



P.O. Box 492, Hoquiam, WA 98550
www.coastalraptors.com
Conservation Through Research and Education

COASTAL RAPTORS TIDEINGS

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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

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Dear Friends of Coastal Raptors,

Greetings from the Washington coast! I hope you enjoy this annual installment of *Coastal Raptors TIDEings*. Established in 2009, this newsletter marks Coastal Raptors' 8th year as a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization. *TIDEings* provides an opportunity to share some of the highlights of Coastal Raptors activities in 2017.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have provided volunteer and/or financial support to Coastal Raptors. It takes your support to make the education programs and scientific research happen. If you have not made a financial contribution to Coastal Raptors in 2017 and are able, please consider doing so.

This past year's efforts have been fun and rewarding for Coastal Raptors, as you'll see when you read the newsletter. I hope you have a safe and joyous Holiday Season. Whatever comes your way, **Keep Calm and Carry On!**

Dan Varland
Executive Director
Coastal Raptors
Hoquiam, Washington



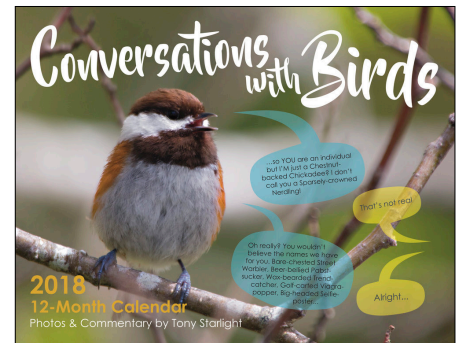
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BIRDS, MUSIC AND LAUGHTER!



Old Liberty Theatre, Ridgefield, WA

In October, Portland-based entertainer Tony Starlight and I shared the spotlight as Keynote Speakers for the *BirdFest and Bluegrass Festival* in Ridgefield, Washington. We had a blast! The organizers had chosen the Turkey Vulture as “Bird of The Year” for what was their 18th annual *BirdFest*. Tony and I were natural choices for the Keynote. He was *Professional Entertainer*, *Amateur Ornithologist* and I was *Professional Ornithologist*, *Amateur Entertainer*. Tony’s been performing music and comedy shows for 25 years and owns Tony Starlight Showroom in Portland. Just in the past year or so, Tony has taken flight as birder and bird photographer. He loves sharing his newfound passion with others. Tony created a calendar for 2018, *Conversations with Birds* and in 2018 will publish a book chronicling his first year as a birder; both feature humor and showcase his photographs. You can follow Tony’s birding adventures at tonystarlight.com or on Facebook at [tonystarlightbirds](https://www.facebook.com/tonystarlightbirds).



Band on the Bird

By Tony Starlight

Well, the birds exploded with a
mighty flash
As they flew up from the sand
And the first one said to the second
one there
Did you see that band?
Band on the bird (twice)
Raptor Dan and the Singer Man
Were teaching everyone
Band on the bird (four times)

We drove up closer
And the flock dispersed
As our cameras start to click
We scanned the flock
Looking for the bands
So that we could take a pic
Band on the bird (four times)

We took our pictures and we
made them big
To see what we could find
We got the numbers and we
passed them on
To the Banding Lab online
Band on the bird (twice)

See the band
Know the plan
We’ll search forevermore
Band on the bird (once)

I started off the evening with *The Turkey Vulture*, *Love at Second Sight*, a presentation with photos and commentary on Turkey Vulture natural history, their virtuous role as nature’s recyclers, Coastal Raptors’ vulture research, and their beauty (Really, you ask? Yes! Next time you see one skyward, watch it soar!). Next, Tony joined me on stage for a conversation about how a vulture introduced us (see facing page). The audience joined us in a singalong, *Band on the Bird*, which was performed to the tune of the Paul McCartney **and Wings** hit, *Band on the Run*; new lyrics by Tony). Following an intermission, Tony shared his photographs and comic commentary from his 2018 calendar, photosts and comedic stories about how he got interested in birding, and more songs including *Mama Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowbirds* and *Wish They All Could be California Gulls*.



