

The UK's leading specialist Bird of Prey & Owl rehabilitation organisation



**RAPTOR
RESCUE**

Registered Charity No. 283733

An organisation dedicated to ensuring all sick or injured birds of prey and owls are cared for by qualified people and that whenever possible released back into the wild.

NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 2011



New Pullout Children's Page

In this issue is the first of our Junior Raptor Rescuers page.

It contains jokes, cut out bookmark and more fun for our junior members.

We have made it as a pullout page so you don't have to destroy your newsletter.

In this issue:

- ✿ Chairman's Chat
- ✿ Fireman to the Rescue
- ✿ Rehabbing News
- ✿ First Aid Course
- ✿ Trustee Profile
- ✿ And lots more!

National Help & Advice Line: **0870 241 0609**

Online: www.raptorrescue.org.uk

PLEASE NOTE; THE HELPLINE IS NOT A 24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE, IF YOUR CALL IS NOT ANSWERED AN ANSWER PHONE IS AVAILABLE; PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AND SOMEONE WILL GET BACK TO YOU.

Chairman's Chat



I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and hope you all had a good Christmas. 2010 was a busy year for the Charity, following the revision of the Rehabilitators Handbook and Code of Practice; we launched the revised book at the Falconry Fair in May. Copies now sit with DEFRA; The Animal Welfare Network for Wales and the Scottish RSPCE and this is now available on the website for anyone to download.

We again attended a good number of events to raise funds and awareness of the Charity, membership increased, and the National Helpline has continued to be very busy. We also had two new Trustees join the team to help spread the workload. We still have the capacity for further Trustees if any member would like to get involved with the running of the Charity.

I think 2011 will be a challenging year for the Charity, particularly from a financial point of view as the prosperity measures the new Government has introduced start to take effect. Hopefully, they won't have too much of an impact on what we do. One of the Board of Trustees thought it would be a good idea to have an Annual Report, detailing what we had achieved over the past 12 months, an idea all the Trustees agreed on. Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of that report, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any comments on the report.

Steve Davidson

Strategy 2011 - 2016

Following a review of the Raptor Rescue Strategy, the Board of Trustees have now agreed the strategy for the next five years. The new 2011 – 2016 Strategy now has targets to achieve and one of the themes will be reviewed and progress recorded at each Trustee meeting. The strategy is available to view on the 'About Us' page of the website: www.raptorrescue.org.uk
A special thanks to Trustee Ian Taylor for coordinating the review.

Wanted for Raptor Rescue Displays



One of the major aims of Raptor Rescue is to increase the public awareness and conservation of our native raptor and owl species. Malcolm Robbins is looking to establish a display of birds for use by Raptor Rescue that will demonstrate the wide range of raptors and owls indigenous to the UK. Raptor Rescue is often asked to provide birds for static displays and it is sometimes disappointing that we do not have examples of the birds we rescue, rehabilitate and release.

Wild birds and injured birds are not used in displays – quite rightly - and so the display collection will be made up of captive bred birds. It would be really something if Raptor Rescue had the use of a collection that contained an example of each of the indigenous species for the public to see at close hand and appreciate the amazing variation that is to be found in the UK. Many people probably have no real idea of just how many raptors and owls are native to the UK and certainly not everyone has the opportunity to see the birds in their natural habitat.

This is a long term project and neither Raptor Rescue nor Malcolm has funds to go out and purchase examples of each species, but it may well be that someone out there may have a raptor or an owl that they feel would be suitable as a static display bird. Malcolm who looks after our rehoming activities is able to take in some captive bred birds that need rehoming but more often than not, the birds for rehoming are non-indigenous or are disabled in some way and are not suitable.

