



HAWKS ALOFT

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



**Celebrating 2024
Accomplishments &
Looking to the Future**

**By Gail Garber
Executive Director**

Thank you for your generous support of Hawks Aloft. We are thrilled with your many donations of time, money, supplies and equipment. We could not do what we do without you! Much has been accomplished in 2024. Here are just a few of the highlights:

- Our first gala since pre-Covid, "Wingspan" took place in April. Tickets were sold out and the Albuquerque Garden Center was packed. Thank you to all who donated art and other items for our silent and live auctions. We are planning for a repeat in 2026, but at a larger facility.

- We held two volunteer training classes, one each in March and December, and welcomed several new volunteers with expertise previously not found in volunteers. Chief among them were construction and engineering experts, a grant writer and editor, and surveyors with songbird and raptor experience!

- We were granted a coveted Eagle Rehabilitation permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We then promptly completed a large flight cage suitable for the rehabilitation of Bald and Golden Eagles.

- We applied for and were granted a facility license by the USDA, the same agency that regulates zoos, medical laboratories, food production companies, and agriculture operations. We have been permitted under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and New Mexico Game and Fish standards since our inception in 1994. The additional USDA regulations are extremely stringent and were not written with educational birds in mind. We had to comply with the very strict rulebook for 'non-human primates'. To say this was a challenge would be a huge understatement!

- Our new-to-us volunteer construction team toiled away in the blazing heat of summer over numerous workdays to replace parts of aging structures and to bring four of our facilities up to the previously mentioned USDA standards. Thanks to two of our engineer volunteers, all of the avian transport boxes were retrofitted to meet USDA standards too.

- Our research team and volunteers completed the large, collaborative four-year Owl Community Study on the [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#) and the 12-year Jemez Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project. Our portion of the overall study was to measure avian abundance and distribution relative to restoration in eight different habitats over 220,000 acres.

- Our social media has seen huge growth thanks in large part to daily posts and interactions with followers on our sites.

- Thanks to our volunteer editor, who in her regular work life is a professor at Texas Tech University, our publications (like this online newsletter) improved dramatically, and the percentage of successful grant applications improved considerably!

- Seven of our members traveled to Ecuador and the Galapagos Archipelago in June. We also set up forthcoming trips to three destinations: Costa Rica and the Pantanal, Brazil in 2025, and Cuba in 2026. We are planning more trips, so if you have a preferred destination, please contact me.

- Our many volunteer photographers continue to donate their images to our ever-growing library.

Several of you have asked about our progress in finding a new home for Hawks



Aloft. Linda Contos and John Heidrich, our veterinarians, have taken the lead on the search. We've visited a number of potential buildings and, while some were very suitable, we had to reject them due to the large, unhoused population near downtown, expanding as far north as Montgomery Blvd. I've learned much about the real estate market in Albuquerque too, much of it centering around this issue, and the flight of businesses from the city center. We continue our search in the hands of a new realtor with fresh eyes and hope to have something to report relatively soon.

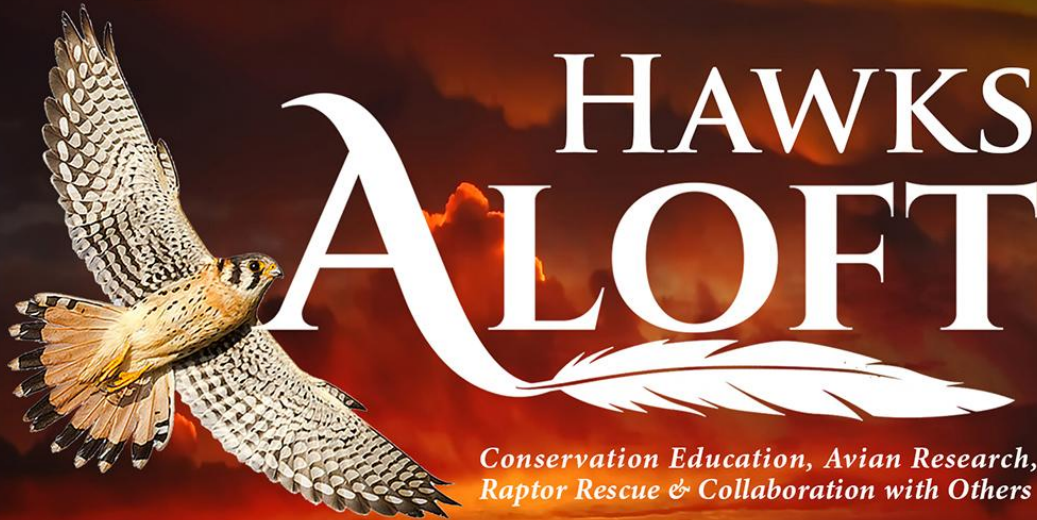
Thank you for being an important part of Team Hawks Aloft!

