



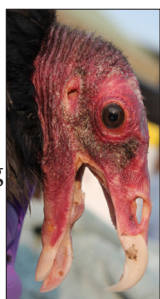
P.O. Box 492, Hoquiam, WA 98550  
[www.coastalraptors.org](http://www.coastalraptors.org)  
 Conservation Through Research and Education

## COASTAL RAPTORS TIDEINGS



Nick Dunlop

*Monitoring the Health of Avian Scavengers on the Washington Coast.* Financial support in 2013 from individual donors and the Oregon Zoo allowed **Coastal Raptors** to continue monitoring the health of avian scavengers - Bald Eagles, Turkey Vultures and Common Ravens – on the Oregon and Washington coasts. Initiated in 2012, Coastal Raptors collaborates with Hamer Environmental, the US Geological Survey Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center (Corvallis, OR) and several other organizations for this research project. As of November 2013, 19 Turkey Vultures, five Bald Eagles and three Common Ravens have been live-captured and tissue sampled for contaminants and disease analysis. A primary goal of the study is assessment of lead levels in these species. They may ingest lead while feeding on lead-contaminated food from a variety of sources, including: marine mammals which wash up dead after being shot illegally and carcass remains left by hunters and varmint shooters. The critically endangered California Condor is especially susceptible to lead poisoning. Lead poisoning in condors has hampered reintroduction efforts. Determining lead exposure in Bald Eagles, Turkey Vultures and ravens is a way to evaluate the risk of lead poisoning in California condors, an important task given an emerging interest in re-introducing the species to its former range in the Pacific Northwest.



Dan Varland

Turkey Vulture

*Long-term Raptor Monitoring on the Washington Coast.* **Coastal Raptors** continues to document raptor use of Washington beaches, using a 4-wheel drive vehicle to cover ground. Ongoing since 1995, as of November 2013, 171 Peregrine Falcons have been captured and banded for this research (for the story on one of these banded birds, W/Z, see pages 2 and 3).

In addition to Peregrine Falcons, other raptor species are sometimes captured and banded along the way; the list includes five Gyrfalcons, an uncommon winter resident in Washington that nests close to and beyond the arctic circle.

On March 3, 2006 we captured and banded a one-year-old female Gyrfalcon at Ocean Shores. Showing fidelity to Ocean Shores, six years later **to the day**, on March 3, 2013, we re-captured her at Ocean Shores one-half mile from where she was banded.



Dianna Moore

L to R: Scott Horton, Dan Varland and Dave Murnen with Gyrfalcon 8 in 2006



Wayne Munich

Gyrfalcon 8 in 2013

The Board Members, Treasurer, Goals, Mission and Vision of **Coastal Raptors** are listed on page 7. Visit our website at [www.coastalraptors.org](http://www.coastalraptors.org).



# PEREGRINE FALCON W/Z



Dianna Moore

Dan Varland (right) and brother Andy Varland with W/Z at banding, November 17, 2007



Dan Varland

Kim Middleton with W/Z at one of three re-captures, March 2, 2013



Dan Varland

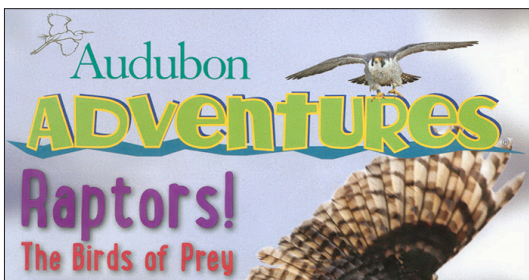
Visual identification band after 5+ years of wear

On November 17, 2007 we captured and banded a first-year male Peregrine Falcon on the beach at Ocean Shores, Washington. Upon examination of his plumage, we assigned him a green visual identification band, which, according to the federal bird banding protocol, is reserved for Peale's Peregrine Falcons. Peale's peregrines are darker in plumage and larger in size than Continental or Tundra peregrines, the other two North American subspecies. Peale's peregrines nest in coastal Washington, British Columbia and Alaska. About 80% of the peregrines of the 171 peregrines we have captured and banded so far match the Peale's subspecies plumage and size.