Currently he has kestrels, barn owls, and buzzards; but now needs to extend the range of birds. If you are in a position to assist with this project, please contact Malcolm at 01400 28 11 96 or email Malcolm@owlman.co.uk

Charity News

The Board of Trustees would like to welcome to the following new members:

Pauline Taylor
Neil and Gaynor Williams
Martin Turner
Martin Watson
Mr & Mrs West

The Board of Trustees would like to thank the following for their kind Donations:

K Fraser through Bill Stratton helping him with rescue birds
National Exhibition of Wildlife Art
C Winstone, in memory of Danny Holmes
Paul Mack
Cornish Bird of Prey Centre
Start Right Nursery, Grantham
Mrs Burd
Revana Swales
Indiefield

We would also like to thank the following members who give a little bit extra when renewing their membership:

H Atkinson
D Howes
G Garrett
A Lambert
A Ketchell
A Dale
R Roberts

J Bagshaw
S Bailey
D Foster
G Craggs
M Habershon
A Bradley

M Robbins
K Vanommeslaeghe
K Woodhead
M Watson
R&Y Taplin



Caption Competition

The picture (left) was taken during the First Aid Course at Avian Veterinary Services, Gauntlet Bird of Prey Centre, Knutsford, Cheshire on 21st November 2010.

Vet, Richard Jones (back left) instructs two delegates in the art of crop tubing, but what's Richard saying to them!

Answers to Steve Davidson, 28 Victoria Road, Great Sankey, Warrington, WA5 2ST or e-mail steve.vulture@btinternet.com by 31st March 2011.

The funniest answer as judged by the Board of Trustees at the April Trustee Meeting will receive framed picture of a Barn Owl taken by a member of the Halton Photographic Society.

Event Dates for 2011

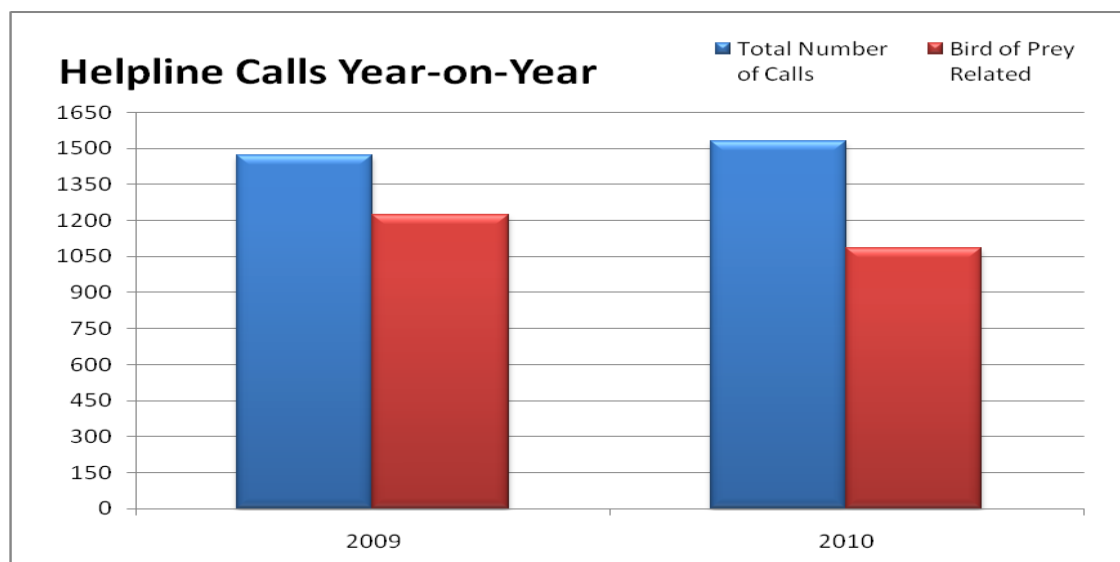
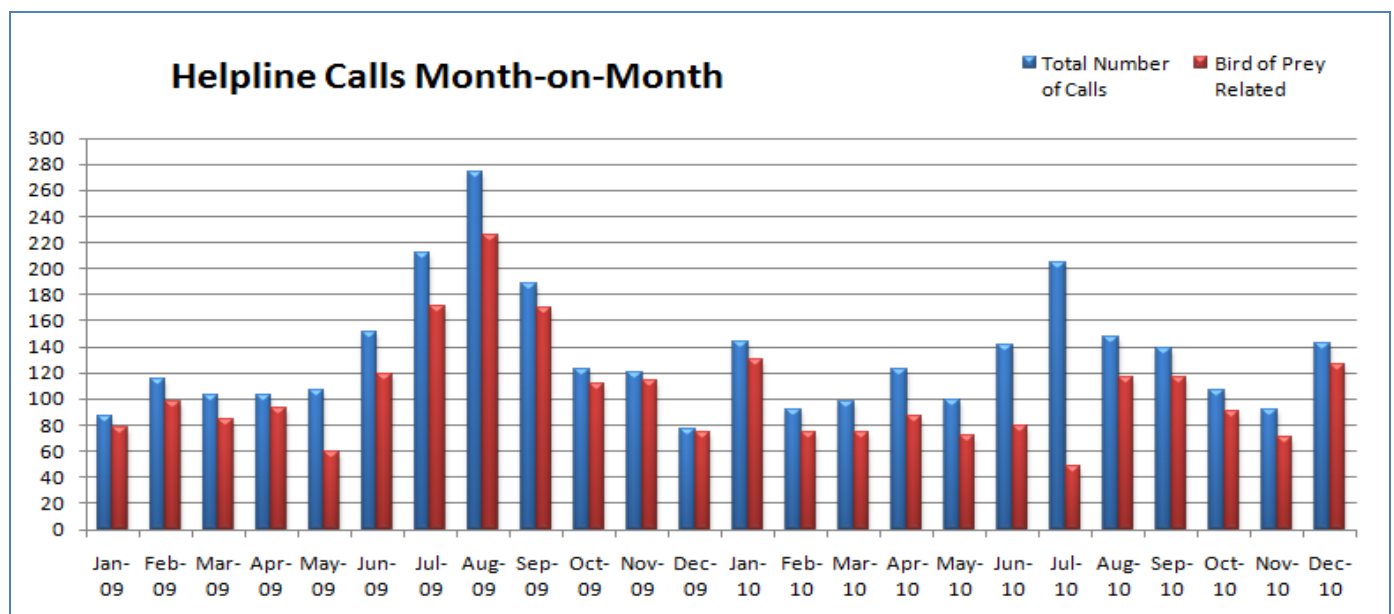
Come and visit Raptor Rescue at the following events this year:

