

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings RRF members,

First let me start by thanking our out-going Directors whose terms ended on December 31st 2012. These individuals have provided their expertise, time and energy over the last three years to ensure that our organisation keeps moving in the right direction. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Marc Ruddock (Director At Large Outside North America), Gary Santolo (North American Director #2), Torgeir Nygard (Director At Large #5) and Clint Boal (Director At Large #2). Our in-coming Directors began their three-year terms on January 1st 2013: Jemima Parry-Jones (Director At Large Outside North America), Gerald Niemi (North American Director #2), Torgeir Nygard (re-elected Director At Large #5) and Jim Bednarz (Director At Large #2).

As many of you will know, we have a regular turnover of Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs. I consider this to be a very healthy process that results in a vibrant and effective organisation. I'm involved with several other organisations that don't insist on a frequent turnover in leadership and the difference is tangible. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing but admiration for those who dedicate 30+ years of their lives to volunteering (usually receiving little but criticism in return), but the need for fresh blood, ideas and enthusiasm is essential, and our organisation thrives on it.

With this in mind, I'm very happy to be standing down as President at the close of our 2013 conference. I've survived for almost ten years on the Board, six as a Director and four as President. That's plenty for me, and probably for you, too! Last summer you voted to elect Clint Boal as your new President and I couldn't be happier with your choice. He knows our operating procedures well, having just completed two consecutive terms as a Director, and ever since his election as President-Elect last summer we have been working closely together to ensure he can hit the ground running in October. Clint is someone you can rely on. I know this because I've relied upon him during several 'crises' during my presidency and I now consider him as more than a colleague – he's become a trusted friend. So much so that I almost feel sorry for him, knowing what he's stepping in to (!) but I have no doubt that his calm and thoughtful approach will stand him, and RRF, in good stead.

I suppose it's normal at this stage to enter a reflective period, to review successes as well as failures, but I'll probably save that for my final Wingspan in September. One thing I do want to mention here though is something that the Board committed to a few years ago: to hold our annual conference away from North America at least once every four years. That was an important step forward, not just for RRF but for me personally, and I can't tell you how pleased I am to see that this year's annual conference will be held in Argentina, exactly four years after the Scotland conference. To me, this



single change defines RRF's future and I'm immensely proud to have been part of that decision-making team.

I hope as many of you as possible will make it to Bariloche in October – it looks set to be a classic.

Best, Ruth



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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).

Editor's Note – Thanks to the following contributors for this issue of the *Wingspan*: Karla Bloem, Clint Boal, Travis Booms, Laurie Goodrich, Gene Jacobs, Jemima Parry-Jones, Miguel Saggese, S.G. Surmach, Luis Tapia, Ruth Tingay, and 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. If you are submitting photos, please include them within the Word doc with a caption and photo credit. Contribution deadline for the next issue is **15 August 2013**.

All issues of *Wingspan* and content guidelines are available at:

<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/publications/wingspan-newsletter/online-newsletters-pdfs>

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2013 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



Raptor Research Foundation Annual Conference 2013 III Neotropical Raptor Network Conference WWGBP VII International Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls 21-24 October

Greetings! Bariloche is ready to receive delegates from around the world for the **I Worldwide Raptor Conference**, probably the most important raptor meeting ever held! For the first time, a joint conference between the Raptor Research Foundation, the Neotropical Raptor Network (The Peregrine Fund) and the World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls will take place in South America. A perfect mixture of wild nature and cultural heritage awaits you, so mark your calendars now and we will ensure that you experience all the wonders the city of San Carlos de Bariloche, Patagonia, and Argentina have to offer. This international meeting will be held 21-24 October 2013 in the heart of Nahuel Huapi National Park, Bariloche City, Rio Negro province, Argentina. The conference will be hosted by the Universidad Nacional del Comahue – INIBIOMA/CONICET, Bariloche, Argentina.

San Carlos de Bariloche, usually known as Bariloche, is a city in the province of Río Negro, Argentina, situated in the foothills of the Andes on the southern shores of Nahuel Huapi lake and is surrounded by the Nahuel Huapi National Park. Bariloche is a major tourism center with ski, trekking and mountaineering facilities apart from numerous restaurants, cafés, Native American (Mapuche nation) crafts and chocolate shops. The city has a permanent population of 108,205 according to the 2010 census. This is early spring season and an excellent time of the year for birding, as many southern migrants are returning from their wintering areas in central Argentina. Please visit the [Conference Location](#) link for more information about Bariloche.

