

*"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," according to a proverb. A single "wingbeat" would more accurately describe the beginnings of long journeys made by migrating birds, but some individuals in our care this year made lengthy trips by vehicle. This Razorbill was one of them. For stories of these long-distance travelers as well as others that came through our doors, read on!*

## Rehabilitation 2013 Overview

Our total of 1556 for the calendar year (1526 new admissions plus 30 carried over from 2012) was about the same as last year's 1547, as was our species total of 120. Our five most commonly admitted native species apart from raptors were American Robin (143), Mourning Dove (96), Eastern Phoebe (95), American Crow (84), and Chipping Sparrow (39). The total number of raptors (198) in care this year was down a bit from 2012, but still well ahead of what had been typical for the prior several years. Barred Owl (52), Broad-winged Hawk (31), and Bald Eagle (27) were the top three raptor species. We did have an atypical variety of owl species in 2013: in addition to the

Barred, Great Horned and Saw-whet "regulars" of most years, we also saw Long-eared, Short-eared, and Snowy Owls.

Overall, our non-native admissions were a little lower than last year (102 Rock Pigeons, 70 European Starlings, 30 English Sparrows). The most frequently admitted aquatic species was the Common Loon (18); among the other water birds was a variety of species that included Great and Double-crested Cormorant, Common Murre, Red-necked Grebe, Great Shearwater, Black Guillemot, Leach's Storm Petrel, Northern Gannet, Red-throated Loon, assorted ducks, and of course the Razorbill whose story is told on page 4. Our reptile admissions were about half of last year's—24 in all, mostly Painted and Snapping Turtles.

*Continued on page 2*

In March, Terry began work on the pool enclosures for the new aquatic bird facility (the "Pool Hall") we told you about in last year's report, and as soon as each pool was ready, it had an occupant. We'd over-wintered



a young Black Guillemot with a sinus injury, but within a one-week period in March, we admitted three more water birds: (top to bottom) a Red-necked Grebe, Red-throated Loon, and Common Murre. Members of this trio were storm victims, uninjured but thin and not waterproof. Good meals and our new pools soon remedied those problems, and all three birds had been released by the end of the month. The Guillemot, featured in our Winter-Spring 2013 Slide Show (available on our website), was returned to the sea in early May.

The largest pool was completed in May, and its first occupant was a Common Loon rescued from the tarmac at an airport in Auburn by Warden Dave Chabot. Minor lacerations from her crash landing had bled profusely, but they healed quickly, and she was released a week later by Sandy Bailey.



Just a few days after that release, another Common Loon came down at the same airport! This individual, rescued from the airport by Rich Burton and brought here by volunteer transporters Kim Bailey and Paul Bonenfant, had been shot in the wing at some point in the past. The fractures had long since healed around the projectile; given that the bird had been seen coming down, it was obvious that he could fly. His blood work looked fine, and he was released the following day. A particularly interesting case among the other Common Loons this year was presented in our Late Summer-Fall 2013 Slide Show. ■

## Special Thanks to...

### Businesses and Organizations

Albion Bait Fish  
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Atlantic Veterinary Care  
Beaver Hill Plantation  
Belfast Cooperative  
BioDiversity Research Institute  
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Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery  
Ellsworth Builders Supply  
Fosters Family Pet Store  
Little River Veterinary Hospital  
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Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife  
Maine Dept. of Marine Resources  
Maine Fish Health Laboratory  
Maine General Hospital  
Maine Warden Service  
Maine Wildlife Park  
Mid-Coast Audubon Society  
Petco (Augusta)  
The Raptor Trust  
Unity Barn Raisers  
U.S.D.A. APHIS Wildlife Services  
U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Village Farm  
Walmart (Augusta)  
Wind Over Wings

### Wildlife Colleagues

Brad Allen  
Rich Burton  
Becky Duerr  
Erynn Call  
Judy Camuso  
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Philip deMaynadier  
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Eric Holmes  
Keel Kemper  
Jen Lewis  
Mark McCollough  
Erica Miller  
Shearon Murphy  
Kristin Peet  
Mark Pokras  
Betsy Pratt  
Ann Rivers  
Kappy Sprenger  
Kelsey Sullivan  
Charlie Todd  
Flo Tseng

