



HAWKS ALOFT

Conservation Education, Avian Research, Raptor Rescue & Collaboration with Others



14 Years! in the Jemez Mountains

**By Gail Garber
Executive Director**

Trevor and I had heard rumblings about long-term conservation planning for the drought-stricken Jemez Mountains. It was 2010, and we joined the conversation in the hope that it would eventually develop into a successful application to the [Collaborative Forest Landscape Program \(CFLRP\)](#), a government-funded, regional (Southwest Jemez), ten-year multi-million-dollar effort to restore resiliency to 220,000 imperiled acres. Robert Parmenter, Ph.D., science director at the National Park Service: [Valles Caldera National Preserve \(VCNP\)](#) took the lead in pulling together the many diverse partners that represented federal, state, and tribal agencies, universities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Hawks Aloft, Inc. Over the course of two years, we met regularly to determine not only the master plan, but also each partner's role. Finally, our two years of planning were rewarded in 2012 with one of only four contracts



awarded by CFLRP nationally!

The overall goal of this project is to improve the resilience of ecosystems to recover from wildfires and other natural disturbance events in order to sustain healthy forests and watersheds. Specific objectives include 1) reducing the risk of wildfire and restoring natural fire regimes; 2) increasing forest diversity and old growth characteristics; 3) improving fish and wildlife habitat; 4) improving water quality and watershed function; 5) mitigating climate change impacts; 6) protecting cultural resources; and 7) utilizing woody by-products to create local economic development opportunities.

Mitigating the effects of climate change is one of the key objectives of this project. Climate change models project that the southwestern U.S. will become steadily hotter and drier over the remainder of the 21st century. Consequently, we will experience more frequent and severe droughts, increases in insect outbreaks and associated tree mortality, shifts in vegetation distributions, and more catastrophic fires.

While the first years of active restoration were spent on [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#) compliance, collecting pre-disturbance data began immediately as it was essential to measure the change that was to come. Dr. Trevor Fetz, our research director, managed our portion of the study. Initial plans were to monitor 212 points within eight habitat types across a wide swath of the Jemez Mountains, matching control plots to those that would undergo management treatments. Our survey protocol to measure change in bird populations over time included three rounds of point count surveys each breeding season using Distance estimations, essential to measure abundance in bird detections.

The reality of increased fire risk was forcibly illustrated by several major fires within the project area. In 2011, the Las Conchas fire burned over 156,000 acres on the VCNP and adjacent Santa Fe National Forest land, making it the largest fire in New Mexico history up to that point. In 2013, the Thompson Ridge fire burned nearly 24,000 acres within the VCNP. The Pino fire burned approximately 4,300 acres of Santa Fe National Forest land in 2014. The Cerro Pelado fire burned approximately 45,600 acres in the Santa Fe National Forest and Valles Caldera National Preserve in 2022. Additionally, several smaller fires have occurred in or near the study area since 2014.

The effects of climate change such as those listed above will have a substantial impact on birds. Thus, monitoring avian response to management actions designed to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change at both the community and individual species levels will be important factors in assessing project success. In addition, birds comprise the most diverse vertebrate taxa within the study area and can serve as ecological indicators of overall environmental health.

Now, fourteen years and hundreds of surveys later, this study is nearing completion. Currently, we have funding for one additional year of point count surveys on the VCNP. Trevor has written and submitted one of the chapters for the final report that will be published in the coming year.

Recently, I had the opportunity to edit the discussion portion of Trevor's work. It is impressive – 13 years of avian change relative to management and recovery from wildland fire. We hope that we will be able to extend our portion of the project into the future to further explore the effects of habitat change on the birds that call the VCNP home during the breeding season. Please read Trevor's summary report of our study elsewhere in this issue of the HAI Flier. We thank the many people who participated in these surveys.

We also conducted a five-year Owl Community Study and a single-year waterfowl inventory on the VCNP, although they are not related to the larger CFLRP study and not covered here.

Photos by Larry Rimer and Tom Mayer

Help Us Find A New Home!



