



HawkWatch International
Share with Wildlife
Final Report
May 1, 2008

Project description.

Share with Wildlife awarded a contract to HawkWatch International (HWI) for 2007-2008, with the purpose of creating the Raptors and the Rio program, an education program with the objective to raise awareness of threats to the river and wildlife habitat using the charismatic theme of raptors. HWI worked with New Mexico information and education center managers and the New Mexico Game and Fish to determine conservation messages for educational programs relating to New Mexico Species of Greatest Conservation Need and the ecology of wildlife in the Rio Grande watershed. HWI offered the program, at no charge, to New Mexico State Parks and other Rio Grande conservation-related organizations. HWI PR staff developed a small printed piece for distribution at this program, with the objective of getting audiences to notice the raptors in their area, and to consider raptors' needs as they make large and small decisions with potential ecological impacts. The printed piece is attached to this report as an Adobe Acrobat file.

Sample programs.

The HWI Education Director created and performed the first Raptors and the Rio program for the open house at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge. In program evaluations, audiences were generally positive, but suggested that better photographs might be appropriate in the presentation. The educator revised the PowerPoint with better quality photographs for future presentations.

Program performances.

The goal was to perform 40 educational programs this year. At the time of this report, 24 programs were presented for approximately 600 people with 15 scheduled programs left to present. This will result in 39 programs and a total audience of approximately 900 people.

Date	Program Location	Programs	Attendance	Age Group
10/2007	Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge	1	30	Mixed
11/17/2007	Festival of the Cranes	1	25	Mixed
12/10/2007	Randall Davey Audubon Center/ Cesar Chavez Elem	2	40	2nd gr
12/13/2007	Randall Davey Audubon Center/ Cesar Chavez Elem	2	50	3rd gr
12/14/2007	Randall Davey Audubon Center/ Cesar Chavez Elem	2	55	3rd gr
1/8/2008	Randall Davey Audubon Center	3	65	Mixed
1/9/2008	Randall Davey Audubon Center	2	47	3rd gr
1/10/2008	Randall Davey Audubon Center	2	41	3rd gr
1/11/2008	Randall Davey Audubon Center	2	56	2nd gr
2/15/2008	Las Cruces Library	1	20	Mixed
2/23/2008	Oasis State Park	2	35	Mixed
3/15/2008	Oliver Lee Memorial State Park	1	30	Adults
3/29/2008	Rio Grande Nature Center	1	32	Mixed
4/5/2008	Storrie Lake State park	2	74	Mixed
	Totals	24	600	

The ongoing program schedule is as follows:

Date	Place	Time	Number of Programs
3-May	Coyote Creek State Park	4:00 pm	1
17-May	Fenton Lake State Park	11:30, 6:00 pm	2
31-May	Brantley Lake State	TBD	1
7-Jun	Elephant Butte State Park	12:00 pm	1
13-June	Eagle Nest State Park	TBD	1
13-Jun	Cimarron Canyon State Park	6:30 pm	1
18-Jun	Belen Public Library	2:00 pm	1
21-Jun	Heron Lake State Park	TBD	1
28-Jun	Ute and Conchas Lake SP	TBD	2
2-Jul	Los Lunas Public library	10:00 am	1
8-Jul	Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park	1:00 pm	1
13-Jul	Mesilla Valley SP	10:00 am	1
13-Jul	Las Cruces Natural History Museum	1:00 pm	1
22-August	Fenton Lake State Park	10:00 am	1

Program evaluation.

