



**RAPTOR
RESCUE**

Registered Charity No. 283733

The UK's leading specialist Bird of Prey & Owl rehabilitation organisation dedicated to ensuring all sick and injured birds of prey are cared for by qualified people and wherever possible released back into the wild.

Annual Report 2011



Rescue



Rehabilitate



Release

National Help & Advice Line: 0870 241 0609

Online www.raptorrescue.org.uk

PLEASE NOTE; THIS 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.

First and foremost I would like to say how proud I am to be associated with Raptor Rescue, the dedication and work that the volunteers undertake needs to be acknowledged. The rehabilitation and treatment of sick and injured wild birds of prey is a massive undertaking, and not only that, the knowledge that is required to administer the correct treatment is paramount if a successful reintroduction into the wild is to be had. It saddens me to think that birds such as our beloved Barn Owls are being injured as a result of traffic accidents, these poor creatures have it hard enough to survive in recent freezing cold winters, loss of habitat and nesting sites, without the added extra hazards of busy roads.



Many years ago I witnessed such an incident, at the time I hadn't heard of Raptor Rescue, if I had the Barn Owl that was so badly hurt may well have had a fighting chance of full rehabilitation and release, I now have the Raptor Rescue emergency telephone number within my contact numbers on my mobile phone, a number that I could call and be rest assured that my call will be dealt with swiftly and professionally by people who care.

Thank you all at Raptor Rescue!

Steven Lingham- Patron

I would like to welcome you to this Annual Report and first of all to recognise and thank all the trustees, rehabilitators, members and supporters for all their continuing hard work and endeavours. It is due totally to their unceasing contributions that Raptor Rescue remains the leading Charity in the UK for the **Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release** of sick and injured wild birds of prey and owls.



Looking at the achievements of the last few years, and 2011 was not an exception, it is difficult at times to appreciate that all this is achieved by a set of dedicated volunteers who are prepared to give up so much of their time to the cause. Thank you all.

The report covers a brief resume of the 2011 activities including: Raptor Rescue Goes Forth, Finances, Membership Statistics, Events Attended, National Helpline Statistics 2010, Rehoming Statistics, Rehabilitators Statistics and Annual Survey. As the incoming Chair, I hope that I am able to live up to the role and to follow the footsteps of my immediate predecessor, Steve Davidson, who was over the past year very much Mr Raptor Rescue as he covered multiple roles as a Trustee. Thanks Steve – but if you want to come back I am happy to move over! Raptor Rescue has continued to change and evolve over the past years and will need to continue this process through 2012. We are operating in a difficult economic period but can look back on the past year as one of achievement and consolidation.

Malcolm Robbins - Chairman

Finances

2010/2011 was a tough year for everybody as the recession continued; however the Charity received a slight increase in donations and sales, although membership was down. Our income for the year was £8,768.55, this is a decrease of £3,885.61 on last year, although we received a £5,000 donation the previous year from **Pets at Home**. Our total expenditure for the year amounted to £9,894.23. This is £1,578.52 more than the previous year. The largest increase in expenditure has been to help purchase a new rescue hospital for captive bred birds prior to rehoming, rehabilitation first aid course (the majority of which has been reimbursed by individuals), and an increase in newsletter and update costs due to an increase of external members who now receive our publications and also in previous years updates have been printed courtesy of the North West Regional Development Agency. However, we have saved funds on tent and van hire due to not being able to attend many shows last year and less mileage has been claimed due to no meetings with external partners being held.

Membership Statistics

In 2010/2011 we were joined by 21 new members but we sadly lost 24 members. The membership currently stands at 151.

Carol Davidson – Treasurer

Events Attended

Due to lack of resources, mainly people on the ground, we were not able to attend the Falconry Fair or the country fair at Chatsworth House this year. The Falconry Fair, while a good publicity event for the Charity, has failed to raise any funds over the past two to three years and has actually cost us to attend. Likewise, Chatsworth Hall last year also failed to raise anything like it did the first year we attended and we only just broke even. As well as raising the awareness of the Charity, it is hoped that by attending these events we raise much needed funds, get new rehabilitators on board and gain new members. We now have to review the events we do attend to ensure that there is little or no outlay to the Charity but maximising what we gain from attending. However, we did attend Sandringham Game & Country Fair and the Burghley Game Fair

We also attended a number of smaller events throughout the year such as school fairs, fun days etc, including: Royden and Wirral Country Parks; St Bridget's Fair, West Kirby and Wirral Allotments Show Birkenhead Park. Talks to clubs and societies included: Wirral Birdwatching Club, the Yorkshire Falconry Club and Buxton U3A.

Raptor Rescue National Help Line 2011

The National Help line, this year again sponsored by **Exotic Direct**, has taken a total of 1172 calls over the year and although the majority relate to raptors and owls requiring help. 144 (12%) of the callers asked if we could help parrots, garden birds, kingfisher, a mallard with 11 ducklings and even scorpion, corn snake and a bearded dragon as well as the usual squirrel, foxes and other mammals!. A further 106 (9%) of the calls were asking for information about the charity and 18% were duplicate or follow up calls. Only 1% of callers failed to leave a contact number. An analysis of the calls received over the past year show that 51% related to wild bird rescue and a further 9% to captive bred birds.