- ✿ Perton Springwatch Festival, Perton, Staffordshire - 9th April
- ✿ Royden Park - Greasby, Wirral - 15th May, 3rd July & 28th August.
- ✿ Wirral Country Park - Thurstatston, Wirral - 24th April, 5th June & 9th October.
- ✿ St. Bridget's Church Fete - West Kirby, Wirral - 25th June.
- ✿ Wirral Allotments Society - Veg & Flower Show, Birkenhead Park, Wirral - 14th August.
- ✿ Falconry Fair – 1st & 2nd May. Please note the fair has moved this year to Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire.
- ✿ Thoresby Park Craft & Country Fair – 19th & 20th May
- ✿ Burghley Game Fair – 29th & 30th May
- ✿ Cheshire Game & Country Fair 27th, 28th & 29th August
- ✿ Sandringham Game & Country Fair – 10th & 11th September

If you would like to help out at any of the above events, please contact me on 01925 726704 or e-mail me at steve.vulture@btinternet.com

Helpline Update

2010 saw a slight increase in the total number of calls to the Helpline along with an increase in the number of none bird of prey related calls.



Rehabilitating

Who you gonna call?

It was blowing a gale and teaming down with rain when I received a call from Lesley at 11:30 on the morning of Sunday, 29th November 2009. A kestrel seemed to be stuck on a roof about 5 minutes from where I live. The house was at the end of a quiet cul de sac in Mosley Common.



The lady who had rung up and lived opposite had some binoculars and sure enough there was a kestrel caught by it's jesses on the TV aerial of the house, being bombarded with wind, rain and crows.

The occupants of the house were away and there was no way I could climb up on to the roof even with a ladder but if I didn't get help, the little guy was going to perish.

I decided there was nothing else for it but to ring the fire brigade because I knew from watching TV that they had turned out for animals in distress before.

I didn't have a non-emergency number and so I had to ring 999, which was a bit embarrassing when I was asked for the address of the fire and I had to explain that it wasn't a fire but a bird stuck on a TV aerial!

I was told that I would be called back but I didn't want to hold my breath.

Imagine my surprise when about 20 minutes later two fire tenders turned into the street. I spoke with one of the firemen who decided that he needed to speak with his supervisor.