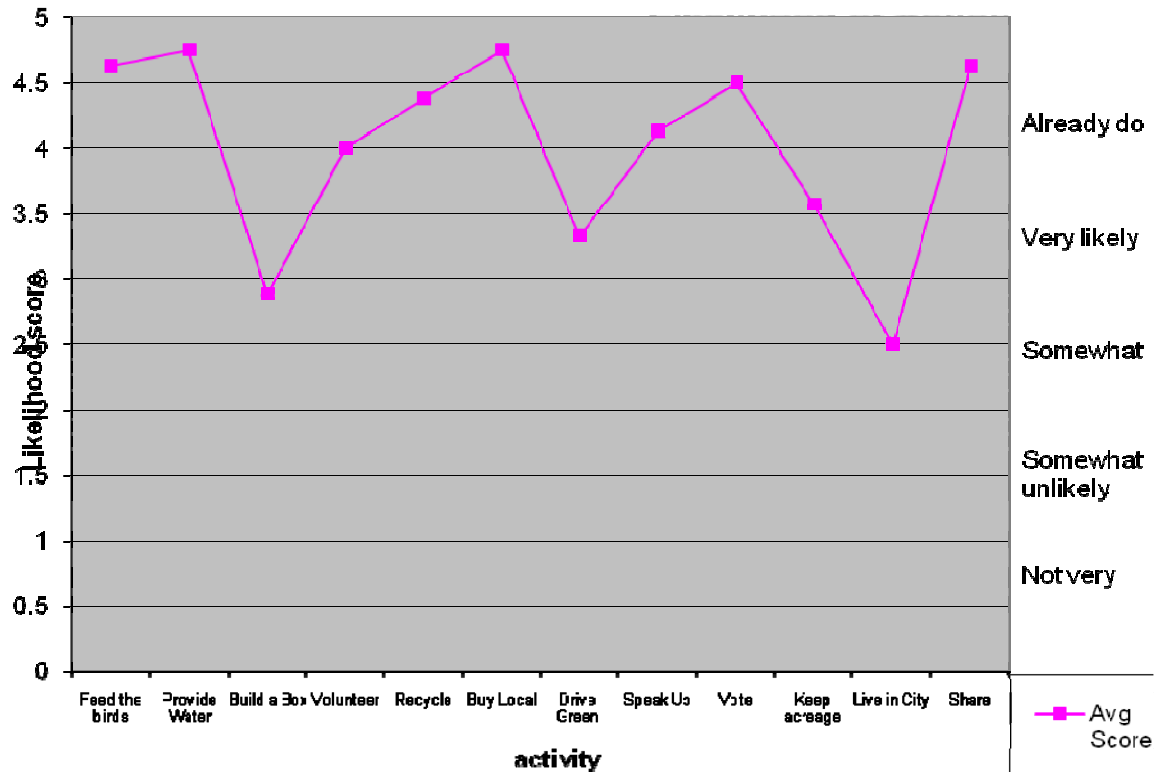
The State Parks have been wonderful to work with and support the program. The live bird aspect of our program is especially interesting to them. The presenter gathered audience opinions using an evaluation form (attached). The form sought feedback on the printed brochure, determining the perceived feasibility of these actions for regular citizens. There are only 8 evaluation responses to date, so we can't really tell if this has statistically significant meaning. With more evaluative data, we will be able to get a better idea of what is going on.

One thing that does seem evident is that most of the respondents, in their opinion, already do many of the actions suggested in the flier, or feel that it is somewhat likely that they would perform these actions. This could be due to three things: they are lying, they are truthful and there really is no habitat-sharing issue, or they don't understand what is meant by the suggested item. Many of the suggested actions are considered socially desirable, and respondents would not want to admit to the evaluator (an environmental group) that they are being irresponsible. It would be interesting to redesign the evaluation form to determine whether audiences are giving truthful answers, or giving what they feel is socially desirable information. This could be done using a "lie scale," frequently associated with gathering this kind of data. The ceiling effect might also be due to a misunderstanding of what the request means. For example, what is meant by recycling? Perhaps we should have a stronger message about what recycling means, and what needs to happen prior to recycling.

Data were also collected about reading ease, and the look and feel of the document. These indicated that the background of the inner section was too busy, the fonts were readable, but one respondent indicated that headings should be larger. They found the photos appropriate, but didn't find it entertaining. Overall, the response to the feel of the brochure was positive.

If the purpose of the flier is to make people feel good that they are already making a difference, mission accomplished. If it is to encourage people to look at what they do and make decisions, we can't tell from these data if that has occurred. Our wish was to make people think, so we may redesign the brochure, with the easy actions removed, leaving only the actions that people found less likely to perform. We would then want to work to facilitate getting people to try these actions, perhaps by hosting public events with these specific outcomes in mind.

Likelihood of Action



The form also evaluated the program itself, including the presenter’s ability and the program’s efficacy, entertainment value, etc. Audiences found the program informative and entertaining, especially enjoying the live bird aspect of the program. They were asked to comment on what they now feel differently about, what surprised them, and what they would keep or change about the program.

Feel differently about: raptors have a role and are heralds of problems in the environment, we can do things to help raptors, there is a lot to do.

Surprises: New terms like dewatering, jetty jacks, recycling is at the end of a process, not a bird program but a “we’re all connected” program, so few attended.