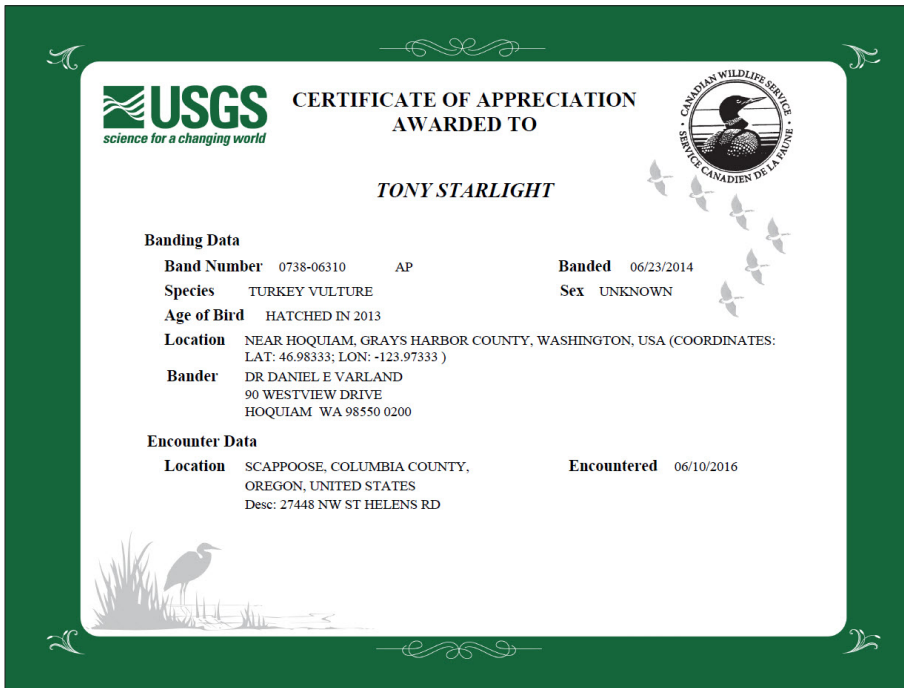
Sandra Miller photos.



LIKE A MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE



Like a message in a bottle, releasing a bird with a band or a wing-tag sends out information with the hope that someone will discover it.



In 2016, while standing on the dock at his home at River's Bend Marina on a channel of the Columbia River in Oregon, Portland area entertainer Tony Starlight saw a Turkey Vulture fly overhead wearing a wing-tag with the letters AP. He reported his observation to the USGS Bird Banding lab online. Not long afterward, the Lab notified me of his observation and Tony received a Certificate of Appreciation for his efforts. Coastal Raptors tagged the vulture in 2014 near Hoquiam, WA , 100 miles away.



Tony saw and photographed AP on two more occasions in 2016. Both times, AP was in a hay field next to the marina. Along with others of his kind, he was feeding on small mammal carcasses left behind after haying operations.



River's Bend Marina and the flooded field where Tony saw vultures feeding on carp carcasses.



In 2017, Tony saw and photographed AP three more times, once with other vultures feeding on carp carcasses lying in the same field he had seen AP in the year before. Spring rains had caused the river channel to overflow to the field and the carp had become stranded.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS 2017

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Date	Title	Organization, Location
January 19	The Peregrine Falcon: Hunter and Scavenger	Coastal Interpretive Center, Ocean Shores, WA
March 14	Get to Know the Raptors	Aberdeen Timberland Library, Aberdeen, WA
March 29	Scavenging as a Food Acquisition Strategy in Coastal Washington	The Wildlife Society (WA Chapter), Yakima, WA
April 12	Get to Know the Raptors	Shoalwater Birders, Ocean Park, WA
April 13	Get to Know the Raptors	Oakville Timberland Library, Oakville, WA
May 7	The Peregrine Falcon: Hunter and Scavenger	Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival, Hoquiam, WA
October 7	Birds, Music and Laughter!	BirdFest & Bluegrass Festival, Ridgefield, WA
October 25	Coastal Raptors: A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two on the Beach!	Victoria Natural History Society, Victoria, BC
October 26	Monitoring the Health of Avian Scavengers	Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC
November 8	Techniques for Handling, Marking, and Measuring Raptors after Capture: A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush!	2017 Raptor Research Foundation Conference, Salt Lake City, UT

PUB CRAWL!

Dictionary.com defines *Pub Crawl* as “to have drinks at one bar after another”. Here, *Pub Crawl* aptly describes the slow process of publishing Coastal Raptors’ research findings in the scientific literature. It is common for long-term monitoring efforts such as ours to use years of data in publications. This is a long process. However, it is essential that the information be made available to scientists and public alike.

