

Mailing Address:
185 Pond Road
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472

Newsletter Editor: Daena Ford

E-mail: information@bbrr.org

Website: bbrr.org

Find BBRR on



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BBRR's Mission:

- To educate the public about, to conduct research programs on, and to contribute to consideration of public policy on birds of prey, other wildlife and the environment.
- To maintain the natural character of Braddock Bay, Lake Ontario, New York for public benefit.

2026 Hawkwatch Season—by Maili Waters, Official Counter

The 2026 hawkwatch season represents the 40th year that Braddock Bay Raptor Research has organized this count, and what a season it was! We officially kicked off on March 1st and ended on May 31st. Volunteers also counted on one day in February and four days in June, adding an additional 311 birds, bringing the grand total to 86,309. This is the fourth highest season total in the history of the count. We also broke the all-time season record for Bald Eagles with a total of 1,680 birds.

It is such a privilege to witness the spectacular spring migration at Braddock Bay. This is one of the best places in the country to observe bird migration in the spring, not only with thousands of hawks, but with thousands of other birds as well. Flocks of waterfowl in March give way to the early passerine migrants like blackbirds, flickers, and swallows in April. The floodgates really open in May, with thousands of warblers, orioles, Blue Jays, and other songbirds moving through. Of course, this constantly evolving world of migration is also very evident in raptors. From the early Rough-legged, Red-shouldered, and Cooper's Hawks in March, to the Sharp-shinned and Broad-winged Hawks in April, to the push of young Bald Eagles and the possibility of Mississippi Kites in May, there is always something new to be looking for. This season did not disappoint, with a total of 204 species seen from the platform, including 19 species of raptors.



Male Northern Harrier. Photo by Maili Waters

February - 35 individuals of 7 species

There were favorable weather conditions on February 27th, with SW winds at 10mph and temps in the 40s, which enticed a few people to stop by the platform ahead of the official count to see if anything was on the move. We were rewarded with 35 individuals representing 7 different raptor species. The first 15 Bald Eagles of the season passed over, an early sign of a record year for this once critically

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Braddock Bay Hawkwatch Monthly Totals by Species—Spring 2026

Species	Febru- ary	March	April	May	June	TOTAL	Season Average *
Black Vulture	0	3	6	0	0	9	2
Turkey Vulture	0	7816	20014	4301	143	32274	14022
Osprey	0	3	68	129	2	202	221
Bald Eagle	15	281	602	730	52	1680	387
Northern Harrier	2	91	770	177	2	1042	801
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	196	6369	1369	0	7935	5528
Cooper's Hawk	1	103	99	27	0	230	483
American Goshawk	0	1	4	0	0	5	33
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	392	89	0	0	481	674
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	28752	10944	65	39761	28,497
Red-tailed Hawk	8	429	932	261	11	1641	3,684
Rough-legged Hawk	7	64	16	2	0	89	297
Golden Eagle	0	15	32	3	0	50	27
American Kestrel	0	134	660	47	0	841	554
Merlin	0	9	17	6	0	32	27
Peregrine Falcon	1	6	11	15	0	33	17
Mississippi Kite	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
Swallow-tailed Kite	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Short-eared Owl	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	35	9543	58443	18012	276	86309	55792
*Season averages are from 1977-2026							

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endangered bird. Rough-legged Hawks also established their presence early with 7 individuals, the first of 89 for the season.

March - 9,543 individuals of 15 species

As cold north winds blew in our faces and snow fell from the sky, a few hardy souls joined me on the platform for the first official day of the count. As the snow began to taper off, the first migrating raptor for the season flew over: a beautiful adult Golden Eagle! I can't think of a better omen for our first bird. This was the first of 50 Golden Eagles that passed over the hawkwatch this season—the fourth highest total in the history of the count.

The rest of the week was very slow, until the weather finally improved a bit and a few more birds started to move. In just two days, March 7th and 8th, we counted 54 Rough-legged Hawks (more than last year's entire season total

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of 52!) We ended up seeing 89 Rough-legs for the season, the second highest total in the past 10 years.

Red-shouldered Hawks are one of the earlier migrants here, with the majority passing through in March. Our best day for Red-shouldered Hawks was March 9th, with 155 birds. We saw a total of 392 Red-shoulders in March and 481 for the entire season, the highest total since 2013.

