

Jasper basking under his “Sarah Sunshine” infrared heater.



Whisper getting medication for her arthritis.



Ike getting his wing wrapped to protect active blood feathers.

## Health Maintenance of ARC’s Resident Raptors

Every day begins with a check of the mews (enclosures) of all resident raptors to make sure the birds seem comfortable and alert, and to gather any leftover food scraps and provide fresh water. Several times throughout the week, all birds are weighed and their jesses and falconry equipment are inspected. A visual assessment is done to check the condition of their eyes, talons, beaks, feet, and any permanent injury, such as one resulting in recurring blood feathers, that may require periodic treatment. While birds are out of their mews, the enclosures receive a thorough cleaning, including sifting and turning over the sand, scrubbing walls and perches, and washing and refreshing water containers.

All our birds are fed a nutritionally sound species-specific diet similar to what they would eat in the wild. They receive daily vitamins and biotin supplements to aid feather health along with periodic preventative treatment for feather mites and other parasites. We vaccinate biannually for West Nile Virus, a mosquito-borne illness that is often fatal for raptors. When necessary, simple blood and fecal tests can be done in-house to check for possible infectious and/or parasitic diseases and a treatment plan established to quickly treat these conditions with antibiotics or other medications to prevent the spread to other residents. In the rare instance when we are unable to pinpoint the cause of a suspected illness, samples are sent out to a specialized lab for testing. Raptors can be affected by chronic diseases such as diabetes and respiratory illnesses.

Eye problems such as styes and ear infections occasionally occur and are promptly treated with medication prescribed by our veterinarian. One of the more common issues with captive raptors is slight irritation on the bottom of the feet and/or the tarsi. We treat these minor tissue irritations with CEH, a holistic herbal salve made by a compounding pharmacy that has antibacterial, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties. This salve is also very effective on any small wound and often healing is accomplished in just a few days. Tissue abrasions associated with chronic wing injuries are often protected with Tegaderm during healing. Tegaderm is a clear, water-resistant bandage and since the birds don’t see it, they tend to ignore it. Compression wraps, using a slightly stretchy material, can be used when it’s beneficial to temporarily restrict movement of the wing. (See photos on the back page.)

Some of our residents have chronic conditions that require long-term, ongoing treatment. American Kestrel, Professor Slinky, has torticollis, a muscular condition also known as wry neck, that is maintained with a combination of two specialized nutritional supplements. Elderly Barn Owl, Whisper, has arthritis in her legs and feet. She has special perching in her mews and is treated with CEH and a hemp salve to help relieve discomfort. Birds with mobility issues have ramps and special perches to make it easier for them to move about their mews. Birds who are more susceptible to cold due to wing injuries that prevent them from using their wings to provide proper insulation have radiant heaters to keep them comfortable during cold weather.

In the wild, raptors normally wear their talons and beaks down on rough surfaces such as branches and the skeletons of their prey. Even though we make rough surfaces available to our birds, they don’t always make adequate use of them and so their talons and beaks may need to be trimmed to prevent over-growing. If the talons are too long, it makes perching uncomfortable and an overgrown beak can make eating difficult.

Care and management of raptors is quite involved, therefore trained staff and dedicated, knowledgeable volunteers are needed to successfully accomplish these tasks.

## A Soaring Success

In late January of this year, the Raptor Center of Tampa Bay took in a young, male Red-tailed Hawk with an injured wing. After a week, the hawk was transferred to ARC for further rehabilitation. To gauge the extent of his injury, we took the bird for an x-ray at Park Avenue Animal Hospital. The results showed that the young hawk had a fractured ulna, one of the large bones in the wing.



While the fracture was not severe, it was greatly impacting the hawk's flight. Red-tailed Hawks are soaring hawks, commonly seen gliding through the air for hours at a time. Hawks and other soaring birds display masterful efficiency in flight. In order to expend minimal energy during flight, these birds exploit thermal air currents. Soaring birds use the warm, rising air to get altitude with little effort before gliding over to the next thermal. A Red-tailed Hawk spends quite a lot of time in the air, but this injured hawk could not even fly 20 feet!

The ability to fly efficiently is essential to a Red-tailed Hawk so we employed falconry training techniques to assist in the young hawk's recovery. This hawk, nicknamed Baron, was trained over a period of three months by falconer Charles McKee. After having negative experiences with humans in rehab and transport, Baron did not take to training very easily. However, some patience went a long way and Baron learned that training wasn't so bad.

The road to release was difficult for Baron. Several times throughout his training, the falconer worried the hawk's progress would plateau and deem the bird non-releasable. Charles had to reconsider the approach to Baron's training, giving the bird much more time to build and tone his flight muscles at different intervals. Although it took longer than anticipated, Baron was able to make a full recovery, soaring over the falconer for a full hour! Without his falconry training, Baron would not have been able to restore his full ability to soar, exemplifying falconry's irreplaceable value in a rehabilitation setting.

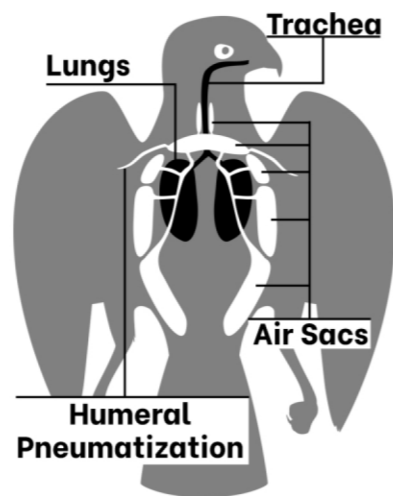


## Did You Know...

Birds have the most efficient respiratory systems of all vertebrates. In fact, they even use their bones!