HAWKS ALOFT

*Conservation Education, Avian Research,
Raptor Rescue & Collaboration with Others*

*The office where we have been housed for more than 20 years will be sold next year. Do you know of an available building to rent? We are looking for a space that can house a raptor veterinary clinic and our offices. The location must be in the general vicinity of the Albuquerque and surrounding communities.
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**CLOCKWISE, FROM UPPER LEFT: STELLER'S JAY,
CLARK'S NUTCRACKER, BROWN CREEPER, TOWNSEND'S
SOLITAIRE. SPECIES THAT WERE MORE ABUNDANT IN
UNTREATED FOREST. PHOTOS BY DAVID POWELL, LARRY
RIMER, ALAN MURPHY, AND DAVID POWELL.**

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLRP)

By Dr. Trevor Fetz
Research Director



As Gail detailed above, the CFLRP was completed this year. This massive regional project involved 39 different organizations, including government agencies, non-government agencies and universities. The role of Hawks Aloft was to monitor avian activity.

From 2012-2024 we conducted point count surveys to evaluate avian use within eight habitat types located in the Valles Caldera National Preserve (VCNP) and the Santa Fe National Forest. This included mixed conifer forest, burned mixed conifer forest, mountain meadow, mountain valley grassland, burned mountain valley grassland, ponderosa pine forest, burned ponderosa pine forest, and riparian.

Cumulatively, over 13 years of surveys, avian density was highest in mixed conifer forest (2.51 birds/hectare) and burned mixed conifer forest (2.28 birds/ha), and lowest in burned mountain valley grassland (1.16 birds/ha). Avian density was significantly higher in unburned mixed conifer forest than all other seven habitat types, while density in unburned ponderosa pine forest was significantly lower than all other three forest types. But avian richness was highest in riparian habitat (115 species) and unburned ponderosa pine forest (89 species). Over the course of the study, we documented a total of 141 bird species, including 57 species of conservation concern.

In addition to monitoring avian use relative to the eight habitat types, we also monitored avian response to different management treatments. In a comparison of untreated and treated ponderosa pine forest plots at Banco Bonito in VCNP, cumulative (2012-2024) avian density was significantly higher at treated points (2.27 birds/ha) than untreated (1.68 birds/ha); however, the difference was largely driven by data collected after points were subjected to both forest thinning and prescribed fire. Density was significantly higher after thinning and burning (2.41 birds/ha) than after only thinning (1.97 birds/ha). Avian richness was similar at thinned points (59 species) and unthinned points (58 species).

Individual species response to treatment activities was highly variable. For example, among species of conservation concern, the densities of [Brown Creeper](#), [Clark's Nutcracker](#), [Evening Grosbeak](#), [Steller's Jay](#) and [Townsend's Solitaire](#) were significantly higher at untreated points. In contrast, the densities of [House Wren](#) and [Violet-green Swallow](#) were significantly higher after burning and thinning than at thinned points before burning and unthinned points, while [Chipping Sparrow](#) and [Western Bluebird](#) densities were significantly higher at thinned points both before burning and after burning than unthinned points. Cumulatively across the entire study area and among 15 relatively common species of concern, nine were more abundant in unburned forest and six were more abundant in burned forest, while eight were more abundant in unthinned forest and seven were more abundant in thinned forest.

The variability in the response of different bird species to different treatments illustrates the complexity of forest management and the importance of understanding the preferences of different species, especially species of concern, for different forest characteristics. Our results suggest that the use of a combination of treatments, including prescribed fire, thinning, and areas of no treatment, conducted in patchy arrangements over time and area could improve overall avian diversity and benefit the greatest number of species.

Evening Grosbeak photo by Larry Rimer. This species was more common in untreated habitat.



**CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: CHIPPING SPARROW,
HOUSE WREN, VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW
WESTERN BLUEBIRD. SPECIES THAT WERE MORE
ABUNDANT IN TREATED FOREST. PHOTOS BY ALAN MURPHY,
KRISTIN BROWN, LARRY RIMER, DOUG BROWN**



Harris's Hawks are My Kind of Hawks!

By Lars Wells
Guest Author

Why do I relate to the [Harris's Hawk](#)? They leave the worms for those annoyingly perky early risers and hunt in the afternoon to catch the rabbits that run late in the day.

Fourteen lucky folks were able to visit Matt Mitchell's falcon breeding facility near San Antonio, NM in late October where we got up close and quite personal with some of his great birds, including the Harris's Hawk. "Come down, have lunch at the world-famous Buckhorn café. Then see the birds. Bring a hat!"