Where causes of injuries were reported, the leading three were the same as in previous years: car hits (153 cases, 31% survival), cat predation (66 cases, about a third of which were nestlings, 17% survival), and window strikes (55 cases, 40% survival). In 2013, toxic effects of ingested lead affected ten birds in our practice, including two Common Loons, four Bald Eagles, and one Golden Eagle. Because of the size of lead sinkers and jig-heads, loons consuming them virtually always die. New legislation that set stricter limits on lead fishing gear beginning in 2014 should reduce loon mortalities in the years to come. However, eagles acquire lead poisoning from scavenging remains of carcasses containing tiny fragments of spent lead ammunition, with the effects depending on the amount ingested. Lead affects a number of body systems; lethal amounts are more globally disabling. Birds ingesting smaller amounts have difficulties such as impaired coordination that may be a factor in their becoming injured.

Birds admitted here with elevated blood lead levels are immediately started on a chelating agent; if lead is still in the GI tract, we remove it by gastric lavage. Looking back over the 10 years since we acquired our blood lead test kit, we find approximately a third of our eagle admissions (excluding nestlings) presenting with significant lead exposures. Among them, about a third were released; the others either died outright from a lethal dose, or else they did not survive injuries to which a sub-lethal dose likely contributed. A legal ban on lead ammunition is probably many years away, but meanwhile, hunters could either voluntarily switch to non-lead, or take great care not to leave any remains of lead-killed game in the field.

Each summer, among the hundreds of nestling songbirds we admit, one of the most common species is the Eastern Phoebe. Because of their preference for flat surfaces with an overhang, phoebes often nest on human dwellings or outbuildings. The proximity of these nests to people means that youngsters in difficulty are readily found and



rescued. We release our hand-raised fledglings on the property here, and though we may occasionally see one or two later on release day, they typically head straight into the woods and are not seen again. This year, among the many we had released both earlier and later in the season, were eight that were set free at the edge of the woods on July 30. At the end of the day, several were in a witch hazel shrub near the flight cage in which they'd been housed; the next day, different numbers were around at different times, but twice, all eight were counted. We put a dish of mealworms under the shrub, and they fed readily there. Over the next week, the number of "regulars" dropped to four or five. We released another eight birds on August 5th and four more on the 7th, but the number of visitors to the witch hazel did not increase.

Then on the 9th came a terrible rainstorm; the regulars were around all day, this time reverting to nestling-style begging (successfully!) for hand-feeding. Early the next morning, three were in the shrub, and as Diane was feeding them, a Cooper's Hawk flew onto a branch mere inches from Diane's hand. Within one or two seconds, the raptor and the phoebes scattered; things happened too quickly for Diane to know whether a fledgling had been taken. No more than one at a time appeared during the next few days, but on the 15th we saw two, sitting side by side in the shrub, basking in the afternoon sun. We released six more into the witch hazel on the 18th, but the pattern remained the same; only two birds continued to appear there. We last saw them on August 27th, nearly a month after they had been released, and about the time when migratory instincts might have prompted them to move on. ■





Broad-winged Hawks are one of our more common raptor admissions; most of the birds among them are youngsters that got into trouble around the time of fledging. However, this year we admitted two older birds that both had been plucked from the grille of a vehicle! The first was rescued by Warden Steve Allarie on June 13. The left wing drooped, but by the next day the bird was flying. Because he was a likely



breeding adult, we released him the next day. The second bird had a more complicated story and recovery. The driver of the vehicle knew he had hit a bird, but thought little of it until he returned home and found it in the grille of his van. After putting on gloves, he pulled the bird loose and put her on the ground. An hour passed and the bird did not move, so he began making calls. One of our volunteers, Linda Harrell, was able to get to the location just before dark and made the



capture with little difficulty. Linda knew one leg was injured, but made the bird comfortable overnight and delivered her first thing the next morning. The left tibiatarsus was badly fractured, as shown in this x-ray image. We splinted the fracture to stabilize it, and kept the patient indoors for nearly two weeks; when she began to challenge the hospital cage, we moved

her to an outside habitat with the splint still on. It was removed on August 26, and a week later, we gave her access to a larger habitat where some of the youngsters were housed. She was soon flying well and landing solidly on the injured leg. She was released on September 18.