Turkey Vulture numbers in March were just over the ten-year average with moderate daily counts and a total of 7,816. We were eagerly anticipating “the” big Turkey Vulture day, which could have easily happened in late March, but weather conditions delayed the push until April 3. Black Vulture, a species that was completely absent last year, made an appearance on two of the last three days of the month.

These three birds weren’t the only ones seen this season though, with 6 more following in April. The season total of 9 represents the fifth highest total for the count.



Black Vulture (center bird) with two Turkey Vultures. A total of 9 Black Vultures were counted for the season. Photo by Maili Waters

On the Accipitrine front, the first of 5 American Goshawks for the season passed by on the 19th, heading east over the barrier island. American Goshawk is a species that has declined drastically over the past 30 years, with the ten-year average now only 3. They need large undisturbed areas of forest to breed in, which is a habitat that is quickly disappearing. We saw 103 Cooper’s Hawks in March and a season total of 230, just under the ten-year average. Sharp-shinned Hawks, on the other hand, had a stellar year with one of the highest season totals ever... but more on that later.

April - 58,443 individuals of 18 species

Watching the skies for six hours on the first two days of the month resulted in only a single bird (a Turkey Vulture) migrating over. However, on the third day of the month, the skies opened in a truly spectacular fashion! We saw over 12,000 birds, 10,759 of which were Turkey Vultures, setting a new single day record for this species! It was a really amazing day, with constant kettles of vultures and other raptors congregating over the West Spit and moving along the lakeshore. Fittingly, we also had the highest April total for Turkey Vultures in the history of the count, with a total of just over 20,000 (out of a total of 32,274 for the season).

April is the month for Broad-winged Hawks: 28,752 were seen this month, out of a total of 39,761 for the season. This is the highest total of Broad-winged Hawk since 2012. April is also the peak month for Sharp-shinned Hawks, and we had a phenomenal year with a total of 7,935 (the highest since 2011). For a species that has been in a dramatic decline over the past several decades, it was nice to see some higher numbers. There were two days this month where we counted over 1,000 Sharp-shins: 1,013 birds on the 14th and 1,621 on the 28th.

It was a great year for American Kestrels, with the highest total count since 1996. We saw 660 kestrels in April alone, and 841 for the whole season. Thirty-two Golden Eagles passed over in April, out of the season total of fifty. Northern Harriers also had a stellar year, with 770 in April and a season total of 1,042 (the highest since 2008). Red-tailed Hawks had a pretty average year with a total of 1,641. One Short-eared Owl was spotted coming in off the lake in mid-April, the only one for the season.

The rarity highlight of the year happened on April 18th, when a local birder notified us of a Swallow-tailed Kite flying east along the lakeshore! This spectacular tropical raptor has only been seen twice before at the count, back in 1987 and 2002. Thankfully, the bird was heading in our direction from the Hamlin area, and the timing worked

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out perfectly. After many frantic minutes scanning, we picked it out briefly as it glided low over the trees along the parkway. What a stunner!

May - 18,012 individuals of 14 species

The arrival of May is a little bittersweet as a hawkwatcher, because the biggest days are typically behind us and raptor migration starts to wind down. But May is still full of excitement! We start to notice the interesting transition from mostly adult birds early in the month (in a hurry to get back to their breeding grounds) to mostly immature birds in the latter half (that will not breed this year but still have the instinct to head north). This shift is most apparent with Broad-winged Hawks, and as soon as we start seeing mostly immatures, we know the season is really beginning to taper off.



Adult (bottom left) and immature Bald Eagles. Photo by Maili Waters

The highest single day total in May was on the 4th, with a total of 6,107 birds. The flight that day was high on the lake side with the majority of the birds being Broad-winged Hawks (the last big push of adult birds). By the end of that day we had officially passed last year's season total of 74,205 and we still had most of the month left!

This month is also known for the northerly movement of young Bald Eagles. First-year birds from Florida (and presumably elsewhere in the Southeast) move north in May, giving us an exciting late season push of hundreds of eagles. These birds tend to look smaller and darker than the eagles that breed around here, and can be definitively aged by uniformly fresh flight feathers.

On the rarity front, one Mississippi Kite was seen during the official count period on the 16th, plus one in June. The hoped-for Swainson's Hawk did not make an appearance this year.