Gala photos by Stephanie Schulz, Construction photos by Gail Garber

We thank the Avangrid Foundation for their very generous funding in support of our efforts to establish a raptor veterinary hospital in the Albuquerque metro area and Raptor Rescue New Mexico.



Help Us Find A New Home!



*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.

Call us! 505-828-9455



We thank the Edward F. Zimmer Community Fund for their very generous funding in support of our efforts to establish a raptor veterinary hospital in the Albuquerque metro area and Raptor Rescue New Mexico.



Reflections of a New Educator

by Heather Rissi
Education Coordinator & Writer

The past few months have been quite a whirlwind for me as I navigated a new city, new schools for my children, and a new career here at Hawks Aloft. I have a very strong background working and training raptors, having volunteered and worked at places like the [Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum](#) in Tucson, Arizona. Although I had years of experience working with birds of prey, I did not have as much experience working with the public. Fortunately for me, Hawks Aloft welcomed me, and Liz Roberts (our senior educator) has been



showing me the ropes for the past four months. It has been an all-in, learn-on-the-job experience, and I have learned a ton!

As a mother, I have ample experience to draw upon when we visit schools, but there is nothing like first-hand experience in a working classroom full of students who all want to be heard. Liz likes to joke that as educators we cheat in a way, because we get to bring cool raptors that students may not have ever had a chance to see before. I agree! Having an owl, hawk, or [Turkey Vulture](#) to open our program is a great way of getting their attention. But what I think is more important is that we follow the raptor encounter with an age-appropriate curriculum that teaches the children the importance of wildlife and habitat conservation.

For example, we might show our [Peregrine Falcon](#), Flash, and then lead the students in a game of chase where they represent falcons (predators), grasshoppers or blue birds (prey), or plants (habitat). Afterwards, Liz and I explain the concept of bioaccumulation, or how chemicals build up and affect the food chain. Students learn about the rescue efforts of the Peregrine Falcon, and what it took to bring the falcon back from near extinction due to [DDT](#). Importantly, we leave the children on a hopeful note: While humans can harm the environment and negatively impact wildlife, we can also make positive changes to repair or prevent further damage. Children, for example, can pick up trash, clean up after their pets, and plant pollinator plants.

Our programs took a short break over the winter holidays, but Liz and I are set to continue Living with the Landscape and begin visiting all 3rd grade classes at Rio Rancho schools as part of our Arroyo program in January. I have not been with Hawks Aloft long, but I can already tell how much these education programs benefit students and school staff. For our second and third visits, students wave at Liz and me through windows when we arrive and chat with us about topics covered in our previous session as we walk down the halls. Teachers too are always excited to see what we have planned for the day.

On a more personal note, my 5-year-old daughter who is in preschool, recently accompanied me to an elementary school program. At the end of the day she said, “Mom, when I grow up, I want to teach kids about birds.” In my opinion, this is what this program is all about: Encouraging a passion for raptors and nature. If we inspire even a couple of these students to become engaged wildlife educators or conservationists, then we have succeeded in our job.

Photos by Robert Kasuboski and Heather Rissi.



We especially thank Nusenda Foundation for their very generous funding in support of our efforts to establish a raptor veterinary hospital in the Albuquerque metro area and Raptor Rescue New Mexico AND for our Living with the Landscape conservation education program.



Larry Rimer©2025



Year Twenty-two of MRGSS Begins

**By Trevor Fetz, Ph.D.
Research Director**

December brought the beginning of the winter field season and the beginning of the 22nd year of surveys for the Middle Rio Grande Songbird Study. So far, it appears that overall bird numbers are slightly lower

than normal. My impression to this point is that common wintering species such as [American Robin](#), [Eastern Bluebird](#), [Northern Flicker](#), and [Yellow-rumped Warbler](#) are at much lower numbers than normal. Although many factors could be contributing to the low numbers, a generally poor crop of Russian olive and New Mexico olive berries in the bosque is certainly one factor.