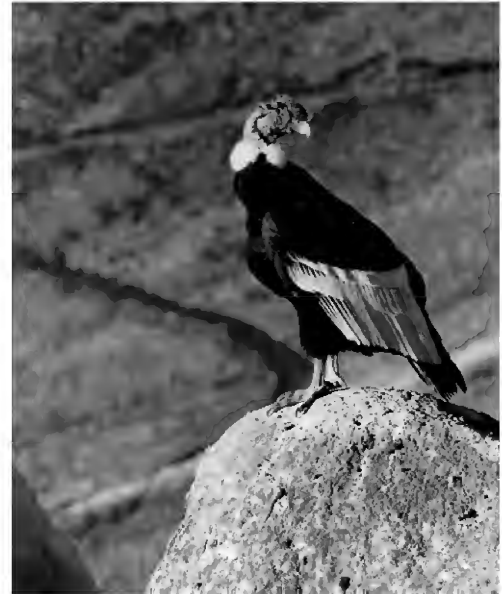


We launched on line registration just a few weeks ago and **spots are filling up at a very fast pace. You do not want to miss this unique event so act now!** Register at the conference Web Site [Conference Registration](#) before is too late. We have already attendants coming from **USA, Canada, Peru, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Australia, Spain, Norway, United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan**, and the list keeps growing! For logistical reasons the registration for this conference is limited to 300 delegates, so early booking is advisable. **Please, remember the Early Registration Deadline is May 31 2013.** The extended registration deadline is July 15 2013, but at this rate we expect to have all the places filled up before the early deadline.

In addition to the preconference workshops, [Field Trips](#) and the possibility to experience amazing Patagonian landscapes and observe and photograph a wide catalogue of wildlife (yes, raptors in the area are aware of the conference and already waiting for you!) we are planning many other events to offer you the best experience ever. We will have several plenary and key-note speakers, special evening events and early morning bird watching short trips along the Nahuel Huapi lake shore and surrounding areas. Recently we have inaugurated the [Conference News](#) section, please, visit this site periodically for the most current news and updates, we will be announcing the confirmed speakers in a few weeks and updates will be uploaded monthly.

WORKSHOPS will be conducted before the conference begins, on Sunday, October 20th. Pre-conference activities are optional and are not included in the conference registration fee. For a detailed list of workshops please visit the [Workshops](#), a complete list and registration details will be available in March. SYMPOSIA will be held during the main dates of the conference. If you want to propose a specific symposium please contact us at bariloheraptors2013@gmail.com as soon as possible!

We recommend all delegates seek lodging in the Hotel Panamericano Bariloche. This helps the organizers defray costs of the conference, registration fees and also contribute to registration awards for Latin American students. Reservations should be made with the hotel using the form provided at the conference [Lodging and Travel](#) site and not through the hotel online reservation system. The hotel manager will respond by email and confirm your reservation as soon as possible. Furthermore, the local committee will gladly answer any questions you may have about attending the conference, lodging options, travel, etc so please do not hesitate to contact us at bariloheraptors2013@gmail.com. We want to make your visit to Bariloche and your attendance to this conference a life-long memorable and enjoyable event!



Mingling with raptor people from all around the world, delicious food, amazing landscapes, exotic habitats, an exciting scientific program and of course raptors you may have never seen before...what else can you ask for?

We look forward to meeting you in Bariloche!



News from the RRF

RRF Nominations Committee Submitted by Laurie Goodrich

The Raptor Research Foundation Seeks Your Help

The Raptor Research Foundation is a relatively small society of researchers worldwide that have a passion for raptors. One of the nice things about being a small society is that it is easy to become involved, get to know your fellow researchers, and take part in shaping the direction of RRF. One way to do this is to serve on committees. Check the website for information on committees and their activities. Another way to become involved is to serve on the RRF Board of Directors.