It was a gorgeous Saturday as we all sat outdoors eating burgers slathered in green chile and recounting why New Mexico is such a great place to live: climate, geography, and wildlife. Afterwards, we leisurely rolled ourselves out of the Buckhorn and made the short drive to Matt's. "Everybody got their hat?" I didn't know what to expect, but I figured we might be walking under a fair number of "active birds". Hence the hat. I knew Matt often takes in a number of rescue birds and rehabilitates them in a large aviary that has an opening to the great outdoors. That way they can try living in the wild but also have food and shelter should they need it. Think of it as a flight training school.

He also breeds birds for other falconers. Matt led us through his breeding roosts where we saw [Peregrine Falcons](#), [Gyrfalcons](#), [Aplomado Falcons](#), Harris's Hawks, and hybrids from pairings of gyrfalcons-peregrines and alpomados-peregrines, for example. How do you get these different species to breed? Well, since this is a G-rated newsletter, let's just say Matt has some tricky falconer moves up his sleeve and off the top of his head. Seeing all these birds up close was a real treat and hearing them getting riled up and excited about going out hunting was fascinating. They're just like a group of sled dogs – anxious to go out and work.

Matt then loaded a pair of Harris's Hawks into his SUV and took us to the hunting grounds. You might picture him loading each into a cage placed in the car, but you would be wrong. This pair just perched free range on the seats and looked over Matt's shoulder like a pair of anxious



teenagers asking, “Are we there yet? Are we there yet?”

Harris’s Hawks are definitely social. On arrival, Gail once again checked that everyone had a hat. This is when my mental alarm bell went off. We hadn’t toured the aviary so thus far no need for a hat. Why was this a question? Did my mother send a note saying I had to keep the sun off my head during the field trip? What kind of birder hazing ritual was coming? The answer was too preposterous to believe.



As soon as the hawks came out of the car, one took a short flight and landed directly on top of the nearest visitor’s (hatted) head! Then it proceeded in short order to fly over onto the next person’s head. The old Winston Churchill quote, “Nothing in life is so exhilarating as being shot at without result” can reasonably apply to eight large talons coming straight for your brain. It turns out this particular hawk had landed randomly on a skittish lady’s head as a young bird, causing Matt to rush over with a large treat to remove it. That was it. From then on, our happy hawk associated a noggin perch with good treats. It only took one lesson. Don’t you wish your children were so easily trained? Our friendly hawk seemed to look to Matt from the top of each of us with a simple question – when are you going to bring out some trained people who know what to do when I’m up here? She was disappointed in all of us. She even landed on the oak branch-sized camera lens of one of our photographers, looking at him as if to say – close enough for you?

Before we set out, Matt spoke about breeding, falconry, and training birds. Also, he talked about pursuits of falconers beyond sport, namely using trained hawks and falcons to clear other birds from airports, vineyards, and even parking garages. Well, I’ve got a new one: scalp massage! Matt’s hawk felt surprisingly good when perched on my head and turning circles, I think it would be a great addition to a resort spa menu: steam bath, backrub, hawk kneading.

Despite the Harris’s Hawk comedy routine, they were all business when a jackrabbit broke out running. They were fast and agile, as the rabbit dove into a thorny mesquite bush the hawks dove into it as well – at an alarming speed. They are some tough birds. Matt had them flying amongst us and really showing off their skills and beauty up close. It was quite a memorable afternoon. Thanks to Matt for sharing his birds with us and his hospitality.

Harris’s Hawk in grassland by [Kristin C. Brown Photography](#), Collage: Lars Wells, Susan Coulter, Stephanie Otts, Mark Aspelin, Doug Brown. Hunting Harris’s Hawk below by [Doug Brown Photography](#).



A Happy Ending with a New Friend

**By Robert Kasuboski
Outreach Coordinator**

September is one of our busiest months for Raptor Rescue, and during that time, I answered the Raptor Rescue Hotline while Evelyn was out of town. Since it was the end of the nesting season and the beginning of migration, we were busy fielding calls about recently fledged Cooper's Hawks who found themselves in trouble. In addition to that, a Western Screech-Owl found itself trapped inside a house, and I also responded to an evening call about a Swainson's



Hawk that had been hit by a car near McIntosh, New Mexico. The caller had picked up the hawk and tried to care for it, but became concerned about a possible eye injury, so he called the Raptor Rescue Hotline seeking assistance.

