



# Sky Hunters

## Raptor Education and Rehabilitation

NOTES FROM THE NEST

Spring 2012

### Owlets Everywhere!

#### Greetings fellow bird friends!

Spring has sprung and the birds are coming in daily. With the season just starting, we have received 50 baby barn owls, 14 baby great horned owls, and 2 very cute screech owls. Add one kite and one turkey vulture and we're off to a big start!

Another fostering this year happened with the owl box in Escondido. The female was sitting on infertile eggs for about 6 weeks that should have started hatching after 4 weeks.

We had someone take the eggs out, put 2 baby barns in and

when the female returned was she surprised that a couple of her eggs had "hatched." The male started bringing food within two hours. This is the second time we have tried it with this pair—last year they raised 3 owlets for us.

Let's talk about barn owl boxes that have been installed on poles. We keep getting baby barn owls that have fallen out of the boxes or from boxes taken over by bees.

We recommend putting boxes in trees so there is a canopy from the branches to help with hot weather and branches for the young to learn to fly to. They

need to be able to get back in the box for a couple of weeks until they learn to hunt from the parents.



**Barn Owlets**

If your box is on a pole and not close to any trees, think about buying a tree to put in front of the box or moving the box to a tree.

*Continued on Page 2.*

### Partnering with Fund for Animals

This year we are doing a "trade" with the Fund for Animals in Ramona. We send all the injured, ill, or orphaned hawks that come in to Sky Hunters to Fund for Animals and they send us all of their owls. We tried this last year and it worked out really well.

We also took on a turkey vulture that was at the Fund for Animals for 20 years as an education bird. We are

glad to have her so that people who visit Sky Hunters can learn how important this species is in keeping the environment cleaned up of dead animals.

Many people think vultures are not the best looking of birds but we think they are beautiful! Their bare head is just one way they keep themselves clean as they act as the janitorial crew for the rest of the world.



**Turkey Vulture**

# Sky Hunters

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## Owlets Everywhere continued from page 1

There should also be some type of plant or mulch at the bottom to help with a soft landing. Since the parents can't pick them up, there needs to be a way for the young to climb back in. If that can't happen, and you find a young owl on the ground, try and get the it contained in a box or animal carrier and give us a call. Don't feed them or try to give them

water. They have to have the same food that their parents would feed them. Not bread and milk as most people try to feed them. Where would any animal get that kind of food in the wild?

We also recommend putting WD-40 on the inside ceiling so that bees can't attach. In the past two years we have had babies

that have been stung. A Bee Keeper has to be called to remove the bees and then the babies can be removed. It is against the law to remove nestlings from an active nest unless there is an emergency.

We know some boxes have a web cam and that people all over the country are watching and sometimes don't see the parents drop off food. Remember once they get to be almost the size of their parents the young don't require constant feeding. Food is dropped off quickly for the young to learn to rip and tear. The parents don't have to stay in the box - the owlets have feathers to keep warm and are quite rambunctious!

BARN OWL  
ADULTS HUNT  
FOR SMALL  
RODENTS TO  
FEED YOUNG  
IN THE NEST.



## Rescue Information

*What would you do if you came across an injured hawk or owl?*

Most people don't know the proper care and handling, and can end up hurting themselves or the bird accidentally.

Protect yourself by wearing gloves and covering the bird with a towel or blanket. Remember these birds are wild - they don't know you are trying to help.

A cardboard box with air holes can be used as a temporary container to move the bird to safety. Once contained, move it somewhere warm, dark and quiet. Don't try to pet it or feed it.

Call a licensed rehabilitation group immediately. Sky Hunters can be reached at (619) 445-6565.

Wishing you a very happy spring and many bird sightings.

Blessings to all of you,  
Nancy and John Conney



## LEARN ABOUT RAPTORS AT SKY HUNTERS PRESENTATIONS

Mark your calendars and come see us at these educational programs.

All are open to the public.

