



Another record-breaking year on the way!

2014 is shaping up to be a year to remember! First, it was SOAR's 15th anniversary and that was celebrated with many friends at the Dale Valley Vineyard on 31 August! Then, if admits keep at the current pace, we'll have WELL over 200 patients. A record number of hatch-year bald eagles were admitted this summer. Read Kay's perspective on [eagle summer 2014 linked on the website patient page!](#) One of those young eagles came with his own "followers" and many, many people have been very generous in supporting his care and other patients' care through donations via PayPal, through the mail, and by purchasing items from our Wish List. More about donations later. Looking back in our calendar over the year, we were busy doing educational programming in 2014. I know there were days that several of us were going in opposite directions! While 2014 isn't quite over, I do hope we're not in for any more surprises.

Rehabilitation highlights

Raptors found in leg-hold traps, a famous eaglet rescued from a creek, another eaglet rescued on a sandbar, a whole nest of late-hatched barn owls (They are ready to fledge, but will not be released until spring and warmer weather returns), too many patients with West Nile Virus (WNV) symptoms, and many admits that were so broken the best and right thing to do was to euthanize. Counter the not good with all the patients that were able to be released... eagles at Lake Red Rock, hatchling screech owls, kestrels, great horned owls and red-tailed hawks, plus many with healed fractures and those that recovered from WNV. We'll update you on total patient admits for 2014 after the annual permit reporting is complete.

Here's some good news from our data-keeper (that's me): we no longer have "pending" patients from 2013. I know that doesn't sound good... but we often have patients that are with us as the calendar turns over and it isn't until sometime the next year that we have a complete picture of what happened.



Kay holds the Decorah juvenile eagle during moving day to the 100' flight pen for continued evaluation.



A 2013 red-phase screech owl is about to be released at Swan Lake State Park in September 2013. Photo V Webber

Total # of 2013 patients	208
Total # pending	0
Total # Died	60
Total # Euthanized	22
Total # Transferred	9 (mostly to other permitted education providers)
Total # Released	116
% Released	56
% Survival	60
(Transferred + Released)	
% Mortality	39
% unresolved	0



A rehabilitated rough-legged hawk is released May 2013 in NW Iowa. Photo T Flammang

A special thanks needs to go to other folks that help SOAR's efforts to rehabilitate injured birds. Those include SOAR rescuers and transporters, other wildlife rehabilitators in the state; county conservation board and Iowa DNR staff for helping the injured birds get to SOAR; and especially to our veterinarians, Dr. Struve and Dr. Riordan at Manning Veterinary Associates, and Dr. Dirks from Dickinson Small Animal Clinic. If you have a chance, please thank these folks.

SOAR programming:

In 2014, SOAR has presented 106 programs through 1 November. These include 18 school and youth groups for 59 programs, 14 private programs for clubs and church groups, and 33 public programs. Eight private or public programs also featured releases of rehabilitated raptors!

We don't have a hard number of how many people attended programs as many programs were passive, table and information, with birds set up as people pass by or stop to interact. Programs at events such as Deer Classic (3-day event), Outdoor Expo (2-day event), Ottumwa Bald Eagle Day, Des Moines Park and Rec Bald Eagle Day, and Jester Park Bald Eagle Day easily surpassed 300 attendees each (it's difficult to count folks at these events!). Easily, SOAR interacted with over 9,000 people!



Kay has just handed off a rehabbed eagle to Diane to release below Lake Red Rock Dam, April 2014.



Cassie, Terrie, and Kay talk with visitors at the SOAR booth during Outdoor Expo 2014. Photo by J Wells

2015 upcoming programs include Eagle Day programs in January and February and collaborating

with the National Association for Interpretation presenting a workshop for interpreters and environmental educators about ammunition and the effects of lead on the environment, plus school field trips in March, April, and May.

- ❖ 10 January 2015 - Ottumwa Bald Eagle Day at the Bridgeview Center
- ❖ 24-25 January 2015 - Lewis & Clark Visitor Center Bald Eagle Days
- ❖ 14 February 2015 - Des Moines Park & Rec Bald Eagle Day

Keep an eye on the SOAR website [event page](#) for details, times, and more.

Research

SOAR continues to coordinate the eagle and lead data collection efforts for all Iowa wildlife rehabilitators. Thanks to staff at Black Hawk Wildlife Rehabilitation Project, MacBride Raptor Center, and Wildlife Care Clinic for collecting and sharing their data with us. The larger and more complete the data set is, the more impact this data can show. Thanks to Dr. Z at the Wildlife Care Clinic (WCC) for putting us in touch with Dr. Taylor Yaw! Dr. Yaw is helping get the eagles and lead research and data into a format acceptable for and able to pass the peer-review muster for a scientific journal. Dr. Yaw is currently an exotic animal

intern at Iowa State University, so part of his clinical appointment is with the WCC. We'll keep you posted.