Another raptor with a poor-prognosis fracture was a much rarer bird, a Peregrine Falcon, rescued on August 8 by Warden Kris McCabe and brought to volunteer Kate Weatherby for transport here. The bird had a metacarpal fracture close to the wrist—not a good prognosis for a falcon. We wrapped the wing to the body to ensure there was no movement at all. An x-ray taken ten days later revealed good alignment, and in a physical therapy session, all of the joints were found to have good extension. The body wrap was reduced to a figure-8

around the wing, and a few days later, that wrap was removed. The bird was moved to an outside cage on August 26. A series of upgrades to progressively larger habitats occurred over the next



month, and on Sept. 22, the peregrine went into our flyway, where he was soon flying multiple laps (at 160' per lap). He was released on Oct. 28. An x-ray taken on his way out the door showed an almost perfect remodeling of the fracture. ■

## Helpers at the Nest

Avian Haven has an absolutely wonderful human crew; it includes a small group of year-round, on-site staff plus a larger number of summer interns and volunteers. Regardless of the time of year, co-directors Diane and Marc are of course here; others in 2013 included Glori Berry, Jane Brackett, Kelani Cundy, Terry Heitz, Selkie O'Mira, Shelley Spanswick, and Jerry Stefansky. Our full-time summer interns were Alicen Kanzler and Mandy Lightcap; Ian Brackett and Kelly Walker were part-time interns. Seasonal "regulars" that helped with the summer youngsters consisted of Amy Dillon, Linda Harrell, Laura Lecker, Connie Moore, and Janet Wiseley. Others pitching in from time to time included Abby Everleth, Adrianna Pellegrini, Hannah Rhea, and Rebecca Zerlin. Our Infirmary Manager for several years, Shelley Spanswick, left Avian Haven in the fall to pursue an alternative career; we are grateful for her fine work here, and wish her success in her new pursuits. Special thanks also go to Myra Altman for tireless and skillful work on the plantings around our flight habitats; we hope to recruit additional landscaping and gardening volunteers for 2014—let us know if you are interested!

Avian Haven also has a small number of avian staff—nonreleasable birds we have permits to keep as surrogate parents for orphans of species prone to inappropriate imprinting if raised by people. Among our best fosters were two Barred Owls, "Emma" and "Oscar," who raised 25 youngsters over the thirteen years they were with us. Emma died in January of 2013, and Oscar a year later, just into 2014. A memorial tribute to them can be found on the Slide Shows page of our website.

Returning to the human realm, we thank our Consulting Veterinarian, Dr. Judy Herman (Animal Wellness Center, Augusta), for surgeries and other kinds of help with particularly difficult cases. Additional local veterinary/medical assistance was provided by Dr. Dean Domeyer (Boothbay Animal Hospital), Dr. Sarah Caputo (Belfast Veterinary Hospital), Dr. Laura Leighton (Penobscot Veterinary Services), Dr. Chip Ridky (U.S.D.A. APHIS), and Dr. Steve Witkin (Maine Eye Care Associates). Particular thanks for counsel and support also go to Board Members Judy Herman, George Matula and Allen Stehle. For other 2013 special contributions of goods, services, funds, and/or shared expertise, we are especially grateful to Kim Bailey, Anne Beauleau, Louis

Continued from page 3

Bevier, Bob Brummel, Amy & Bob Campbell, Shirley & Alan Casey, Jan Corning, Janika Eckert & Rob Johnston, Mark Finke, Georgie Hall, Sandra Hammond, Carol & Bob Jones, Diane & Rob Jones, Georgia & Tug Kellough, Don Lecker, Susan MacDonald, Darcy Mahoney, Deb Maringola, Eleanor & Bill Murley, Mary Offutt, Nancy & Charlie Shuman, Kim Smith, Nancy Spencer-Smith, Marge Sorenson, Kathy Stager, Laura Teisl, Charlene Turgeon, Charley West, and John Winn.