All four of the above-mentioned species forage heavily on Russian olive and New Mexico olive berries in the winter. [Cedar Waxwing](#), another species that heavily exploits the bosque berry crops during winter, has been absent from nearly all of my survey routes. But I have documented waxwing flocks as large as 52 birds at one of my Corrales sites where the berry crop is relatively large.

In contrast, [Western Bluebird](#), another heavy consumer of berries during the winter, has been present in large numbers at numerous sites throughout the study area. [Dark-eyed Junco](#) and [Ruby-crowned Kinglet](#) are two other species I encountered at higher than normal numbers in December. I did not have any particularly unusual sightings during the month. The most interesting sighting I heard about among our group of surveyors was a [Harris's Sparrow](#) that Nate Gowan documented on one of his Rio Rancho transects.

Once again, I am deeply grateful for the assistance of our volunteer MRGSS surveyors, David Buckley, Nate Gowan, and Tom Mayer. Their help allows us to survey a much larger number of our historical transects than Gail and I would be able to cover on our own. Unfortunately, Mark Aspelin, another of our volunteer surveyors, is currently not able to survey. But I'm hoping he will be back in mix for the summer survey season. In the

meantime, we are all looking forward to seeing what the bosque has to offer bird wise in January, and are hoping for some interesting sightings.

Cedar Waxwing photo by Larry Rimer; Harris's Sparrow photo by Nate Gowan.



Where are They Now?

Helen Haskell Former Educator

Helen Haskell, our first naturalist/educator brought an enthusiastic teaching style to Hawks Aloft that continues to this day. Notably she embraced hands-on play as a more effective learning experience than traditional methods. In addition, her British accent charmed every student in the classroom. Helen was (and is) multi-talented. She created our earliest educational tools (Build-A-Raptor and Wingspan Banners) that we still use today. We wished Helen a fond farewell in the late 1990s as she moved on to new adventures.

And what adventures they have been! Since leaving Hawks Aloft, Helen has continued teaching for both the [New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science](#) and Sandia Preparatory School. She currently spends much of her time teaching high school students geology and outdoor leadership. Being outside continues to be a passion and commitment for Helen as she often can be found with students either hiking, cross country skiing, or kayaking, all to explore the diverse environments of the Southwest. She also teaches a Southwest Field Ecology class based at [Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge](#) for the University of New Mexico.



We thank McCaughin Mountain Foundation for Empowerment for their ongoing support of Living with the Landscape conservation education program. This school-year-long program serves every student at selected Title 1 schools in the Albuquerque area. For the 2024-25 school year, we are serving Hodgin, Atriso, and Armijo elementary schools.



Volunteer Training was a Success!

**By Heather Rissi
Education Coordinator & Writer**

Our original Volunteer Training Course scheduled for November was blown off course — quite literally— by a storm that brought a lot of wind, rain, and, in many areas, snow! We were informed days prior to the

November 9th date that some trees had been downed at [Bachechi Open Space](#) near Alameda and Rio Grande, and consequently the education building would not be available to us. Robert Kasuboski, Outreach Coordinator, had the job of contacting all the participants to reschedule, and worse, he had to put frozen bird cadavers (meant for the wet lab portion of the training) back in the freezer.



Despite all that, we had an excellent turnout for the rescheduled training on December 7th. Executive Director, Gail Garber, welcomed our trainees and gave them a brief introduction to Hawks Aloft and the various volunteer opportunities in research and bird surveys. Educators Liz Roberts and I presented opportunities in social media and school and outreach programs. We then demonstrated a favorite school program activity: Dress-A-Raptor! Dressing up current volunteer, Jeannine Kinzer as a large bird!

During a brief break, volunteers got to meet and learn about four of our ambassador birds: Taken, the [Swainson's Hawk](#); Talon, the [Western Screech-Owl](#); Celeste, the [Barn Owl](#); and Sunny, the [Prairie Falcon](#). Afterwards, volunteers Evelyn McGarry and Linda Contos, DVM, discussed what it takes to be a raptor rescue volunteer for Hawks Aloft. We were pleased to find most of those who attended stayed for the wet lab portion of the training. Robert and volunteer rehabber, Amelia Thompson, and veterinarian, John Heidrich, taught volunteers how to assess a rescued bird (checking for breaks, feeling the keel, etc.). Volunteers then practiced injecting subcutaneous fluids and gavage feeding (using a tube down the throat) on raptor cadavers (birds that arrived to us already dead or died after rescue).

