



SOAR

saving our avian resources
soarraptors.org



2016 off to a big start!

Rehabilitation highlights

Our village does much!

Many people help SOAR with our mission of rehabilitation, education, and research! In 2015, we admitted 365 sick, injured, or orphaned birds, reached over 10,000 people through 76 events / programs, and completed data collection on 22 bald eagles admitted. Thanks goes out to Deb, Cassie, Tyler, Megan, Vic, Matt W, Marla, Ron H, Matt H, our Conservation Officers, natural resource agency and county conservation staff, plus the concerned citizens that make initial contact. My apologies if we left out someone! Plus, we could not do this without our donors!

Check out the table, right, to see just how much patient numbers have grown over the last four years. Part of the increase in 2015 can be attributed to Cassie, Kay's apprentice rehabilitator, who quickly became known as the water bird "go to" person. As you can imagine, our food bill has gone up year by year also.

Patients

It's "raining babies" right now! So far this year we have admitted hatchling owls (great horned, barred, and screech), a fledgling red-tailed hawk, plus goslings and ducklings. Soon enough we'll admit the first hatchling kestrel of the year.



We have had some unique patients admitted already this year -- a common loon and a western grebe. Very interesting patients to have and very important to put these unique individuals back in the wild. We work with coots and other more common water birds so we have what we need when a rare admit comes in. No out of the ordinary raptor admits yet this year, but we are prepared to handle those, too!

Eagles

Kay is thinking that if eagles were ash trees, then maybe more folks would be involved... there's a lot of ash trees and proactive measures have been taken to prevent or limit the movement of the emerald ash borer that kills ash trees. There are rules, lots of agency public relations materials and information available, and funding...

Our natural resource agencies are charged with being stewards of wildlife and wild places for everyone to enjoy. Wildlife belongs to everyone. In Iowa, where over 90% of the land is privately owned, federal taxpayers foot a large part of the bill for providing wildlife habitat. Public opinion will determine the future of hunting,

| Admits by group | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Buteos | 39 | 49 | 28 | 50 |
| Accipiters | 18 | 17 | 24 | 26 |
| Owls | 48 | 72 | 89 | 122 |
| Vultures | 3 | 2 | 9 | 14 |
| Harriers | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Kites | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Eagles | 23 | 26 | 27 | 22 |
| Falcons | 23 | 24 | 23 | 22 |
| Osprey | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Raptor total | 156 | 192 | 201 | 259 |
| Ducks / geese / swan | 2 | 3 | 8 | 71 |
| Other Water Birds | 3 | 3 | 8 | 12 |
| Songbirds | 4 | 7 | 3 | 13 |
| Others | 1 | 3 | 4 | 10 |
| Non-raptor total | 10 | 16 | 23 | 106 |
| Grand total | 166 | 208 | 224 | 365 |
| Released | 48% | 56% | 60% | 51% |
| Survived (released, transferred) | 55% | 61% | 64% | 55% |
| Mortality (DOA, died, euthanized) | 45% | 39% | 35% | 35% |
| Unresolved | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10% |

not whether or not there are rules made to prevent poisoning wildlife with lead ammunition. Many public surveys show the majority of people support phasing out lead ammunition and its negative impacts on wildlife health.

Poisoned wildlife is very different from wild animals dying from a disease or random, accidental injuries. We understand eagles die in the wild, but when a poison is the cause, it is not acceptable. Wildlife rehabilitation data is a sample of what is causing death in wildlife species, just as emergency room data measures what is causing problems for humans. Seventeen bald eagles have been admitted to-date in 2016; 13 of those eagles had extremely elevated lead levels. Only one of those 13 is still alive. Eagle poisoning deaths are being documented across the country, not just in Iowa. Read more about this in a post on our website.

We wonder why similar proactive steps (like those taken to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer) are not in place to prevent eagles from ingesting lead ammunition.

SOAR programming

SOAR winter and spring programs are all but done and summer programs begin early June. Kay and volunteers have handled bald eagle day celebrations both in and out of Iowa, youth groups, public programs, and school groups large and small from preschoolers up to 8th grade.



We are adapting programs to meet the new Iowa Science Standards. Kay and Thora worked with 8th grade students this spring, investigating the cause of Thora's blindness. Students learned symptoms of trauma and toxins and viewed x-rays and photos. We hope students learned some about

human impacts on earth systems, how to analyze and interpret data, plan and carry out an investigation etc.

SOAR continues to be invited to present at events farther and farther away from our location in Carroll County. We have been humbled to attend programs from the Missouri to the Mississippi. As a result we instituted a mileage fee in addition to our regular suggested program fees. Groups have been most generous and completely understanding. We really appreciate their kindness.