We are proud to work closely with many individuals and organizations with a wildlife focus, including Maine's game wardens and wildlife biologists as well as wildlife veterinarians and other rehabilitators. Colleagues as well as people or businesses with a different emphasis that have nevertheless been particularly helpful in 2013 are listed in the sidebar of this report (page 2). As in past years, about half of our admissions were brought to Avian Haven by "avian ambulance" drivers—volunteer transporters who step in when needed to drive birds here. This awesome team has too many members for us to thank each individual in print, but a complete list is on our website.

## New Wings

Physical Plant Manager Terry Heitz was very busy in 2013! As mentioned on the cover, our new water bird facility became operational in the spring of 2013, with all four of its pools in nearly continuous use through the remainder of the year. Though already open for business, the "Pool Hall" was dedicated on June 28, with Sandy Bailey cutting a ribbon across the doorway near a plaque acknowledging memory of her husband Ken, the former Megunticook Lake Warden. A wonderful photo of Ken in his boat hangs on one of the inside walls; we will always imagine him watching over the building's occupants.

Over the summer, Terry did some major work on the grounds, installing drainage systems, terraces and new pathways to improve and beautify access to the flight habitats. In the fall, his attention turned to renovations on our original raptor flight cage. In the electronic realm, [avianhaven.org](http://avianhaven.org) is kept running smoothly by our long-time webmaster, James Skowbo. Our Facebook page has been infused with a new vibrancy by Selkie O'Mira, who took over its management in the fall.

The Razorbill, a species of auk or alcid (family *Alcidae*), is a northern seabird normally found no farther south than the mid-Atlantic states. But the winter of 2012-2013 brought what some called an "unprecedented invasion" of Razorbills and other alcids into south-Atlantic waters and even into the Gulf of Mexico. One hypothesis was that unusually warm surface sea temperatures along the Northeast coast disrupted food availability, with the fish normally favored in short supply. Flocks numbering in the hundreds were seen in Miami and other parts of southern Florida! We received numerous calls from rehabilitators in Florida asking how to care for types of birds they had never seen before. The last call in this series came in early June from the Florida Wild Mammal Association in the Gulf Coast town of Crawfordville; several weeks earlier, an emaciated, exhausted, wet and dirty Razorbill had been rescued from a nearby beach and brought to FWMA. Their supportive care had saved the bird's life, but they knew two things: that he needed further time in rehab, ideally at a facility better equipped for northern seabirds, and that he could not be released into the Gulf of Mexico in summer. Some research had led FWMA to us; they were prepared to fly the bird to Maine if we would take him. Of course we said yes!

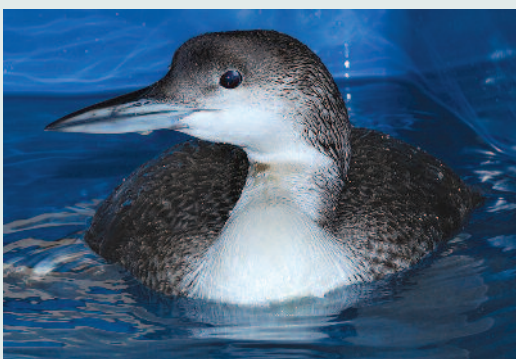
The auk's sponsor was a FWMA volunteer named Pat, who also bought airline tickets for herself and another patient, a Common Loon that was too debilitated to migrate back north. Appropriate documentation was arranged for both birds, with special attention given the Razorbill, a species listed as Threatened in Maine. Travel day was June 5. While in the air, members of the flight

crew were momentarily alarmed when they noticed a bird resembling a penguin on board, but an in-flight call to Maine's wildlife agency confirmed that all the paperwork was in order. Marc met Pat and both birds at the Portland airport; Pat boarded a return flight to Florida, and Marc drove the two birds here.



The Razorbill had a mostly-healed wing fracture and had almost completely lost his waterproofing. However two baths with Dawn detergent helped to restore it, with the bird's own bathing and preening in our pool doing the rest. Within a couple of weeks, the bird had gained weight, was spending more time in the water, and was nearly ready to release. Brad Allen, a water bird biologist with Maine's IF&W, had seen Razorbills recently in Penobscot Bay and was happy to do the honors. June 24 was release day; Marc handed the bird off to Brad, who took him for release near a small island just west of Deer Isle.

