

**NEWS AND REVIEWS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 88-01  
INFORMATION CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT RAPTOR ELECTROCUTION**

**WHEREAS**, The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., has concern for the welfare of raptor populations around the world, and;

**WHEREAS**, the electrocution of raptors and other birds is taking place in parts of Europe and Africa due to improperly designed electrical power pole/insulator combinations, and;

**WHEREAS**, disseminating of information on alternative methods for constructing new power pole/insulator combinations and modification of existing poles will decrease the number of European and African raptors electrocuted,

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., supports the initiation of an international information campaign to disseminate methods of proper power pole construction to prevent raptor electrocutions and to increase the understanding of the raptor electrocution problem.

THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

GARY E. DUKE, PRESIDENT  
THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

**RESOLUTION NO. 88-02  
MAINTENANCE OF TOP PRIORITY FOR BIRDS OF PREY WITH THE  
SNAKE RIVER BIRDS OF PREY AREA**

**WHEREAS**, The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., is composed of professional raptor biologists and managers working with birds of prey, and,

**WHEREAS**, The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., recognizes the ecological value of birds of prey, and,

**WHEREAS**, The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., recognizes the tenuous status of many raptor species and has concern for the welfare of raptor populations around the world, and,

**WHEREAS**, the Snake River Birds of Prey Area represents a resource of international significance, and,

**WHEREAS**, top priority has been assigned to the birds of prey and the ecosystem that supports them within the Snake River Birds of Prey Area, and,

**WHEREAS**, all other activities, barring national security demands, should be secondary to the long-term ecological integrity of the birds of prey and their supporting ecosystem, and,

**WHEREAS**, the Idaho Division of Military and National Guard Bureau has proposed upgrading and new construction of three training facilities at the Orchard Training Area (OTA) within the Snake River Birds of Prey Area, and,

**WHEREAS**, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 was designed to insure a comprehensive examination of proposed projects, such as the aforementioned proposal in order to identify potential undesirable environmental impacts, and,

**WHEREAS**, no investigation has been carried out to determine the cumulative impact of proposed and ongoing activities, and,

**WHEREAS**, the 1979 EIS contains statements which are objectively indefensible, e.g. "The National Guard activities were assessed as to their impact on the birds of prey ecosystem. As stated in the EIS, these activities have had no adverse effects on the neting [sic] birds of prey or the prey that inhabits the maneuver area," [1979 Final Statement, page 9-33],

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., urges the adoption of "ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION" until a technically sound Environmental Impact Statement is produced which covers not only the proposed activities of the Idaho National Guard but the ongoing activities presently occurring there, thus assuring the birds of prey and their prey base the long-term protection as intended by NEPA.

THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

GARY E. DUKE, PRESIDENT  
THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

### RESOLUTION NO. 88-03

#### THANK YOU TO THE LOCAL COMMITTEE OF THE 1988 RRF ANNUAL MEETING

**WHEREAS**, the 1988 Raptor Research Foundation annual meeting was successful, stimulating, and entertaining for all who participated, and;

**WHEREAS**, the host committee chaired by Patrick T. Redig and the local arrangements committee chaired by Thomas Walkington did an outstanding job of organizing the 1988 meeting; finding both comfortable accommodations and providing lively entertainment, and;

**WHEREAS**, the program committee chairperson, Joan Galli, organized over 100 excellent scientific presentations and prepared an exceptional program booklet,

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., thanks all the members of the local, host and program committees for their long hours of hard work, making the 1988 annual meeting one of the best ever.

THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

GARY E. DUKE, PRESIDENT  
THE RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION, INC.

**Hawks and Owls of the World: a Distributional and Taxonomic List** by Dean Amadon and John Bull, with the genus *Otus* by Joe T. Marshall and Ben F. King. Proc. Western Found. Vert. Zool., Vol. 3, no. 4, 1988, pp. 295–357, 2 color plates, cost \$10.00 U.S. (obtainable from Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 1100 Glendon Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024, U.S.A.).

