



Tailwinds

RAPTOR EDUCATION & CONSERVATION

Summer/Fall 2025 Issue 4

TAILWINDS "MEWSLETTER"

Friends of Tailwinds

Thank you for being one of the Friends of Tailwinds! We are so grateful that you attended one of our events and shared your email with us. We hope you will enjoy the fourth issue of our seasonal "Mewsletter." We hope to see you at one of our upcoming programs!

News From The Mews

We are very sad to share the passing of our Great Horned Owl ambassador, **Henry**. Out of all the stories that come with the birds, his is my favorite.

Henry was an elderly bird when he was hit by a car. To reach such an age in the wild, he needed to be a formidable hunter and amazing flier. The collision resulted in brain damage and blindness in one eye. He was brought to a rehab, and there was a question of whether or not he would have a meaningful quality of life. He was borderline. But, we took a chance, and he recovered to the point where he could stand, eat independently, and fly perch to perch...mostly. He grew a whole new set of tail feathers, his hearing made up for his lack of vision, and through the exceptional care of our volunteers, he was comfortable on a glove and we were able to bring him to programs. The best, but also the hardest part about working with these creatures is how deeply we love them. Their time with us is transient, and when it's suddenly cut short, we are left with a hole in our hearts. He was so loved by all of us. Wherever his spirit is now, he is no longer hindered by his injuries. He can fly freely into a clear beautiful blue sky.



For Henry, My Owl
In loving memory

In the hush of dawn where stillness stays,
You watched the world in feathered grace,
Eyes like lanterns, deep and wise—
The silent keeper of the skies.

You came not tamed, but calm and proud,
A spirit shaped from wind and cloud.
Yet still, you let me close, and near,
And something wild drew me here.

I learned your ways, your quiet mind,
Each ruffle, blink—a sacred sign.
And in return, you let me see
A gentler world, where hearts fly free.

I came on days off, early light,
To check on you, to make things right.
Not for duty, not for show—
But simply this: I loved you so.

And though today your wings grew still,
I hope you felt my love until
The final breath, the soft release—
May your wild soul rest in peace.

Soft winds to ride, wide skies to roam,
A place where every soul finds home.
And if owls dream, may yours be kind—
Of forest winds and hands once kind.

I'll carry you inside my heart,
Where hollow loss and memory nest.
Fly far, dear friend, but leave me this:
The hush, the grace, the bond, the kiss.



Poem by Paula S



Picture by Anna G

Kensington, NH



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Meet Our Team!

Tailwinds volunteers are the cogs in the wheel that make everything come together. We are grateful for all our truly amazing volunteers. Each one comes with a unique story. We will share these stories throughout our newsletters.



Paula

I am **Dr. Paula Santana**, a nurse practitioner currently working as a critical care cardiac telemetry nurse, as well as an educator and researcher deeply committed to advancing healthcare. My drive for innovation and service carries into my work as a volunteer at Tailwinds Raptor Education, where I blend my medical background with a passion for wildlife. Raptors have always fascinated me for their strength, grace, and unique roles within the natural world.

What truly sets this organization apart for me is the camaraderie among the volunteers and the collective commitment to providing the highest standard of care for these remarkable birds. I find joy in every experience—whether working closely with the raptors or engaging the public in educational programs. Seeing curiosity sparked and minds opened to conservation reminds me how impactful our efforts are, both for the birds and the community.



Anna

While the start of my career in the conservation field has led me mostly in the direction of plants and hydrology, wildlife and - especially birds - are my real passion. I was delighted to find Tailwinds near the end of 2024. It has been incredible to learn and practice handling, training, and providing enrichment for the raptors, and getting to know each wonderful bird - not to mention getting to know the wonderful people in the Tailwinds community. A highlight of volunteering for me has been working with Phoenix; whether flying her to stumps in the yard or on her Zipline, it is spectacular to watch her attentiveness, intelligence, and power in motion.



Species Spotlight



In honor of dear Henry, we will shine our spotlight on the magnificent Great Horned Owl.

The classic “Whoo-oo-oo, hoo-hoo” call played over any owl in almost every movie is that of the great horned owl. Large, grey to brown in color, with yellow eyes and their “plumicorns” (ear tufts) they are instantly recognizable. Their coloration can vary based on location, with birds from the Pacific Northwest colored dark and sooty, to the birds located in subarctic regions and Canada, where they are almost white.