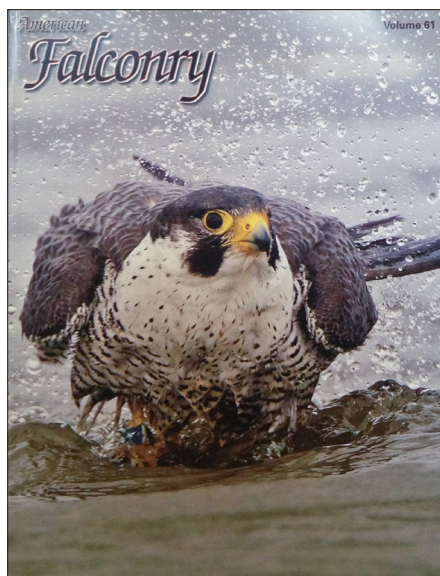
This falcon's visual identification band was engraved with W over Z. Unique to the individual, band codes such as W/Z allow a bird's identification without re-capture; codes can be read through a spotting scope at 150 feet, sometimes further. Following capture, once each year we try to recapture peregrines we've banded to obtain blood and feather samples for contaminants and genetics analysis. Since banding, W/Z has been re-sighted 21 times and recaptured three.

Our re-sightings reveal that W/Z spends time in winter and early spring on the beach at Ocean Shores. W/Z is not shy. He allows close approach, which makes it easy to read his band and to get photos. Some of the best photos over the years have been taken by Nick Dunlop, Kate Davis and Rob Palmer. Nick says W/Z is 'tame as a cat'. This year one taken by Kate wound up atop the lettering of an Audubon publication for kids. Another by Rob appeared on the cover of the journal of the North American Falconry Association, *American Falconry*.

The first time W/Z was re-sighted far Ocean Shores was 2013. The observation was made by John Palka, his family and friends during a camping trip to Olympic Peninsula's Shi-Shi beach (pronounced *shy-shy*, see story, facing page). It seems W/Z was nesting nearby. The group saw him eating a freshly killed gull, feeding some to a young falcon.



Kate Davis



L to R: Nick Dunlop, Kate Davis and Rob Palmer at Ocean Shores. Together they produced the award-winning book, *Raptors of the West, Captured in Photographs*.

Rob Palmer

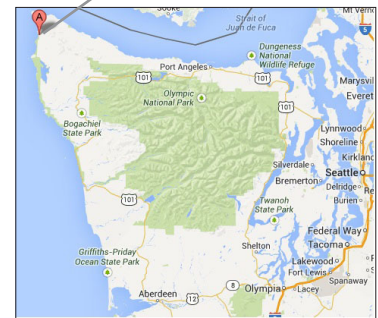


W/Z feeds on a gull, Shi-Shi beach



Bull Kelp basking in the sun at Shi-Shi beach

Steph Abegg



Shi-Shi beach, labeled 'A' on this map of the Olympic Peninsula

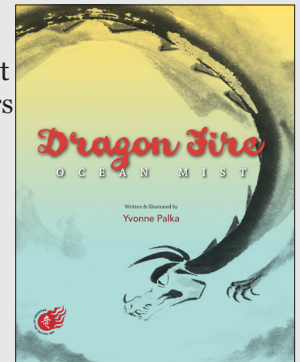
Google Maps

### *John Palka reflects on observing W/Z during a camping trip to the Olympic Peninsula*



Way back in 1971, when our daughters Rachel and Tanya were only six and four years old, we took our first camping trip to Shi-Shi Beach. We had read about the beach in a Mountaineers guide and it seemed like it would be a fine adventure, manageable for little feet and little backpacks. We were entranced. Setting up camp way down by Willoughby Creek, close to the Point of the Arches, we reveled in the fine sand, the brilliant sea creatures in the tide pools, and especially the sense of magic evoked by all the magnificent caves in the sea stacks and around the point.

Over the years we returned often, even three times a summer. Sometimes we came by ourselves, but more often there were other young families with us, especially Tanya's very best friend Heather and the rest of her rambunctious family. Once the kids reached their teen years and went off to college, Yvonne and I made only the occasional outing to Shi-Shi. However, after Rachel and Tanya married and started their own families the pull returned, and about ten years ago we went on the first of many three-generational excursions. The stories we told on these trips even turned into Yvonne's first book for children, *Dragon Fire, Ocean Mist*, illustrated with her wonderful brush paintings in Chinese/Japanese sumi style. These trips, including Heather and her family who come all the way from Portland, have now become a powerful tradition.



Thus it came to pass that from July 30th to August 2nd of 2013 many happy campers, ranging in age from 11 to 75, found themselves taking in the beauties of Shi-Shi Beach and the Point of the Arches. As usual, we were camped close to Willoughby Creek, our supply of fresh water. The dragons were still there, visible to the more discerning eyes. And for the first time ever, at least in our awareness, the falcons were there as well. We spotted the first one shortly before noon on August 1st, 2013, in the bright sunshine fairly close to our busy camp. It was dismembering its prey and allowed me to approach to within not very many yards. After a while (and many pictures) it took off, but it circled, came back again, and continued to feed. It finally left some time later. At eight o'clock the following morning, while it was still grey and misty, there was a new falcon. Unlike yesterday's falcon, this one was banded! It was hard at work on a fresh kill. The feathers it plucked off its prey flew in a stream right into our campsite and, for a short while, we saw it feeding a young one approaching adult size. Unfortunately, before I could get my camera the youngster flew into the trees. The parent, however, was undeterred and continued to feed boldly and posed for many more pictures. On some of them its bands were clearly visible, hence this report.