In the Northeast, May is associated with large songbird migration and the return of the majority of our local breeding passerines. We get excited about all of these passerines, too, even though we are focused on raptors. Most of my early mornings were spent on the platform even though it was too early in the day for raptors. I was particularly interested in watching the early movements of warblers and other passerines along the lakeshore. These early mornings did not disappoint and I was rewarded with thousands of birds over the course of the month. One of the most spectacular mornings of the month happened on the 13th. Between some early morning rain and an afternoon cold front with more rain, over 10,000 birds passed by the hawkwatch. The major components of this flight included roughly 1,000 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 400 Northern Yellow Warblers, and 300 Cape May Warblers, along with almost a thousand Bobolinks and over 750 Baltimore Orioles! We also saw over a thousand raptors that day, too!

June - 276 individuals of 7 species

We had four days in June with good southwest winds, and luckily a few dedicated volunteers manned the platform. Their efforts were rewarded with an extra 276 birds for the season tally. These birds were mostly Turkey Vultures, Bald Eagles, and Broad-winged Hawks. There was also one Mississippi Kite, bumping up the season total to two.

Non-raptors - 204 species

The overall number of birds that migrate past Braddock Bay is astonishing. From ducks and geese to blackbirds

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and Blue Jays, there are hundreds of thousands of birds that pass over the course of the season. This year we were lucky to see several uncommon species mixed in with the swarms of expected migrants. Starting with waterfowl in March, we sorted through tens of thousands of Canada Geese and picked out a few rarities: Ross's Goose and Greater White-fronted Goose, both seen flying high overhead and coming in to land on the bay. One afternoon near the end of March, a gorgeous adult Northern Shrike popped up in front of the platform and proceeded to hunt along the hedgerow for a few hours. During the second week of April there was a large movement of Bonaparte's Gulls, plus four Little Gulls mixed in: three on the 6th and one on the 9th. Surprisingly, one day in mid-May, after the vast majority of the waterfowl had departed, a single Eurasian Wigeon flew in and landed on the bay. We saw two American White Pelicans, spotted by Bridget Watts as they headed east in the blue sky. May also produced several unusual wading birds, including Glossy Ibis, Snowy Egret, and Western Cattle-Egret. There weren't any super unusual songbirds this spring, however the sheer number of birds is always amazing! There were days with several thousand Blue Jays swarming over the West Spit, hundreds of warblers and orioles, huge flocks of Rusty Blackbirds, Bobolinks...the list goes on, and it was so much fun to experience all the magical migration!



Broad-winged Hawks. Photo by Maili Waters

Summary

We had a fantastic season! We counted 86,309 raptors of 19 species, making this the 4th highest season total in the count's history. A total of 634 observation hours were logged. Several records were broken this season including the overall season total for Bald Eagle (1,680) and the single day record for Turkey Vulture (10,759). Species like Broad-winged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Northern Harrier all had stellar years, with season totals higher than any in at least a decade.

Hawkwatching is closely tied with weather, so it was very noticeable that this was the third wettest spring on record here in Rochester, including the wettest March in the past 90 years. As you can imagine, all that rain meant that I spent a lot of time waiting for rain to stop. Of course, this plays a huge role in how many birds we see and when and how they move, but by the end of the season we had powered through and came away with some exciting numbers. Compared to last year, there were more days this season with high altitude flights, where the majority of the birds were only visible with optics and constant scanning. There were a lot of flights this season that were condensed into a few hours either before or after a band of rain. Despite the rain and the difficult flights, it was a fun and successful season, always with something interesting to look at or look forward to.

Acknowledgments

A huge thank you goes out to everyone who followed along with the daily reports, visited the hawkwatch, and supported Braddock Bay Raptor Research this year. This count is a team effort and would not be possible without all of you. I'd like to thank Mike Tetlow and Bridget Watts especially for their invaluable dedication and support—I really appreciate your company, plus all of your help spotting and counting birds and sharing them with other visitors. Thank you Vid Killius, Greg and Shannon Sanda, Mark Kimble, Niki Banke, Mitch Barry, among many others, who kept me company and brought me snacks and coffee throughout the season. Thank you to Andy Guthrie for finding the Swallow-tailed Kite west of the hawkwatch and giving us a heads up that it was heading our way. Without that, we would have definitely missed it! Thank you to Luke Seitz for doing all of the dishes at home for 92 days in a row; I would have been using paper plates without you. And lastly, thank you to Daena Ford, the president of BBRR, for such continuous support and for giving me this amazing opportunity for another season! I am so grateful for all that you do for the birding and raptor conservation community.