Donations

In 2014 we have had over 1,000 unduplicated folks that have supported SOAR! Thank you for supporting us... whether for an individual patient, for all patients and education birds, the education program, the ongoing eagles and lead research, or our efforts to educate others about "getting the lead out of hunting and fishing."

Starting at the close of the SOAR spring newsletter, we started tracking donations made in memory of and in honor of special people and remembrances and we'll be adding this as a regular feature in our periodic newsletters. If any remembrance was missed, please advise admin@soarraptors.org.

In memory of...

Ruth Vigen
Bruce Van Zee, DVM
Pauline Lee
D18
D14

In honor of...

Mary Jo Osterholm
David Lynch
Decorah Eaglet / D20

What “good” have the donations done this year?

Thanks to our generous supporters we have new freezers and have re-purposed one for storage (!), purchased ‘specialty foods’ for our high-energy patients, added and updated rescue and rehab equipment, have new educational materials, and vehicles have had routine maintenance!

Rehabilitating wild birds takes more ‘stuff’ than many realize! Cocoa mats and long-needed door mats simulate tree bark and help condition the feet of raptors. Vet-wrap has many uses beyond stabilizing broken bones! X-rays, vaccinations, wormers and other medications are sometimes all needed to help a patient recover and move from ICU to a flight pen. Wood shavings, rugs, and carry crates are needed for every living patient. The pressure-sensitive heating mats are used now through spring to help warm patients exposed to the cold too long. Welding gloves, gauntlets, eagle hoods, and jesses are needed for rescue, rehab, and education!

Cleaning supplies are boring but necessary for a clean environment that is crucial for our immune-compromised patients. Table covers, brochure holders, replica raptor parts, Identifier (bird sound player), and handouts are part of our education mission.

Capital improvements

Several flight cages (also called mews) have been needing updates or replacement and we were able to build a new mew for our smaller raptors, but with some versatility! A flight cage for the many kestrels and screech owls that are admitted in the spring and summer now have a new place to stretch out and practice their flight skills. One side of this new building will be the winter home for our education snowy! Of all the birds we care for, he can best handle being outside!

Ways to support...

SOAR relies on and greatly appreciates the donations of talent, time, money, and requested items from



you, our supporters. Without your generosity, SOAR would not exist as it does now. Our goal is to use these given resources wisely to support our mission.

I want to give a special “shout out” to our monthly donors. Thank you for understanding that a nonprofit needs some consistent, sustaining donations. Most of the monthly donations come via PayPal, but a couple folks have set up a ‘bill pay’ through their bank that sends a check monthly around a certain date. Every \$5, \$10, or whatever amount is appropriate for you is important to pay our recurring food, utilities, and maintenance expenses.

In addition, we are constantly on the look-out for other avenues for folks to support SOAR! Besides the [Amazon Wish List](#), you can also choose SOAR as your [Amazon Smile](#) charity and your [GoodSearch](#) charity, and you can share your review about SOAR on the [Great Nonprofits](#) website! (Thank you for the 179 new reviews in 2014 that helped us earn the 2014 Top-Rated Nonprofit designation.)

In addition, SOAR has been enrolled as a participating organization in Thrivent Choice, a donor-directed fund from Thrivent Financial. If you’re an eligible Thrivent Financial member and have [Choice Dollars®](#) available to direct, please keep us in mind.

Don’t forget the [SOAR Store](#) to not only support our mission, but to help spread the word about SOAR!



SOAR - Saving Our Avian Resources
25494 320th St
Dedham, IA 51440

In the works...

Terrie and Linette are working on a package of goodies for members of the Iowa Association of Naturalists and Iowa Conservation Education Coalition to help them teach about lead poisoning in raptors and the subsequent effects on our environment. The goodies will include a PowerPoint with notes, photos, research articles, printable handouts, and some tried-and-true activities adapted for hands-on teaching! There could be more info, too, we'll keep you posted!



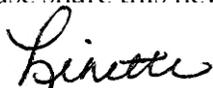
Terrie with Blaze at a 2014 Cornell College program. © Cornell College

To schedule a program

Is your classroom, youth group, service club, or community organization looking for an inspiring and educational program? Invite SOAR educators for a unique educational experience featuring our non-releasable birds of prey – education ambassadors. All SOAR programs stress our mission of raptor rehabilitation, education, and research and are adapted to your specific needs as best we can. Visit the website [education page](#) to learn more about our education programs or email Terrie (educate@soarraptors.org) to discuss dates, content, suggested donation, and education ambassador.

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Linette Bernard, Communications Director

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