Birds have lungs just like people; these lungs are attached to nine air sacs. Air sacs are extensions of the lungs, but do not perform gas exchange. They store air until it can reach the lungs. This allows birds to have two breaths of air circulating simultaneously. This system allows for a continuous supply of oxygen which is important for energy during flight.

But birds don't stop there; birds' hollow bones, known as pneumatized bones, are also used during respiration. In young birds, air sacs begin to grow into hollow areas of bones until they have expanded into most hollow bones. When air sacs are filled, so are the pneumatized bones, allowing for extra air storage. What amazing, unique creatures birds are!



## ARC Merchandise

Support ARC by visiting our Etsy store to purchase original ARC apparel designed by our talented artists. Click on the Resource Store tab and then on ARC Merchandise to start shopping! 100% of the proceeds benefit bird care at ARC.

## Staying Connected

For more information about our facility and available education programs, visit our website. Follow us on social media for up-to-date information about our birds, upcoming events and behind-the-scenes photographs.

- [www.arc4raptors.org](http://www.arc4raptors.org)
- [www.facebook.com/arc4raptors](https://www.facebook.com/arc4raptors)
- [www.instagram.com/arc4raptors](https://www.instagram.com/arc4raptors)
- [www.youtube.com/user/arc4raptorsorg](https://www.youtube.com/user/arc4raptorsorg)

When you do your online shopping at Amazon, you can help ARC by clicking on our link [arc4raptors.org/amazon](http://arc4raptors.org/amazon) and following the prompts. Amazon Smile will donate .05% of your eligible purchases to ARC at no cost to you.

Sponsor the care of your favorite resident bird with ARC's Adopt-a-Bird sponsorship program. [www.arc4raptors.org/adopt-a-bird.html](http://www.arc4raptors.org/adopt-a-bird.html)

The Nest Box Resource Store is open on Saturdays from 10a to 4p (2p during June & July). We have a large selection of raptor-themed items and children's books. We sell owl pellets, too! All proceeds benefit bird care at ARC.

As ARC continues to grow, we need your help! We are looking for volunteers on Saturdays from 9:30a to 4p and on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30a to 1:00p. We request a minimum of 3 hours. No animal experience is necessary, only a desire to learn and assist. You must be 14 years or older. Soar with us and join the ARC family today! Call 407-461-1056 to learn how a few hours of your time can make a big difference.



## Upcoming Events

We're open to the public on Saturdays (weather permitting) from 10a-3p May through September (10a-1p June-July and closed to the public during August). Stop by to learn about our work and visit with our resident Florida raptors. We're located at 323 West Lester Road, Apopka, FL 32712. Visit [ARC4raptors.org](http://ARC4raptors.org) for a map.

### Meat Bingo – September 12, 2023

Hollerbach Restaurant in Downtown Sanford, 6-9p Visit with one of our resident hawks, play Bingo and buy a \$20 wingspan of tickets for our 50/50 raffle.

### Hops & Hawks – September 30, 2023

Deviant Wolf Brewery in Downtown Sanford, 4-7p Join us for our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual fundraising event. Meet some of our resident hawks, enjoy craft brews and bid on a spectacular array of items at the silent auction.

### Owl at the Moon – October 28, 2023 at ARC

A fun day for children to celebrate Halloween with ARC's resident owls. Come make an owl mask and join us for story time. This is a ticketed event and two sessions will be available.

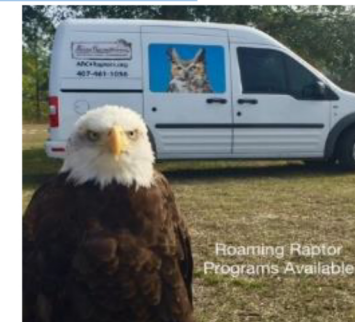
### Holiday Raptor Mingle – December 9, 2023 at ARC

Hawk! the Herald Angels sing! Celebrate the "owlidays" with fun crafts for kids and adults. Make an owl angel or wreath.

## Roaming Raptors

Roaming Raptors programs are available to come to your location or you can choose to bring your group to our center for a field trip.

Dates are booking quickly, so schedule your program today! Get more information and submit your program requests online at [ARC4raptors.org](http://ARC4raptors.org) under the education tab.



*The Avian Reconditioning Center is a specialized raptor rehabilitation facility where large outdoor enclosures and the use of falconry techniques provide a more natural environment for physical conditioning and weather proofing of orphaned and recuperating raptors.*

*State and Federal Wildlife Permits; 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation*

## Patron Reply Form – Please consider becoming a “Patron of the ARC.” All monies donated are used entirely for the birds' welfare.

NAME _____	_____ \$25.00 Wings of Copper
ADDRESS _____	_____ \$50.00 Wings of Bronze
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____	_____ \$100.00 Wings of Silver
EMAIL _____	_____ \$250.00 Wings of Gold
	_____ \$500.00+ Wings of Platinum

The Avian Reconditioning Center is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Donors may deduct all contributions as provided in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code, A. Copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll free (800)435-7352. State Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendations by the state.