All in all, it was a very successful training course, and we are so thankful for both the new and current volunteers that are an essential part of our organization. We are hopeful going into the new year that these volunteers will help us succeed with our mission.

DONATE

Meet Kristin Brown

New Member of Hawks Aloft Board of Directors

Please help us extend a warm welcome to our newest director, Kristin Brown. A native New Mexican, Kristin has deep roots in this community and joins us at this exciting time in the organization's journey. "I believe we will be able to deliver the best care for the birds and best education and connection to the community in a more comfortable and productive way with the upcoming move and the construction within the new facility."



Kristin brings to the board a unique blend of healthcare and leadership experiences, and a personal passion for both photography and community engagement. She spent 35 years as a registered nurse, specializing in both medical and surgical cardiac care, with her final 20 years at the Heart Hospital of New Mexico in the Cardiac Operating Room. Her clinical background has equipped her with a strong foundation in critical thinking, problem-solving, and compassionate patient care—all of which she hopes to apply in this new role.

As a photographer for nearly 20 years, Kristin has been photographing birds, and in recent years since her retirement she has dedicated more time to both capturing nature's beauty and teaching others the art of photography.

Help Needed for Taos Raptor Study

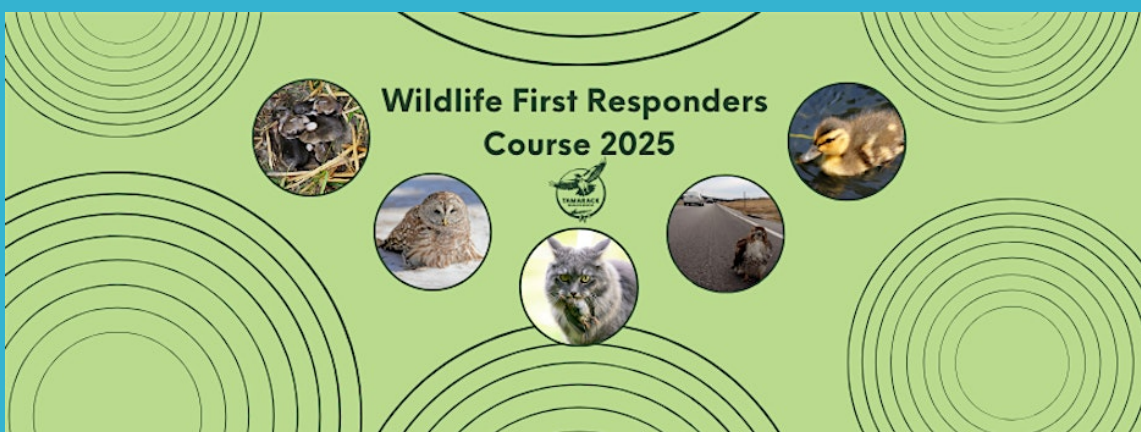
Are you the rugged, outdoor type? Does it make you happy to hike in the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument along the rim of the Rio Grande Gorge? Do you marvel each time you spy a Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk or Prairie Falcon? Is back-country camping your thing?

We seek a few volunteers that would like to assist Susan Coulter, Project Manager, as she monitors nesting raptors in the Rio Grande and San Antonio



Gorges. In general, visits last three days with two nights camping visiting known nest sites and searching for new locations. Must be comfortable hiking and camping in a remote area, possess binoculars and a GPS Unit (and know how to use it).

Please contact [Gail](#) or [Susan](#) if you would like to volunteer for this study.



Wildlife First Responders Class 2025

Have you ever wished you'd known how to handle a wildlife emergency like a baby raptor or a hawk hit by a car along the road?

This Wildlife First Responders class will be an online course that you can complete at your own pace with prerecorded video segments, electronic handouts, and live Q & A sessions via Google Meet. Class will be available Feb. 1 and include 4+ hours of video instruction.

This course will teach you when to intervene in wildlife situations and when not to, as well as how to capture, stabilize, and transport injured wildlife to a rehabilitator. Although the course is offered by Tamarack Wildlife Center, the curriculum is relevant to Hawks Aloft raptor rescue hotline volunteers, transporters, and onsite volunteers. The course can be used towards state licensure as a capture/transport permittee as well.