The next morning the gentleman arrived at volunteer Chellye Porter's office with the hawk tucked under his arm. On examination, the juvenile Swainson's Hawk appeared to be in good health. However, as days passed, the young hawk did not eat on his own. With Chellye's expert care, the hawk continued to gain weight but still did not self-feed. We placed him in our large eagle flight cage with an adult Swainson's Hawk. There, he began self-feeding and thrived in the captive enclosure with the adult role model, but questions remained about the vision in his right eye. Dr. Candace Auten of [Eye Care for Animals](#) conducted a thorough ophthalmic

exam and found some trauma, but she was hopeful that the vision would eventually self-correct. She suggested waiting on releasing the bird.

Blindness or reduced vision in one eye is a death sentence for an immature hawk in the wild. Even an experienced adult raptor with reduced vision would struggle to feed themselves. Raptors have binocular vision, meaning that sight in both eyes is critical for depth perception. Swainson's Hawks primarily eat rabbits, rodents and reptiles (the 3-Rs) and trying to catch prey with limited vision would be difficult or impossible in the wild. To release a bird such as this would almost certainly lead to additional injuries or quite possibly death in the wild. This young hawk seemed to do quite well around people and was pretty comfortable hanging out in his enclosure where he knew where things were. But he was not releasable.

We learned that [Wildlife Rescue of New Mexico](#) had an adult Swainson's Hawk that was being placed at the [Hillcrest Zoo](#) in Clovis. Could this be a good match and give our young hawk a friend to stay with as he continues to grow up? We decided to introduce the two hawks in our large eagle flight to see if they were compatible. As soon as we opened the carrier door, the adult got out and immediately went up to roost next to the juvenile. They both did a quick fluff of the feathers (called a rouse) then looked back at us as if this were the most normal thing in the world.

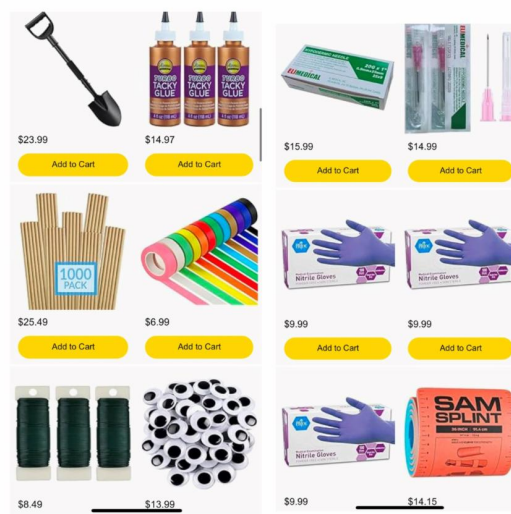
I completed the transfer paperwork in record time, and less than a week later, the Hillcrest crew made the trip to Albuquerque and transferred both hawks to their new home at the Hillcrest Zoo. Their personnel report that both hawks are doing well and have become quite comfortable in the new home.

Although this Swainson's Hawk was not releasable, we are happy that it was given another chance at life and at the Hillcrest Zoo, that will help educate the public about its species.

Eye exam photos taken at Eye Care for Animals, by Gail Garber. Photo of young, sight-limited Swainson's Hawk and adult Swainson's Hawk by Hillcrest Zoo staff.

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Amazon Wishlist!**

Want to give to Hawks Aloft,
but also know exactly where
your money is going?
Consider buying something
off our Amazon Wish List at:



https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2RKBK1WZR458Y?ref_=wl_share

Everything on our list will be used for either office work, raptor rescue, or education. Our education department uses gardening tools, crafts, and art supplies for various school programs and to develop new interactive and engaging games.

Big or small, we are extremely grateful if you are able to support us in any way possible!
Thank you for considering us!

The image is an example of some of the items found on our wishlist.



The Bird of Christmas

By Nate & Jeanne Gowan
Guest Authors

Everyone recognizes the adult male [Northern Cardinal](#). This time of year especially, cardinals are prominently featured on Christmas cards, decorations, and home accessories. Easily spotted by his bright red plumage, sassy black mask, and plucky sharp red crest, he is known as the emblematic “Bird of Christmas”.

Females, though more cryptic and a bit less recognizable, also symbolize the season.



The male Northern Cardinal's plumage inspired its name as the bright red reminded early settlers of the red robes worn by the cardinals of the Catholic Church.