Keep: Presenter, diversity of live birds, photographic imagery, what people can do as individuals, fabulously entertaining and informative.

Change: the Powerpoint, more raptor-specific information, use more and better photographs, give the presenter some water, more live birds.

Challenges.

This year, we placed Jenny Good as our Wildlife Educator, who has worked for us previously. She has excellent presentation skills and works well to create partnerships with others. Though her availability for the position was not ideal (only available from November through February), we felt that she was the best choice to schedule the programs and then train others to present it. HWI arranged to hire a replacement to begin training with Jenny in January, who, unfortunately, did not show up to work. We were able to arrange with one of our volunteers to perform the remaining programs. This has been successful and may prove to be an improved model for continuing our live bird programs in the future; however, it was initially difficult to make schedules meet. In order to accommodate all of the partners, it was necessary to adjust our timeline into July, rather than June 30. Another challenge was budgetary. HWI did not receive total requested funding to cover all programmatic costs from other sources as anticipated.

In short, we stretched our financial and human resources too thin and had to draw funds from other internal sources to complete the program.

Future of the program.

The combined staffing and budgetary issues discussed above caused us to reevaluate our approach to working in New Mexico. An ad hoc committee assembled to investigate the scope of our work in New Mexico recommended continuing the overarching Education Department goal (to impassion audiences about raptors and the threats they face in order to foster behaviors that help conserve our shared environment), but based on HWI's core expertise and organizational capacities. Therefore, rather than creating a new education program implemented by new staff such as Raptors and the Rio, we will carry out our education mission through HWI's existing programs, which are either already established and can be improved, or have been carried out in other geographies and can be easily leveraged and taken to scale in the Albuquerque area. One of the first changes we have implemented is the installation of a Southwest Regional Coordinator. This change increases our capacity to train crews and volunteers, interface with partners, and conduct educational activities.

This approach will be carried out through the following three projects: teacher professional development, volunteer recruitment, and training for our monitoring sites, and specific community outreach lectures geared to adult audiences.



Raptors and the Rio Audience Evaluation

1. The thing I enjoyed the most about the program was... (Circle ONE)
 The information given
 Live bird
 Original music
 Photos

2. After viewing this program, I FEEL differently about...

3. I was SURPRISED by...

4. If I were in charge of this presentation, I would change....

5. If I were in charge of this presentation, I would keep...

6. I think the...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Program was entertaining					
Program was informative					
Program met my expectations					
Program was different from other programs I have seen					
Live bird was the main reason for coming					
Presenter was knowledgeable					
Live bird looked comfortable					

7. I would still like to know...

The following items will help us understand your feelings about the recommended actions that enhance raptor habitat.

8. I think I will do at least one of the things that enhance raptor habitat (please circle ONE)

- I already have
- Within the next six months
- Within the next year
- Someday
- Never

9. Please mark your response about the LIKELIHOOD that you will do one of the following:

	I already do this	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Not very likely
Feed the little birds					
Provide water for birds					
Build a nest box					
Volunteer for habitat restoration					
Recycle					
Buy Local					

10. Please mark your response about the LIKELIHOOD that you will do one of the following:

	I already do this	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Not very likely
Drive Green					
Speak Up for Open Space					
Be an Active Citizen					
Keep acreage					
Live in the City					
Share what I have learned today with a friend					

Are you a member of HawkWatch International? (Circle ONE) Yes No Lapsed

Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

If you would like to receive our RaptorUpdate e-newsletter, please provide your name and e-mail address:

Name:

E-mail address:

Thank you!



Our Vision

We at Hawk Watch International envision our work contributing to a greater public awareness of humanity's place in nature and of its responsibility to the rest of life. We envision a public that understands and appreciates the importance of healthy, biologically diverse ecosystems.

We strive to achieve this by focusing on raptors as indicators of ecosystem health, by scientifically monitoring long-term trends in their populations and by working to promote conservation actions based on sound science. Our aim is to advance the stewardship of nature by engaging the public in citizen-science projects and education programs. We hope to promote an ethic of ecological sustainability and conservation that spans generations. To learn more, visit our website: www.hawkwatch.org

SIMPLE WAYS YOU CAN ENHANCE HABITAT FOR RAPTORS



"NOBODY MADE A GREATER
MISTAKE THAN HE WHO
DID NOTHING BECAUSE
HE COULD DO ONLY A
LITTLE." --- EDMUND BURKE



Raptors are Indicators of Ecosystem Health

All life needs habitat: a clean and close combination of food, water, shelter, space and air in an arrangement that can be used. If all of the components of habitat are present, you'll see a healthy ecosystem, with great diversity of life and ecological relationships that function normally.