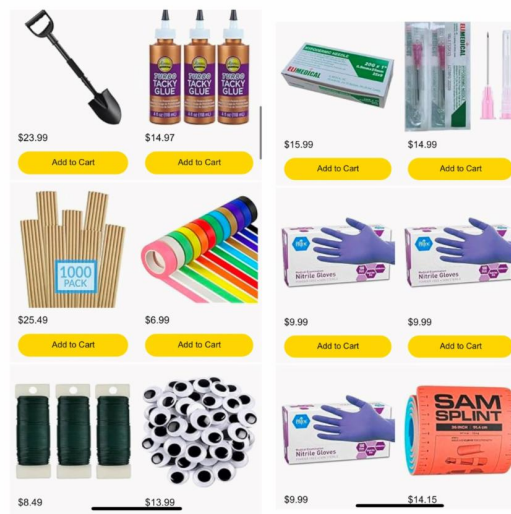
Contact [Robert Kasuboski](#) for additional information.

Course cost is \$40. Registration must be received by Friday, January 31st. [Click here to register.](#)

Check Out Our 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.



Birds of Winter Cedar Waxwing

By Nate & Jeanne Gowan
Guest Authors



This winter, we have been treated to seeing large flocks of Cedar Waxwings along the bosque in Corrales, New Mexico. In the sunlight, their breasts are a yellow or bright orange-rust, but they are most easily identified by their pointed crests and black “masks” that adorn their eyes. Their wings are brown or pale gray with a yellow underside and brilliant red waxy tips. Males and females have a similar plumage, but it takes a year or two to develop their full adult condition. Juveniles appear mostly brown, white and gray until they reach maturity.

Cedar Waxwings get their name from the food they consume, mainly cedar berries in many parts of their range. The “waxwing” comes from

the wax-like discharge present at the tips of their secondary wing feathers. Researchers don't know the purpose of the waxy residue, but it may help attract mates.

Cedar Waxwings are a specialized “frugivorous” species as they rely almost entirely on sugary fruits. In fact, they can survive on fruit alone for several months because of their efficient digestive systems that process simple sugars well. In winter, they travel in large flocks called an “ear-full” or “museum”. Together they will clear berry-laden trees or bushes before moving on to the next location. In the Corrales bosque, they were feeding on New Mexico olives. Cedar Waxwings are known to become intoxicated after eating overripe, fermented berries. Unfortunately, this intoxication makes them more likely to collide into windows or become easy prey for cats and other predators.

During courtship, males and females hop towards each other, back and forth, sometimes touching their bills together. Males often pass an item such as a fruit, insect, or flower petal to the female. The female will accept the item and hop away, only to return the item back to the male. This ritual repeats a few times until the female eats the gift.

Cedar Waxwings are widespread across much of Canada and the United States. Breeding and wintering areas may change from year to year, depending on food supplies. We have never witnessed their mating ritual personally, but I will be on the lookout for it this coming spring. That is, if we are lucky enough to travel to their nesting grounds.

Photos by Nate Gowan.



by
Staff and Volunteers

At year's end, we look back on our hotline calls and patient intakes to measure them against prior years. However, raw numbers do not tell the full story of success or failure. They also can be deeply misleading. For instance, consider this hypothetical case:

Four birds were rescued over the course of a year. Of the 4:

1 bird is returned to the wild.

1 bird was deceased on arrival and was brought to us for final disposition.

1 bird was hit by a vehicle (HBC). The bird passed away within two hours of arrival. A necropsy showed it had major internal damage that was not survivable.

1 bird is a falcon with a broken wing. Falcons are the Indy cars of the bird world. Peregrine Falcons can dive at speeds of over 200mph and must be precise in their movements. We transferred the falcon to another facility that had an orthopedic surgeon on staff as well as very large pre-release flight cages to increase the chance for release.



Any bird coming into our facility counts as an admission — including birds that are already deceased or die soon after rescue. One way we report these data are separating out birds that die within 24 hours of care. While the fourth bird in this scenario eventually does survive and is released, the data do not reflect that because it was transferred to another facility. Most centers exclude birds that pass away within 24 hours of admission as these patients could not be saved despite heroic medical efforts. Transferring patients to other centers with better facilities for pre-release training is a Best Rehabilitation Practice for the long-term recovery of some patients. Local falconers also are important collaborators for pre-release assessments. When they take on a patient, they free-fly the bird to determine if it has adequate hunting skills for survival. All of this requires collaboration among a wide array of individuals and organizations.