Dean Amadon and John Bull, both of whom are capable scientists and knowledgeable of raptors, have joined forces with 2 other biologists with intimate knowledge of owls, Joe Marshall and Ben King, to produce this volume. To me, this publication has proven most useful as a quick reference and ready source for considerable information on raptor names and distribution. The publication for me has also been handy in a general overview of who might be most closely related to whom by looking at the sequence of names.

In format there are 8½ pages of introductory material explaining more or less each “group” composition, an overview of the species (also superspecies) and genera, a broad outline of the limits of distribution and what each region contains, a review of what the names of the habitats mentioned mean (e.g., tropical vs. rain forest), and a discussion of authors’ choices of vernacular names (based, I suspect, largely on length of time in usage). Lastly, within the introductory material there are several pages of comments on genera, such as taxa included within a genus and how a given genus might be related to another.

At the beginning of the typical owl (subfamily Striginae) section, Marshall and King have a one-page discussion of *Otus* owls and give their views on how various *Otus* line up systematically. Many of those discussed are either insular or Neotropical. The remainder and bulk of the publication is a phylogenetic list of named species with a few lines under each that gives general geographic occurrence with 1 or 2 words on habitat (e.g., semi-open and lightly wooded country).

While I generally find this publication very useful there are some distracting items, however, as I try to use it. I could find no statement as to the cut off date for information acquisition. It’s hard to know what data were available to the authors, although there is one literature reference as late as 1987. Therefore, it is a bit frustrating to read the brief paragraph description of Family Cathartidae, for example, and note the still very tenuous alignment of that group with the storks (family Ciconiidae) in view of the excellent paper by Rea (Cathartid Affinities: a brief overview in Vulture Biology and Management, S. Wilbur and J. Jackson, Eds., U. Calif. Press, 1983) and the DNA/DNA hybridization information of C. Sibley and J. Ahlquist (papers presented at 19th International Ornith. Congr., Ottawa, 1986; A.O.U. Mississippi, 1986), findings which removed any doubt, I believe, concerning the Ciconiid-Cathartid relationship.

There is likewise not enough discussion in the introductory material or in the several-line statement under each species to clarify why a given discussion was made. This could have been easily handled with more literature references. If anyone is qualified to discuss relationships among genera, for example, it is Dean Amadon and additional insights into his views would have been invaluable. The material under the heading “Accipitres” would have been a great place for Amadon to have suggested why certain genera are of uncertain position and affinity and list them. Instead, we are simply told that many genera are of uncertain positions and then we are referred to Brown and Amadon (Eagles, hawks, and falcons of the World, McGraw Hill, New York 1968). The problem is that certainly there has been new data to help elucidate the sequential position of some genera in the past 20 years. *Kaupifalco* and *Butastur* were earlier (1968) placed with the Sub-buteos and in fact Amadon (A revision of the Sub-Buteonine Hawks (Accipitridae, Aves), *Amer. Mus. Novitates*, no. 2741, 1982) places them with the sub-buteos as late as 1982. In this current publication they are placed between Snake Eagles and Harriers and not at all allied with Sub-buteos. The 2 genera are probably correctly placed in the current publication but there should at least have been a footnote as to why the differences in these sequences.

The use of some vernacular (common) names needed more explanation. For example, *Spizapterxy* is called a falcon, not a falconet as it has been earlier. Why the change, especially if the species is indeed allied with the Subfamily Polyborinae (Caracaras and relatives) as was apparently done by Amadon and Bull? The *Circus approximans/silonotus/aeruginosis* complex (superspecies) that are named as Eastern or Western Marsh or Swamp Harrier have other vernacular names used in areas of their occurrence than those given by Amadon and Bull. *C. approximans*, from Australo-Papua and Oceania, has frequently been called the Australasian Harrier (cf. Baker-Gabb, *Notornis* 26:325–327, 1979, for example) and it seems that such a name is more meaningful and utilitarian than Swamp Harrier.

I found the arguments and statistical analysis of B. Millsap (Biosystematics of the Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitidus*), unpubl. M.S. thesis, George Mason Univ., Fairfax, VA, 1978) rather compelling. His assertion is that if the Gray Hawk is removed from *Buteo* and placed in *Austurina* (as earlier done by Amadon 1982 and by Amadon and Bull) so should the Roadside Hawk (*B. magnirostris*), Red-shouldered Hawk (*B. linneatus*) and Ridgway’s Hawk (*B. ridgwayi*). Whether one agrees or not, at least the arguments of Millsap merit reference by Amadon and Bull, if only in a footnote.

