

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

My summer was spent doing fieldwork in Mongolia. Lots of interesting things happened during this trip, including an incident involving goat heads and vodka, but that story is probably best told at another time and place. One thing that happened that I can talk about was the 6th International Conference on Asian Raptors, held in Ulaanbaatar and organised by the Asian Raptor Research & Conservation Network (ARRCN). There is an interesting model – ARRCN functions as a single unit, whether the members are from affluent Japan or the relatively poorly-resourced Indonesia, and they hold biennial conferences right across the region. They provide a source of full funding for those who otherwise couldn't afford to attend the conference, and they donate large amounts of optical equipment to the host organisation. I couldn't help but compare this to the RRF model, with the overwhelming disparity in our membership (many of us coming from the relatively prosperous continents of North America and Europe), a limited amount of funding for travel awards and almost an expectation that the hosting organisation of the annual conference will generate extra capital for the Foundation. Now, it's not really a fair comparison, especially because, unlike ARRCN, a large proportion of our annual funding is ploughed into producing our quarterly scientific journal – a publication of global interest as it regularly includes research results from all over the world. Nevertheless, I do think we have a lot to learn from our colleagues in ARRCN and I hope we can work with them on future initiatives – given that the majority of threatened raptor species are located in Asia and most of them are also understudied, RRF has the potential to make a very real difference in terms of disseminating research results that can be applied to actual conservation policy.

During a conversation at the ARRCN conference, a friend told me the following:

“There are two types of raptor researcher: one type who thinks, ‘What can raptors do for me?’, and another type who thinks, ‘What can I do for raptors?’”.

In April this year, we lost someone who was definitely categorised as the latter type. Carl Marti had been involved with RRF leadership activities for many years. He was always generous with his time, charming, thoughtful and supportive of those he worked with, whether they were established old-timers or young students just starting out. His unassuming demeanor was an example to many of us for how to conduct ourselves within what is often an ego-ridden field. Carl leaves a lasting legacy at RRF and we are privileged to have had the opportunity to know and work with him.



Our annual conference (in Colorado this year) takes place in a few weeks time. I'm delighted to learn that delegates are arriving from at least nine countries – Malaysia, Netherlands, US, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Australia, UK and India. I look forward to seeing some of you there.

Best, Ruth



RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INCOFFICERS

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 At Large #5: Torgeir Nygard
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For more information about the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc. (founded in 1966), please visit the RRF website at: <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/>.

Persons interested in birds of prey are invited to join the Raptor Research Foundation (RRF). *Wingspan* is emailed twice each year to all members of RRF and is available on the RRF website. Members also receive *The Journal of Raptor Research* (ISSN 0892-1016), which is published quarterly. For membership and subscription information, please contact: Ornithological Societies of North America, 5400 Bosque Boulevard, Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710, USA; 1-254-399-9636 (phone); 1-254-776-3767 (fax); business@osnabirds.org (email); <http://www.osnabirds.org> (web).

Get Involved with RRF!!

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Raptor Research Foundation, please contact an Officer, Board of Directors member, or Committee chair. There are many opportunities with varying levels of time commitments. Elections for Directors and Officers occur every year; throw your name in the hat. Participate on a committee; the RRF committees are always looking for additional members! See the RRF website for committee chairs.

Please remember to VOTE!

The RRF election is ongoing and **voting deadline is Sept. 5**. The ballot can be found on RRF's homepage <http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/>.

Editor's Note – Thanks to the following contributors for this issue of the *Wingspan*: Clint Boal, Karla Kinstler, Mike Kochert, Margaret Marti, Libby Mojica, Joan Morrison, Jemima Parry-Jones, Peter Steyn, Ruth Tingay, Susan Whaley.

Wingspan welcomes contributions from RRF members and others interested in raptor biology and management. Please submit contributions via email to Petra Bohall Wood, *Wingspan* Editor, at rrfwingspan@mail.wvu.edu. For long contributions, please send as an MS Word attachment.

