



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER

Welcome to The RARE Group
newsletter!

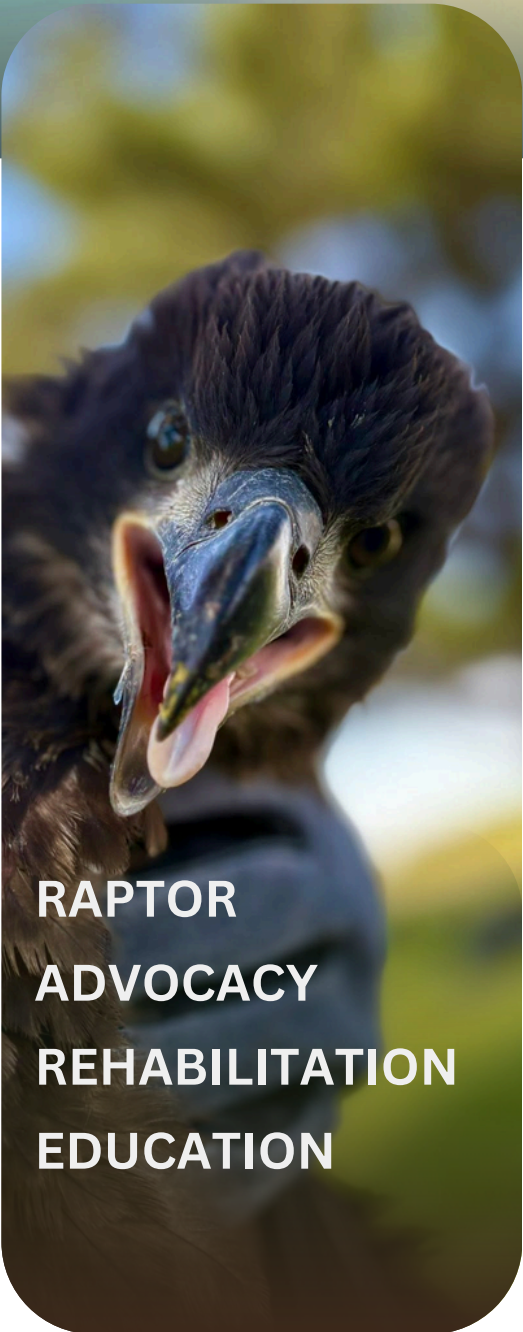
Hello Friends of **RARE**

Summer is one of the busiest seasons for Iowa's raptors. Many of the young birds that fledged this spring are now continuing their journey toward independence, learning how to hunt and survive on their own. At the same time, our rehabilitation clinic remains busy caring for injured and orphaned birds in need of a second chance.

Inside this issue, you'll meet some of the dedicated volunteers who make our mission possible, read inspiring release stories, and learn how discarded fishing line can impact raptors and other wildlife.

We're also celebrating one of our avian ambassadors, Killy the American Kestrel. In these last months, Killy took on a special role as a surrogate father to a young kestrel in our care. We couldn't think of a better time to wish him a Happy Father's Day! Thank you for supporting The RARE Group and our mission to rehabilitate, educate, and advocate for Iowa's raptors. We hope you enjoy this summer's newsletter.

-The RARE Team



**RAPTOR
ADVOCACY
REHABILITATION
EDUCATION**



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY, KILLY!

KILLY'S NEWEST PARENTING ADVENTURE

This Father's Day, we'd like to recognize one of the special dads in our lives: Killy, our American Kestrel avian ambassador.

Earlier this month, a hatch-year American Kestrel arrived at the clinic in need of help. The young bird required a few good meals and some treatment to its eyes, and needed a safe place to recover. While the kestrel received supportive care, Killy stepped into an important role as surrogate dad.



Many people are surprised to learn that raptors can sometimes accept young birds that aren't their own. This behavior can help orphaned birds get a second chance and gives rehabilitators an opportunity to support natural development.

After a few good meals and some much-needed eye care, the young kestrel was strong enough to be introduced to a new surrogate family in the wild. Today, the bird is thriving and learning the skills it will need to survive on its own.

We're grateful to Killy for helping us care for the next generation of kestrels. From all of us at The RARE Group,
Happy Father's Day, Killy!