Our fall release party is scheduled for Sunday, 28 August at Dale Valley Vineyard. We hope to have a wonderful turnout again and enjoy some food and fun, live music, and the thrill of letting some gorgeous wild creatures fly free.

To schedule a program

Invite SOAR educators for an unique educational experience featuring our non-releaseable birds of prey as 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 programs or email Terrie (educate@soarraptors.org) to discuss dates, content, suggested donation, mileage fee, and education ambassador availability.

Public events

Visit the SOAR website [events page](#) for public program locations, details, times, and more.



News and notes

GCCF Grant Work complete

The renovation to Cassie's rehabilitation building has been completed thanks to support from a



Guthrie County Community Foundation grant! The building was divided, insulated, and water and gas lines were run from the house to this building!

Thank you to everyone that purchased Home Depot gift cards and sent donations to support this project.

Osprey Sighting

Wildlife restoration is a slow process and success to specific aspects of the projects are difficult to identify. Fortunately, the osprey reintroduction program includes banding the young osprey (SOAR birds have come from Minnesota) with both federal and project bird bands. We know exactly which osprey were banded from which tower in what year. In 2015, we received a confirmed sighting of YU in Woodbury County (a 2011 bird from the Whiterock Conservancy Tower) and of AT in Black Hawk County (a 2006 Whiterock bird).

Board Update

The annual meeting of the SOAR board of directors was held on 25 April 2016. Board positions were voted on and are as follows: Chair, Kathy Hodges; Vice-Chair, Tom Holcomb, DVM; and Treasurer / Secretary, Rosemary Partridge.

Interns

Interns are incredibly important to SOAR operations. They help out with chores, event prep, and maintenance. In addition every intern has an opportunity to learn the natural history, biology, and habitat needs of patients and education ambassadors.



Trevor completed his first year of college at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC). His plans include a second year at DMACC and then on to Iowa State University for coursework in the Natural Resource Ecology and Management department.

Caitlin has finished her sophomore year at Coon Rapids High School. Caitlin is active in FFA and recently got her drivers license! She's a pro at cleaning and even better... she got a young barred owl to eat!



Kristina is a student at Buena Vista University and completed a January Term internship at SOAR and Whiterock Conservancy.

Donations

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. SOAR uses these given resources wisely to support our mission.

In memory of...

Bob Anderson
William Barlow
Warren & Dorothy Knowles "who taught me to appreciate the natural world"
Richard R. Hansen
Jerry Cross (Toolesboro Tom)
Lisa Burt

In honor of...

A.I.T. Decorah
Decorah's rescue
Mary Jo Osterholm
The three healthy 2015 Decorah eaglets
Dave & Lois Morse, Roger & Linette Bernard, and Kevin & Sara Paar

If any remembrance was missed, please advise admin@soarraptors.org.

Support SOAR...

- ❖ Visit our [Amazon Wish List](#)
- ❖ Mark SOAR as your [Amazon Smile](#) charity
- ❖ Shop the [SOAR Store](#)
- ❖ Write a review for SOAR on the [Great Nonprofits](#) website
- ❖ Become a [monthly donor](#)
- ❖ Check with your employer or investment manager about matching gift programs or donor-advised funds.

In the works...

Eagles and Lead Data

Iowa wildlife rehabilitators with state and federal permits for rehabilitating bald eagles have collected 11 years of data from admitted patients on impact of lead. SOAR recently worked with an Iowa State University veterinary intern and graduate student in statistics to prepare a research paper. The research paper was submitted to the Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management. We will keep you posted!

Decorah's new digs

Renovations are extensive and in progress. One wall of the 10' x 20' room needs insulated. That must be done from inside the next flight room.

The 10' x 15' weathering area needs added. This chain-link enclosure will have a roof and hardware cloth on the ground covered with pea rock.

Thanks to all of you that helped us with donations to get us this far! We still need to purchase more steel, insulation, chain-link, hardware cloth, and pea rock! Your donations will greatly help us complete this project.

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

Save the date!

Please put Sunday, 28 August, 2:00-5:00 p.m. on your calendar for our annual release party. The location will be the Dale Valley Vineyard, same place as last year. Watch the website and Facebook for more details!

Thanks for your support!

Please share this newsletter with others and tell them about our website. Please "like" our Facebook page.



Linette Bernard,
Communications Director



Save the Date!
August 28, 2016
Fall Release Celebration!
Dale Valley Vineyard
3097 285th St • Stuart, Iowa
2:00-5:00 p.m.
Raptor Releases • Music by The Irregulars
Education Ambassadors

SOAR
saving our avian resources
soarraptors.org

Please help us keep our database current! If you received multiple copies or would prefer to receive this newsletter in another way, please email Linette at admin@soarraptors.org and tell her your preferred and / or correct address.