



# Tailwinds

RAPTOR EDUCATION & CONSERVATION

Winter 2024 Issue 2

TAILWINDS "MEWSLETTER"

## Friends of Tailwinds

Thank you for being one of the Friends of Tailwinds! Your interest and support is immensely appreciated. We hope you will enjoy the the seasonal "Mewsletter." We hope to see you at another program. Be sure to introduce yourself as a *Friend of Tailwinds* so we can thank you in person!

## News From The Mews - First Year!

### TAILWINDS IS ONE YEAR OLD!!

OUR team of educational birds are settled in for the winter. We have enjoyed getting to know their individual quirks and lovable traits.

**Phoenix**, (*Buteo jamaicensis*) our red tail hawk came to us without a tail, and partial wing feathers; she had contracted West Nile Virus as a youngster. Now fully feathered and beautiful! She is in her second year, and started developing a more feisty character, like a strong healthy hawk!



First new pin feather



Three weeks later



New tail

**Henry**, Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*), He is mellow, has a healthy appetite and knows his way around his adapted environment.

**George**, Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) is a charm. He lives with Greta our turkey vulture, and doesn't mind her large presence except when she steals his food!!!

**Greta** – Turkey Vulture (*Carthartes aura*), full of character, still exhibiting new behaviors. Always hamming it up with us and at programs. Greta is a joy!



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## Tail talk!

- Tail shape, length, color, markings help us identify birds.
- Tail feathers collectively are called retrices.
- Retrices comes from the latin word "helmsman". They help a bird break and steer in flight.
- Raptors typically have 12 retrices.
- Tails help with balance during perching.
- Help sustain lift by fanning out feathers.
- Some birds bob their tail up and down when excited!
- Tail shape and length can be dependent on hunting method.

## Light as a feather!

Tail feathers or retrices are keratin-based and have an interlocking microstructure. The main shaft or rachis turns into the vane which are the thin hook like interlocking barbules. Birds preen their feathers by zipping the barbules together.



*Red-tailed hawk immature and mature tail feathers - photo courtesy of the modern apprentice*

## Seasonal Neighbor News

### What do raptors do in the winter in NH?

Some birds will stay and some will migrate or partially migrate to areas where there is more food and better climate. Birds will even come south to NH (red-tailed hawk, snowy owl).

- Bird will use more energy trying to stay warm.
- Birds will tuck in their feet, shiver, fluff their feathers to create insulating air pockets.
- Some are early nesters like the great horned owl who start their courtship in December/January. Listen for their calls!



### **Phoenix**

*Red-tailed hawk*  
*Buteo jamaicensis*

# Who's tail?

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**A**



**B**



**C**



**D**



**E**



**F**



**G**



**H**





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## Owls superpowers!

Why it's hard to hide from an owl!

Owls have superb hearing for many reasons. Their whole head is designed for listening. Feathers make up their facial disk which help funnel sound to their ears. Some owls ears are asymmetrical (one higher than the other) to help differentiate sounds coming from above or below and left to right. This helps them pinpoint prey with incredible accuracy. At certain frequencies, their hearing is ten times better than humans.



photo from Buffalo Center of the west



### Greta

Turkey vulture  
*Cathartes aura*

## Wishlist and Donations

Our team of educational birds requires constant care and feeding. We provide a varied diet, enrichment, veterinary care, clean and secure housing. Your support is key in helping us achieve our goal of connecting raptors with our community. All donations go directly to our birds and their care. There are several ways you can help:

**Venmo:** @TailwindsRaptors

**Check:** Tailwinds, 14 Shaws Hill Road Kensington, NH 03833

A list of items that will help with the basic care and husbandry of our birds can be found at: [Amazon Wish List](#)

THANK YOU!

## Volunteers!

Teamwork: "work done by a group acting together so that each member does a part that contributes to the efficiency of the whole"

This summer we started our volunteer program. We are truly the definition of teamwork. We are incredibly grateful for this group of amazing volunteers!

- Anna** - a nurse who brings us much enthusiastic experience with raptors
- Leah** - vet tech, brings us creative enrichment, animal lover extraordinaire
- Miya** - worked at Boston Museum of Science in wildlife education
- Sarah** - experienced teacher and lover of all things outside and nature
- Jane** - UNH student who completed internship at Seacoast Science Center
- Jesse** - teacher of robotics and varied experience in wildlife education

Welcome new volunteer, **Arianna**! We can't wait to get to know you!



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## Upcoming Programs

Along with multiple schools, libraries, and other private events, we will be at the following:

### JANUARY

- 21 THE WORD BARN, Exeter
- 25 CREEK FARM, Forest Society, Portsmouth

### FEBRUARY

- 8 CONSERVATION CENTER, Forest Society Concord
- 18 THE WORD BARN, Exeter
- 20 SALISBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY, Salisbury MA
- 22 CREEK FARM, Forest Society, Portsmouth

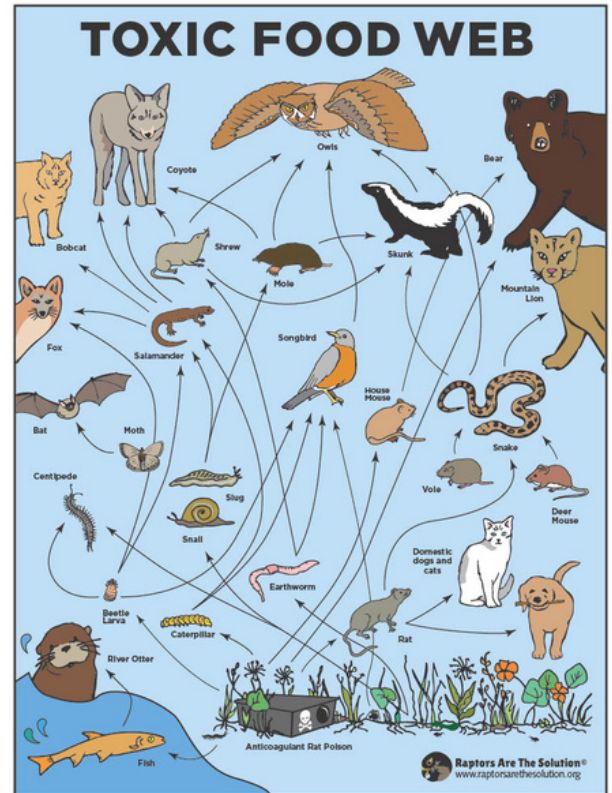
### MARCH

- 5 OLLI, UNH Lifelong Learning Institute
- 14 CONSERVATION CENTER, Forest Society Concord
- 24 THE WORD BARN, Exeter
- 28 CREEK FARM, Forest Society, Portsmouth

\*\*\*Please note that our programming can change due to extenuating circumstances and we appreciate your understanding.

Visit **TAILWINDS.LIVE** for events, ticket purchasing links and to book your program **TODAY!**

Program bookings: [linda.noon@tailwinds.live](mailto:linda.noon@tailwinds.live)



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## Resources

In our neighboring State of MA, **Save Arlington Wildlife (SAW)**, founder Laura Kiesel is committed to advocating for elimination of rodenticides that contain SGAR (Second generation anticoagulant rodenticide). Their website contains a wealth of information. Shout out to SAW!

<https://savearlingtonwildlife.org/>



Tails: A Red-tailed juvie, B kestrel, C red-tailed adult, D turkey vulture, E great horned owl, F sharp-shinned hawk, G barred owl, H cooper's hawk

<https://www.tailwinds.live>

Kensington, NH