We are currently seeking RRF members with an interest in serving on the Board of Directors beginning in January 2014. Whether you are a student or experienced researcher your energy, enthusiasm, and interest in being involved in the organization are ALL that is needed! We have four Director positions to be elected in fall 2013: (1) a North American director position, (2) a Southern Hemisphere director position, and (3 and 4) two at-large positions with no geographic restrictions (i.e., can be from any country).

Directors interact through quarterly e-meetings to discuss and vote through email on items of business. Most of them serve on a committee to assist the society with various tasks, and they attend the annual face-to-face board meetings when it is feasible. If you would like to add your name to the ballot or if you have suggestions for possible nominees for RRF Director positions, contact me, Laurie Goodrich, RRF Nominations Committee Chair, before April 30. Do not be shy about volunteering, RRF is inviting your participation! Call or email any questions or nominations to, Laurie Goodrich, goodrich@hawkmtn.org<<mailto:goodrich@hawkmtn.org>> or 570-943-3411 x106. I look forward to hearing from you!

The William C. Andersen Memorial Award Special Session
Submitted by Clint Boal, Andersen Award Subcommittee Chair

The William C. Andersen Memorial Award is an annual award presented in memory of Dr. Bill Andersen. He was a strong supporter of the RRF and a number of students accompanied him to each of the annual meetings. His enthusiasm, sincerity, and humor sparked an interest in raptors among many of his students and associates. In his memory, the RRF presents awards for the best student oral and poster presentation at the annual RRF meeting. Papers and posters submitted for this competition are evaluated by a subcommittee of judges and the recipients of the award are recognized at the meeting banquet.

In addition to submission of normal abstracts, students interested in competing in the oral presentations competition must also submit an additional, extended abstract to the Andersen Award Committee. To be included in the competition, the paper cannot be part of an organized symposium at the meeting. The extended abstract should be a maximum of 3 pages double spaced, in JRR format. The purpose is to provide a clear background/context for the study, methods used, results, and relevancy of findings. The Andersen Committee will judge the extended abstracts for quality; the highest ranked abstracts will be accepted for the next stage of the competition, and will be presented together in the Andersen Student Presentation Award Session. This session is a showcase of the best research being conducted by student members of RRF, and is a truly special session at the meetings.

2013 Early Career Raptor Researcher Skills Workshop in Bariloche!
Submitted by Travis Booms

The RRF Early Career Raptor Researcher (ECRR) Committee will host an ECRR workshop on Sunday, Oct. 20, 2013 in conjunction with the conference in Bariloche, Argentina! Like the previous workshops in Duluth (see photos below), this event will focus on hands-on learning about current raptor research techniques and will occur the day before the conference. Although course details are still being finalized, students and early career professionals will have the opportunity to enroll in a variety of classes taught by leading experts in the field who donate their time and share their expertise with RRF's ECRRs. These courses are a rare opportunity to learn research techniques first-hand from the best of the best in a small group environment. Likely courses include safely accessing raptor nests, harnessing raptors with transmitters, auxiliary marking, trapping, biomedical techniques, and spatial modeling.

Online workshop registration at the conference website will open in April after workshop details have been finalized. ECRRs (students and those who have graduated within the past three years) will be given priority and asked to register through the summer. If space remains, we will open registration to all other interested parties in early September. A small fee of \$10 per course will be charged to help offset workshop costs. If interested, plan to arrive in Bariloche on Saturday, Oct. 19th, the day before the workshop and reserve lodging as needed. Most courses will be within walking distance of the conference venue, however bus transportation to/from the conference venue will be provided for any courses that are not within walking distance.

To learn more, please see the conference workshop webpage

(<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/current-conference/symposia>) OR contact the ECRR Committee Chair: Travis Booms (travis.booms@alaska.gov) OR email rnf-early-career-raptor-researchers@googlegroups.com.



Left: Brian Millsap instructing students how to properly harness a raptor with a radio transmitter.



Right: Wayne Nelson demonstrating marking and handling techniques on a raptor carcass in Duluth.



Left: Irene Bueno instructing students on proper necropsy techniques.



Right: Jason Smyth teaching a course on preparing raptor study skins from carcasses.