The cardinal's most recognizable song is said to be a message from the heavens (listen here: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Northern_Cardinal/sounds). It is often cited to be a reminder of hope and joy during the Christmas holidays. Some Christian mythology holds the visitation of cardinal to be a message from a loved one who has passed. Indigenous cultures variously believe the first cardinal (or redbird) to be the daughter of the sun (Cherokee) or a directional guardian. Their totemic power signifies renewed vitality. Our friend and award-winning blue grass and country song writer, [Mark “Brink” Brinkman](#) composed a song in memory of his mother, “Mama Loved the Redbirds”.

The male Northern cardinal's red feathers are a result of sex-related metabolism of pigments called carotenoids. Their diet of wild grapes, dogwood berries, mulberries, and honeysuckle berries, which are rich in yellow and red carotenoids, are converted into red pigmented plumage. Females lack the enzyme and consequently have more muted feathers that are brown and gold-flecked. The crown and tail on the female are the only areas that sport a brighter red. Young Northern Cardinals have black bills that turn orange-red as adults. This gradual change takes about three to four months after hatching. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, “Cardinals don't migrate and they don't molt into a dull plumage, so they are still breathtaking in winter's snowy backyards.”

In the 19th century, the cardinal was mostly found in the southern U.S. Since then, their range has expanded to the North and Midwest and along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. The theory for this expanded range is that trees and shrubs along these areas provide the perfect cover for these birds that do not migrate. That is why they are found mainly east of the Rockies and southeastern Canada. But we also found an abundance of Northern Cardinals in the RV park where we wintered in the Tucson area. Hidalgo County, including Guadalupe Canyon and the Gila River, are areas where you are most likely to spot a Northern Cardinal in New Mexico. It might be worth the trip to see this most striking bird.

Happy holidays to you all and happy birdwatching!

Photos by Nate Gowan.



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Mitigating Raptor Electrocution Through Community Collaboration

by
Heather Rissi

Educator/Naturalist
Writer

According to a 2014 study (Loss SR, Will T, Marra PP), 0.9 to 11.6 million birds are fatally electrocuted every year. This is a cause for major concern, especially for endangered or at-risk birds of prey. Avian electrocution occurs when a bird makes phase-to-phase or phase-to-ground contact by simultaneously touching differently energized electrical equipment or an energized and grounded part with the wings or feet. This often happens when conductors are placed closer together than the wingspan of the bird or the energized equipment is not covered.

There are other potential risk factors for electrocution. Young birds are at risk because some species of birds of prey choose to build their nests on power poles. Species type and size are also major determinates. Buteos such as [Red-tailed Hawks](#) and Swainson's Hawks, will perch and hunt from available utility poles (which are often the highest perch in areas that lack trees or other tall structures), therefore making them easy victims of electrocution when they take off. Eagles and other large-winged birds are also common casualties of electrocution because their wings can span the distance between differently energized electrical components. Wet weather can also increase electrocution risk because feathers lose their insulating properties when wet, thus allowing electricity to pass through the bird more easily.

Unfortunately, Hawks Aloft receives several calls about electrocuted raptors every year from the service territories of multiple utilities. Sometimes it is easy to tell if a bird is electrocuted due to singed feathers on its wings, but some suspected electrocution cases can be difficult to discern. The bird might only have a small visible injury on its feet or legs. In the case of a deceased [Great Horned Owl](#) recently brought to Hawks Aloft, no wounds were found on the feet or wings. Instead, there was significant singeing of the feathers

around the beak of the bird. This type of electrocution likely occurred after the owl took a meal up to a perch on or near an electrical pole. Raptors do not always eat the entrails of their prey but may discard them instead. This owl likely flung the long entrails from its prey into a live wire. As the entrails were still connected to its prey and through it, to the owl, it was hence electrocuted.

Due to federal bird protection laws, power companies can be held liable for bird electrocutions. In 2006, the [Public Service Company of New Mexico \(PNM\)](#) created their [Avian Protection Program](#). This program focuses on providing avian protection training to employees, but also prevents avian fatalities through raptor friendly design standards such as bird-guarding existing poles (e.g., installation of insulating products to prevent electrocution). According to PNM's website, they have installed bird guarding on over 5,000 poles since 2010 and have committed over \$3 million to bird guarding activities over the next 5 years. As part of that program, PNM continues to identify high risk structures in need of retrofitting by using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to track locations of avian electrocutions. Mitigation at these high-risk sites has significantly decreased electrocution rates.