John Palka

Professor Emeritus of Biology, University of Washington

Founding Co-Director, Program on the Environment, University of Washington

September 26, 2013



Month	Topic	Audience/Location
March	<i>Raptors in Action</i> : videos presented by Dan Reiff; Snowy Owl photos by Dan Varland	Local community/Hoquiam's Polson Museum
April	<i>In Search of Coastal Raptors</i> : Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival Field Trip	Shorebird Festival attendees/Ocean Shores
May	<i>Monitoring the Health of Coastal Raptors</i>	Nationwide/Feature was a 2-minute segment on National Public Radio's Bird Note (for a listen, go to the link at the Coastal Raptors website homepage)
October	<i>Monitoring Avian Health and Disease on the Pacific Coast</i>	Grays Harbor Pacific School Retirees' Association/Montesano
November	<i>Wildlife and Lead: Understanding the Issues and Working Together to Reduce Exposure in the PNW</i>	PNW wildlife professionals/Portland
December	<i>Birds Are Beachcombers Too!</i>	Local Community/Ocean Shores (Fundraiser for Ocean Shores Interpretive Center)



Dianna Moore

Dan Reiff (standing, at right) gives a video lecture on raptors, entitled *Raptors in Action*, at the Polson Museum in Hoquiam.

## From the Grays Harbor Pacific School Retirees Association



Oct. 23, 2013

Dear Mr. Varland,

We would like to thank you so much for your presentation on Coastal Raptors at our meeting and luncheon today. It was very informative and we enjoyed learning about the scientific research and

the visual identification of wildlife birds. You and your colleagues show much patience for all that you do.

We were sorry there wasn't a larger turnout for your program, but several were vacationing or ill.

Thank you again -  
Grays Harbor Pacific School Retirees

Jim Leggett - President  
Marilyn Pratt - Sunshine



Collin Eagles-Smith (left) and Garth Herring

Dan Varland



Golden Eagle nestling



Eric Forsman



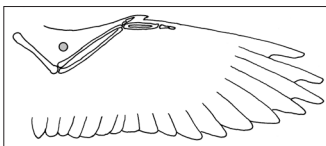
Jeremy Buck

Bill Price

**Blood sampling Golden Eagles.** Last spring Dan and 5 other wildlife biologists teamed up to band and blood sample nestling Golden Eagles near Mahler National Wildlife Refuge in southeast Oregon. This effort was part of a larger project headed by the Oregon Eagle Foundation to monitor Golden Eagle nesting success in Oregon. Four team members, those pictured above, needed training in the 'how to' of blood sampling eagles. While all four were experienced in drawing blood from birds, none had experience in taking blood samples from eagles. The Federal Bird Banding Lab, which oversees and regulates bird banding activities nationally, requires blood sampling training specific to the type of bird from which samples are to be drawn. Dan provided the four with the training they needed.

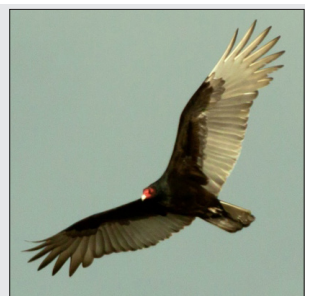
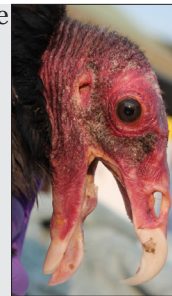


Source: [www.birdandmoon.com](http://www.birdandmoon.com)



Outline showing wing feathers, bones and the location where a hole is made to secure a wing tag

**Wing-tagging Turkey Vultures.** As the cartoon at left indicates, Turkey Vultures poop on their legs! Because poop can get trapped between leg and band and cause leg injury, the federal Bird Banding Lab does not allow leg bands on Turkey Vultures. Instead, they are wing-tagged. Wing-tagging requires that a hole be punched in the wing, through which the tag is secured (drawing below).



Dalene Edgar

The procedure is tricky business because blood vessels, nerves and tendons must be avoided in the process. Last summer Dan provided training in the application of wing tags to US Geological Survey (USGS) biologist Garth Herring, pictured below. **Coastal Raptors** and the USGS are collaborating on research examining contaminant levels in Turkey Vultures, Bald Eagles and Common Ravens on Washington and Oregon beaches.



Larry Warwick

Attaching a wing-tag.