Among owls, especially *Otus*, there seems to be a lot of lumping of forms recognized as species by other authors

without any explanation. For example, no reason is given for including *Otus petersoni* (the description as a new species seems rather persuasive) with *Otus colombianus* rather than recognizing species status. I am not questioning the authoritative knowledge of Marshall and King, but rather I suggest that we should be informed in a note as to why the decision was made. On the other side of the coin, *Bubo bubo* traditionally has about 23 geographic races (subspecies) and 2 normally included in *B. bubo* (i.e., *ascalaphus* and *bengalensis*) were elevated to species status. A footnote suggesting an earlier precedence or other reasons seems in order. Additionally, the above *Bubo* together with *B. capensis* are included as a superspecies. It seems that if *capensis* is relegated to that association with *bubo*, *ascalaphus* and *bengalensis* then the equally similar *B. africanus* should have been included. Amadon (pers. comm.) has pointed out 1 typographical error; on page 344 *Pseudoscops grammacus* should read *P. grammicus*.

Overall, I highly recommend the purchase of this useful publication, especially in view of the vast compilation of material one gets for the modest price. I should also call attention to 2 other publications from the Western Foundation that concern raptors: Ecological aspects of the food habits of insectivorous screech-owls, by A. Ross, Proceedings #6, 1969, 43 pp, \$4.00 U.S., and Parallel variation in North and Middle American screech owls, by J. T. Marshall, Jr., Monograph #1, 1967, 72 pp. \$10.00 U.S.—**Clayton M. White**

**Hawks in Flight: the Flight Identification of North American Migrant Raptors** by Pete Dunne, David Sibley, and Clay Sutton. Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston, 1988. 254 pp. Cost for hardback \$17.95 U.S.

Birdwatching has become a well established hobby and avocation with numerous "field guides" attesting to its popularity. More recently, specialty field guides (e.g., shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls, among others) are being published at an increasing rate. Guides for "hawkwatchers" are no exception to this trend. With the addition of A Field Guide to Hawks of North America (reviewed *J. Raptor Res.* 22:74) and now *Hawks in Flight*, hawkwatching has blossomed into a recognized subset in the birdwatching family.

*Hawks in Flight* differs considerably from more conventional style field guides. Missing are schematic illustrations with typical coloration and shadings accompanied by pointers to easily recognizable "field marks." The "Peterson System," as noted by Roger Tory Peterson's forwarding remarks, serves to simplify bird observations for the novice. *Hawks in Flight* is a natural extension to Peterson's "field marks," under conditions unique to hawkwatching (i.e., accurate identification of flying raptors from often fleeting observations at extended distances). The authors' overall premise is that many of the shading, shape, behavioral, or other characteristic subtleties, not readily observable with smaller birds, are visible on raptors in flight, even at extreme distances.

More notable changes from average field guide format are that all illustrations are pen and ink sketches of raptors from angles typical in the field (rarely directly overhead). The photo appendix following the main text is all black and white. The authors reasoned that black and white illustrations and photos best approximate field conditions, typically poor lighting compounded by distance and optics. Also lacking are brief natural history and habitat descriptions on each species. Only information regarding range, migration, and detailed flight identification characteristics are provided for each of 23 species in 7 identification chapters. The authors omit non-migratory, occasional, or rare migrant raptors from the 39 species known to occur in North America, although many are noted through comparisons with subject birds. Field identification of subspecies is covered for such species as Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) and Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). Pertinent or cautionary recognition notes for each species are set in italics which aids in field use. Each identification chapter concludes with a summary of how to differentiate between other similar species. A section on "Telling Accipiters Apart" is the best I have read and reflects the authors' familiarity with the subject. There is a slant towards eastern raptors, probably due to the authors' experience and knowledge with hawk watching stations found there; such does not detract from the usefulness of this guide for westerners, however. Finally, this is a "non" field guide in that it is best read before entering the field.