SPONSOR KILLY TODAY

After stepping up as a surrogate dad this spring, Killy has certainly earned some recognition. Surprisingly, Killy is a RARE avian ambassador WITHOUT A SPONSOR!

Our Avian Ambassador Sponsorship Program helps provide food, housing, enrichment, and veterinary care for our ambassadors.

If Killy's Father's Day story warmed your heart, consider becoming his sponsor and helping him continue his important work as an ambassador for American Kestrels.

RAPTOR ADVOCACY REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION

Learn more
about our
sponsorship
program



EDUCATION

This spring, we welcomed a new educator to our programs: Dana! Dana has been a RARE volunteer for several years, and we're so excited to have her join the education team. We asked Dana about her education experience thus far, and here's what she had to say:

What has been your favorite moment at a RARE education program?

I loved the program at Hauberg Estate because I wasn't expecting to present, and then Sonja asked if I wanted to do it and boom! My favorite part of that presentation was bringing out Bog: everyone oozed excitement.

Why do you think education programs are important?

The educational programs are so important to share the truth about raptors. There are so many misconceptions out there. These programs are a wonderful opportunity to remind the public everything they can do as individuals to help raptors and the environment.

Who is your favorite avian ambassador?

Bog with Killy a very close second. Bog, only because I joined RARE because of the Barred Owls in my backyard.



RARE TAKES PRIDE

The RARE Group was thrilled to participate in this year's Iowa City Pride Parade!

We loved connecting with community members, sharing our passion for raptor conservation, and handing out stickers featuring our avian ambassadors.

A Barred Owl with brown and white striped feathers is perched on a thick, dark tree branch. The background is a soft-focus green forest.

FISHING LINE AND RAPTORS:

A DANGEROUS COMBINATION

A fishing rod with a blue and yellow handle and a yellow reel is leaning against a wooden dock railing. The background shows a clear blue sky and a body of water.

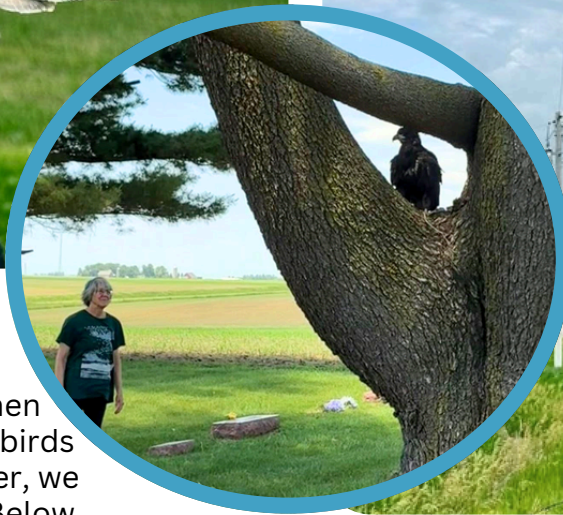
When you're out fishing this season, you can play an important role in helping our local raptors survive! If you cast out and your line gets caught in a tree or some other structure, taking the time to retrieve and properly dispose of the line can ensure a raptor avoids a dangerous and potentially deadly situation.

When a raptor is hunting, its attention is solely focused on pursuing prey. Because of this, a filament of fishing line dangling in the air can be nearly impossible for the bird to see. If a raptor flies through it, the line can easily become tangled in its feathers, causing it to hang from the filament with its entire body weight.

When we admit birds in these situations, we often see broken or dislocated bones, severe soft tissue injuries, or damage to the patagium. The patagium is the skin that connects the bird's primary and secondary feathers to its body and is essential for flight. Unfortunately, if the damage to the patagium or underlying bone is too severe, we have to make the difficult decision to euthanize the bird.

Every year, we admit raptors that have been injured by improperly discarded fishing line and tackle. This issue especially impacts Barred Owls, which often make their homes near lakes, rivers, and creeks where fishing activity is common. A few moments spent cleaning up fishing line can make a life-saving difference for the wildlife that shares these spaces with us.

The next time you're fishing, please make sure to clean up after yourself. Our volunteers and our wildlife will thank you for it!



