



Branching Out

Fall 2019

Remembering Windy



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Our beautiful Bald Eagle Windy passed away at the age of 26 on June 27 from West Nile virus. Windy received the best possible care at UF Veterinary Hospital, but sadly was not able to overcome the virus. She will be sadly missed but always fondly remembered and will forever hold a very special place in our hearts and those of all who knew and loved her.

Windy and her brother Stormy came to live at ARC in 2007 and shared their amazing story of surviving the Storm of the Century with ARC visitors and on programs at schools and nature festivals. They were young eaglets in 1993 when the freak storm felled their nest and both suffered fractured wings when they were tossed to ground.

Windy was much more outgoing than Stormy and commanded the attention of everyone she met. She was a wonderful education ambassador for ARC, reflecting all the strength and courage associated with our National Symbol. Windy loved frolicking in the eagle play yard connected to her mews and would bathe in the pond and sit atop a low perch to preen and bask in the sun. Dinnertime was always met with excited calls and she would quickly trot back into her mews and step up onto her feeding perch to take her meal from her caretaker.

West Nile virus was first detected in the United States in 1999 and is the leading mosquito-borne disease in the continental United States affecting both humans and animals. Fortunately, most people infected with West Nile virus do not feel sick and only about 1 in 5 develop a fever and flu-like symptoms.

West Nile virus is much more serious in birds. Although over 40 species of mosquitos have been found to carry the virus, the most dangerous for the spread is the genus *Culex*, which feeds mainly on birds. Birds are the virus's primary natural reservoir where they act as an amplifier host and the virus has been detected in over 300 species of birds. Birds with West Nile virus often exhibit neurological signs including loss of coordination, weakness, lethargy and loss of appetite. West Nile virus is difficult to diagnose without conducting laboratory tests and once symptoms of the virus become visible, birds often die within a few days.

After carefully reviewing all the information available and consulting with our volunteer vet, Dr. Rick, about vaccinating for West Nile virus, we made the decision to vaccinate all our permanent resident raptors. The protocol calls for an initial dose followed by a booster two weeks later which meant we needed to purchase over 50 doses of the vaccine.

The vaccine is very costly and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who donated so generously via our Facebook campaign to help with the cost of protecting our birds against this debilitating and potentially deadly virus!



Busy Baby Season

As of mid-August, 69 baby raptors of 10 different species were admitted and 57 have been released bringing our release rate for this year's babies to 83%! Two American Kestrels and one Great Horned Owl are still receiving care at ARC.

Red-shouldered Hawks were our top admit with 17 admitted and 13 released. Nine of the 10 Cooper's Hawks admitted were released. Most of these young hawks were unharmed and just needed to be exposed to adult role models and fed until they reached fledging age. We admitted 5 Red-tailed Hawks, 2 were very seriously injured and sadly did not survive, and 2 were released.

We admitted 3 young Swallow-tailed Kites. Raising this species is a bit more challenging as the young must learn to glean prey from tree tops and to look for prey, such as insects, in the air. We introduce natural branches into the rehab mews and put prey items in the branches to encourage the young kites to hone their hunting skills.

American Kestrels can imprint on humans very quickly so it's imperative to expose the young to adult role models and minimize human contact to insure they develop natural behaviors.



We admitted 6 kestrel chicks and Moira, our resident female kestrel, was a wonderful surrogate mom patiently feeding and encouraging these chicks as they quickly grew up.

We admitted a total of 27 owlets of 4 species and released 25 with one young Great Horned Owl still at ARC for further evaluation. Nick-named Stu, this young owl seems to have some cognitive issues. Resident Great Horned Owl, Nonamé, assumed the role of surrogate mom for all 14 Great Horned owlets and that kept her very busy! She doted on each and every one, feeding them and keeping them warm until they were old enough to eat and move about on their own. Seven Barred Owlets were admitted and six were released. The young Barred owlets got along well and seemed to take comfort in being close together.



We didn't admit as many Barn Owlets and Screech Owlets as past years, with just three of each species coming in this year, but all were unhurt and returned to their natural habitats when they reached fledging age.



Did You Know...

From social butterflies to solitary scavengers, all animals gather into groups at some point in their lives. A group of perched hawks is called a **cast**, in flight a group is called a **kettle** and two or more spiraling in the air is called a **boil**. A group of owls is called a **parliament** and a group of eagles is called a **council** or a **convocation**.

Congratulations



ARC volunteers Charlie McKee with Eston (above), Bill Hammer with Gary (below) and Tiffany Perry passed the falconry exam and received their falconry permits! Charlie and Bill, seen here with their hawks on their first free flights, will apprentice under ARC's master falconer, Scott McCorkle. Tiffany will be trapping later in the fall and will apprentice under local falconer, Terry Arndt. Falconry is an ancient sport and a very demanding endeavor, requiring a serious dedication of time and energy from the falconer, but the rewards of hunting one-on-one with a hawk are exhilarating!



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
www.facebook.com/arc4raptors
www.instagram.com/arc4raptors
www.youtube.com/user/arc4raptorsorg

When you do your online shopping at Amazon, you can also help ARC by clicking on our link arc4raptors.org/amazon and following the prompts. Through our partnership with Amazon.com, ARC will receive a 6% donation on all purchases made by shoppers using this link.

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

The Nest Box Resource Shop is open on Saturday from 10a to 4p (1p during June & July). We have a large selection of raptor-themed items. 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 from 10a-4p (weather permitting). Stop by for an up-close and personal encounter with your favorite Florida raptor. We're located at 323 West Lester Road, Apopka, FL 32712. Visit ARC4raptors.org for a map.

Fall Owl Fest – November 9, 2019, 10a-3p

Join us for our 14th annual Fall Owl Fest – a family-friendly event featuring live owls and many other birds of prey, flight demos, nature and green-living exhibits and vendors, native plants, nest boxes. Kidz Zone with crafts and bounce house. Live music, food trucks and a coffee cafe. Great raffle prizes!

Sir Henry's Valentine Party – February 8, 2020, 10a-3p

Barn Owls are often called the Valentine Owl because of their heart-shaped face. Kids can make a Valentine for someone special and Sir Henry will be giving out party favors and candy kisses. Don't miss the Bake Sale with amazing sweets and treats baked by our volunteers.

Spring Affaire Renaissance Day – March 28, 2020, 10a-3p

Join us for a medieval celebration! Have an up-close and personal experience with our falcons, learn about the ancient sport of falconry and watch flight demonstrations. Kidz Zone with themed games and activities. Refreshments available. Bring your camera for some fabulous photo opportunities.

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 request online at 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 _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

_____ \$25.00 Wings of Copper

_____ \$50.00 Wings of Bronze

_____ \$100.00 Wings of Silver

_____ \$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.



P.O. Box 296
Apopka, FL 32704

It was a HOT summer! Mrs. P, Ike and Sparky enjoyed taking a cool dip!



Save the Date – Fall Owl Fest is November
9, 2019.

It's gonna be a HOOT!