Raptor News

The International Centre for Birds of Prey

Submitted by Jemima Parry-Jones

After the wettest year on record last year, when normally we would get about 28 inches of rain and we had over 50, we moved into 2013 on a cold note. January started with snow and ice, however that did not deter the birds here and the breeding season started early with all but one species. Our Curator left just before Christmas so as he was in charge of the breeding, Holly Cale stepped up to the plate. We sent her to an incubation course at Houston Zoo run by Susie Kasielke from LA Zoo, Susie then kindly took her back to LA as they have birds hatching early and so Holly was able to do some hands on experience there before coming back to the cold here!

We have a pair of Grey Buzzard Eagles (*Geranoaetus melanoleucus*) (they have many other common names) who apparently believe they are chickens, we can't seem to stop them breeding, they produced three clutches of two young last year and have eggs hatching in the incubators as I write! The Steller's Sea Eagles (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*) have laid three weeks early, the African Fish Eagle has one egg (*Haliaeetus vocifer*), she reared one of our Tawny Eagles (*Aquila vindhiana*) last year so we are double clutching her this year. The Verreaux's Eagles (*Aquila verreauxii*) have just laid their first egg and three pairs of owls are on eggs as well. So Holly is going to get her experience very quickly here.



We re-opened to the public on February 1st and now remain open until the end of November, so hopefully this year the weather will be better and increase the visitor numbers back to where we were. So not only are we dealing with the breeding season, but also flying birds and educating our visitors, dealing with winter weather and training new staff members.

One of the things that we like to achieve here is research, we find it very valuable to be able to utilise the birds for research as long as the process is non-invasive and does not hurt the birds and the

reason for the research is valuable in the long term, either for captive birds or wild populations. In the last few months we have had some interesting projects in the last couple of months.

Just before Christmas we had a student ask for help, he is studying whether or not 'eyespot' markings on butterfly and moth wings genuinely do imitate bird of prey eyes or just act as strong signals which small birds are adverse to from startle effects or 'neophobia'. Currently there is a lot of evidence that eyespots are adaptive in reducing attack rates by birds but most recent evidence points to this being due to conspicuousness of the signal rather than eye mimicry. The first part of his study involves collating categories of images of non-predator eyes, raptor eyes, eyespots, and artificial eyespots used in previous experiments. A computer learning algorithm is then used to recognise raptor eyes this can then be used to give an unbiased rating of 'eye-likeness' by using the rate of miss classifications of eyespots as raptor eyes.

The second half of the study uses triangular cardboard fake moth targets with a (dead) mealworm reward. The fake moths are marked with eyespots. If survival analysis shows that survival is correlated with the degree of eye-likeness this should support the raptor eye mimicry hypothesis. It's very interesting work and easy for us to help out with.



The next one was a chap who does thermal imaging, with a very expensive thermal imaging camera. He lives close by and these cameras are mainly used on horses for diagnostic purposes. However he wanted to do some photography with our birds. He arrived and started to take photos of some of the birds. We have an injured Barn Owl in that someone had lost and it had been caught up by one leg in a branch. I suspect it had been out for at least three to four days, as it was close to death. We treated it and it recovered and showed absolutely no signs of any problems with its leg, but when a photo was taken the joint showed heat. He also took photos of our Yellow Billed Kite, and the Ural Owl, the Ural Owl showed almost no heat loss over its body, the Kite showed a ton. This for us was really interesting because we need to be aware which birds need extra shelter and heat in the winter months. Much of it is common sense, but it was really good to see visually. Even better Jon thought that we might be able to use the camera on birds that had been wearing a GPS body harness to see if there were signs of injury or physical stress on its body. All good information and great to be involved with. So we are looking forward to a good year and much in the way of research projects to keep us interested.

Photo credit www.veterinary-thermal-imaging.com

OWL FESTIVAL WINNERS SPAN FOUR CONTINENTS

Submitted by Karla Bloem

Wildlife species know no borders, and this year's award winners at the 11th Annual International Festival of Owls in Houston, Minn., reflect that global outlook. The top award winner in the World Owl Hall of Fame – the Champion of Owls -- is a zoologist from Bavaria. Two Special Achievement Award winners are a professor of vertebrate zoology from Argentina and an ornithologist in Taiwan. And the fourth award winner is a Kenyan owl named Bundi.