Hawks Aloft has worked tirelessly with PNM over the years to help alleviate the number of raptor fatalities and injuries by informing PNM of electrocution sites. PNM is a sponsor of the HAI Living with the Landscape educational program and we have worked with PNM to provide avian protection training to linemen. PNM has an excellent record and a leader in developing Avian Protection Programs - they now report only 1-2 electrocutions annually.

You may report electrocuted raptors to Hawks Aloft, NM Game and Fish, PNM, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. You may also call our Raptor Rescue Hotline (505-999-7740) to report a raptor suspected of injury from electrocution.

Loss SR, Will T, Marra PP. Refining estimates of bird collision and electrocution mortality at power lines in the United State. *PLoS One*. 2014;9(7):e101565.[mer](#).

Photos by Larry Rimer



Memories of Quemado

Quemado was one of our very first avian ambassadors. His rescuer watched the young Red-tailed Hawk struggle amidst a flock of attacking [American Crows](#). They eventually chased him into a utility pole that burst into flames as he fell to the ground, electrocuted!

But he was one of the few lucky ones! He was picked up immediately and brought to long-time wildlife rehabilitator, Shirley Kendall.

Often, electrocution burns result in death when the tissues within the path of electricity becomes necrotic. But Quemado survived, minus the tip of his left wing and a toe on his right foot.

Over Quemado's 30 years with Hawks Aloft, he was an exceptional ambassador alongside his mate Jamaica, a cranky old gal that had been shot and had a head injury. After Jamaica's euthanasia due to age related issues three years ago at age 33, Quemado refused to accept any other cage-mates and carried on alone. His arthritis worsened this past year and, with winter coming, we made the humane decision to compassionately say farewell to our beloved red-tail.

Photo of a much younger Gail Garber with Quemado. Unknown photographer.



Presenting The Hawks Aloft 2024-25 Raffle Quilt!

We are super proud that we again present our newest raffle quilt. Designed by Gail Garber and Cynthia Figueroa-McInteer, our quilt team stitched up this New Mexico themed quilt over the course of a few weeks. It was machine quilted by Tisha Cavanaugh.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's raffle quilt a reality: Tisha Cavanaugh, Ed Chappelle, Mary Chappelle, Barbara Deshler, Rick Deshler, Vicky Harms, Cynthia Figueroa-McInteer, Carol Meincke, Liz Roberts, and Carolyn Sanborn.

[Click here to purchase tickets.](#)

The drawing will take place on the first Saturday of December 2025 !

Photo by Bob McInteer.

Thank you! November 2024 Donors and Member Renewals

Sherrie Auhl
Penny Avery
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subscribed Monthly Recurring
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Gail Garber*
Patricia Hawley*
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Lee Rottler*

Would you like to join our team
of monthly contributors? If so,
[contact Gail](#) to set up your
preferences.

Hawks Aloft Upcoming Tours



Cuba
A Journey to the
Extraordinary



**January 31 – February 9,
2026**

From \$4,295/person

At long last we can finally offer you a special 10-day tour that not only appeals to the bird lover in you, but also satisfies your curiosity about the culture and history of this singular country that consists of over 4,000 islands and cays in the northern Caribbean Sea. First inhabited by the Guanahatabey and Taino peoples, Cuba was colonized (and named) by the Spaniards after the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1542. Even

still, the people embody a mix of Indigenous, Spanish, and African heritage. Did you know mambo was created here? Also, ever since the 1959 revolution, Cuba is still under Communist party rule. That will certainly add an interesting layer.

Aside from Cuba's unique cultural history, its biodiversity is astonishing. There are 6 terrestrial ecoregions (moist forests, dry forests, pine forests, wetlands, cactus scrub, and mangroves) that are home to over 17,000 animal species and over 9,000 species of plants.

Highlights for bird fans include the Cuban Trogon—Cuba's national bird, known locally as the Toco-ro-ro—and the world's smallest bird, the Bee Hummingbird. We will visit prime birding hotspots and encounter the lively spirit of the Cuban people as we learn from residents. Reptile lovers will enjoy looking for turtles on both land and sea and catching a glimpse of the Cuban crocodile. We may even see manatees and cabybara!

We have partnered with Holbrook Travel, to create a very special adventure to Cuba, a land where time seems to stand still amidst a vibrant cultural tapestry from its stunning natural beauty to its diverse ecosystems. It's a place where every moment is a new discovery.

[Click Here for complete details and for registration information.](#)

Featured: [Cuban Emerald](#), and [Cuban Trogon](#), images courtesy of Holbrook Travel.

