



Utah Birds of Prey (Raptors)

Tips on how to protect raptors and avoid conflicts

SHARE THE WILD

Understanding the threats to raptors and learning ways to minimize those threats are the first steps in helping protect birds of prey. One of the greatest threats to raptors and other wildlife is habitat loss.

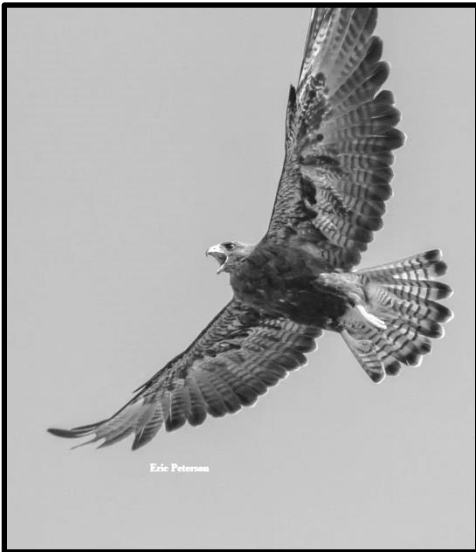
Often things we don't value are important to wildlife. For example, some raptors prefer to perch on tall, dead trees. Kestrels and small owls often nest in holes in dead trees, but unfortunately, many old trees get cut down. Do you think that old nest is abandoned? Don't remove it; raptors such as merlins, long-eared owls, and great-horned owls use the old nests of ravens and magpies.

Here are some tips to help protect raptors in your backyard:

- ✓ Save large old growth trees and do not remove dead trees, unless they are a hazard to your family.
- ✓ Avoid removing trees during the prime-nesting season in spring and summer.
- ✓ Supervise dogs and keep cats indoors. Young raptors learning to fledge are vulnerable to pets.
- ✓ Avoid using poisons to control rodents. Raptors may become poisoned when they catch a rat or mouse that has ingested poison.
- ✓ Avoid using pesticides too. Raptors may eat rodents or birds that are sickened by fertilizers and pesticide sprays.
- ✓ Minimize the chances of window strikes by moving bird feeders further away from windows, and add bird-detering stickers to your windowpanes.
- ✓ Dispose of oil and antifreeze properly. Antifreeze is toxic to wild animals as well as pets.
- ✓ Install a chimney cap or screen over attic ventilation openings and vent pipes to prevent nesting in your home.
- ✓ Install raptor nesting boxes or platforms on your property.
- ✓ Leave baby raptors alone if they are on the ground. Birds are very good parents and they will return to feed their young.



UDWR Phil Douglass



Eric Peterson

wildawareutah.org

Protecting raptors while recreating:

- Drive safely and watch for wildlife near the roads. Vehicles kill hundreds of raptors every year. Raptors like eagles and vultures will often feed on road kill or hunt in the tall grasses along roadways.
- Hunters and anglers can help prevent raptor deaths from lead poisoning. Raptors get lead poisoning from eating fish, birds and mammals that have been shot with lead bullets, or ingested lead sinkers.
- Purchase lead free ammunition, and sinkers.
- Bury gut piles so wildlife cannot ingest ammunition shrapnel.
- Collect and dispose of fishing lines, kite strings and nets.



Raptors (eagles, falcons, hawks, etc.) are important predators. They help to control rodent and insect populations.

Avoiding Conflicts

Raptors will sometimes prey on small pets and livestock, such as poultry. Keep your house cats inside and supervise small dogs while outdoors. Keep chickens and other poultry in roofed coops, especially at night to prevent owls from preying on them.

Raptors and Songbirds: Some raptors prey on songbirds and will hunt for prey near birdfeeders. This is a natural process, but if you are concerned about the songbirds at your feeder, you can install a roof or overhang above the feeders and plant thick, tall grasses or bushes near the feeders to provide hiding areas for the birds.

Nesting on Homes: Raptors may sometimes build nests on buildings because of the unavailability of natural nest sites. Exclusion should be done in the fall and winter and not during the nesting season. Provide the raptors with alternative nesting areas where possible. To keep birds off of ledges, attach netting to the roof, beams or girders, then drape it across the front of the building and tightly secure the base. Cover vents and attic openings with mesh or netting. Install a grid of upright bird wire barbs along the ledges to deter perching.

DID YOU KNOW?

A single pair of ferruginous hawks can prey upon 480 ground squirrels in one summer while raising young!



Raptors found in Utah include:

American kestrel, Bald eagle, Boreal owl, Broad-winged hawk, Burrowing owl, California condor, Common black-hawk, Cooper's hawk, Ferruginous hawk, Flammulated owl, Golden eagle, Great-horned owl, Long-eared owl, Merlin, Spotted owl, Northern goshawk, Northern harrier, Northern pygmy-owl, Northern saw-whet owl, Osprey, Peregrine falcon, Prairie falcon, Red-tailed hawk, Rough-legged hawk, Sharp-shinned hawk, Short-eared owl, Swainson's hawk, Turkey vulture, Western screech-owl.

Never harm a raptor, either in your backyard or in the wild, and avoid disturbing nesting raptors. All raptors are protected by state and federal regulations. It is illegal to capture or kill a raptor; it is also illegal to possess a raptor (living or dead) without the proper permits from local state governments and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Help Stop Poaching Hotline: 1-800-662-3337



If you find a sick or injured raptor here is a link to find an authorized Utah wildlife rehabilitator:
<http://wildlife.utah.gov/dwr/grazing/258-wildlife-rehabilitators.html>