After the supervisor had arrived and carried out a risk assessment he decided that it was too dangerous to put up a ladder. Instead he turned out the 'cherry picker' and guess who had to go up on to the roof? Me!!

I was given a quick safety chat, a helmet and I was harnessed up. Then, together with a rather nice fireman, I started our slow ascent to the roof. The bird was caught extremely fast with it's jesses and I had to cut them off but apart from being very wet, the bird was fine.

Greater Manchester Fire Service was fantastic. If it hadn't been for them turning out the bird would have died and so on behalf of Raptor Rescue – Thank you very much.



The bird had no rings on and so I rang Juliana at IBR. Within a week the bird was returned to its owner none the worse for its ordeal.

Barbara Royal

Barbara with the rescued Kestrel

Gentleshaw



Thursday the Kestrel

Thursday was first reported on in the November 2010 Update, has left Gentleshaw and is now back in the wild. Off she goes.....

Skip the Kestrel (left)

Skip was bought into Gentleshaw by another rehabilitator.

He had been in care for some time and now needs to be trained and exercised as at present he cannot fly very far and tends to skip about a lot. After a few weeks with Gentleshaw he can now fly up around 6ft, but he has a long way to go. He is only a young bird and looks like he is going to spend his first winter with Gentleshaw.



Byrkley the Tawny



Byrkley the tawny owl was bought to Gentleshaw a few weeks ago whilst they were doing a display at Byrkley Park Garden Centre, Burton upon Trent. She had been found in the road and had hair line fractures on both wings.

She has just had her strapping removed and is being to stretch her wings and is now holding them up well. She has started having some light exercise to get her fighting fit.



Buzzard the Barn Owl

Buzzard's rescuers said he was being attacked by a Buzzard in their garden.

He had a few superficial wounds but nothing serious. He was a foul tempered owl, and got away lightly considering the size of Buzzard compared to a barn owl's small size.



And another Buzzy!

Gentleshaw have had another Common buzzard in. She has early frounce (a horrible condition in the mouth) and is currently on medication. She is eating well so just a matter of waiting for the treatment to do its job.

And another one!

Bag came into Gentleshaw a few days before Christmas. He was transported by his rescuer in a very smart shopping bag having been struck by a car. He was suffering from concussion and was a little wobbly.

However after a few days and some force feeds he was up and going. He then had some flight practice as he was slightly favoring one wing and was not gaining height.

This soon came right and he was returned to the wild in between snow showers, with a crop full of dinner. He gave a very tasteful flying display over the snow and then landed very high up in a large tree.



RyedaleRehab

It's been a hard winter in Yorkshire for Barn Owls with a mortality rate, with 30+ I know about. These birds did not do well this year after last winter's cold weather, many were not in breeding condition and some did breed late.

Many of this year's young have died and I have had reports of dead Barn Owls in buildings and nest boxes.

One sad report was of a pair found dead in a nest box with the males wing around his mates body, both thin and frozen dead. Barn Owls have come in weighing 210g, a Barn Owls normal weight is approximately 300g. These birds have not survived despite intensive care here.



I have doled out dead day olds to farmers and landowners to feed "their" Barn Owls and in some cases this has worked very well. Happily I saw two separate birds on the low ground flying well at dawn so that's two that have made it. I have a female in with a broken wing which arrived here just before the hard weather hit.

She has healed and recovered well and is ready for the off. She was from Sledmere which is high ground and the snow and ice is still covering most of the ground there. So she'll stay, she's eating well and hopefully can go out soon.

The persecution of birds of prey continues here in North Yorkshire. A female Buzzard was brought in from Nidderdale. She was found on farm land next to a grouse moor. She had been seen 4 days earlier but not picked up. I settled her for the night with food after tube feeding.

The following day she was taken for x ray. As you can see by the photos she had been shot gun shot. The pellets had lodged either side of the joint on one leg, fracturing it. The wound was infected and swollen and the bird was sore and depressed. Her flight feathers were shot through and shortened by the damage done by the shotgun pellets.

I settled her back into a small shed with low stumps and left her to recover. She ate well and began to regain her composure. After 22 days I found her perched high up and knew she was feeling better, the wounds were clean and she was stood on both feet.