RELEASES

One of our ultimate goals is to strengthen conservation by giving these beautiful birds a second chance at life. This last quarter, we are thrilled to have multiple releases. Below are a few of their stories.

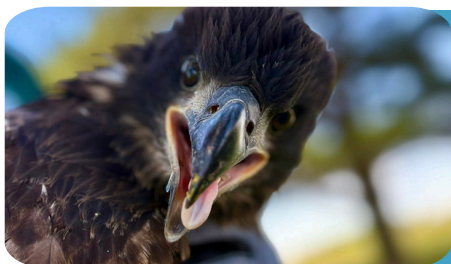


RED-TAILED HAWK - NEUROLOGICAL

This bird arrived at RARE in early May after being found unable to stand or fly. After receiving supportive care for neurological symptoms and spending time rebuilding its strength in one of our flight cages, it fully regained its ability to fly and was successfully released back into the wild.

BARRED OWL - EXHAUSTION

This young owlet was brought to RARE after being found on the ground. After an overnight stay, a few good meals, and some fluids, we confirmed it was uninjured and returned it to a nearby branch at its original location. Before long, a parent owl appeared nearby, making for a successful reunion.



BALD EAGLE - FELL FROM NEST

This juvenile Bald Eagle was found on the ground beneath its nest and brought to RARE for evaluation. After receiving fluids, a meal, and a clean bill of health, the young eagle was returned to its nesting tree and reunited with its parents.



MEET THE REHABBER:

COLIN

Colin's journey with RARE began after finding an injured bunny and connecting with a local wildlife rehabilitator. The following week, he was asked to transport a fledgling Great Horned Owl to a rescue near Chicago. Curious if there was a closer option, Colin did some research and discovered The RARE Group.

When he arrived at the clinic, Jodeane asked how much time he had available to volunteer. Colin's answer? "I'm free all day!" She handed him a pair of welder's gloves, and he's been coming back ever since.

Since becoming a rehabber in 2021, Colin has enjoyed helping conserve Iowa's native raptors and educating the community about their important role in our ecosystem. His favorite raptors are the Osprey and the Great Grey Owl.

For those interested in wildlife rehabilitation, Colin offers this advice: "It's not for the weak of heart. Many difficult decisions have to be made, but seeing a case through from intake to release is a reward worth the work."

Outside of RARE, Colin is the Marketing & Events Coordinator for Nahant Marsh Education Center in Davenport. In his free time, he enjoys birding, wildlife photography, and spending time with his puppy, Ernest, and cats, Victor and Mary Jane.



2026 DONORS

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN RAPTORS LIVES

DONATIONS MADE FROM 3/1 - 5/31

Elizabeth Haas*
Mary Schweitzer
Jennifer
Zimmerman

Alexandra Musel*
Ellen Nicholson
Kelly Peterson
Theresa Smith

Ken & Marge
Washburn
Timothy Huesman

AVIAN SPONSORSHIPS FROM 3/1 - 5/31

Julianne DeLussio - Bog

Steven Schroeder - Bog

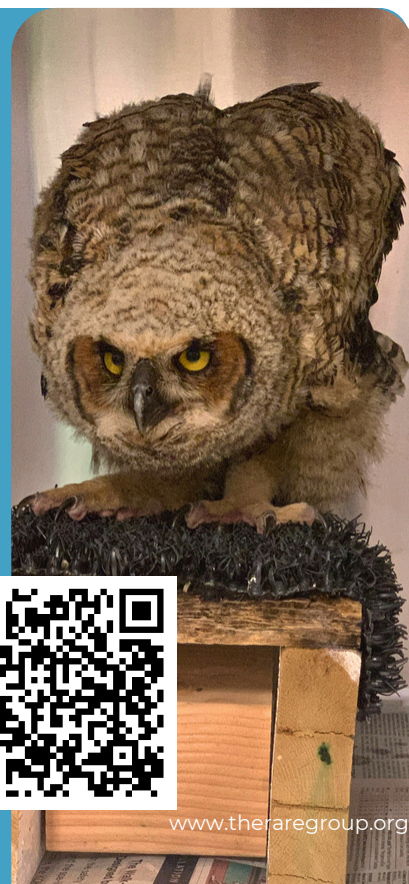
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RAPTOR ADVOCACY REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION

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