Raptors are sensitive to disturbance, so when they are present in normal populations, we know that the system is working. If you love raptors, you can contribute to their habitat needs. Here are 12 ways you can help. Some are easy, and some take a little more work, but all make a difference.



Feed the Little Birds

When you feed the little birds, the bigger birds are sure to follow. Raptors like Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks and American Kestrels eat smaller birds. Put out a bird feeder to increase the likelihood of raptors visiting your neighborhood. Bird feeding is simple, but there are a few things you should keep in mind. Place your feeder well away from windows. Feeders should be cleaned often to avoid the spread of disease from bird to bird. Select a quality seed or suet that attracts the birds you'd like to see, and replace the seed in the feeder often.

Provide Water

During times of drought, a little bit of water can be an oasis for birds and insects. A simple birdbath can create a valuable food source for raptors. Water features need attention, though, so plan to maintain it once you've installed it. Standing water can be a breeding ground for mosquitoes, which spread diseases. Clean your birdbath often, and don't let the water stand for more than 48 hours. Another way to prevent mosquitoes in your birdbath is to get the water moving, using a fountain pump. This will reduce the need for frequent cleaning, and will make the bath more aesthetically pleasing for you!

Plant Natives

The next time you plant a garden, consider using drought-tolerant, native plants instead of fancy cultivars from all over the world. By doing so, you will be providing food for native insects and birds. You'll also reduce the need to water and fertilize heavily.



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Build a Nest Box

Cavity nesting birds like American Kestrels and Western Screech Owls need trees to raise their families. In the absence of a tree, some raptors will readily choose a next box. You can build a nest box to attract these birds to your yard or agricultural field. There are several benefits to having nesting birds in your neighborhood. Many cavity nesters eat pesky insects and small rodents. You'll also get to see the youngsters as they learn to fly and hunt.

Volunteer

There are many conservation organizations nationwide that mobilize themselves and volunteers to make a difference for habitat and wildlife. They cannot do it without support from people like you, through donations of time and talent. Contact your local Nature Center to find out more about organizations in your area.

Reduce, Reuse, Repair...and then Recycle

You've heard it a million times that you should recycle. Consider recycling as the last step in a products life, after you've first reduced your consumption something, reuse it if possible and make an effort to repair before replacing it. Recycling is still a key part of reducing the need for additional materials, which come from our natural resources. However, if you first reduce, reuse, and repair, you will greatly increase your personal contribution to resource conservation.

Buy Local

Purchasing local fruits and vegetables, meat and eggs helps keep local agriculture in business, preserving habitat from further development. It also saves fuel and reduces pollution from transportation.

Drive Green

You don't have to purchase a hybrid or electric vehicle to make a difference! You can commit to riding your bicycle to work once a week, walking to the grocery store, or using public transportation.

Speak Up

Few people realize that they have a voice in open space issues. When federal money is used, NEPA requires thorough investigation and public comment. It is a prime opportunity for you to get involved in decisions with lasting impacts on environmental quality.

Citizen Action

Send a message by voting in every election, no matter how small. Do your research to understand the issues. Once elected officials are in office, let them know what you want, by attending public meetings or writing letters. Thank them when they do good things, and let them know when they don't.

Keep your Acreage

Changing land use from natural habitat to agriculture to suburban development effects wildlife. If you own land, don't be tempted to sell it to developers for homes or strip malls. Try to keep it in its current use, or work towards restoring the natural landscape. Organic agricultural uses are typically good for raptors, as they attract food resources and provide hunting grounds. Restored landscapes can provide habitat for all of the plants and animals of a healthy food web. If you want to preserve your land in perpetuity for wildlife, consider getting a conservation easement.

Live in the City

We love the feeling of being away from it all. As demand for homes in the suburbs increase, cities sprawl into what used to be natural landscapes and agricultural lands. Life in the 'burbs has its challenges: it increases close encounters with displaced wildlife, necessitates long commutes, and isolates us from amenities like cultural events. If you are in the market for a home, consider buying an existing home that is close to where you work and play.