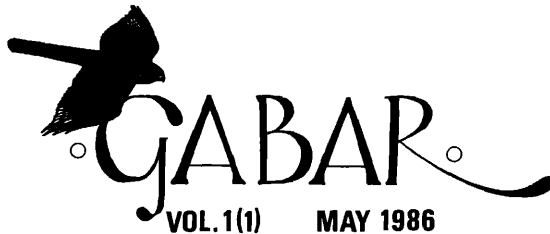
One endpaper provides an excellent quick-reference of overhead illustrations for the 23 subject raptor species in flight, all in the same scale. The opposite endcover has raptor topography and head-on profiles, also useful as a quick-reference. There is a brief but usable bibliography. The index is detailed and functional. I found only one error; there are 10 species of harriers not 9 as noted in the chapter on harrier identification. I found no typographical errors.

I had the opportunity to use much of the information provided in this guide through teaching a course on raptor identification last summer, and was amazed at how characteristics of flight (buoyancy in flight, rate of wing beats, head-body size comparison, chord-span length ratio, etc.) were more readily observable than color, tail-bars, etc. This guide provides much more identification information than *Hawks of North America*. However, the two guides appear to compliment each other. *Hawks in Flight* will make raptor identification more accurate and interesting for novice and experts, whether used alone or in conjunction with other field guides—**John W. Martin**

## 1988 LESLIE BROWN MEMORIAL GRANT RECIPIENTS

**Robert E. Simmons, Ph.D.****Amount Received: \$600****Project: Reproductive Ecology of Wahlberg's Eagle**

Rob Simmons was born in Kent, England in 1957 and studied astrophysics for an honors degree at London University. Realizing the folly of his ways, he switched to Ornithology and moved to Acadia University in Canada for his M.Sc. research on polygyny and population dynamics of the Northern Harrier. His newfound love of behavioral ecology in general, and harrier mating systems in particular, led Rob to South Africa in 1983 where he has studied a variety of raptors, including Black Harriers, Red-breasted Sparrowhawks, African Marsh Harriers (for his Ph.D.) and Wahlberg's Eagle. Rob is currently looking at reproductive constraints, population regulation and breeding biology of Wahlberg's Eagle, a study funded in part by the Leslie Brown Memorial Award. His theoretical interests are broad, ranging from life history strategies, cannibalism and population dynamics to the evolution of sexual behavior. When not with his binoculars or computer, Rob enjoys running, squash, cricket, golf and food, and more recently, making faces at his two-month-old daughter.



◦ A RAPTOR FILE FOR RAPTORPHILES ◦

**GABAR****Amount Received: \$400**

The African raptor research journal *GABAR* was established in 1986 by Robert Simmons, David Allan and Phoebe Barnard in order to fill a gap highlighted by recent conferences on African predatory birds. The name of the journal is both that of an ubiquitous small African Goshawk [the Gabar Goshawk, *Micronisus (Melierax) gabar*], and an acronym for the journal's subject, the Growth and Biology of African Raptors. The journal features both refereed articles on recent research, a forum for discussion of controversial issues and ideas, a science review summarizing selected papers from international journals, informal short notes, and news. The journal has been edited jointly by

Rob Simmons (Chief Editor) and Phoebe Barnard (Copy Editor), with representatives in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and will in the future be edited by John Mendelsohn and David Allan. *GABAR* has recently become affiliated to the newly formed African Raptor Information Centre (ARIC) as the centre's scientific publication and has a readership of close to 1000. Editorial correspondence regarding *GABAR* should be addressed to the new Editor, John M. Mendelsohn, State Museum, Box 1203, Windhoek 9000, Namibia, and subscription/membership enquiries to ARIC's Secretary, Shelley Berkow, ARIC, Box 59507, Karenpark 0118, Republic of South Africa.