Contribution deadline for the next issue is **15 February 2011**.

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Fort Collins, CO
22-26 September

Raptors in a Changing World



Plan to attend the 2010 Annual Conference for the Raptor Research Foundation, set for September 22-26 in Fort Collins, Colorado. The conference theme, “Raptors in a Changing World”, seeks to explore the role of raptor research in a world of energy development, human conflicts, and emerging diseases. Judy Scherpelz, Executive Director of the non-profit organization, Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (RMRP) is host of the event, and EDM, International, a leader in addressing avian interactions with utility infrastructure, co-hosts.



bicycle, several fitness and climbing centers that offer day passes, fishing on the scenic Poudre River, to name a few. Fort Collins also has a reputation for the number of world-renowned microbreweries, including New Belgium Brewing Company.

For information on the conference and to register online visit the websites: <http://www.rmrp.org/> or <http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/>. Questions? Contact Judy Scherpelz (Local Committee Chair); judy@rmrp.org or 970-484-7756 or Libby Mojica (RRF Conference Committee chair; ejmojica@wm.edu). For both of these please put RRF Conference as the subject.

Rocky Mountains National Park
(photo by Petra Wood)



UPCOMING RRF MEETINGS

2011 RRF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by Libby Mojica

The 2011 RRF Annual Conference will be held October 5-9, 2011 at the Radisson Hotel in Duluth, Minnesota. The conference is hosted by the [University of Minnesota's Natural Resource Research Institute](#), [Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory](#) and the [Duluth Audubon Society](#).

Poised at the southwestern tip of Lake Superior, Duluth is a picturesque town with a rich history connected to the natural beauty and resources of the northern Midwest. The western-most inland seaport in North America, Duluth's shipping industry supports the mining, logging, railroads and farming industries. The natural beauty of the area is highlighted by rugged terrain, abundant rivers, lakes and forests and beautiful weather—perfect for hiking, biking, boating, and of course, hawk watching!

The fall raptor migration at Hawk Ridge (www.hawkridge.org) is beyond compare! Hawk Ridge counters average 93,000 raptors each fall, with early October being the prime time for catching sight of up to 14 different kinds of raptors: Sharp-shinned, Cooper's Hawks and Northern Goshawks (reliably); Broad-winged, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks; American Kestrels, Merlins and Peregrine Falcons; Bald and Golden Eagles; Northern Harriers, Turkey Vultures and an occasional late Osprey. In addition to Hawk Ridge, birding in general is spectacular, and you'll have the opportunity to participate in a variety of guided birding trips, as well as other natural history tours in conjunction with the October conference.

For more information, contact local conference coordinator, Julie O'Connor at RRFinDuluth@aol.com or 218-348-2291.

Photos by Debbie Waters



2012 RRF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2012, 14-18 August, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. RRF will participate in the North American Ornithological Conference V in a joint meeting with nine other ornithological societies.

NAOC V - The 5th North American Ornithological Conference, organized jointly by the American Ornithologists' Union, Society of Canadian Ornithologists/ Societe des Ornithologues du Canada, Bird Studies Canada, Association of Field Ornithologists, Cooper Ornithological Society, Raptor Research Foundation, La Sociedad para el Estudio y Conservacion de las Aves en Mexico [CIPAMEX], Waterbird Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society, will be held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The 4 day scientific program (15-18 August) will be preceded by annual and council meetings of most of the ornithological societies, and scientific and ENGO workshops. The opening reception will be held on the evening of 14 August. Field trips will be offered before and after the scientific program. The Steering Committee for NAOC-V, with representatives from each of the participating ornithological groups, is engaged in the conference planning details.

News from the RRF

Update Your Contact Information

Submitted by Joan Morrison, Secretary

All Members: Please remember to **update your contact information** regularly. Contact Secretary Joan Morrison Joan.morrison@trincoll.edu or Membership chairperson Ted Swem ted_swem@fws.gov with any changes to your e-mail, phone, or address information. Also, please check your Spam folder regularly for misplaced e-mails from OSNA, which sends our announcements and notices about elections. E-mails from OSNA come from "osnabirds.org." You can ask your organization's IT personnel to add "osnabirds.org" to your list of contacts that you, as the user, deem are acceptable to receive e-mail from. This should avoid messages from OSNA being automatically sent to your trash or spam folders.