### MAY

5/19 MISSION TRAILS 12:30-2:30

5/26 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

### JUNE

6/23 SAN DIEGUITO PARK 2:00

6/30 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

### JULY

7/7 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

7/28 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

### AUGUST

8/11 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

8/25 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

### SEPTEMBER

9/1 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

9/16 VIEJAS OUTLET CTR. 12-3:00

9/22 WILLIAM HEISE PARK 6:00

### OCTOBER

10/9 SOLANA BEACH LIBRARY 6:00

10/13 TECOLOTE CANYON 1:00-3:00

### Addresses for Programs:

Mission Trails Regional Park: 1 Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119

William Heise County Park: 4945 Heise Park Road, Julian, CA 92036

San Dieguito County Park: 1628 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Del Mar, CA 92014

Viejas Outlet Center: 5005 Willows Road, Alpine, CA 91901

Solana Beach Library: Earl Warren Middle School, 147 Stevens Avenue, Solana Beach, CA 92075

Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Nature Center: 5180 Tecolote Road, San Diego, CA 92110

## You Can Help Us Rehabilitate Raptors!

*Your donations keep Sky Hunters going in our mission to rescue and educate about raptors.*

*Here's how you can help:*

### Purchase:

We have barn owl boxes for sale as well as tee shirts and greeting cards with our birds pictures. They make great gifts.

### Donate:

Use Pay Pal by going to our website at:  
<http://skyhunters.org/funding.html>. Click on the funding link and scroll down to the **Make a Donation** button.

### Sponsor:

Fill out the enclosed application and join us or sponsor at the support level right for you!

Visit our website @ [www.skyhunters.org](http://www.skyhunters.org)

***Time to thank our dedicated staff of volunteers—***

***We couldn't do without you!***

Cathy Harrell

Eve and Ron Babcock

Lara and Robin Webster

## GET TO KNOW SKY HUNTERS' EDUCATION RAPTORS

### Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*)



Crested Caracara

Known also as the northern caracara, this species ranges from northern Mexico to Tierra del Fuego. In the United States it occurs only along the southern border in Texas and Arizona, and in Florida, where there is an isolated population in the south-central peninsula.

The caracara lives in open habitats—grasslands, prairies, pastures, or deserts with scattered taller trees, shrubs, or cacti in which it nests.

While related to falcons, caracaras can be seen walking about on the ground as they search for invertebrate and vertebrate prey, as well as carrion.

Adults are generally monogamous and highly territorial, and exhibit strong site fidelity. Young remain with their parents for several months after fledging, although at some sites, two broods are raised per year. Immature caracaras often congregate in groups, sometimes roosting and feeding with vultures.

Come see this different type of raptor!

Sky Hunters is open by appointment on Saturday or Sunday from 1pm-4pm. Call 619-445-6565 to make an appointment to see this special species.

(SOURCE: Morrison, Joan L. 1996. Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*), *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, Ed.), Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/249>)

SKY HUNTERS  
c/o Nancy Conney  
PO Box 1275  
Lakeside, CA 92040

# Sky Hunters

RAPTOR EDUCATION & REHABILITATION

## Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt # \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Enclosed is my tax deductible gift

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15     Student/Senior  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$25     Individual  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$75     Family

### Sponsor

### CHECK ONE RAPTOR OF YOUR CHOICE IN THE CATEGORY

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 75     \_\_\_\_\_ Kite    \_\_\_\_\_ American Kestrel    \_\_\_\_\_ Burrowing Owl    \_\_\_\_\_ Screech Owl    \_\_\_\_\_ Pygmy Owl  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100     \_\_\_\_\_ Red Tailed Hawk    \_\_\_\_\_ Harris' Hawk    \_\_\_\_\_ Peregrine Falcon  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$100     \_\_\_\_\_ Barred Owl    \_\_\_\_\_ Great Horned Owl    \_\_\_\_\_ Barn Owl  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$250     \_\_\_\_\_ Bald Eagle    \_\_\_\_\_ Golden Eagle

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