The loon had a longer recovery that included repair of a keel sore; seabird veterinarians that were consulted offered suggestions on the type of suture stitch to use, and Dr. Herman performed the procedure on the day the Razorbill was released. The sore healed extremely well, and the bird's overall recovery was rapid after that. She was released on July 9.



Amazingly, these were not the only birds we admitted from down south! On June 24, a Bowdoinham woman who had just unpacked a vacuum cleaner that had been ordered and shipped from Florida was astonished to find three young robins in a nest made in the machinery. The nestlings were in fairly good shape, considering the circumstances. Their stay with us was uneventful, and they were released on July 12. ■

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It was near the end of December 2012 that our colleagues at Center for Wildlife in Cape Neddick called to ask if we could take over care of a Snowy Owl they'd had for several months.

Snowy Owls call the Arctic home; but when the populations are large and/or food sources scarce, they will wander south, usually in the winter. This bird was unusual in having been this far south in June; she had been admitted at CFW with some number of broken flight feathers, and had unfortunately continued to break others. We set the bird up in one of the habitats of our owl compound, a low-traffic area on the far end of the property where we believed she would feel safe and comfortable. Snowy Owls do not go through a complete molt annually; rather, it may take several years to achieve a new set of feathers. Our first impulse was to imp the broken ones, and to that end, we sought a donor bird. But although we were able to locate two cadavers, both were males whose feathers were significantly shorter and narrower than those of our female. We knew she would not do well if held through a second and possibly third Maine summer; the species is prone to both West Nile Virus and aspergillosis (a fungal disease). We therefore began exploring the possibility of sending her to The Owl Foundation in Ontario, Canada (<http://www.theowlfoundation.ca>), a well-known facility that specializes in northern owls and that has regular admissions of Snowies. We knew there would be paperwork involved, and once our new friends at TOF agreed to take the bird, Diane had the first of what would be many conversations with various U.S.F.W.S. personnel about the export procedure. Late in February, an application for what we'd been told was the only permit we would need was submitted, along with a permit fee. It was the middle of April before that application was approved, and along with that approval came notice that we would need two additional permits, each with an accompanying fee. Those two permits were not issued until early August; meanwhile, we had applied mosquito-proof netting to all open sections of the habitat to guard against West Nile virus. The next hurdle was the health



certificates and lab tests required for crossing the border, which in turn required the participation of U.S.D.A. veterinarians (and more fees). As soon as those certificates were complete, Diane

began a final review of all the documentation with the U.S.F.W.S. wildlife inspector whose office would be overseeing the border crossing. On the day before departure, it was confirmed that everything was in order . . . everything except for a border inspection fee that had not been mentioned previously. And yes, at each step along the way, apologetic officials did acknowledge that, if not for her damaged flight feathers, the owl would have flown back into her native Canada free of charge.

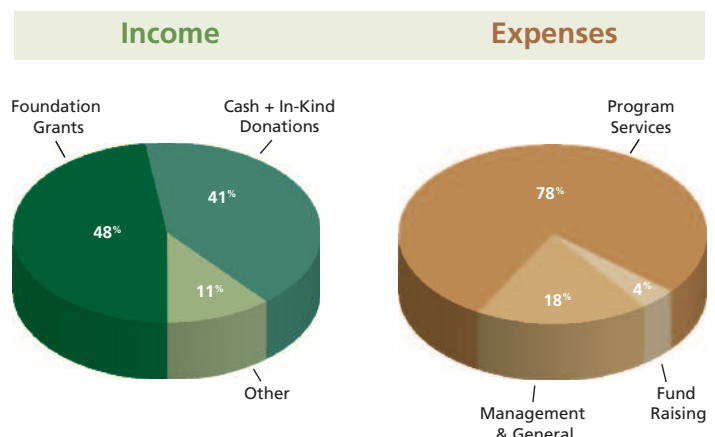
On July 17, our heroic volunteer transporter, Laura Teisl, left Maine with the owl, headed for the Buffalo, NY area. The bird had to be at the customs office at a certain time to match the schedule of the Canadian veterinarian who would be reviewing the health certificates and examining the bird on the other side of the border. The only practical way to keep that appointment was for Laura to leave late in the afternoon of the previous day, spend