RRF Committee Chairs

Submitted by Ruth Tingay

Many thanks to those of you who responded to the article in the March edition of Wingspan, calling for nominations to fill various Committee Chair positions. We are pleased to introduce the following new personnel. Contact details for all our new Committee Chairs can be found on the RRF website.

James Dwyer: Chair, Scientific Programme (annual conference).
Term: January 2011 – December 2013

Laurie Goodrich: Chair, Nominations Committee.
Term: January 2011 – December 2013

Jemima Parry-Jones & Thomas Sproat: Co-chairs, Education Committee.
Term: June 2010 – April 2013

Brent Bibles: Chair, Awards Committee.
Term: January 2011 – December 2013

Ted Swem: Chair, Membership Committee.
Term: January 2010 – December 2012

Vacant: Chair, Conservation Committee.
We had a disappointing response to this position and the RRF Board will be discussing the future of this Committee at the September Board Meeting.

Many thanks to our out-going Committee Chairs:

Jim Bednarz: Scientific Programme (annual conference).

Carol McIntyre: Nominations Committee.

Kate Davis: Education Committee.

Clint Boal: Awards Committee.

Jim Bednarz: Conservation Committee.

2010 RRF Grant Recipients

Submitted by Clint Boal

Stephen R. Tully Memorial Grant

Recipient: Scolasticah Ndegwa

Project: Distribution and Population Size Of Martial Eagle *Polemaetus Bellicosus* In Kakamega Forest-Kenya.

Dean Amadon Grant

Recipient: Todd Whiklo

Project: Nest Structure and Breeding Habitat Characteristics of Barred Owls (*Strix varia*) in Manitoba.

Bio: I am currently a Master's candidate in Zoology at the University of Manitoba, where I had completed my undergraduate degree in Biology. My research on Barred Owls is the first field study on this species in the province. To date, findings have greatly expanded the knowledge of Barred Owls in Manitoba. During my thesis research my interest in raptors, and owls specifically, has grown exponentially. Aside from my thesis research I have been involved with the Manitoba nocturnal owl survey, monitoring of other owl species, and started an independent nest-box monitoring project. I hope to continue studying raptors after the completion of my Master's thesis.

Leslie Brown Memorial Grant

Recipient: Allai Orimba

Project: The distribution and abundance of the locally threatened Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens* in Lake Victoria Region.

Bio: Allai Orimba has been a volunteer conservation practitioner at Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (LVSBS) since 2003. LVSBS is a site Support Group of Nature Kenya (a birdlife partner in Kenya) in Dunga wetland (IBA 037) in the Lake region. He holds a diploma in Wildlife and Natural Resource Management. As the head of Department of Monitoring and Research of his organization, he coordinates programs of Environment Education outreaches and awareness to both school and local community within the Lake basin region for the need of sustainable utilisation of the natural resources in the area. He has coordinated a project titled “Grass root Mobilization to the Conservation of Endemic Bird species in Yala Wetland” through the support of Africa Bird Club in 2007. The Leslie Brown Memorial Fund will financially supplement the implementation of his project titled ‘The distribution and abundance of the locally threatened Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens* in Lake Victoria Region. He generated the idea during several bird watching activities of 2008-09. In over 200 of the birdwalks we conducted in between January to December 2009, we realized the decline of the Banded Snake Eagle (only 7 in number occurred) in the entire Dunga wetland. This finding was supported by our bi-annual monitoring of birds, vegetation and water quality in Dunga IBA, the birds’ data checklist only scored less than six individual species of Africa Banded Snake Eagle. This revelation to the disappearance of the bird of prey which has cultural significance the local community has provided my reason to hypothesize my investigations; the increase of human activities within Dunga Wetland decreases the number of prey (snake) population, this leads to migration of Banded snake eagle to other areas in search of food. By using Ndere Island a protected area as a reference area I will compare my findings in all study areas. My second hypothesis will investigate the effect of climate change on the eagle distribution in the Lake region.

