



The Raptor Chapter

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The Newsletter of Three Rivers Avian Center

So just imagine for a moment: you are sitting in the Dirtbean coffee shop mid-day, September 19th in Marlinton, WV taking a quick break to check your device for emails and get ready to meet with a Scout troop later in the day. As District Executive for the Buckskin Council of Boy Scouts of America's Seneca District this is not an uncommon day. Then a man comes into the shop talking about a bald eagle in need of help on the Greenbrier River Trail. Turns out Jim Mincher is an Eagle Scout and Scoutmaster from North Carolina, biking through on the River Trail. Your day changes. Thus it was for Seth Kiriluk, an Eagle Scout himself and two time veteran of the Iraq war, and he took on the task of rescuing the bald eagle. By the time he had the bird in captivity, he had met and "locked eyes with the fiercest pair of eyes I've ever seen" and both of them had ended up in the Greenbrier River.



With help from Greenbrier River Trail Superintendent Jodi Spencer who came on the scene with a blanket and large box, Seth was able to rescue the eagle. He then took it to the US Forest Service's Marlinton office, and they helped coordinate getting it to Greenbrier Veterinary Hospital in Lewisburg, a Three Rivers Avian Center intake veterinary location where she was examined by Dr Sue Mohler. The eagle had a very large number of severe bite marks on its right wing and left foot, all several days old, most likely from a mink. The wounds made it very hard for the wing to work and the bird was starving - at least 2 pounds lighter than she should be. It took the TRAC staff 2 hours to clean her wounds. In addition to the pain, blood tests showed that she was also suffering from non-lethal lead poisoning.

With treatment, the bald eagle healed up beautifully. She was released at her home in Marlinton, not more than 2 miles down-river from where she was found originally. Over 130 people came to watch the release, including 2 Boy Scout Troops. After having his first experience "eagle wrangling", Seth also got his first experience to set one free on Veterans Day, November 11th ..She flew out beautifully and obviously knew her surroundings well. Once the main group of watchers left, she came back over the release site, circled us several times, then headed off over a nearby hillside. Watch the video of the release at www.tracwv.org/tracvideos



The Squirrel Who Died Fighting *The Story of a Unique Intake*

October 25, 2016 Connie Toth was looking out her window into the back yard in Pipestem, WV and noticed a strange shape on the ground by the chainlink fence near the creek. Further investigation by her husband Gary showed that it was a screech owl, but it was behaving very oddly. It would roll around, get upright, then fall over, and it looked like it was gagging on something. She contacted Three Rivers Avian Center and volunteer Sam Richmond quickly drove to their home. It was indeed an Eastern Screech Owl, locked into a battle with a flying squirrel! The squirrel had just died when Sam got there, it's body soaking wet from the creek. It died with it's jaws clenched around the

beak of the Screech Owl, it's upper incisors buried in either side of the owl's upper beak just below the bird's nostrils. The owl was lethargic, unable to stand and off balance with the heavy flying squirrel literally a dead weight hanging on the front of its face. Initial attempts to remove the flying squirrel failed because the squirrel had entered rigor mortis, firmly clamping the incisors into their position. We had to wait until the body of the squirrel relaxed, in the meantime the owl fell into a deep sleep of exhaustion. A couple of hours later the squirrel's body relaxed and we were able to gently remove its teeth from the holes it had created in the owl's beak. Several days of R & R followed for the Screech Owl, with plenty of good food. We watched carefully for several weeks to make sure that there were no long-lasting issues from the holes in his beak but there seemed to be none. He was released back into his native woods. We buried the dead squirrel, it only seemed fair. *Photo of the newly rescued Screech Owl is courtesy of Sam Richmond.*

It's that time of year again! Time for the
GREAT SUET RECIPE!

Melt together:

- 1 cup crunchy peanut butter
- 1 cup lard (no substitutes!)

Stir in:

- 2 cups old fashioned rolled oats
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 cup whole wheat flour

For added birdie enjoyment stir in one or all of the following:

- 2 handfuls + of raisins
- ½ - 1 cup freeze dried mealworms
- 2 handfuls craisins

Put into containers that fit the size of your suet holder and store the cakes in the freezer.

Makes at least 3 cakes, more if you add extra ingredients after the 2nd step.

Riffle

TRAC's newest
Barred Owl
Ambassador



Riffle was found as a hatch year owlet just outside Elkview in the aftermath of the flooding in late June 2016. He had been hit by a vehicle on the road that runs along the Elk River, the impact broke his wrist. He was rescued by Kathy Moore and Linda McKinney who named him Riffle after the riffle in the River near where he was found. The broken wrist could not be repaired, but we were able to get it into a comfortable position for him. He is non-flighted. He has been happily residing with our 21 year old barred owl Robbie, and the two have become good friends. Watch for young Riffle in our upcoming educational programs!



TRAC will have our 2017 Summer Internship Application available beginning January 2nd. The position is open to college students interested in improving or gaining skills in environmental education, handling and rehabilitative work with wild birds. The application period is January 2 - January 31st.

To request an application or for more information, send an e-mail to wendy@tracwv.org.

Thank you to the 4th Grade Class of Ms. Angela Lewis of Hinton Area Elementary School! After meeting some of our Ambassadors at Camp Brookside Environmental Education Center in Brooks, WV, the class decided to raise money for Three Rivers Avian Center. They held a drive to collect spare change and then donated it to TRAC on November 5th. Thank you! Ms Lewis' 4th Grade Class is/are Bird Buddies for sure!



If you shop at Kroger, you can help TRAC! Kroger has a generous donation program that has been generating funds for TRAC for a year now. All you need to do is go to www.Kroger.com/comm and select Three Rivers Avian Center as your charity of choice (or you can type in our NPO number 91219). You need to re-register your decision annually, but other than that, every time you swipe your

Kroger card with a purchase, Kroger makes a quarterly donation to TRAC!! You still keep your fuel points, still get your discounts, but TRAC also benefits. It really adds up!!

Memberships are vital to the success of Three Rivers Avian Center. As an IRS registered 501(c)3 charity, your donations are tax-deductible. Members receive a quarterly newsletter. Feathered friends receive the newsletter as well as a frameable certificate featuring the Raptor Educational Ambassador of their choice. Memberships are renewable annually, the renewal date is included on the mailing label of your newsletter. Credit/debit cards are accepted on our website: www.tracwv.org Please let us know if this is a gift!

Name: _____

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- Individual (\$10) _____

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- Nick red tailed hawk (\$30) _____
- Harlan dark red tailed hawk (\$30) _____
- Kendra red shouldered hawk (\$30) _____
- Dori peregrine falcon (\$30) _____
- Gimli American kestrel (\$30) _____
- Hoolie great horned owl (\$30) _____
- Robbie barred owl (\$30) _____
- Riffle young barred owl (\$30) _____
- Thomas grey screech owl (\$30) _____
- Rudy red screech owl (\$30) _____

Many Thanks to our Sponsors!

Your name, a loved one's name or your group or company's name can be listed here for an annual donation of \$150 or more. Your donation is fully tax-deductible & will help advance the work of Three Rivers Avian Center.

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A Very Special Thank You to:

The Acker Foundation The Beckley Area Foundation
The National Eagle Scout Association

In loving memory of:

*William Norman Jones, Duncan Hollar, Grady McRae,
Robert L. & Ann V. Morris, Ferdi Perrone, Clyde Wallin*



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*A private nonprofit organization dedicated to
wild bird conservation & to educating and involving
people in ecosystem stewardship since 1990*

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