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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Visit us at our website, coastalraptors.com or on Facebook.
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.

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, photos 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.

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.

In 2016, while standing on the dock at the River’s Bend Marina and the flooded field where Tony saw vultures feeding on carp carcasses.


**Education Programs 2017**

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**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

Progress being made, slowly but surely!

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<th>Title</th>
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<td>Scavenging as a Food Acquisition Strategy in the Peregrine Falcon</td>
<td>The Journal of Raptor Research</td>
<td>Dan Varland, Joe Buchanan, Tracy Fleming, Mary Kay Kenney and Cheryl Vanier</td>
<td>In Review. Accepted for publication pending revision.</td>
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<td>Peregrine Falcons on Coastal Beaches of Washington: Fifteen Years of Banding and Surveys</td>
<td>The Journal of Raptor Research</td>
<td>Dan Varland, Joe Buchanan, Tracy Fleming, Mary Kay Kenney and Tom Loughin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tundra Peregrine Falcon Occurrence in Washington</td>
<td>Washington Birds</td>
<td>Dan Varland, Tracy Fleming and Joe Buchanan</td>
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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 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.

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.

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!
**Young Osprey Rescued!**

In August, Albert Watters visited the Osprey nest on Port of Grays Harbor property in Hoquiam, WA. Ospreys have successfully nested at this location for many years. During the nesting season, local birders and photographers often enjoy Osprey observation along Paulson Road near the nest pole. While most years the parents have two young, in 2017 they had only one. Not long after arriving, Albert noticed that the youngster was seriously entangled in some type of monofilament line. He called me, asking Coastal Raptors to come to the rescue. I was visiting family in Illinois at the time, 1,700 miles away...yikes!

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.
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.

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

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!
Many thanks to Coastal Raptors Supporters

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