RRF MEMBERSHIP (as per membership database Aug 2010)

Submitted by Ruth Tingay

Membership Type	# Members
Total members	903 (incl 4 deceased)
Life members	59 (3 deceased)
Sustaining members	6
Contributing members	65
Regular members	664 (1 deceased)
Special countries rate	25
Student members	82
USA-based members	614 (~68%)
International members	289 (~32%)
Total # countries	44
# new members	Year 2010 to date: 111

Continent	# Members
North America	675
Europe	135
Asia	43
South America	28
Australasia	13
Africa	8

Top-ranking countries (# Members)
USA (614)
Canada (61)
Japan (31)
Spain & UK (28)
Germany (19)
Australia & Italy (10)
Mexico (9)
Brazil (8)
France (7)
Argentina & Austria (6)

Country	# Members
Argentina	6
Australia	10
Austria	6
Belgium	1
Belize	1
Brazil	8
Canada	61
Chile	3
Czech Republic	1
Denmark	2
Egypt	1
Finland	4
France	7
Germany	19
Greece	4
Guatemala	1
Hong Kong	1
Iceland	1
India	2
Israel	1
Italy	10
Japan	31
Kenya	2

Country	# Members
Korea	1
Mexico	9
Mongolia	1
Netherlands	5
New Zealand	2
Northern Mariana Islands	1
Norway	5
Pakistan	1
Panama	0
Philippines	1
Portugal	2
Republic of Ireland	3
Romania	1
Slovak Republic	1
Slovenia	1
South Africa	5
Spain	28
Sweden	4
Switzerland	1
Taiwan	4
Turkey	1
UK	28
USA	614

Raptor News

European Raptor Monitoring Network (EURAPMON)

Submitted by Ruth Tingay

Since 2006, RRF has been involved in a collaborative effort with key raptor groups in 21 countries to instigate an ambitious pan-European raptor monitoring network (please see reports in earlier editions of *Wingspan*). The European Science Foundation (ESF) approved the proposal in June 2009, pending successful financial support from the ESF Member Organisations (MOs). The target budget was €775,000 for a five-year project, although the ESF had advised that the project could launch in 2010 if 65% of funding was secured (€505,000).

As reported in the spring 2010 edition of *Wingspan*, by January 2010, MOs in nine countries had offered funding totalling €290,000. I'm very pleased to report that by March 2010, funding of over €450,000 from 16 countries had been secured. This amount, and the expectation of further funding in 2010 and 2011, convinced the ESF Chief Executive of the project's viability and formal approval has now been given for the project to start. Further updates will be provided in due course.

A British First and two World Firsts in India

Submitted by Jemima Parry-Jones

With the very cold winter we had last winter, not only extremely cold but with several episodes of snow, the breeding season was a difficult one. Particularly for those birds that normally lay their eggs early in the year, and in those cases it is always a choice of decisions. Do you let them sit for 10-14 days to give the egg or eggs some natural incubation, which is a risk in very cold weather and with first time layers, or do you take the eggs straight away which means hatching them in incubators from day one incubation, and in the case of first time laying birds can be stressful. These are decisions that are made every year in many different situations, but are always tough ones, particularly if you get it wrong!

As usual some we got right and some wrong. We hatched our second Eurasian Griffon Vulture, and he is a charmer, although sadly with a leg problem, but it is being fixed! Our younger Verreaux's Eagle laid for the first time, which was very exciting, but she broke her only egg, so that was a wrong decision with the benefit of hindsight. The standard cry of a captive breeder is 'next year'!