We cannot underestimate the critical role of our Raptor Rescue Hotline. In 2024, the hotline fielded 697 calls from concerned citizens and admitted birds from 56 cities throughout the state. Hawks Aloft is the **only** organization in New Mexico that offers this service and it has become a resource to government agencies that now refer these types of calls to us to handle. These include the NM Department of Game and Fish, NM State Police, and most other rehabilitation groups that do not offer help with capture and transport of injured birds.

The hotline is (wo)manned 90+ percent of the time by Evelyn McGarry, our dedicated volunteer of 10 years. She calmly helps determine if there is a need to conduct a rescue, and then works with our extensive group of rescue volunteers to find help for capture and transport. Sometimes calls can be directed to another, closer facility, and occasionally we recommend that the caller keep watch to see if the bird flies away. In addition to managing the hotline, Evelyn also regularly responds to rescue calls herself.

When we compile our data at the end of the year we try to be consistent so we can accurately compare results among years. Thus, it is important to consider these variables when reviewing the reporting data.

Hawks Aloft Bird Intake Data 2024

- 697 hotline calls
- 237 admissions
- 105 species
- 28 releases
- 54 transfers
- 24 dead on arrival
- 66 immediately euthanized
- 3 birds still under care *

**Three birds remain in our care, awaiting a spring release. One needs to molt and regrow new feathers; one is a migratory bird and will wait for warm spring weather when its species returns and the third was a December 2024 intake that is still in recovery.*

If you were to take this information into account and exclude the deceased birds and birds that had to be euthanized right away, you would find our release rate for 2024 is 30%. However, it would be higher if we included the birds awaiting release and the birds that were transferred to other facilities and released. These numbers show how important it is to take all variables into account when analyzing data. It can be easy to get disheartened with a release rate of 30%, but by looking at all the details, we can put everything in perspective.

*Swainson's Hawk (needs to molt new feathers) by Heather Rissi.
[Great Blue Heron](#) rescue by Evelyn McGarry - Stephanie Kinnamon*



Remembering Turbo

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of our [Burrowing Owl](#) ambassador, Turbo.

Turbo was discovered on a dark and stormy night in 2019. She had taken shelter from the storm on someone's roof in Albuquerque. Unfortunately, that roof had a rotating rooftop wind turbine, in which she got trapped. She was caught by her neck and was hanging on the spinning structure that repeatedly hit her left wing during the long and windy night.

She was rescued by Hawks Aloft, who responded to the call from the concerned homeowners who heard "something" flapping on their roof overnight. Turbo suffered trauma to her neck and also a fracture of the left wing, rendering her unflighted. She was named Turbo in honor of her incredible survival story.

Turbo was an older education bird and had been retired from programs some time, although she continued to foster youngsters for several years. We will always remember her fondly and appreciate the time we had with her, and we thank Chellye Porter for providing loving care and support to Turbo in her final years.

Photo of Turbo with one of her foster babies. Photo by Gail Garber



**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!
December 2024 Donors and Member Renewals**

Robin Anguiano
Meredith Armstrong
Avangrid Foundation
Andrew & Adrienne Bonell

Jack & Alexandra
Liebster
Megan Lindstrom for
"Baby Hawkins" Bonnie

Dorothy Stermer *
Tom Stewart
Susan Stiger
Gerald Swanson Virginia W

Nancy Bowsher
Wendy Brown
Mary Bruesch
William Burkhardt
Loretta Burnham
Lee Carn
Niels Chapman & Ruth
Burstrom *
Charles Cummings
Donald Dapkus
Frank Dobrushken
Brian Dykstra
Terry Edwards
Facebook Donors
Zvi Flanders
Patricia Folsom
Gail Garber *
Lawrence J Gibel MD
Teresa Garcia *
Kathy Granillo
Sajit Greene
Sarah Hamilton
Leslie Hansen
Lynn Harris
Michael Hartshorne & Lida
Crooks
Joan Hashimoto
Patricia Hawley *
Ted & Holly Healy
James & Nancy Higdon
Melissa Howard
Diana Kelleher
Rebecca Kraimer
William & Sandra Kroll
Martin Kuziel & Erica
Wheeler
Laura Kuster
Nelson Leonard & Linda
Rodgers
Veronica Lewis