**1989 Leslie Brown Memorial Grant.** In memory of one of the most inspired and productive raptor biologists of recent decades, The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., announces the availability of up to \$1000 to provide financial assistance to promote the research and/or dissemination of information on birds of prey. Applicants must submit a resume, specific study objectives, an account of how funds will be spent, and a statement indicating how the proposed work would relate to other work by the applicant and to other sources of funds. Proposals concerning African raptors will receive highest priority between proposals of otherwise equal merit. **Application material must be received by 1 October 1989.** Proposals, donations and inquiries about tax-exempt contributions to the fund should be sent to: **Jeffrey L. Lincer, Ph.D., Chairman, RRF Leslie Brown Memorial Fund, 4718 Dunn Drive, Sarasota, FL 34233, U.S.A.**

#### 1988 STEPHEN R. TULLY MEMORIAL GRANT RECIPIENT



Gian Basili graduated from Colorado College in 1987 with a B.A. in Biology. Since then, Gian has spent one year working as a teacher's assistant in the Department of Biology at Colorado College. Gian has participated in numerous Peregrine Falcon management projects, including population surveys in Utah's canyon country and in the Wasatch Mountains and release projects in Wyoming and Colorado.

Gian's career objectives are in foreign conservation, with specific interest in endangered species. After finishing a research project on raptors in Venezuela, Gian plans to enter a graduate study program in tropical raptor ecology.

**1989 Stephen R. Tully Memorial Grant.** The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., announces the availability of the Stephen R. Tully Memorial Grant to provide financial assistance to promote the research, management, and conservation

of birds of prey. Individuals demonstrating serious interest in raptors, particularly students and amateurs with limited access to major granting agencies, are eligible. Applicants must submit 3 copies of the following: resume (vitae), study plan (5 pages maximum), an account of how funds will be spent, and a statement indicating how the proposed work would relate to other work by the applicant and to other sources of funds. **Applications must be postmarked by 10 September 1989, and addressed to Stephen R. Tully Memorial Grant, 5666 West Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, ID 83709, U.S.A.** Grant awards will be announced at the annual Raptor Research Foundation meeting 10–14 October 1989 in Veracruz, Mexico.

**Hawk Mountain–Zeiss Raptor Research Award.** The Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association awarded its 1989 research grant to Suzanne M. Joy, a M.S. candidate at Colorado State University. Her project is entitled “Nest-site characteristics and foraging behavior of Sharp-shinned Hawks in mature aspen and conifer habitats.”

The Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association is now accepting applications for its thirteenth annual award to support student research on birds of prey. Support for this award is provided by Carl Zeiss Optical, Inc. **Up to \$2000 in funds are available and will be awarded to one or two recipients.** To apply, a student applicant should submit a brief description of his or her research program (five pages maximum), a *curriculum vitae*, a budget summary including other funding anticipated, and two letters of recommendation to Dr. James C. Bednarz, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, Route 2, Kempton, PA 19529, U.S.A. **The deadline for applications is 15 November 1989.** The Association's board of directors will make a final decision in February 1990. Only undergraduate and graduate students in degree-granting institutions are eligible to apply. The awards will be granted on the basis of the project's potential to improve understanding of raptor biology and its ultimate relevance to the conservation of raptor populations. **The funds are no longer restricted to studies in North America and applications from anywhere in the world will be considered.**

**The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., 1989 Annual Meeting and II Western Hemisphere Meeting of the World Working Group on Birds of Prey.** The annual meeting of The Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., will be held in conjunction with the II Western Hemisphere Meeting of the World Working Group on Birds of Prey on **10–14 October 1989 at the Hotel Mocambo in Veracruz City, Veracruz, Mexico.** The meeting will focus on the biology, ecology and conservation of neotropical raptors, as well as wintering ecology of Nearctic raptors in the Neotropics. For further information contact: **Mario A. Ramos, Chairperson, RRF-WWGBP 1989 Meeting, Mexico Project Officer, World Wildlife Fund, 1250 Twenty-Fourth Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20037 U.S.A.; Telephone (202) 293-4800, or Eduardo E. Inigo-Elias and Michael W. Collopy, Department of Wildlife and Range Sciences, 118 Newins-Ziegler Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-0304, U.S.A.; Telephone (904) 392-4851.**

**Request For Assistance.** I am anxious to locate a male Brown Wood Owl (*Strix leptogrammica*) to pair with my female which is one of only two in England. Any help or suggestions for further correspondence would be most welcome. **Marshall Lee, 88 Priestwood Avenue, Brachnell, Berkshire, ENGLAND RD12 1X9.**