2026 Spring Raptor Banding Report—by Jill Heimrich and David Mathiason

The only predictable thing about the spring weather in Rochester, is that the patterns will be different every year. Yet there are two steady truths: 1) the days will get longer and 2) the raptor migration will happen. With much dedication on days when we might have stayed home, and the occasional day with lots of birds on the move, we ended up with banding season that had an above average total.

Sharp-shinned Hawk Project Continues

This spring the team continued our study of capillaria and its possible impact on Sharp-shinned Hawks. We were able to deploy an additional 29 Motus transmitters and are now waiting to see how many of those hawks return south in the fall. Our primary research goal with this effort is to learn if the level of capillaria infection has an impact on the hawk's survival over the six-month period from spring to fall. There also is a wealth of data collected that can be examined from these birds' migration routes. BBRR banding director David Mathiason and bander Grace Dowdall will be presenting some of the result of this study at the annual Raptor Research Foundation conference in Duluth, MN this October. The funding for this year's round of transmitters came from the Genesee Valley Audubon Society, the Hawk Migration Association, and Braddock Bay Raptor Research. We are grateful for all the support we received. For more information on the Sharp-shinned Hawk Project, visit our [website at https://www.bbrr.org/sharp-shinned-hawk-project/](https://www.bbrr.org/sharp-shinned-hawk-project/).



Adult Broad-winged Hawk. Our most common migrant, but a rare capture at our banding stations.

Veterinarian Dr. Sara Childs-Sanford from the Janet L. Swanson Wildlife Hospital at Cornell University and Dr. Taylor Haef, a second-year resident in Wildlife Population Health at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine came for a visit this spring and collected some blood samples from Sharp-shinned Hawks. Together they are conducting a project in which they hope to validate the use of dried blood spots for analysis of pesticides and heavy metals in the blood of migrating sharp-shinned hawks. If the dried blood spots can accurately be used for this analysis, this method will facilitate wider sampling for population-level surveys for these compounds, since only a few drops of blood are needed and storage and shipping are very easy. Sample analysis is currently underway with their collaborators in the Toxicology section at the Michigan State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

Encounters of Banded Birds

Four encounter reports were received so far this year on birds that were banded at Braddock Bay.

- ✦ A second year, female Sharp-shinned Hawk banded and fitted with a transmitter last April, was recaptured five months later and released from Hawk Cliff Raptor Banding Station in Ontario, Canada.
- ✦ An after second year, female Sharp-shinned Hawk banded last spring was found deceased this past April in Indiana County, Pennsylvania.
- ✦ A second year, female Cooper's Hawk banded last March was found deceased four months later locally in

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Rochester, NY.

- ✦ Lastly, a hatch year, female Red-tailed Hawk (pictured above) that was banded in August of 2023 was found at a nesting site on Long Island, NY this spring. She and her mate successfully raised two young this year.

When a banded bird is recaptured or reported by someone else, it provides valuable information about its journey and survival. These encounters help researchers track migration routes and timing, estimate lifespan and survival rates, and learn whether birds return to the same breeding or wintering areas each year. Together, these data improve our understanding of bird populations and support effective conservation efforts.

If you ever find a banded bird, you can report the number on the Bird Banding Lab’s website at <https://www.usgs.gov/labs/bird-banding-laboratory>. When this is done, the finder receives a Certificate of Appreciation from the lab, with all of that bird’s information that was collected when it was first banded. The bander also receives information about the encounter as well as the bird’s current status.



This Red-tailed Hawk, originally banded at Braddock Bay as a juvenile in 2023, is now an adult that successfully bred this summer on Long Island, NY. Note the band on her right leg. Photo by Natalie Cavallaro



Sharp-shinned Hawk with MOTUS transmitter.

