

Birds of Prey Benefit at Superstition HD

People had another opportunity to observe birds of prey up close when Superstition Harley-Davidson, located at 2910 W Apache Trail in Apache Junction AZ, hosted a benefit for The Arizona Raptor Center on Saturday October 12, 2019. The ARC mission is to promote wildlife conservation and environmental awareness.

This is not the first time that birds from the ARC have been here. They are always amazing to see. It was very interesting to speak with the Falconers ... the birds' handlers & caregivers.

The Falconers adopt these birds, making them full-time members of their household. This is a significant commitment. For example... an African Augar who was there with her handler is now 14 years old and has a life expectancy of up to 35 years. Among the birds also visiting today was an Ornate Hawk-Eagle, a Harris's Hawk, and a Golden Eagle. Each of these particular birds have their back story as to why they are unable to be released into the wild. They've become 'ambassadors' for the ARC.

The Arizona Raptor Center has an educational mission. They do presentations at camps ... Scouts, hunting groups, & the like. They teach about the importance of birds of prey in maintaining a balanced eco-system & how to co-exist with raptors in different environments... urban, suburban, & rural.

One of the things they are also working to get across is the importance of using steel shot instead of lead shot when hunting. Lead poisoning is among the

health issues they see when caring for injured birds. The lead shot ends up in the water and in the food chain. Spent shot will be in the entrails that hunters sometimes leave behind when they've dressed their kill to pack out. Or birds & other wildlife that survive the hunt inadvertently eat the shot that 'missed its mark' & falls to the ground. They either die slowly from lead poisoning or quickly by a larger predator, which then ingests the lead that is in their prey's system. And so on.

ARC experts care for injured & sick birds with the primary goal to release them back to the wild. If you find an injured Raptor, call The Arizona Raptor Center at 602-549-8482. It is recommended that you make no attempt to capture, handle, or care for a raptor yourself. Some issues they see include broken wings, injuries from window strikes, dehydration, and West Nile Virus ~ which they get from mosquito bites. Donations to the ARC go toward the cost of food for the animals being rehabilitated and the cost for medical attention needed by the raptors in their care.

The ARC also tracks bird migrations, the progress of birds that they have released, and the affects of habitat loss on the population.

The efforts of the ARC impact our environment & therefore us, whether we realize it or not. Learn more about the Arizona Raptor Center at <http://www.arizonaraptorcenter.org>

Betsy & Bruce