I think about release the first day any casualty comes in but knew that this Buzzard could not be released back to bandit country she came from. Her original finder made us promise not to bring her back as she would not survive long.

So I e-mailed round my birding contacts for a suitable release site for this beautiful bird. She was successfully released on Skipwith Common and flew well over plough. She was BTO rung and the following day was seen by Craig Ralston the Lower Derwent Valley Site Warden circling with 4 other Buzzards. Her short flight feathers will be obvious for a while but she was flying and maneuvering well.



Sparrowhawks



I had a Sparrowhawk summer with over 10 birds in over a short time all of which were young birds, just fledged and finding their way. Some of the birds had to be put to sleep, but many were rehabbed and released.

One large female from Scarborough has stayed about and is being regularly fed here. She came in

unable to fly, but was rested and fed well.



As sparrowhawks are very nervous they can refuse to eat and have to be carefully managed for them to survive in good feather condition and ready for release. She is a fine bird and calls often for the 2 dead day olds I put out for her. She has become much wilder, she flies in, scoops up a chick in passing and flies low and fast to a fence post in a nearby field to eat her food, she is such a pleasure to watch.

A little juvenile male Spar flew into a window and was knocked out and came here for rehab. He was very confiding and would eat in front of me, it took a while for the swelling to go down and his wild nature to return, but it did. He was a tiny smart dark bird and released very well flying low and up into a tree. He spun round to face the wind and glared defiantly at me and was gone.

Jean Thorpe

Top Tip: When releasing a wild casualty Tawny Owl, check trees aren't full of corvids that immediately mob it!

First Aid Course

November 2010 saw Raptor Rescue host its first raptor first aid course at Gauntlet bird of prey centre, Knutsford. After a quick catch up of old friends and an introduction to new faces, we began what was to be a very informative day.

The first part of the morning was an introduction to avian anatomy and physiology, where everything was and how it should work. The presentation was given by veterinary nurse Carli Dodd, whose enthusiasm was clear as she talked us through from one end of a raptor to the other.



After a quick cuppa it was back to business with vet Richard Jones taking us through disease recognition and diagnostics and first aid techniques. This well documented talk was accompanied by some fascinating, if a little gory, images. These really helped to point out what kind of things a rehabber needs to be on the look out for. Examination of a casualty, fluid replacement and crop tubing were all subjects covered. Richard also explained how many falconry techniques could be employed when dealing with wild raptors.

A tasty lunch gave us time for our brains to catch up and to have a chinwag with our fellow classmates. The 17 'pupils' were a mix of those new to rehabbing with lots to learn and those with more experience who wanted to brush up on their techniques and learn something new, no one was disappointed.



We also got chance to see some of the magnificent birds of prey held at Gauntlet and first thing after lunch we were given the chance to see some of the birds in action during a flying display, the highlight of which, for me, was the wonderful group of kites, all out flying together and a credit to the staff at Gauntlet.

It was then time for us to get our hands dirty. Many first aid techniques need some practice, and a frightened, sick, wild casualty is not going to appreciate being someone's guinea pig. Richard solved the problem by supplying a variety of deceased birds for us to practice on.

The dead birds were most accommodating and gave us all plenty of chance to practice what we had learnt about earlier. Fluid replacement, crop tubing and strapping broken wings and legs are all things that rehabbers come across regularly.

Although my casualty may have ended up looking like a mummy, being able to practice these techniques, with Richard and Carli on hand to guide us, was extremely beneficial.

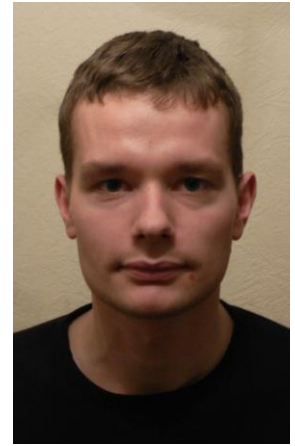


Many thanks to our hosts, the staff at Gauntlet, our teachers, Richard and Carli, and Steve & Carol Davidson for arranging the course.