However our most special breeding success this year was the Steller's Sea Eagle. They have been together for years, and never really shown much signs of even liking one another, but this year it was very different. A definite pair bond and that meant cleaning and feeding all of a sudden became rather more difficult. She laid one egg only, but one is better than none. We don't recycle first time layers normally and as she was sitting brilliantly, we left her to it for a fair time, only taking the egg towards the end of incubation. Taking the egg was an interesting affair and took three of us, but we successfully



switched it for a wooden dummy egg, and Simon, my curator and incubation specialist, successfully hatched it. We reared it for two weeks and then took on the scary task of putting it back with the parents, which is nerve racking with any bird, but particularly so when it was a chick this important to us.

It went well, the parents were very interested and not aggressive, I am not sure if the chick was impressed, but after several hours the female sat and the chick coped with it. They did not feed it well for

the first couple of days so Simon helped, but they soon got the idea and as I write there is an enormous dark grey chick, almost the size of its mum up on the nest ledge. Watching them feed it was an amazing sight and one to treasure.

In another part of the globe the breeding season was also going well. Simon had been out to India to the Vulture Breeding Project in November last year to set up the incubators and do some staff training. And over the next few months with much in the way of emails and phone calls, baby vultures started to hatch. Simon went over again in the early spring and the upshot of it all was ten vulture chicks were hatched, three Long-billed Vultures - a World First captive breeding - three Slender-billed Vultures - a world first last year and four Oriental White-backed Vultures. This bodes well for the project in saving the vultures in southeast Asia.



white-backed vulture nestlings
(Photos by Linda Wright)

Below is press release issued by the RSPB on behalf of a partnership involving: BirdLife International, Bombay Natural History Society, RSPB, UK International Centre for Birds of Prey (ICBP), and the Zoological Society of London

WORLD FIRST FOR VULTURES FACING EXTINCTION

Globally extinct within 10 years: that has been the worst prediction for three species of vulture which have disappeared from huge swathes of southern Asia. But the latest exciting news from a conservation partnership in India reveals that all three species have now successfully reared young in a captive breeding centre, providing some long-term hope for these three critically endangered species, especially as the ultimate aspiration will be to return birds to the wild. The centre reports that 10 vulture chicks have fledged this year, with three long-billed vulture chicks fledged in captivity for the

first time ever. These chicks were complemented by the fledging of three slender-billed vultures and four oriental white-backed vultures.

Reportedly, before their population crash, Asia's vulture population extended to tens of millions of birds, but now the combined population of all three species numbers is believed to be well below 60,000 individuals. And with the population of at least one species almost halving each year, the success of captive breeding may give some hope that these magnificent birds will be prevented from reaching oblivion. The population crash of Asia's vultures was first noted in the late 1990s, since then their rate of decline has been steeper than many other species, including the infamous extinction of the dodo. The vultures' catastrophic decline has been driven by the veterinary use of [diclofenac](#). A vulture will die of acute kidney failure within a few days of consuming meat from the carcass of livestock recently treated with the drug. Chris Bowden, of the RSPB, said: "The crisis facing vultures is one of the worst facing the natural world. Since the declines of these birds was first noticed, the speed at which they have gone is terrifying - and these birds played such an important role in cleaning up carcasses and the environment!"

"Although we may never again witness the sheer abundance of vultures across southern Asia, the latest news provides hope that we may, at least, be able to prevent the total extinction of these birds." Asad Rahmani is the Director of the Bombay Natural History Society. He said: "Quickly building up the important captive stock so they can be released within a few years is crucial. But this will also depend on eliminating diclofenac from veterinary and farming practice and this still needs a big effort from everyone."

Most of the birds were reared at Pinjore, in Haryana, where the Haryana State Government has recently started further aviary construction. One nestling was raised at Rajabhat Khawa, in West Bengal. The youngest of these nestlings have finally taken their first flights this week. The partnership also involves the Bombay Natural History Society, the RSPB as well as expert input from the Gloucestershire-based UK International Centre for Birds of Prey (ICBP) – the oldest raptor centre in the UK - and the Zoological Society of London. The Bombay Natural History Society and the RSPB are the Indian and UK representatives of BirdLife International.

