

The Birds of Prey of TGO

One of the most exciting parts of living in The Great Outdoors RV & Golf Resort is sharing our skies, woods, and wetlands with some of Florida's most impressive birds of prey. Whether soaring high overhead, silently hunting at dusk, or perched quietly watching from a pine tree, these raptors are a powerful reminder that nature is thriving all around us.

Birds of prey play a critical role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. They help control rodents, insects, fish populations, and even clean the environment by removing carrion. Each species has its own unique hunting style, habitat, and purpose in nature's balance.



Bald Eagle

The Bald Eagle remains one of America's most powerful symbols and a true conservation success story.

These magnificent birds are commonly seen throughout Brevard County near lakes, wetlands, and rivers. Eagles build massive nests that they often reuse and expand year after year.

Seeing one soaring above TGO or perched near water is always a breathtaking experience and a reminder of how far wildlife conservation has come.



Osprey

The Osprey is one of the most recognizable raptors around TGO's lakes and waterways. Often called the "fish hawk," these birds specialize almost entirely in catching fish.

Watching an osprey hover before diving feet-first into the water is one of the most incredible sights in Florida wildlife. Their reversible outer toes and sharp talons help them grip slippery fish while carrying them headfirst through the air for better aerodynamics.



Red-tailed Hawk

Broad-winged and powerful, the Red-tailed Hawk is often seen soaring high over open areas searching for prey below.

Their sharp eyesight allows them to spot movement from incredible distances. They are among Florida's top daytime predators and play an important role in balancing rodent populations.

Photos by Chad Avian



Red-shouldered Hawk

The Red-shouldered Hawk is one of the most commonly heard hawks in wooded Florida neighborhoods.

Their loud whistling screams echo through trees and often alert residents before the bird is even spotted. These hawks hunt rodents, snakes, frogs, insects, and small mammals while helping naturally control pest populations.

Cooper's Hawk

Fast, agile, and incredibly skilled, Cooper's Hawks are specialists at hunting smaller birds through trees and tight spaces.

They are commonly seen darting quickly through wooded areas and sometimes surprising backyard feeder birds. Their speed and maneuverability make them one of the most efficient hunters in our area.

The Guardians of Our Skies



The Birds of Prey of TGO

Great Horned Owl

The Great Horned Owl is one of the largest and most powerful owls found in Central Florida.

These impressive nighttime hunters are recognized by their large yellow eyes and distinctive feathered "horns." They prey on rodents, rabbits, birds, snakes, and other small animals. Great Horned Owls usually spend the daylight hours resting quietly in tall trees, making them difficult to spot. Around TGO, listen after dark for their deep, familiar hooting calls coming from wooded areas, especially around dusk and early morning.



American Kestrel

The American Kestrel is the smallest falcon in North America and one of the most colorful.

These tiny raptors are often seen perched on utility wires or fence posts while searching for insects, lizards, and mice. Despite their small size, kestrels are fierce hunters and incredibly fast flyers.



Swallow-tailed Kite

The Swallow-tailed Kite is one of the most graceful and easily recognized birds of prey found in Florida.

Its striking black-and-white coloring and deeply forked tail make it unmistakable in flight. These agile raptors spend much of their time soaring overhead, catching insects and small prey. Around TGO, they are most often seen during the spring and summer months.



Barred Owl

The Barred Owl is one of the most beloved night-time birds in Florida woods.

Their famous call often sounds like they are asking, “Who cooks for you?” These large owls hunt rodents, frogs, insects, and small animals, helping keep nighttime prey populations balanced.

Hearing a Barred Owl calling through the trees at night is one of the magical sounds of living close to nature.

Eastern Screech Owl

Small and beautifully camouflaged, the Eastern Screech Owl often goes completely unnoticed despite living close to homes and neighborhoods.

These tiny owls nest in tree cavities and hunt insects, rodents, and small reptiles after dark. Their soft trills and haunting nighttime calls are often heard more than the birds are seen.

Turkey Vulture

Turkey Vultures are among nature’s cleanup crew and are far more important than people realize. They are easily distinguished by their red heads.

Using an extraordinary sense of smell, they locate carrion and help prevent the spread of disease by removing dead animals from the environment. Their soaring flight with wings held in a shallow “V” shape makes them easy to recognize.

Black Vulture

Smaller and darker than Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures are highly social birds often seen gathering in groups.

Unlike Turkey Vultures, they rely more on eyesight than smell to locate food. Together, both vulture species perform an essential service in maintaining healthy ecosystems.



Why Birds of Prey Matter

Raptors are essential to healthy ecosystems. They remove weak or sick prey, control rodent and insect populations, clean the environment, and help maintain natural balance.

They are also indicators of environmental health. When birds of prey thrive, it usually means the ecosystem supporting them is functioning well.

Living in TGO gives many of us the opportunity to witness these incredible birds almost daily — from osprey diving into ponds to hawks soaring overhead and owls calling after sunset.

The next time you look up and spot a large bird gliding across the sky or hear an owl calling at night, take a moment to appreciate these remarkable hunters that share our community and help keep nature in balance.