Spring Banding Totals by Year (January 1-June 30)					
Species	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Bald Eagle	1	0	0	0	0
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	7	0	2	3
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	1	0	1
Red-tailed Hawk	28	72	27	47	36
Rough-legged Hawk	3	0	1	0	1
Northern Harrier	19	19	15	14	24
American Goshawk	0	2	1	0	0
Cooper’s Hawk	14	38	32	36	33
Sharp-shinned Hawk	227	241	258	252	325
Peregrine Falcon	5	6	0	2	0
Merlin	1	1	1	1	0
American Kestrel	20	20	11	33	24
Eastern Screech Owl	1	15	10	4	3
Great Horned Owl	0	0	0	1	0
Barred Owl	0	0	0	0	1
Long-eared Owl	1	3	3	1	3
Short-eared Owl	0	0	0	0	2
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	2	0	4	0
TOTALS	322	426	360	397	456

2026 Spring Owl Roost Survey—Samantha Cali and Daena Ford

Introduction

The “Owl Woods” in the Braddock Bay Fish and Wildlife Management Area provides important stopover habitat for migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls (saw-whets) and Long-eared Owls (long-eareds). To help manage this area for migrating owls, BBRR volunteers conduct a yearly survey of roosting owls during the spring migration season between February and early May. This year’s survey was conducted from February 8 through May 13. A survey is conducted twice each day, unless the weather prevents surveying, or if the trail is inaccessible. This year the trail was closed both March 21 and 28 for hazardous tree removal by the DEC, leaving the woods inaccessible to surveying. It is very possible that some owls were not accounted for these two days, as this is the time period when owl migration is typically amping up.



Northern Saw-whet Owl. Photo by Jill Frier

Migration Timing and Totals

The table on page 9 shows a yearly comparison of the migration timing for both species since 2012.

Table 1—Season Observation Dates and Counts

Species	First Seen	Peak Dates	Last Seen Date	Peak Daily Average	Season Count
NSWO	2/15	4/2-4/9	4/9	1	12
LEOW	3/25	4/2	4/13	3	20

The Spring of 2026 was a below average migration season for both Northern Saw-whet Owls and Long-eared Owls. Both Saw-whet and Long-ear first seen dates were typical of recent years on record, last seen dates seemed slightly earlier than average.

Saw-whet Owls seemed to be few and far between this year. There were no days with more than one saw-whet spotted in the survey area. Saw-whets had a peak migration push in early to mid-April with 4 individuals being seen in a 7-day period. The season total of 12 saw-whets is well below the season average of 41.3.

Long-eareds had a peak migration push during late March-Early April with 13 individuals being seen in a 9-day period. No more than 3 long-eareds were spotted in a single day. The season total of 20 was below, but not too far off of the season average of 23.1.

Other Observations

A Great Horned Owl was spotted close to the last seen date for both species. This potential predator in the area could have played part in the lack of sightings later in the season. Great Horned Owl, a resident species, was spotted three times between April 15-30. While not seen on the survey this spring, a Barred Owl was captured by BBRR owl banders on the evening of March 29. Another resident species that can be a potential threat to smaller owls.

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In addition to recording the sightings of each owl species, several pieces of information are noted at each roost site. The species of tree as well as the height at which the owls are perched is recorded. This information can give insight as to the type of vegetation and the age of tree that is preferred by the owls. They need roosting spots with good cover during the day to rest and be hidden from potential predators.

One thing that makes the Owl Woods so attractive as migration stopover for these owls is the abundance of conifers in that area. These trees (primarily spruce and pine species) provide good cover in the early spring, before the deciduous trees and shrubs leaf out in late spring. It has been observed over the last few years that the average perch height for saw-whets has increased. Some individuals are now perching between 20-30 feet high in the trees, compared to a more typical historical height of 10-12 feet. This could be due to a higher number of more mature spruce and pine trees in the woods, which have denser foliage higher up in the tree than younger ones, therefore providing good cover for owls in need of a daytime rest. Every few years, BBRR volunteers organize to plant young trees to help replace the older trees to keep a continuous supply of roost trees in the area for the owls.