Wolfgang Scherzinger, the author of "Die Eulen Europas," one of the best books written on European owls, was named Champion of Owls. Scherzinger served as zoologist in Germany's Bavarian Forest National Park for three dozen years, during which he completed field research in birds and animals and helped reintroduce two owl species into the wild. Dr. Scherzinger received the award and delivered the keynote address at the festival's awards banquet March 2.

Dr. Ana Trejo, professor of vertebrate zoology at the University of Comahue in Bariloche, Argentina, is one winner of a Special Achievement Award to be presented at the owl festival, March 1-3. She has researched the role that owls play in the control of hantavirus, a relatively new virus that can lead to death in humans. The virus is carried on rodent waste, and owls are significant predators of mice. Dr. Trejo also helped write a children's TV nature program on owls. The second winner of a Special Achievement Award also has a link to educational TV. Dr. Lucia Liu Severinghaus produced a film titled "Du-Du Wu: The Story of the Lanyu Scops Owl," which was picked up by the National Geographic Channel and shown throughout Asia and Taiwan. Dr. Severinghaus was a research fellow at Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, studying owls from 1983 to 2010.

Bundi, a Verreaux's eagle owl, is the winner of the Hall of Fame's 2013 "Lady Gray" Award," given to an owl that has made the world a better place for owls. Bundi helped a central Kenyan ornithologist dispel local people's distrust of owls, thought to bring disaster. Since Bundi has since been released back into the wild, his award will be collected by Francis Atanasio Kithure, the teacher with whom he lived while being rehabilitated. Kithure was warned not to take the bird into his home in early 2010, but Bundi soon became a local favorite because he was so friendly, and because none of the predicted bad luck actually occurred.

The Houston, Minn., owl festival – the only full-weekend, all-owl event in North America – celebrates the hatch day of Alice, a Great Horned Owl who works at the Houston Nature Center under the tutelage of Karla Bloem, center director and festival organizer. The festival included a variety of family-friendly activities. The World Owl Hall of Fame is sponsored by the International Festival of Owls, the Global Owl Project, Bob Kierlin and Mary Burrichter, the James and Judy Sloan Foundation, and Tanja Sova. More information is available at www.festivalofowls.com.



**Recovery of Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaëtos*) in the Natural Park
Baixa-Limia Serra do Xurés (Galicia, NW Spain)**

Submitted by Alberto Gil, Miguel A. Fernández-Martínez, Ernesto Álvarez,
Manuel Galán, Fernando Gonzalez , and Luis Tapia

The Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaëtos*) is among the most threatened species of vertebrates in Galicia (NW Spain) and is in need of a recovery plan to ensure its conservation in the region. Environmental protection policies adopted in the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve-Xurés Gerês, which includes the Natural Park Serra do Xurés Baixa-Limia (Galicia) and the National Park Peneda-Gerês (Portugal), allowed mitigation of the environmental threats to the Golden Eagle's survival (hunting, plundering of nests, poison, human disturbance, reforestation, etc). Such environmental improvement, together with positive attitude of the local population, allowed the Directorate General of Nature Conservation (Government of Galicia), in collaboration with GREFA (Group for Rehabilitation Native Fauna) and ECOPLANIN (Xestión and Environmental Information SL), to undertake a population reinforcement program. The main objective of this program was to establish a minimum viable population in Gerês-Xurés which would contribute to the recovery of the species in other areas in Galicia.



The first actions started between 2001-2007, with the release of 7 individuals, which was concomitant with population and potentially suitable habitat studies carried out at the Department of Zoology, University of Santiago de Compostela (USC). In 2008-2012, 17 captive bred fledglings from GREFA were released using the hacking method. Each of these individuals was equipped with an Argos-GPS system and VHF transmitters. These techniques provided data about space use, dispersion, response to supplementary feeding, mortality

and return rates. The conservation program was complemented with conservation awareness campaigns, focused mainly on the local population (primary schools, hunter associations, mountain communities, tourism, etc). Other corrective measures, such as modification of dangerous power lines (collaboration with Gas Natural-Unión Fenosa), fight against the use of poisons or specific habitat improvements, have been adopted to minimize direct mortality, increase the survival of the released individuals at an early stage of dispersion, and to promote their philopatry.