the night en route, and depart from her overnight location very early the next morning. The bird had been crated with extreme care, again according to regulations, and made the trip without difficulty. The border crossing went very smoothly, and there were grins all around as Laura handed the crate to Stacy Campopiano, biologist with TOF. It was only an hour's journey from the border crossing to the bird's new home; she was settled in safely about 24 hours after departing.

As of the end of the calendar year, the Snowy Owl was doing quite well. Over the remainder of the summer, the bird had molted her tail and some primary flight feathers, and was beginning to fly well enough to gain the high perches of her habitat. The plan is to imp any remaining broken feathers early in the spring, then give her a few more weeks to build up stamina and maneuverability. If all goes well, she could be released sometime in May. ■

## Nest Eggs

In addition to grant income dedicated to habitat renovation, we gratefully acknowledge support from the American Foundation, Baker Street Trust, the Conger Family Foundation, the Island Foundation, Marty Morse Fund, and the Stifler Family Foundation. Additional funding for operations came from private and business cash and in-kind donations, plus investments earnings and other miscellaneous sources. The proportions in each category of our total unrestricted income are shown here on the left side of the chart. On the right, operating costs are categorized as Program Services (expenses that directly support our mission, such as veterinary and food supplies, payroll, small equipment, etc.); Management & General (accounting and insurance costs, business supplies, etc.), and Fund Raising.



## On the Horizon

The Pool Hall went into such rapid occupancy that Terry did not complete a few planned extras—in particular a sink/washing station that could double as a pool for very small aquatic birds. That project is currently underway. Once the weather warms up enough for outdoor work, Terry will finish the renovations to our original raptor habitat, then move onto modifications of our first circular flight cage, which he designed for aerial insectivores. We thank the Adelard A. Roy and Valeda Lea Roy Foundation and Bangor Hydro/Maine Public Service (now Emera Maine) for grants to help fund these projects.

We admitted 25 Bald Eagles in 2013. Among them was the largest bird in our experience—a female weighing 6.4 kg (about 14 pounds). This bird was reported down in the Fairfield area; volunteers Carolyn and Steve Richens met Warden Tom McKenney at the site, and after a chase and coordinated surround, she was captured just before dark on April 13. On admission, it looked like she had been in a fight: one wingtip was lacerated, there was a large puncture on the breast, and another puncture in the mouth. Remarkably there were no fractures, but intensive wound management was needed. Within a few weeks, however, everything had healed up, and the bird was released on May 18.



Another of our more noteworthy eagle cases was recovered in October by wildlife biologist Jim Hall from a roadside in Cherryfield and ferried here by a volunteer relay comprising Francine Frank and William Nichols. On the basis of her inability to stand or even move her legs, we assumed a lower back injury and sent x-rays to Dr. Mark Pokras at Tufts. He saw "nasty" pelvic fractures to multiple bones, especially on the left side, and voiced concern about nerve damage. There was no particular treatment indicated other than an anti-inflammatory drug and rest on a soft, padded surface. Within a week, she was moving her legs a little, and even sitting up for short periods. Very slow progress continued through the first week of November. On the 7th, we moved her to a small outdoor habitat for some fresh air; she still had a large "bed" of several layers of quilts on top of a foam pad to insulate the bed from the colder ground. Two days later we were astonished to find her standing up! Over the next two weeks, she moved around more, though still favoring her left leg. Around Thanksgiving, we upgraded her to a larger habitat,

After Shelley's departure in September, members of our Board of Directors discussed various strategies for replacement. Marc had resumed his former role as Infirmary Manager, so volunteer (and photographer extraordinaire) Glori Berry offered to help him out with a few clinical tasks. The more he taught her, the more quickly she seemed to learn, and by November, it was apparent that she had the potential to fill the vacated position. Our Board voted unanimously to cancel plans for an outside search and hire Glori as paid staff as of the beginning of 2014; we welcome her with enthusiasm to her new role as Assistant Infirmary Manager.