Long & Donald Giles
Peter Lisha & Ursula Hill
Sue Lyons *
Brandt Magic
Cheryl Maracich *
**McCaughin Mountain
Foundation for
Empowerment**
Susan Metcalfe
David Mikesic
John & Mary Mims *
Mary-Anne Mitchell
Glenda Moore
Ann Morris
Maryam Newbury
Nusenda Foundation
Mary V Orr
Dave Parsons *
Steven J Partch
David Powell
Faye Rafferty
Dave & Tracey Raymond
Rhonda R Rivera
Ann Rhodes & Bari Silver
Margaret Roberts
Lee Rottler *
Carolyn Sanborn
Allison Schacht *
Jeannie Sellmer
Corinne Shaw
Shar Short
Joyce D Smith
Judie Smith
Kim Sorensen
Charlotte & Martin
Sornborger
Alice Stacey
Mikah Stake
Dallas Steele *

Taylor & Albert Koston
Morghen Thomas Gayle Vance
Sandra Viscusi
Janet White (In Memory of Bill
White)
FundPatricia Folsom
Gail Garber
Karen Garcia
Teresa Garcia *
Kenneth Goodrow
Tressa Greenlee
Victoria Heart
Leah Henzler
Ursula Hill
Susan Hunter
Raymond Juncosa
Stephanie Kaylan, Wanagi Wolf
Fund & Rescue
Margaret Keller
Greg Lauer
Susan Leviton
Margaret Lightle
Patricia Logan
Richard Lutz
Sue Lyons *
Lois Manno
Evelyn McGarry
Trish Meyer
Michael Milone
John & Mary Mims *
Russell Munk
Damie Nelson
Diane Owens
Sheryl Paloni
Dave Parsons *
Lili Pearson
Lucinda Porter
Cheryl Quaintance
**Kathryn M Zimmer/Edward F
Zimmer Community**

* indicates recurring monthly
donor

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—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 Little Richard The Merlin

Avian ambassador Little Richard, was named after the scientific name for the [Richardson' Merlin](#), *Falco columbarius richardsonii*. Richie (as we like to call him for short), had head and eye trauma from an impact injury in 2014 that resulted in permanent blindness in his left eye. The inability to use both eyes would have made

survival chances very slim because raptors have binocular vision, which allows them to focus both eyes on a single object. This ability helps them with depth perception, which is critical to successfully hunt prey. Although he is permanently blind in one eye, Little Richard remains very lively and active!

When you adopt a Hawks Aloft raptor you receive:

- A one-year Hawks Aloft membership
- An adoption certificate
- An information booklet about the individual bird you have adopted
- Exclusive access to video updates about your bird
- Your choice of:

A professional 8×10 photo of your bird, or

A stuffed Audubon Bird with realistic vocalizations (if available for that species)

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

Photo by Larry Rimer.

Photographer's Monthly Gallery

Chad & Chris Saladin

We are honored by your inclusion of us in your documentation and celebration of birds of prey for Hawks Aloft!

Chad and I have never considered ourselves "photographers", as our journey began as obsessed Peregrine Falcon volunteer nest monitors, observers, advocates and conservationists, and then we became involved in rescues and volunteer rehabilitation and release efforts. Photography has been an effort to capture some of the incredible experiences that we have had with this species while seeking to further our study and understanding as well as the unique personalities of individuals and pairs.



We have been fortunate to be a part of Ohio's peregrine recovery program through ODNR (Ohio Division of Wildlife) when Peregrine Falcons were listed as "Endangered", and we were active in observing and reporting data on up to 10 nests in Ohio. We learned rehabilitation techniques (such as creancing) under the tutelage of Jackie Fallon at the [Midwest Peregrine Society](#) that we used with Laura Jordan and her team at the Medina Raptor Center, and we were involved in numerous rescues, rehabilitation efforts, and releases of various raptors.

Since 2013, we have shared our information and images on our [Facebook page](#). We have donated images for auctions for different causes, and we have had some images published in media including "Birder's World", HMANA, and NAFA's "Hawk Chalk", our work was included in Minnesota's Belle Museum traveling exhibit, and we have hosted educational programs on peregrines for multiple Audubon groups, some local special interest groups, and our Award-winning Cleveland Metroparks for their "Birds of prey weekend". Our greatest honor from a photography perspective involved our inclusion of our multiple peregrine and merlin images in Pete Dunne and Kevin Karlson's 2017 book: "Birds of Prey: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, and Vultures of North America".