Efforts to Illegally Export Gyrfalcons from Russia Continue

Submitted by Sergey Surmach and Amur-Ussuri

Efforts by law enforcement in the Russian Far East to counter illegal trade of endangered bird species have increased in recent years, and have yielded some results. Since the opening of Vladivostok's new international airport in July 2012, several attempts to smuggle Gyrfalcons from the Kamchatka Peninsula to central Russia and on to the Middle East have been uncovered and prevented. The latest incident occurred in December 2012, when two groups of birds were confiscated (numbering six and eight individuals, respectively). The first group arrived in Vladivostok on a cargo flight, and the second group apparently arrived in the city by sea, with the intention of then transporting them on to the Siberian city of Novosibirsk by air. According to Y.G. Lobkov a further 78 Gyrfaclons illegally removed from the wild were seized directly in Kamchatka in 2012.

This situation has exposed two serious problems that complicate the fight against poaching. The first problem lies in the field of environmental law. Unfortunately, the current law regarding illegal animal trafficking is not strict enough, and the punishments are inadequate. The maximum fine is much lower than the potential gains from the sale of these birds, and actually bringing offenders to justice is possible only in cases of proven inhumane treatment.

The second problem concerns the fate of confiscated birds. There is not a single raptor rehabilitation center in the entire Russian Far East where birds can be brought for rehabilitation and subsequent release while investigations are conducted. Furthermore, there are no specific protocols or regulations for handling confiscated birds, nor are there any standardized methods for rehabilitation and release. Because of these ambiguities, each case is treated differently, with some birds being released immediately near the seizure site, and others moved to zoos with no prospect of release back into the wild. As a direct result of this lack of infrastructure and handling inexperience, six of the recently-confiscated 14 Gryfalcons died within the first two days of seizure.

The physical condition of the recently-confiscated Gyrfalcons in Vladivostok dictated long-term rehabilitation. All individuals were emaciated, some had injuries to their talons and beaks, and one Gyrfalcons had many broken tail feathers. A trial release of one individual was made on January 17, 2013 in southern Primorye, which is within this species' winter range. The fate of this released bird is unknown. Seven other Gyrfalcons (6 females and 1 male) are being prepared for release by specialists at the Vladivostok-based NGO Amur-Ussuri Centre for Avian Biodiversity, with financial support from the World Wildlife Fund's Far Eastern branch.

Anatolii Yanchenko (L) and Sergei Surmach (R) with Gryfalcons seized by Customs officials at Vladivostok International Airport, Russia, en route to international markets. This garage was converted to a makeshift rehabilitation center. Photograph (c) Amur-Ussuri Centre for Avian Biodiversity.



News from the Peregrine Fund

Submitted by Susan Whaley

Climate change could increase the Sokoke Scops Owl's trend toward extinction, according to Peregrine Fund study

Predicted climate changes increase the possibility that the endangered Sokoke Scops Owl will become extinct, according to a study by The Peregrine Fund. The Sokoke Scops Owl currently survives in Africa in two or three small, isolated pockets of forest in coastal Kenya and northeastern Tanzania. The tiny, reclusive owl has retreated to these undisturbed areas as people have cleared the forest to establish farms and villages. Computer models and research data predict that the species will move to more suitable habitat until it finally runs out in 2080. Conservation will require close monitoring and possibly active intervention, such as reforestation, habitat restoration, designation of new protected areas, and re-location to more suitable areas.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8660426>

Peregrine Fund study shows that the ban on toxic veterinary drug diclofenac is effective in addressing Asian vulture crisis

The number of critically endangered Long-billed Vultures in Pakistan is beginning to recover, thanks to a ban on the use of diclofenac, a veterinary drug that is toxic to vultures, according to a study by The Peregrine Fund showing the first evidence of a population increase. Before the 2006 ban, vulture populations in Pakistan, India, and Nepal had dropped by up to 99%. Diclofenac, then a new drug in the veterinary market, was widely used to treat ailing cattle and other livestock, but vultures began dying by the thousands. By 2008, breeding populations of the Long-billed Vulture at the study sites in Pakistan had increased by up to 52% of their lowest numbers, the study shows. The Peregrine Fund discovered in 2003 that diclofenac was responsible for the catastrophic collapse of vulture populations throughout South Asia.



