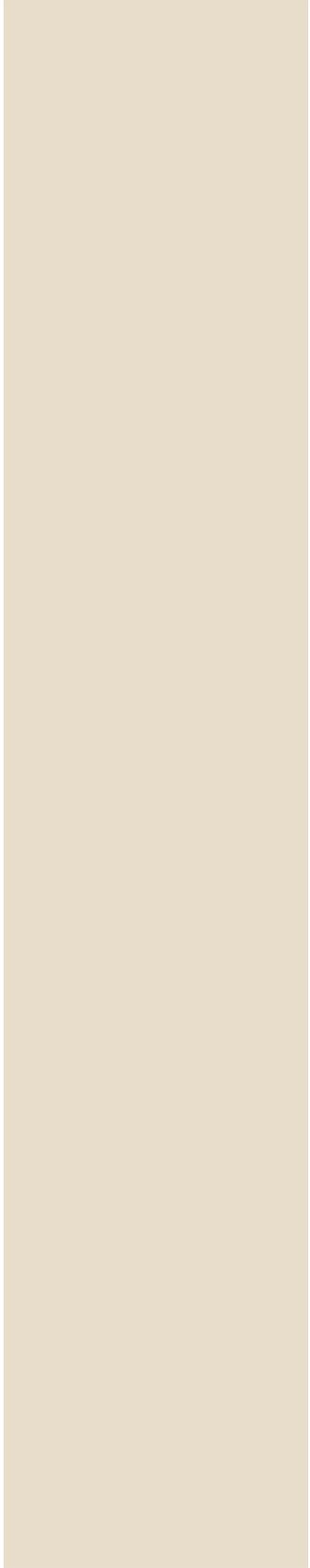
November 28 - December 1, 2017

Join BPN avian moderator Doug Brown, Greg Basco, and NPN avian moderator Keith Bauer at the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in late November and early December! The workshop experience will be broad-based, emphasizing manual exposure for long lens flight photography (either hand held or with a tripod). The other major emphasis will be on image optimization with Lightroom and Photoshop.



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A pair of Sandhill Cranes early morning at the Bosque with a great reflection and symmetry. Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge





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San Pedro De Atacama: This is the charming town in northern Chile that will be part of the workshop led by Keith Bauer and Greg Basco in late October 2017. For more information and sign up options please visit: <http://www.keithbauerphotography.com/Workshops/Chile-From-Sand-to-Stone/n-dmpCWB>



Sandia Mountains: In early January we had some great snow in our Sandia Mountains that provided some wonderful snow shoeing and photography opportunities.





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Tiny Flowers

Our own Botanical Gardens provides some wonderful photo opportunities. This image is a 13 image focus stack of these tiny flowers. They are about 1/4" in diameter when completely open.

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