again with her bed set up as previously; she continued to make progress there, not only walking around but even climbing onto low perches. On December 18, we moved her to a habitat yet another size up—this one 40 feet in length with high perches at either end. We found her up on one of those perches the next morning, and within a few more days she was flying from high place to high place, still a bit unsteady on the left leg but never missing a landing. Improvement continued for the remainder of the month; we moved her into the flyway early in January. Her story continued over just a few weeks into 2014; she was released back home on February 2.

In between these two adult eagles we had the usual assortment of nestlings and fledglings, some of which were found nearly dead from starvation. We pulled most of them through, and released four members of "the Class of 2013" in September. Throughout the year we had other memorable cases of sick or injured eagles, but perhaps the most remarkable was the last of the calendar year—a Golden Eagle rescued from a land preserve in Boothbay on Dec. 29 by local Animal Control Officer Betsy



Pratt and brought here by volunteer Carol Jones. The bird had not resisted capture; she was covered with mud, extremely debilitated, severely anemic, and had an elevated blood lead level. The anemia might have been partly due to lead poisoning, but the bird defecated blood the next day, so there might also have been an internal injury, or possibly a secondary exposure to an anti-coagulant rodenticide. We treated as appropriate for all possibilities. Her story also continues into 2014; however, as this report goes to press, the bird's basic blood parameters are within normal ranges; she has mastered the high perches in a series of habitat upgrades, and is currently in our flyway. More images and continuing updates can be found on our Facebook page. ■





On November 28, we got a call about two birds that had struck a window in Sanford. A smaller one had died immediately, but a larger one was rescued from the ground, still alive. This scenario might be typical of, say, a Sharp-shinned Hawk that had been chasing a songbird. But when transporter Kathy Stager sent us photos, it was immediately obvious that the bird was not a raptor. Instead, it was one of the more unusual carnivorous birds, a Northern Shrike. This species breeds in a range stretching from Alaska to Quebec, but may venture farther south in the winter, which is the only season in which they are seen in our area.

The bills of all shrike species are very much like those of falcons. The upper mandible has a sharp, curved tip backed up by a downward-pointing triangle on each side that fits into a corresponding notch on the lower mandible. This "tomial tooth" (the mandible edges are called "tomia") is used to kill vertebrate prey by cervical dislocation. Northern Shrikes typically scan for a potential meal while perched; when one is seen, the bird dives down for a capture. Killed prey such as small mammals and other birds are then carried to "larders"—usually thorny shrubs, where they are wedged or impaled, and once secured, pulled apart with the beak. The species scientific name, *Lanius excubitor*, can be translated as "butcher watchman."

This individual's window encounter had damaged part of his beak. The curved tip had broken off, leaving the tomial tooth disfigured and essentially nonfunctional. The bird was otherwise undamaged; he would still have been able to capture, but not kill, his prey. Bird beaks are composed of keratin—living, growing tissue similar to fingernails. Our hope was that, over time, the tip would regrow, and perhaps with the aid of some careful trimming and filing, the tomial tooth could be restored. As this report goes to press, some regrowth has indeed occurred, and we remain optimistic that this particular carnivore can someday return to life in the wild. ■



## In Closing . . .

Most bird species eat other animals, whether those foods are mammals, other birds, fish, or insects, either regularly or seasonally, when otherwise vegetarian birds need more protein for rearing their young. But the term "bird of prey" usually designates a species with feet featuring talons specialized for capturing and holding prey—namely, the raptors, which include, among other families, eagles, owls, falcons and hawks. Humans have been fascinated by raptors throughout our history; their images have been found in prehistoric rock art, in later totems and battle standards, and in modern business logos. Ironically, raptors have also been despised as assassins of the innocent, and persecuted; shooting was once a leading cause of death among some raptor species. Today, the greatest threat to their populations is probably habitat loss, though toxins such as heavy metals are an ongoing concern.