Dan Varland

**Garth Herring** about to release a wing-tagged Turkey Vulture.



# HELP WITH SPECIAL PROJECTS



Dan Varland



Tom Rowley photos

**Don Edgar** (above) built a nest box for Peregrine Falcons, which was then placed atop a nest platform originally installed for Osprey nesting at the the Hoquiam Wastewater Treatment Plant. Despite being in place for three years, Ospreys never used the platform. To transport the box and fix it to the platform, next door neighbor **Willis Industires** supplied a man-lift and expert operator **Adam Hoxit** (upper right). While peregrines did nest in the box in 2013, we are hopeful that they will in 2014!



Dalene Edgar

The photo above shows our net launcher in action, capturing a Bald Eagle for banding and tissue sampling at Ocean Shores in 2012. At right **Larry Warwick** is pictured with a fake net launcher that he built for field use. We plan to place the fake in the field ahead of the real one, thereby giving the birds we have targeted for capture an opportunity to get comfortable with our setup. We are so tricky!



Dan Varland



Dan Varland



Sue Varland

**Coastal Raptors** purchased a new utility trailer for hauling traps and supplies in 2013. **Dale Larson** installed wood side boards and also donated heavy-duty paint to cover the wood, protecting it from the elements. In the photo above, Dale tells Dan to put down the camera and get hold the board while he saws! At right, Dan shows off the finished trailer, which includes a cover for camping and processing captured birds in adverse weather.



# ABOUT COASTAL RAPTORS

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## *Board of Directors*

Dan Varland -- Executive Director  
Dave Murnen - President  
Dianna Moore - Vice President  
Dan Miller – Secretary  
Kate Davis

## *Treasurer*

Dalene Edgar

Contact Dan at 360-591-5959 or  
[danvarland@coastalraptors.org](mailto:danvarland@coastalraptors.org)  
or

*Coastal Raptors*

PO Box 492

Hoquiam, WA 98550

**Coastal Raptors** is dedicated to providing research and education programs leading to better understanding and conservation of raptors in coastal environments. Active since 1995 and with non-profit 501(c)(3) status beginning in 2009, the **goals** are to:

- Conduct scientific research
- Provide education programs
- Train wildlife biologists
- Collaborate with experts in wildlife research and management

**Mission:** **Coastal Raptors** conducts research and education programs to provide better understanding of raptor ecology and conservation in coastal environments.

**Vision:** As people gain knowledge, they will achieve a deeper understanding of raptors in coastal environments. Their lives will be enriched, and their will to protect raptors in coastal environments will be strengthened.

In these days of federal and state budget cuts, finding grant support for the work of **Coastal Raptors** is challenging. That makes support from individual donors like you even more important. Please help us move forward by making a contribution toward our operating expenses.



It takes quite a lot to run Coastal Raptors. Listed below are some of our annual operating expenses.

Vehicle mileage: \$2,500 - \$3,500

Training and development: \$1,000

Database maintenance: \$1,500 - \$2,000

Website maintenance: \$175

Office Supplies: \$900

Insurance (non-profit liability): \$400

PLEASE CONSIDER SENDING A DONATION FOR 2014 OR 2013 IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY (SEE PAGE 8 FOR A LIST OF 2013 DONORS). YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS TAX DEDUCTABLE. Please make CHECKS PAYABLE TO **COASTAL RAPTORS**.

## MANY THANKS TO COASTAL RAPTORS SUPPORTERS

Page 8

### 2013 DONATIONS THROUGH NOVEMBER

**Individuals:** Chris Altwegg, Julia Bent, David and Wendy Close, Kate Davis, Will and Betsy Dixon, Barbara Dolan, Kathy Duncan, Don and Dalene Edgar, Jeff Freed, Charlie and Kathy Frisk, Rick Johns and Helle Andersen, Lloyd and Julia Kiff, Erv and Janet Klaas, Carrie and John Larson, Russ and Pat McClintick, Kim Middleton and Wayne Munich, Sandra Miller, Dan and Elise Miller, Michael Milner, Renee and Ann Morris, Dave and Connie Murnen, Del Pelan, Chris and Todd Peterson, Bill Price, Bruce and Christy Schwager, Jerry Smith, Suzanne Staples, Geri and Greg Stubb, Suzanne and Marc Tomlinson, Dan and Sue Varland, Mike Walker, Nadine and Mark Wallace, Suzy Whittey, Mark Wilhyde and Carole Styner, and Kathleen Wolgemuth.



**Businesses, Service Organizations or Foundations:** Aberdeen Lions Club, Insurance Plans Agency, Inc., Oregon Zoo Foundation, Ocean Shores Interpretive Center.

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COASTAL RAPTORS  
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HOQUIAM, WA 98550



Kate Davis

Peregrine Falcon stoops on shorebirds, Ocean Shores