	2010	2011
Total	1531	1172
Wild birds	741 = 48%	602 = 51%
Captive bred birds	113 = 8%	102 = 9%
Info about charity	128 = 8%	106 = 9%
Duplicate / follow up	302 = 20%	209 = 18%
Non raptor	215 = 14%	144 = 12%
No number left	32 = 2%	9 = 1%

As can be seen from the above table the total number of calls for the year has dropped by just over 23% although the percentage of relevant calls (wild & captive birds and info about charity) has increased from 64% to 69%.

The top four species of wild bird handled accounting for 75% of casualties were Sparrowhawk (24%), Kestrel (21%), Tawny Owl (15%) and Buzzard (15%). This compares with a figure of 73%, Buzzard (20%), Kestrel (20%), Sparrowhawk (17%) and Tawny Owl (16%) in 2010. Buzzards were particularly hit during January and December 2010 possibly due to the excessive snow falls. July and August in both years were worst for Sparrowhawks and Kestrels. Some of the callers just require advice and it is great that Leslie and Jenny are able to help without having to call a rehabilitator.

Ian Taylor - Trustee

Rehoming Statistics

Rehoming has continued as a major feature for Raptor Rescue over the year and we have received many enquiries to re-home birds. Our successful rehoming rate (i.e. birds found new homes and not including birds taken in and yet to be rehomed) has increased by 45% over 2010 and the number of enquiries/contacts risen by over 100%. One of the biggest concerns is the number of birds that are held and given up without any supporting documentation and paperwork which means they cannot be used for commercial purposes, display or breeding, and this in itself limits their prospects of new homes. Several birds put up for rehoming are wild disabled birds that have been passed on by Wildlife Centres and these are particularly difficult to place into appropriate homes

Raptor Rescue does not generally support the keeping of wild disabled birds in captivity unless there is an overriding reason such as a breeding programme. Wild birds belong in the wild and should be returned at every opportunity provided they are capable of independent living. Animal Health is no longer issuing Article 10 certificates for breeding purposes for wild disabled birds and only exceptionally for education or conservation purposes: this has meant an increase in the number of contacts we receive for rehoming. Similarly, Animal

Health will refer people who have been refused an A10 to Raptor Rescue for re-homing assistance! Quite a problem.

During 2011, Raptor Rescue successfully took in and then rehomed

Bengal Eagle Owl	2
European Eagle Owl	4
Barn Owl	3
Kestrel	2
Harris Hawk	1
Tawny Owl	2
Turkmenian Eagle Owl	1

We also rehomed a further 14 birds by acting as a go between for people with birds for rehoming and people looking for birds. Birds currently available for rehoming include: Snowy Owl, Kestrel, European Owl, Bengal Eagle Owl, Barn Owl, Buzzard and Tawny Owl. We have been able to order four new re-homing aviaries by utilising part of the donation received from Pets at Home and hopefully these will be located and available from Easter 2012. Thanks to Hutch n Sutch for generously discounting the construction costs.

Malcolm Robbins – Rehoming Coordinator

Rehabilitators Statistics

Survey Results – 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010.

This year, of the 36 rehabilitators who were sent survey forms, we received returns from 19 (53%) of which 3 were nil returns and are unable to continue rehabilitating. This is a very disappointing number of returns.

We handled a total of 325 wild birds which included: Red Kite (5) - Sparrowhawk (49) - Goshawk (1) - Buzzard (66) – Honey Buzzard (1) - Kestrel (51) - Hobby (2) - Peregrine (13) - Barn Owl (26) - Little Owl (13) - Tawny Owl (94) - Long-eared Owl (4)

Of the 325 birds: 228 were adult birds, 97 were immature, 83 were male, 82 were female and 160 could not be identified.

Of the above, birds were received from the following sources: Vet 60, Police 4, RSPCA/SSPCA 72, Other Rehabber 1, Members of the public 188.

Injuries reported were: RTA 144, Abandoned 20, Trapped 21, Injured by domestic animal 4, Poison 6, Other 130.

N.B. Included in 'Injuries Other' were 6 seized birds, 1 stolen wild bird received from Animal Health, 1 baited to death, 1 attacked by a Buzzard, 2 shot and 37 that were (weather related?) weak, thin or wet through.

Treatment consisted of: Stabilisation (no vet required) 190, Minor (injections/simple fracture) 74, Major (operation) 61.

Outcomes: Released to the wild 147, Euthanised 80, Died 77, Still in care at time of survey 13, Referred to other rehabilitator 8.

We returned 45% of wild casualties back to the wild.

Raptor Rescue also handled 22 captive breed birds of which 2 Barn owls died, 1 Eurasian Eagle Owl was retained; 1 Pere x Barbary falcon, 1 Kestrel, 1 Tawny and 1 Little Owl were returned to their owners and 4 Eurasian Eagle Owls, 1 Snowy Owl, 2 Red-tail Hawk, 1 Kestrel, 2 Bengal Eagle Owls, 1 Turkmanian Eagle Owl and 4 Barn Owls were rehomed.

N.B. All poisonings were reported to the Police Wildlife Officer and the RSPB.

A special thanks to Trustee and Survey Coordinator Sharon Mathews for compiling the 2010 Survey.

Sharon Mathews - Survey Coordinator