And yet there is hope that these species will nevertheless flourish; author Scott Weidensaul believes that the freedom and wild beauty associated with raptors has perhaps never been a more powerful symbol. The Introduction to his *Raptors: The Birds of Prey* closes with this observation: "...a female American kestrel is sitting on a wire just outside my office window, bobbing in the wind as she watches the meadow for an incautious rodent. A moment ago she flashed into view, a masterwork of tapered wings, sharp claws, and dark, brilliant eyes. In that instant, she transformed a quiet afternoon into one of high drama and excitement—exactly the kind of fire that raptors of every description add to the natural world."

Until next year—

*Diane & Marc*

Diane Winn and Marc Payne, Co-Directors

All photography is by Glori Berry unless otherwise credited.

## AVIAN HAVEN

is a nonprofit wild bird rehabilitation center dedicated to the return of injured and orphaned birds of all species to their natural roles in the wild.

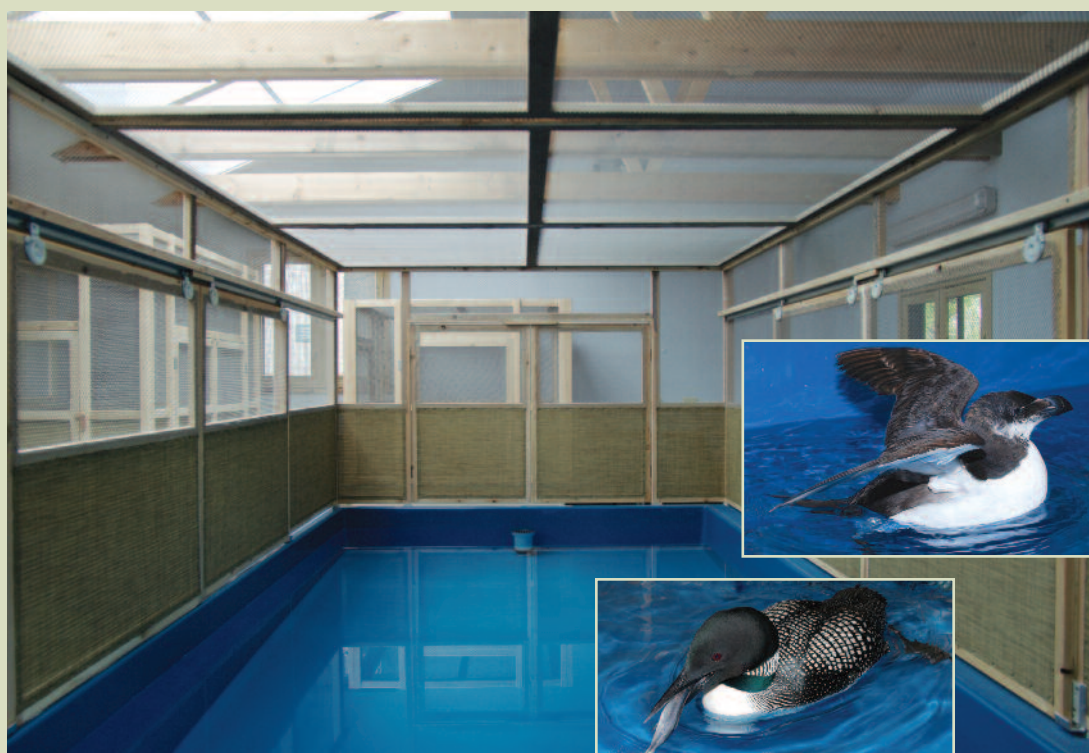
**Your tax-deductible donations enable the success of this mission; please help us continue providing top-quality care for Maine's wild birds by making an annual individual or business contribution.**

Gifts via credit card and PayPal may be given through our website, [www.avianhaven.org](http://www.avianhaven.org), or checks may be sent to 418 N. Palermo Rd., Freedom, ME 04941. Printed receipts are gladly provided upon request.

We can be reached by phone at **207-382-6761** or by e-mail at [info@avianhaven.org](mailto:info@avianhaven.org)

*Thank you for your support!*





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## New Aquatic Bird Facility:

Design and construction by Terry Heitz

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