Year	NSWO First Seen	NSWO Peak Migration	NSWO Last Seen	LEOW First Seen	LEOW Peak Migration	LEOW Last Seen
2012	3/7	3/13	4/9	3/4	4/10	5/14*
2013	2/24	4/14	5/2	3/11	4/15	5/2
2014	3/12	3/27	5/3	3/17	4/8	5/3
2015	3/19	3/29	4/18	3/21*	4/15	4/30*
2016	3/10	3/19	4/23	3/10**	4/22	4/23
2017	3/2**	4/3	5/6	3/28**	4/12	5/13
2018	2/26	2/26	4/27	3/28	4/24	5/1
2019	2/9	3/21	5/26	2/16	4/16	5/26
2020	2/29	3/14	3/26	4/5	4/10	5/4
2021	2/10	3/17	4/28	2/20	4/29	5/13
2022	2/6	3/15	5/2	2/20	3/26	5/9
2023	2/5	4/4	5/4	3/29	4/3	4/27
2024	2/21	4/15	5/2	2/27	4/13	5/2
2025	2/26	3/16	5/7	3/7**	4/21	5/7
2026	2/15	4/2-4/9	4/9	3/25**	4/2	4/13

* eBird entry, **excluding probable overwintering birds

Acknowledgements

The owl roost survey is a volunteer team effort, and every team needs a great leader. After 14 years as team leader and owl survey coordinator, Jim Adams decided to pass the baton to others in 2026. BBRR is extremely grateful for Jim's efforts with this project, and for laying a solid foundation so that it may continue for years to come.

As we move forward, we are also grateful to volunteers Samantha Cali and Maggie MacNeil who stepped in to help as data coordinators for the survey team. This year's survey crew consisted of 27 volunteers. Many thanks to the crew for their dedication to the survey and helping document another spring owl migration at Braddock Bay.

At right: Long-eared Owl photo by Mike Rizzo



BBRR Spring and Summer Education Interns —Daena Ford

BBRR's raptor education internship allows participants to gain knowledge of and experience caring for and working with BBRR's education raptors. It also provides the opportunity to gain experience in conducting presentations and leading educational programs and lessons both in field settings and through outreach in the community. This year BBRR welcomed three wonderful individuals who brought their passion for birds and an interest in sharing knowledge to our education intern program.

Jonah Dean joined us early in 2026, and was introduced to you in our last newsletter. While his internship ended in early June, we are fortunate that he continues to volunteer with BBRR as an educator and summer raptor counter.

Brenna Kinzel started her internship with us in April, just in time for the peak of migration season and to participate in Bird of Prey Days. Perhaps you met her in person that weekend! Brenna's internship has also ended, but like others she has stayed on as an education volunteer, and also participated in the summer raptor count. Here's what Brenna had to say about her experience:

"I started as an education intern in the spring. I'm originally from Victor but got my associates degree in Fish and Wildlife from FLCC and then transferred to SUNY Cobleskill for Wildlife Management. Not only have I learned to care for and be able to hold these beautiful [education] birds but I've been able to increase my raptor identification skills thanks to being able to participate in the summer migration count! This experience with Braddock Bay Raptor Research is something I will never forget and I'm so excited to be a member of such an incredible organization."

We also took on our first summer intern this year, welcoming YouShan Li to our education crew. Since summer is our busiest time for outreach programming, it can provide many opportunities to those who are looking for experience in the environmental education and raptor care fields. Another Wildlife Management graduate from SUNY Cobleskill, YouShan brings a great enthusiasm for wildlife education to our team. He has been learning to care for our education raptors, and has assisted with several outreach programs for a variety of audiences. His birding skills have also come in handy at our summer raptor count. We look forward to having YouShan with us until at least the end of October.

BBRR will be offering both education and research internships in the spring of 2027. A research internship involves working with our field crew at the hawkwatch and in our banding stations. Both internships provide hands-on experience that can be beneficial to those seeking careers working with raptors in educational and research settings. A complete description of each internship can be found on our website at <https://www.bbrr.org/2027-spring-internships/>. Those interested in applying are encouraged to contact us at information@bbrr.org.



Brenna Kinzel with BBRR's Great Horned Owl



YouShan Li with BBRR's Merlin

A Celebration of 40 Years at Bird of Prey Days 2026—Daena Ford

Bird of Prey Days was held at Braddock Bay Park April 17-19 this year, a little earlier than the traditional last weekend of April. The timing was just right though to have some great weather, and some decent flights of broad-winged and sharp-shinned hawks. BOP Days is always extra special when there are lots of visitors around to witness the spectacle of the migration when it is ON!