Jenny Morgan

Trustee Profile

Each issue I will ask a Trustee ten searching questions to see how they tick! This issue I asked Rehabilitator Coordinator Daniel Goldsmith:



1. What are your favourite five birds?

Marsh Harrier (I see many here in Norfolk), Jay, Osprey, Swift, Grey Partridge.

2. What's your favourite book and why?

I am not really into books; however I would recommend one called The Hare by Jill Mason. It's very interesting insight into an animal that is a bit of a mystery.

3. What's your favourite film and why?

Have many, the top must be the Pirates Of The Caribbean (the first one). It's just a great entertaining film and Johnny Depp plays the part so well.

4. What's your favourite food and why?

That would have to be roasted duck.

5. What's your favourite TV show and why?

Dragons Den. It's just a fantastic program and the concepts around it. It never ceases to amaze me the ideas people put forward to the Dragons for investment.

6. What's your favourite piece of music and why?

Anything by Coldplay. My favourite is Viva la vida.

7. What car do you drive and why?

I have a Vauxhall Vectra at present, It's not the fastest or newest mode of transport but being diesel is very good on fuel and is also reliable. I travel over interesting terrain in my work sometimes so a 4 wheel drive would be alot more practical. I also drive nearly 30,000 miles per year.

8. What place in the world would you most like to visit and why?

Australia. Seems a wonderful destination, quite varied dependent upon where in Aus you are. The people are quite straight forward (at least those who I meet seem to be). They also would appear to be by the way they run their country; although restrictions are greater over there for example you can't own a bird of prey.

9. If you could have any job in the world, what would it be and why?

Having an interest in wildlife of all types and also had the privilege of meeting people such as Simon King, who's job consists of monitoring and researching them for TV for the population to enjoy. Watching wildlife in different countries and witnessing behavior never seen before, and then getting paid for it, which would be my kind of thing.

10. If you were stranded on a desert island, who would you most like to be stranded with and why?

Someone who is a bit of a comic and would make the time pass quickly. I think maybe Billy Connolly would do it for me as I do find him funny and would like to meet him.

PATRONS:

Steve Lingham - Chris Packham - Pollyanna Pickering

Honorary President: Mr Bryan Paterson

Honorary Vice President: Mr Robert Haddon

TRUSTEES

Steve Davidson – Chairman/Newsletter Editor - Tel: 01925 726704 – contact for any issues relating to Raptor Rescue and the Newsletter and Updates.

Malcolm Robbins - Vice Chairman/Rehoming Coordinator - Tel: 07734 845288 - contact for any issues relating to Raptor Rescue in the Chairman's absence, any issues relating to external magazine articles, press releases or TV related activities, re-homing birds of prey.

Carol Davidson - Treasurer - Tel: 01925 726704 – contact for any financial issues, donations, membership payments, and first aid equipment.

Lesley Smith, Jenny Morgan – National Helpline & Secretaries - Tel: 01785 850379 – contact for any issues relating to the National Help Line, to order publications, to request attendance at events.

Steve Dewsnap - Stock Control - Tel: 01244 813127 – contact for any issues relating to sales goods.

Andy Craven – IT Communication Coordinator - Tel: 07879 007007 – any issues relating to the website or for links to the website.

Ian Taylor – Trustee – Tel: 01298 70959 - any issues relating to the Rehabbers Handbook and Code of Practice.

Daniel Goldsmith – Rehabilitator Coordinator – Tel: 07881 826811 –, contact for applications to become a rehabilitator.

Sharon Mathews - Survey Coordinator – Junior Members Newsletter/Web Pages – Tel: 01603 485006 - contact for annual survey and junior newsletter/web pages.

Geoff Windsor – Sponsorship Coordinator – Tel: 01625 584586 - contact for details of sponsorship for Raptor Rescue.

Membership Secretary: Barbara Turner, 31 Touches Meadow, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1PA, Tel: 01460 64664 – contact for membership and membership renewals.

Benefits of Membership

Membership of Raptor Rescue is open to anyone with an interest in birds of prey and who wish to support the Charity.

Annual membership fees are divided into three categories:

Junior Members (Under 16) £7.50

Household Membership (One address) £15.00

Wildlife Centre Membership (Raising own funds) £25.00

Application forms are available from our web site.

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