Jemima Parry-Jones, of ICBP, said: "Bringing in expertise from rearing similar species has been a rewarding experience, and thanks to the Pinjore centre's dedicated staff, this success – which we were always convinced would happen - means we can now look forward to increasing the number of chicks reared." The centre's staff are led by Vibhu and Nikita Prakash. Parvez Ahmed, of Haryana State Government, said: "We are very proud to be hosting and playing our part in this project, which is breaking important new ground and increasing hopes for the future of these important environmental cleaners." The use of artificial incubation techniques has represented a world first for the rearing of oriental white-backed and long-billed vulture chicks. Chris Bowden added: "This success gives us hope that we may even be able to increase the number of birds reared in captivity". The partnership has relied on the experience of Simon Brough, the curator at ICBP and a raptor-incubation specialist who spent time at Pinjore and many hours on the phone from the Newent-based Centre.

News from the Peregrine Fund

Submitted by Susan Whaley

Tenth Circuit Rules on Aplomado Falcon

A recent federal appeals court ruling gave the endangered Northern Aplomado Falcon its best possible chance at recovery in New Mexico, where the colorful bird of prey disappeared as a breeding population in the 1950s. In July, the U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the New Mexico District Court's dismissal of a lawsuit challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to release the falcon as a nonessential, experimental population under the Endangered Species Act in New Mexico and Arizona. J. Peter Jenny, president and CEO of The Peregrine Fund, said the designation allows Aplomado Falcons to be re-introduced in areas where they no longer occur without disturbing current land use practices and with the cooperation of private land owners. Frank Bond, a New Mexico lawyer and member of The Peregrine Fund's board of directors, represented The Peregrine Fund in the case.

Sokoke Scops Owl Declines in Africa

The number of Sokoke Scops Owls, a tiny endangered owl found in Kenya and Tanzania, has dropped sharply in the last 16 years. The population declined 22.5% over a 16-year period, said Munir Virani, director of the Pan Africa Program for The Peregrine Fund. He estimated that 800 pairs remain, down from 1,025 pairs in the early 1990s. Virani also observed much lower densities of owls per square kilometer than during previous studies. This alarming trend is caused in part by illegal tree-cutting, which is destroying vital habitat for the cavity-nesting bird. Virani recommends that more exploratory surveys be conducted to locate new populations of the owl and that intensive ecological studies be undertaken to understand the species's habitat requirements. Virani's peer-reviewed study was published in *Ostrich*, the foremost scientific journal for African ornithology.

Condor Release in Arizona

Four California Condors will be released to the wild in the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in northern Arizona at 11 a.m. Saturday, September 25. The public is welcome to observe the release from a viewing area where spotting scopes will be set up and experts will be available to answer questions. This will be the 16th public release of condors in Arizona since the recovery program began in 1996. Condors are hatched and reared in captivity at The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Idaho, Oregon Zoo, Los Angeles Zoo and San Diego Wild Animal Park and transported to Arizona for release to the wild.

For more information, see press releases at: <http://www.peregrinefund.org/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS and BRIEF NEWS ITEMS

Announcements

The **World Owl Hall of Fame** is seeking nominations of both owls and humans who have made tremendous strides toward making this world a better place for owls. Nominees may be living or deceased and may reside anywhere in the world. Self-nominations are accepted. ***Nominations must be received by 15 November 2010*** and will be reviewed by a panel of judges from around the world with expertise in owl conservation, education, rehabilitation, and research.