While this event is always hailed as a celebration of the migration, this year there was even more to celebrate—BBRR's 40th anniversary! The weekend opened up with a reception for volunteers, members and anyone who wanted to join in. Our education raptors were on display and we had a very fun first ever trivia night, organized by education volunteer Tom Keegan. Trivia was a big hit, and we hope to repeat it again next year. After trivia, I gave a presentation which took a look at how far we've come as an organization since the taking over the hawk count in 1986 and expanding our banding and education efforts. Looking back over the years, one thing was clear that while the birds, and their conservation, were the reason the organization was founded, BBRR has continued its work for so long because of all the amazing people that are dedicated to its mission.

Festivities and programming continued throughout the rest of the weekend, featuring many opportunities to learn about and get close to live raptors. The falconry demonstration by Alicia Pickett-Hale was extremely popular. We also welcomed wildlife rehabilitators from Western NY Raptor and Wildlife Care, as well as Messinger Woods. Both organizations brought their ambassador birds with them, providing another up close opportunity with some magnificent birds.

Presentations from our field crew taught this year's visitors about hawk and owl banding, natal dispersal raptor counts and raptor identification. Kids (and young-at-heart adults) enjoyed several activities and games teaching about birds of prey, including a well attended owl pellet dissection workshop. Raptor art was on display again, with participation this year from both Honeoye Falls-Lima's Manor School and Pittsford's Thornell Road School. Many local organizations set up information stations for the entire weekend, with many ways people can learn about birds and nature.

BBRR is very grateful for all the volunteers, presenters, visitors and the town of Greece for helping make this year's BOP Days a great success. Mark your calendars for next year's Bird of Prey Days weekend—April 24-27, 2027. Hope to see you then!



Education volunteer Amanda Little with BBRR's Red-tailed Hawk.



The wonderful presenters and raptors from Messinger Woods.



Volunteers Jonah Dean, Samantha Cali and Tom Keegan

BBRR MEMBERSHIP FORM

Renew today and continue to support BBRR's efforts towards the conservation of raptors.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- ☐ American Kestrel (individual) \$20
- ☐ Cooper's Hawk (household) \$35
- ☐ Northern Harrier \$50
- ☐ Red-tailed Hawk \$100
- ☐ Bald Eagle (Life) \$500
- ☐ I voluntarily set my donation at \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Please send my newsletter via e-mail

Complete on-line or send to: Braddock Bay Raptor Research, 185 Pond Road, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472

<https://www.bbrr.org/membership/>

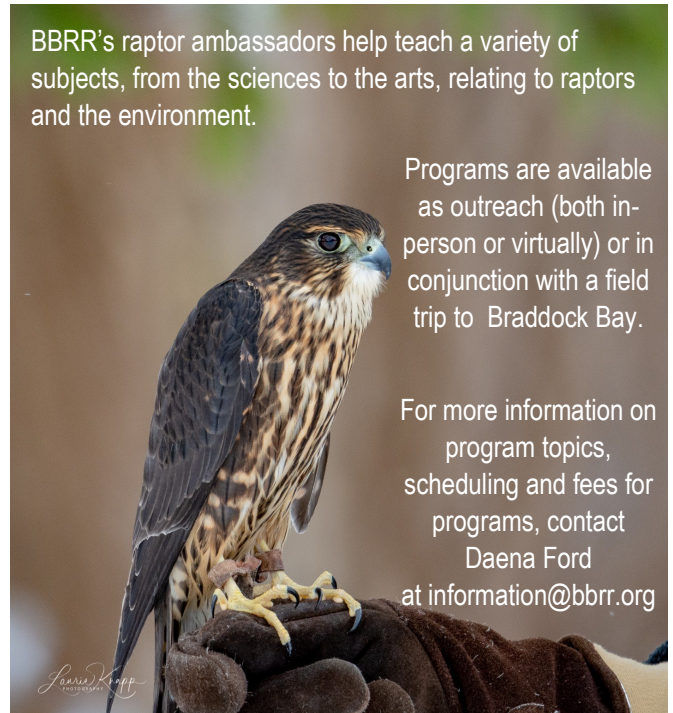
Raptor Connections

Education programs for all ages

BBRR's raptor ambassadors help teach a variety of subjects, from the sciences to the arts, relating to raptors and the environment.

Programs are available as outreach (both in-person or virtually) or in conjunction with a field trip to Braddock Bay.

For more information on program topics, scheduling and fees for programs, contact Daena Ford at information@bbrr.org



Braddock Bay Raptor Research



Braddock Bay Raptor Research
185 Pond Road
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472