Hawks Aloft Waitlisted Tours

**Please visit our website for details and to be added to the
waitlist**

**Birding Costa Rica
with
Hawks Aloft &
Holbrook Travel
February 9 - 19, 2025**

From \$3,625.00

[Click here for more details and a complete itinerary.](#)

We want to thank Doug Brown and Kristin Brown for providing numerous bird photos from their

previous trips to Costa Rica.

[Keel-billed Toucan](#)

Photos by [Kristin C. Brown Photography](#)



Brazil! Natural Wonders of the Pantanal

**With Hawks Aloft, Inc. &
Holbrook Travel
Oct 15, 2025 - Oct 29, 2025**

From \$12,450

[Click here for full details and for registration information.](#)

[Hyacinth Macaws](#) - photos by Pelin Karaca.

Hawks Aloft Merchandise



T-shirts (both long and short-sleeved) are \$30 and can be ordered on our website or can be picked up at the office. Ladies sizes are available in short sleeves; all long-sleeved shirts are unisex, and we also have youth sizes in short sleeves available for \$25.

[Order yours today!](#)



Donate Your Old Car to Hawks Aloft!

Your old car might just be taking up space in your garage--but it could make a huge difference in the lives of New Mexico's native birds, natural landscapes, and the many people who delight in these things.

Car donation is simple. And in fact, it might just make your life *easier*.

[Donate your old vehicle](#)

Call our office if you have questions: **505-828-9455**.

**Thank you,
One Community Auto!**



Support Hawks Aloft by Shopping at Smith's

Many of you have long been Hawks Aloft supporters, and a good number of you have also been longtime Smith's shoppers. For those not in the know, the grocery chain has a program that provides a small kick-back quarterly to nonprofits when their supporters link their shopper's cards to the organization.



The company recently changed their policies regarding the program; so even if you've signed up in the past, you may need to do it again! The good news is that it is easy to do so.

1. Go to [Smith's Foods](#)
2. Either create an account or sign-in to an existing one
3. Once logged in, click on "**Account Summary**" on the left sidebar
4. From there, scroll down to "**Inspiring Donations Program**" and click "**Enroll**"
5. A searchable list will come up, you can either search for "**Hawks Aloft**" or enter our ID number for the program, "**GL430**."
6. Shop using your card and know that every time you do, you help out Hawks Aloft!

We appreciate your ongoing support in this and so many other capacities!

Adopt A Raptor



Meet Electra The Red-tailed Hawk

Electra is one of our newest avian ambassadors. She arrived on January 12, 2024 after being found in a chicken coop along with a dead chicken. She was picked up by Evelyn McGarry, our rescue dispatcher, along with the chicken she had killed. Initially, it appeared that she was thin, but had no physical injuries. She also was missing one flight feather on one wing.

Over the course of two weeks the missing feather turned into a necrotic wound that progressed up to her wrist. It became clear that Electra had suffered an electrocution injury, much like Quemado. Like him, Electra is one of the lucky ones! Dr. Christine Fiorello amputated the wing tip and she is otherwise very healthy. We are working with her now to be comfortable enough to attend classroom presentations. Watch for her debut in 2025.

When you adopt a Hawks Aloft raptor you 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:
 1. A professional 8×10 photo of your bird, or
 2. A stuffed Audubon Bird with realistic vocalizations (if available for that species)

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

Photo by Gail Garber.

Photographer's Monthly Gallery

Alan Murphy

For up-to-date Photography News, workshop reports, new photography work, and more, sign up for my monthly newsletter:

[Alan Murphy Photography | Bird Photography | Workshops | Tutorials](#)

Image 1: [Belted Kingfisher](#)

Image 2: [Tree Swallow](#)

Image 3: Western Screech-Owl

Image 4: [Broad-tailed Hummingbird](#)

Image 5: Diving Belted Kingfisher













DONORS, SUPPORTERS, AND VOLUNTEERS

Donate to Hawks Aloft

**Become a Hawks Aloft
Member**

Thanks to our Hard- working Volunteers!

You keep us going and extend our reach to the far corners of New Mexico!

Although we've been lax about keeping track of all that you do for us, Robert Kasuboski, our Outreach Coordinator is working to keep up to date records. These are used to document all that we do and are vital when reporting in-kind donations and matching hours.

Contact Robert to get set up to report your donations and volunteer hours.