Winners will be individually notified in December to allow time for travel arrangements to be made, and will be made public in mid January. Awards will be presented at the International Festival of Owls in Houston, Minnesota, USA on Saturday, 5 March 2011. Roar Solheim, Senior Curator of Zoology with Agder Museum of Natural History in Kristiansand, Norway, will be the keynote speaker at the festival

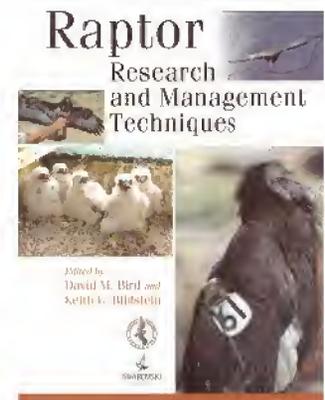
For more information about the World Owl Hall of Fame and to download nomination forms visit www.festivalofowls.com or contact the Houston Nature Center at 507-896-HOOT (4668) or nature@acegroup.cc. The Hall of Fame is sponsored by the World Owl Trust, Global Owl Project, and others. -- Karla Kinsler

For Sale

RRF Publications, Pins, and Decals –Hard copies of The Journal of Raptor Research (Vol. 1-30), most Raptor Research Reports, and RRF pins and decals may be purchased directly from RRF (Angela Matz, 101 12th Ave., Room 110, Fairbanks, AK 99701, USA; email: angela_matz@fws.gov). See http://raptorresearchfoundation.org/back_issues_jrr.htm for details and prices. Orders for 4 or more issues receive a 30% discount. Hard copies of The Journal of Raptor Research (Vol. 31+) may be purchased from Ornithological Societies of North America (5400 Bosque Blvd, Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710, USA; phone: 1-254-399-9636; email: business@osnabirds.org; web: <http://www.osnabirds.org>). Some older issues are not available in hardcopy; but all issues from Vol. 1-39 are available on SORA (<http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/jrr/>) for free download.

Raptor Books and Publications

Raptor Research and Management Techniques -- Copies are still available from many natural history booksellers or order from Hancock House online at www.hancockhouse.com. Look for the reduced price for RRF members.



Memorials to RRF Members

**IN MEMORORANIAM
DR. CARL D. MARTI
1944 - 2010**

The Raptor Research Foundation (RRF) and the raptor conservation and ornithological communities recently lost a long-time member, colleague, and friend. Carl Marti, a world renowned ornithologist and expert on owls, lost his battle with pancreatic cancer on 12 April 2010.

Carl was a long-time member of the RRF since the 1970s, who contributed much to the society. He was an associate editor of the *Journal of Raptor Research* from 1987 to 1991, and served as editor-in-chief for three years from January 1993 to December 1995. Under Carl's editorship, the *Journal of Raptor Research* came into the mainstream of biological journals. Carl single-handedly organized the Annual RRF meeting in Ogden Utah in 1998. He also served as chair of the RRF Conferences Committee and was instrumental in developing the RRF Conference Guidelines. He maintained the RRF web site until a few months before his passing and served as a regular reviewer for the *Journal of Raptor Research*. Carl received RRF's Hamerstrom Award in 2009 for his contributions to raptor ecology and natural history.



Carl grew up in Tarkio, Missouri. He received his B.A degree in Biology from Tarkio College and his M.S. and PhD degrees in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University. He taught one year at Tarkio College and 28 years in the Department of Zoology at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah before retiring as a Full Professor. Although he did not formerly supervise graduate students at Weber State he took a keen interest in students and served as an important mentor to many ornithologists. He was the first endowed scholar in Weber State University's College of Science and received the Utah Governor's Medal in Science and Technology. After retiring Carl moved to Boise, Idaho where he was an adjunct professor associated with the Raptor Research Center, Boise State University, serving on graduate student committees.

Carl was also quite active in the other North American ornithological societies. He was a member of American Ornithologists Union (AOU), Cooper Ornithological Society (COS), and Wilson Ornithological Society since 1968. He was an Elective member and Fellow of the AOU and was a Life Member of the COS. He was recognized by the COS for his service and became an Honorary Member of the organization earlier this year. He served as Editor of *Studies in Avian Biology*, as an associate editor and book review editor of *The Auk*, and Web master for the COS.