<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8776877>

Director of Peregrine Fund's condor field operations honored by Arizona Game and Fish Commission

Chris Parish, who leads The Peregrine Fund's condor recovery project in Arizona, was been named Natural Resource Professional of the Year by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. Parish received the award at the commission's annual banquet on January 12. The department annually honors individuals and organizations for their contributions to Arizona's wildlife resources. "Chris is one of those unique individuals who can pull diverse groups of people together through education and a sincere dedication to building trust and lasting relationships," Commission Chairman Norm Freeman said. "Because of Chris and his unique blend of talents, Arizona's California Condor recovery project is one of the most successful endangered species reintroductions I have ever witnessed."

<http://www.peregrinefund.org/news-release/254>

ANNOUNCEMENTS and BRIEF NEWS ITEMS

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.

Announcements

Raptor Counters Wanted; Batumi Raptor Count (Republic of Georgia)

Batumi Raptor Count is seeking volunteer raptor counters to help conduct its sixth annual raptor survey of the Batumi Bottleneck along the southeastern edge of the Black Sea in the Republic of Georgia from 17 August until 16 October 2013. This is one of the best places in the world to see autumn raptor migrations. Counters should be motivated by a strong interest in raptors (or bird migration in general), speak good basic English, can focus foremost on counting migrants in a standardized manner and adhering to count protocols, and can avail themselves for a minimum of two weeks to assist with the count. Volunteer accommodation (including meals) is offered in a comfortable homestay for approximately 10 EUR (13 USD) per day. We'll begin accepting applications on our website 1 March 2013, and all applications must be submitted by 15 April 2013. We also offer economical options for birdwatchers wanting to witness the migration here on their own schedule without the necessary commitment to the count that we expect of volunteers. For more information, please visit the BRC website (<http://www.batumiraptorcount.org/>).

Raptor Workshop: Accredited through University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

Attend one of our 5-day workshops entitled "Introduction to Raptor Field Techniques" will be held in Stevens Point, WI by Eugene Jacobs of the Linwood Springs Research Station. Summer Session: 3-7 June, 2013. Fall Sessions: 26-30 August, 16-20 September, and 7-11 October 2013. Receive first-hand experience working with: live raptors, capturing, handling, banding techniques, broadcast call surveys, tree climbing, rappelling, blood sampling and more. Cost is \$435 and space is limited, so register early. For more information and a registration form visit <http://www.RaptorResearch.com>.

The Southeastern American Kestrel Partnership is a collaboration between Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) biologists, land managers, and the public to build, install, and monitor Southeastern American Kestrel nest boxes. The Partnership was started in 2009 by FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and has now grown to more than 500 nest boxes in 16 counties in north and central Florida. We are looking for additional collaborators and partners in peninsular

Florida and southern Georgia to aid in the recovery of this threatened species. Sources of nest boxes or materials for nest boxes are welcomed. Please contact Karl E. Miller (karl.miller@myfwc.com) 352-334-4215 for more information.

Raptor Literature

SORA Users -- We are very pleased to officially announce the launch of the new, upgraded Searchable Ornithological Research Archive (SORA). The new URL to the site is **sora.unm.edu**. SORA has been moved to a new platform that will allow the resource to grow and expand over time. Many of the SORA journal titles have been updated with additional articles, and a new ornithological title has been added to the site. Please note that you **do not** need a user account to search, browse or download SORA articles. User accounts are an optional feature that provides added benefits, however SORA remains a free and open access scientific repository.

All of these improvements have been needed for some time, and the UNM Libraries SORA team appreciates your collective patience; it has taken over a year to convert the entire SORA article holdings and prepare the new site for production. A number of ongoing improvements are still in the works for 2013, and as with any major system upgrade, there are a countless number of small details that still require attention. If you have trouble with any of the new features or notice a fix that needs to be made, please send the SORA team an email using the CONTACT US link on the SORA top menu bar. A summary of SORA's new features and guidance on how to use them can be found on in the Help section of the site (click the HELP link on the top menu bar). If you need immediate assistance or have questions about the site, please email me at kevco@unm.edu. - Kevin Comerford

NEWS of RRF MEMBERS

RRF member Brian W. Smith recently moved from the Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture Coordinator's position to become the USFWS Mountain-Prairie Region Migratory Bird Management Program's Deputy Chief. New contact information: brian_w_smith@fws.gov or 303-236-4403.



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