The table below lists two papers currently under journal review and the three already published. These are available on the Coastal Raptors website at:

<http://coastalraptors.com/Research/Publications.aspx>



Dan Varland photo.

Progress being made, slowly but surely!

Title	Journal	Co-authors	Status
Scavenging as a Food Acquisition Strategy in the Peregrine Falcon	The Journal of Raptor Research	Dan Varland, Joe Buchanan, Tracy Fleming, Mary Kay Kenney and Cheryl Vanier	In Review. Accepted for publication pending revision.
Mercury Contamination Trends in Feathers of Peregrine Falcons in Coastal Washington	The Wilson Journal of Ornithology	Joe Barnes, Dan Varland, Joe Buchanan, Tracy Fleming, and Shawn Gerstenberger	In Review.
Peregrine Falcons on Coastal Beaches of Washington: Fifteen Years of Banding and Surveys	The Journal of Raptor Research	Dan Varland, Joe Buchanan, Tracy Fleming, Mary Kay Kenneuy and Tom Loughin	Published.
Tundra Peregrine Falcon Occurrence in Washington	Washington Birds	Dan Varland, Tracy Fleming and Joe Buchanan	Published.
Peregrine Falcon Survival and Resighting Frequencies on the Washington Coast, 1995-2003	The Journal of Raptor Research	Dan Varland, Larkin Powell, Mary Kay Kenney and Tracy Fleming	Published.

V/M SETS LONGEVITY RECORD!

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Bird banding provides an opportunity to learn how long birds live. In 22 years of banding research on Washington's coastal beaches, 218 of these magnificent birds have been banded. Of those banded, 110 have been sighted afterwards at least once.

At age 15, a female Peregrine Falcon with visual identification band V/M currently holds the distinction as the oldest banded falcon in the Coastal Raptors study. The oldest banded Peregrine Falcon on record is age 19, according to the US Geological Survey's Bird Banding Lab website.

V/M photos.



Suzanne Tomlinson photo.

January 22, 2003.

V/M was banded by Coastal Raptors south of Grayland, Washington on January 22, 2003. Two weeks later we sighted her during a raptor survey, not far from her banding location.



Paul Lavesque photo.

February 8, 2004.

The following winter, she was sighted by Paul Lavesque at Esquimalt Lagoon on Vancouver Island, a straightline distance of 115 miles from her banding location. Thirteen years later, V/M was sighted again, 25 miles further north.



Ernie Pacholuk photo.

April 2, 2017.

In April, 2017 Ernie Pacholuk and his wife Sandra were hiking in Stony Hill Park on Vancouver Island when they spotted a Peregrine Falcon perched in a snag. Ernie had his camera along and took photos from several vantage points. It wasn't until he returned home and took a closer look at his photos that he realized the falcon was banded. It was V/M!

Ernie went online and reported his sighting information to the Bird Banding Lab. He soon received information from the Lab indicating who banded V/M, when and where. Around the same time I received an email from the Lab with Ernie's sighting information. I contacted him right away to learn more about his observations.

Ernie returned to the area a week later. He saw and photographed V/M feeding on a mouse. Over the course of the spring, Ernie sighted an un-banded male where he'd seen V/M. He suspected that V/M had a nest with him somewhere, but was unable to confirm that. In October I visited Vancouver Island to make a presentation on raptor banding research to the Victoria Natural History Society. I visited the site with Ernie and Cayla Naumann...beautiful, despite no peregrines in sight!



Ernie Pacholuk photo.

April 9, 2017. V/M feeds on a mouse.



L to R: Ernie Pacholuk, Dan Varland and Cayla Naumann.

YOUNG OSPREY RESCUED!



Dave Murnen photo.



Dale Larson photo.

Albert Watters.