Carl developed a passion for owls and raptor ecology from early childhood that continued throughout his life. He is best known for his long-term field study of Barn Owls in Utah and Idaho. His article on his 15-year study of Barn Owl food habits was published in the *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* only one month before his death. Carl's research imparted important life history information on the Barn Owl in North America, particularly providing insights about Barn Owl reproduction and feeding ecology. He collaborated with other scientists from throughout the world to publish several comparative studies of food-niche patterns in predator communities. Carl was one of the early authors to describe lifetime reproductive success in a raptor species. His published works spanned nearly 40 years with more than 40 major articles in peer-reviewed publications including the widely used chapters on Food Habits in the 1987 and 2007 Raptor Techniques Manuals. He authored the very first account in the Birds of North America Series. This chapter on Barn Owls served as a model for all 715+ subsequent chapters. He also has studied Long-eared Owls, Great Horned Owls, Burrowing Owls, Flammulated Owls, and American Kestrels.

Carl was the quintessential gentleman and scholar. He had a quiet and unassuming, but solid, well-founded demeanor. Those who worked with him would know that Carl would unobtrusively be the first to complete tasks well ahead of schedule. He was a dedicated conservationist, but his interests spanned more than raptor ecology. He enjoyed the arts and playing musical instruments. He was athletic as well and enjoyed sports including running and bicycling. He was an accomplished craftsman who personally remodeled a 90-year old house when he moved to Boise. He knew how to maintain a healthy balance among his profession, personal interests, and his family; including Margaret, his wife of 43 years, and sons, Carl and Mitchell.

He will be truly missed.

Mike Kochert
Karen Steenhof
Pat Kennedy

Valerie Gargett – A Tribute

Valerie Gargett died in Australia on 6 February 2010 at the age of 87. It was my privilege to have known and worked with this remarkable woman over many years in Zimbabwe, where she made a long-term study of the Black (now Verreaux's) Eagle (*Aquila verreauxii*) in the rugged and scenic Matobo Hills 35 km south of Bulawayo.

The story of how she became involved with Black Eagles may be briefly told here. In 1959, Ron Thomson, a young ranger with the Department of National Parks, located 35 Black Eagle eyries. Later, Carl Vernon added new sites to Thomson's list. When Vernon left Bulawayo, he persuaded Val, a mathematics teacher, to continue the survey. The rest is history; she assembled and coordinated an enthusiastic team of amateurs like herself who built on the work of Thomson and Vernon. Eventually the survey encompassed an area of 620 km² in which 60 pairs of Black Eagles were located at a density of a one pair per 10.3 km², the most concentrated eagle population known anywhere in the world.

In 1990, the culmination of decades of exacting field work was published in her monumental book *The Black Eagle – A Study*. Her masterpiece is now a collector's item. Two anecdotes are worthy of mention. On one occasion the brooding female refused to leave the nest when Val arrived so, very gently, she removed the two eggs from beneath the eagle's breast, measured them, and gently replaced them beneath the eagle which had become habituated to her presence over the years. At another site, she recorded the entire 72-hour period of sibling aggression when Cain viciously pecked Abel 1,569 times until the weaker chick mercifully succumbed.

Val's "study" (a complete understatement) is among the most detailed and sustained research efforts on any eagle species in the world. She was particularly gratified that the Black Eagle Breeding Survey continued long after she immigrated to Australia. It is now in its 45th year!

This tribute would be incomplete without mention of Val's husband Eric who supported her in many ways, not least as an intrepid rock climber. But she often went out alone and was completely fearless; once she stood stock still as a large Black Mamba glided by close to her.

Val was internationally recognised for her work, not least by Leslie Brown, doyen of raptorophiles. As a sideline to her Black Eagle studies, Val also located the first Cape (Mackinder's) Eagle-Owl (*Bubo capensis*) nests in the Matobo Hills; her valuable observations were published in four separate papers.

All those who were privileged to know this wonderful person will remember her with deep affection – she was dedicated, encouraging to others, generous, unassuming and gentle, and I like to think that her spirit still soars above those majestic hills she loved so much.

Peter Steyn

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