Henry at SELT Trailfest



Great horned owls are one of the most well known owl species in the world. They range across the Americas, thriving in forests, deserts, wetlands, and many other varieties of habitat. Their prey can be anything from a small mouse, to birds and mammals sometimes larger than itself. In the wild, they can live up to around 15-20 years, and in captivity they can live upwards of 30 years.

Great horned owls will often use the nests of other birds, but they are also known to settle in cavities in trees, cliffs, and human made structures. The size of the nest depends on the species that originally built it, but they may add to it with other pieces of bark, their own feathers, fur or feathers from prey, and even their own trampled pellets.

Visit this link to learn more about attracting owls to your backyard



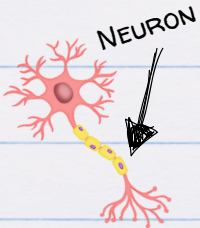
<https://www.owlresearchinstitute.org/attracting-owls-to-your-backyard>



RODENTICIDE AWARENESS

Last issue discussed anticoagulant rodenticides. This issue will focus on bromethalin, a common rodenticide sold under the names of Tomcat Rat and Mouse killer, and Victor Fast Kill Brand.

Bromethalin is a neurotoxin. Instead of attacking the blood, it targets the nervous system. Let's break it down.



The nervous system is like the body's electrical power grid. It allows the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) to send signals to the rest of the body through a network of special cells called neurons, that form pathways all throughout the body. These signals control our every thought and movement, and power the 5 senses, (taste, touch, sight, smell, and hearing).

In order for our central nervous system to send these signals, we first need to create them, and for that we need an energy source. This source is found within tiny little structures inside our cells (mitochondria is the power house of the cell). This energy, called ATP, is created through a complicated chemical process called "oxidative phosphorylation"

Now, let's introduce Bromethalin to the system.

Bromethalin goes right for the energy source. It crashes into the process of oxidative phosphorylation, and disrupts our cells ability to create ATP. This can cause a breakdown of a special membrane that insulates our neurons, resulting in a build up of fluid and pressure in the spinal cord and brain. As the pressure builds around the brain and spinal cord, the whole system starts to malfunction, sending out faulty signals. This manifests as poor coordination, wobbly movements, visual impairment, paralysis of limbs, seizures, coma, and eventually death.

Only now, studies are starting to track if birds of prey have been exposed to Bromethalin. This is complicated by the widespread outbreak of H5N1 (avian influenza), because they both result in similar neurologic symptoms, and there is no definitive test (yet) to prove that a bird has Bromethalin toxicosis.

"But, bromethalin is not an anticoagulant rodenticide. Can secondary poisoning still happen?"

Yes. Any method of rodenticide poses a threat of secondary poisoning to wildlife, not to mention direct poisoning to pets and children. There is no such thing as a "safe rodenticide".

To learn more about rodenticide alternatives, please visit Raptors are the Solution by clicking this link. They are a fantastic resource!

<https://raptorsarethesolution.org>





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Upcoming Programs

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

September

19 Portsmouth Senior Center- 3:00pm
21 The Word Barn- 3:00pm
25 Kimball Library- 6:00pm
30 Exeter Senior Center 2:30pm

October

11 Georgetown Peabody Library 10
13 Coppal House Farm 2:00
18 SELT Trailfest, Time TBD
25 Loudon NH 1:00

Visit our website for more information and how to register for these upcoming programs. We hope to see you there!

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

Adopt a Raptor

Did you know?

One mouse costs **\$1.00**

Which translates to **\$450** a month!

Every year the birds have an annual wellness visit with our veterinarian. This can cost up to **\$1000**, not including other medical expenses that pop up.

You can help us by adopting one of our Raptors!

Head on over to our website www.tailwinds.live to sponsor one of our birds.

The adoption kit comes with a certificate, photo, personal history of the bird, and a tailwinds sticker.



Ways to Help Tailwinds

We are grateful for all of your support! Food, housing, and veterinary care for our raptors can be expensive. Ways you can support Tailwinds include...

- Check: Can be made out to Tailwinds, and mailed to 14 Shaws Hill Rd, Kensington NH, 03833
- Venmo: @Tailwindsnh or scan QR code! —>
- A list of items that help with basic care and husbandry for our birds can be found at:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3MOULKSH4DJN?ref=wl_share



venmo