Dave Murnen

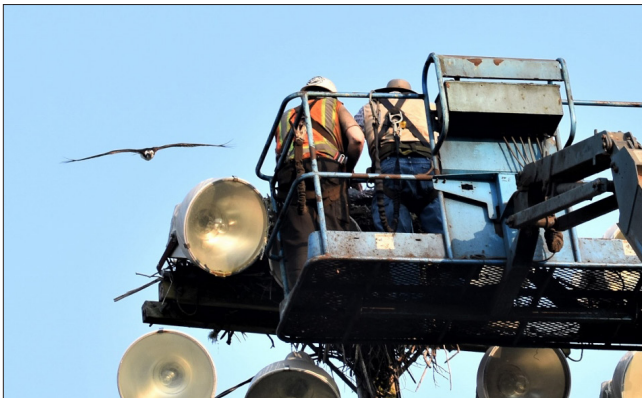
My only option was to arrange for a rescue from afar. I got on the phone to Dave Murnen back in Hoquiam. Dave's been part of many banding adventures with Coastal Raptors over the years, and was more than happy to assist. Next, I called Adam Hoxit, man-lift operator for Willis Industries. Adam too was very enthusiastic with the prospect of lending a hand.

With Willis Industries approval, Adam used the company man-lift to access the nest. While Albert photographed the proceedings from below, Dave and Adam got to the task of freeing the young Osprey. The parent birds were upset, diving and vocalizing repeatedly while the two worked. The nestling was entangled in gill net, which Dave and Adam cut free. Despite the period of entanglement, the bird had been fed by its parents and was in good condition. It successfully fledged a few days after the rescue.

It's not uncommon for man-made materials - gill net, rope, bailing twine, fishing line - to be brought to Osprey nests because parent birds consider them nesting material. As this experience shows, the consequences can be severe. Proper disposal of these items is important to keep it away from Osprey and other nesting birds.



Albert Watters photo.



Albert Watters photo.

Parent diving Dave and Adam as they worked to untangle the young Osprey.

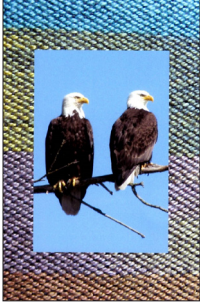


Dave Murnen photo.

Adam Hoxit holds the tangled mess found in the nest.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

In October, Bob Plotnick and his wife Gay Jensen helped with raptor surveys and banding on the Long Beach Peninsula along with Glenn Marquardt, Charlotte Killien, and Tom Rowley. We had great weather and successfully captured, banded, and tissue-sampled two Peregrine Falcons. Not long after returning home to Seattle, they sent a very thoughtful 'thank you' note.



Tom Rowley photos.



Tom Rowley photos.

Dear Dan,

Thank you for 2 amazing days at Long Beach. Seeing how surveys are conducted, learning about your research on raptors, working with the team to capture and band falcons, and the opportunity to be so close to and hold these magnificent birds – truly unforgettable. Keep us in mind when you need extra hands in the future.

Best regards, Bob and Gay

Please Help Provide Financial Support to Coastal Raptors



Albert Watters photos.

Support from individual donors like you is important to **Coastal Raptors**. Please help us move forward by making a tax-deductable contribution toward our operating expenses.

It takes quite a lot to run **Coastal Raptors** (\$15,000 annually). Listed below are examples of our annual operating expenses.

Vehicle: \$3,000 - \$3,500

Postage and sample shipments: \$500

Data analyses and maintenance: \$2,000

Laboratory analyses: \$2,000

Office Supplies: \$1,000

Field Supplies: \$1,000

Please Consider a Donation for 2018 or 2017 if you have not already (see page 8 for a list of 2017 donors). Your Contribution is Tax Deductible. You may donate by check (payable to Coastal Raptors; Send to PO Box 492, Hoquiam, WA 98550) or online at www.coastalraptors.com. THANKS!

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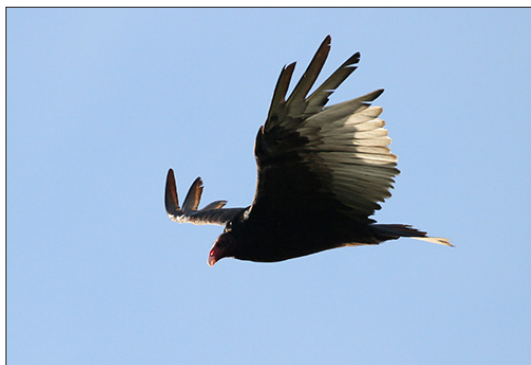
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2017 Donations Were Made in Memory of: Wayne McCleskey, Norma Jean Johnson-Nelson, and Mark Wilhyde.

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Dan Varland photo.

Turkey Vulture.