November 2024

Lars Wells: 7.5 hrs/13 mi
Stephanie Otts: 11.5 hrs/ 13 mi
Mary Bruesch: 26 hrs/164 mi
Tamryn Weidemann: 5 hrs/304

Our Veterinarians and Rehabilitators

Kariana Atkinson, DVM
Candace Auten, DVM
Avery Berkowitz, DVM
Calista Veterinary
Hospital
Mary & Ed Chappelle
Linda Contos, DVM
Coronado Animal
Hospital
Desert Willow Wildlife
Rehabilitation Center
Eye Care for Animals
Tim Fitzpatrick, DVM
High Desert Veterinary
Care
Stephanie Lindsell
(NMWLC)

November 2024

Raptor Rescue Calls and Patient Intakes

Hotline Calls: 33
Patient intakes: 10

- Great Horned Owl, Open Fracture & Necrosis
- Great Horned Owl, DOA
- Northern Saw-whet Owl, Fractured Humerus
- Western Screech-Owl, Head Trauma
- Cooper's Hawk, Wing Injury
- Sharp-shinned Hawk, Fractured Humerus
- Red-tailed Hawk, Neurological Deficit
- Red-tailed Hawk, Trauma

mi

**Total Reported
50 hrs/ 494 miles**

For 2024, we have a total of 1285 hours and 8429 miles reported. If you'd like to see your name recognized here, please send your hours/miles our way.

Sherry McDaniel

Mike Melloy, DVM

Matt Mitchell

Milan Airport Animal

Clinic

New Mexico Wildlife

Center

On a Wing and a Prayer

Petroglyph Animal

Hospital

Santa Fe Raptor Center

Samantha Uhrig, DVM

Amelia Thompson

Wildlife Rescue of New

Mexico

- Merlin, DOA

- Great Horned Owl, DOA

Raptor Rescue Team

Michael Balassone
Brandon Borquist
Wendy Brown
Mary Bruesch
Ed Chappelle
Mary Chappelle
Charles Cummings
Gary Eilar
Chris Gibson
Lee Hanks
Carole Heimann
Denise Inight
Devona Jensen
Jeannine Kinzer
Ruth Latta

Megan Lemmo
Evelyn McGarry
Matt Mitchell
Jenee Moore
Eliane & Johnny Notah
Stephanie Otts
Chellye Porter
Dianne Rossbach
Susan Shook
Jim Taulman
Amelia Thomspen
Lars Wells
Tamryn Wiedeman
Vicki Wilmarth

Thank You to Our Corporate & Foundation Donors!

Albuquerque Community Foundation

American Association of Zoo Veterinarians

Anonymous

Avangrid Foundation

Benevity Fund

Bureau of Land Management

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

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Cottonwood Environmental Consulting

Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation Service/Arroyo Classrooms

Defenders of Wildlife

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Gerald Swanson

Talking Talons

The Frost Foundation

US Army Corps of Engineers

USDA Forest Service - Jemez Ranger District

Valles Caldera National Preserve

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Hawks Aloft, Inc.



Conservation Education, Avian Research, Raptor Rescue
& Collaboration with Others

[Contact Us](#)



Who We Are

Gail Garber, *Executive Director*
David Buckley, *Avian Surveyor*
Linda Contos, *DVM, Consulting Veterinarian*
Trevor Fetz, *Research Director*
Jeanne Gowan, *Guest Author*
Nate Gowan, *Surveyor*
Roger Grimshaw, *Raptor Surveys*
Pat Hawley, *Editor*
John Heidrich, *DVM, Triage Veterinarian*
Jerry Hobart, *Project Manager, Raptor Driving Surveys*
Robert Kasuboski, *Outreach Coordinator*
Tom Mayer, *Project Manager & Avian Surveyor*
Evelyn McGarry, *Office Manager, East Mountain Representative, Raptor Rescue Dispatcher*
Calle Poindexter, *Marketing Coordinator*
Larry Rimer, *Project Manager*
Heather Rissi, *Educator/Naturalist*
Liz Roberts, *Senior Educator/Naturalist*
Dallas Steele, *Bookkeeper*
Lars Wells, *Guest Author*

Our Board of Directors

Claudette Horn, *Chair*
Terry Edwards, *Treasurer*
Linda Contos, *DVM, Director*
Christine Fiorello, *DVM, Director*
Nate Gowan, *Director*
Joan Morrison, *Director*



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