While we enjoy seeing and photographing all wildlife, especially raptors, we each believe strongly that there is no bird like the peregrine falcon, and this charismatic and dynamic species will always be our focus! When given the honor to present our photos here, we were trying to feature some interaction and behavioral images. While they are not "professional quality", we hope that you will appreciate the immersion into the world of the peregrine that we have been fortunate to experience.

[Click here to visit C&C's Ohio Peregrine Page.](#)







C&C Saladin 2024

DONORS, SUPPORTERS, AND VOLUNTEERS

Donate to Hawks Aloft

**Become a Hawks Aloft
Member**

Thanks to our Hard-working Volunteers!

We appreciate all the work our volunteers do to help Hawks Aloft meet the goals of our mission.

We especially thank the folks that stepped out on Christmas day. Thank you Pat Hawley for responding to the injured owl in Santa Fe, and Deney-Rae Evans for picking up a juvenile red-tailed hawk in Sunland Park.

December 2024

Allison Schacht
Amy Brenneman
Charles Cummings
Deney-Rae Evans
Doug Blythe
Evelyn McGarry
Jeannine Kinzer
Jim Rhodes
Judie Smith
Judy Nakamura
Kat Cuadros
Kristin Brown
Lars Wells
Mamie Chan
Mary Bruesch
Michael Balassone
Pat Hawley
Pat Voth
Roxy Balbuena
Sabina Cottrill
Sherry Mack
Stephanie Kinnamon
Stephanie Otts
Steven Partch
Steven Priola
Tabitha Miller
Tara Dulaney
Winston Schultz
Zach Burd

**Total Reported
109 hrs/1341miles**

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
El Paso Zoo
Eye Care for Animals
Tim Fitzpatrick, DVM
High Desert Veterinary
Care
Stephanie Lindsell
(NMWLC)
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 Holeck, DVM
Amelia Thompson
Wildlife Rescue of New
Mexico

December 2024

Raptor Rescue Calls and Patient Intakes

Hotline Calls: 33
Patient intakes: 10

- Great Horned Owl, Myiasis
- Red-tailed Hawk, Trauma & Fracture
- Sharp-shinned Hawk, Head Trauma
- Greater Roadrunner, Neurological Disease
- Red-shafted Flicker, DOA
- Sharp-shinned Hawk, Wing Injury
- Greater Roadrunner, Entrapment
- Western Screech Owl, DOA
- Sharp-shinned Hawk, Unknown Disease
- Harris's Hawk, Trauma & Electrocution

Contact Robert to get set up to
report your donations and
volunteer hours if you'd like to
see your name here.

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

Anonymous

Avangrid Foundation

Benevity Fund

Bureau of Land Management

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

Cottonwood Environmental Consulting

Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation Service/Arroyo Classrooms

Defenders of Wildlife

Edward F. Zimmer Community Fund

Farmers Electric Cooperative

FHL Foundation

Holbrook Travel

Perianne Houghton

Intel Corporation

K. Taka Revocable Trust

Kroger/Smith's Inspiring Donations

Los Alamos National Laboratory Employees

Tom & Edel Mayer Foundation

The McCaughin Mountain Foundation for Empowerment

National Philanthropic Trust

Nusenda Foundation

One Community Auto

Owings Gallery

PNM Resources Foundation

Peabody Natural Resources Company

Rio Grande Jewelry Supply

Smiths/Kroger

Summit Construction

Gerald Swanson

The Frost Foundation

US Army Corps of Engineers

USDA Forest Service - Jemez Ranger District

Valles Caldera National Preserve

Wild Birds Unlimited

[Hawks Aloft Website](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Shop](#)

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*

Our Board of Directors

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

Veterinarian
Jerry Hobart, *Project Manager,*
Raptor Driving Surveys
Robert Kasuboski, *Outreach*
Coordinator
Tom Mayer, *Avian Surveyor*
Evelyn McGarry, *Office Manager,*
East Mountain Representative,
Raptor Rescue Dispatcher
Calle Poindexter, *Marketing*
Larry Rimer, *Project Manager*
Heather Rissi, *Education*
Coordinator
Liz Roberts, *Senior*
Educator/Naturalist
Dallas Steele, *Bookkeeper*
Scott Waters, *Graphic Design*

Hawks Aloft, Inc. | PO Box 10028 | Albuquerque, NM 87184 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!