Teton Raptor Center helps birds of prey through education, conservation and rehabilitation.

Teton Raptor Center is a non-profit organization of conservation biologists, veterinarians, wildlife rehabilitators, educators and volunteers, working together to help birds of prey and promote environmental health through veterinary care and rehabilitation, educational programs and conservation research. We are located at the historic Hardeman Ranch, a Jackson Hole Land Trust protected property in Wilson, Wyoming. Our work has three key components:

- **Education** - Teton Raptor Center provides classroom and assembly programs for schools, as well as natural history and raptor ecology programs for students of all ages.
- **Conservation** - Teton Raptor Center partners with wildlife biologists, public land agencies, naturalists, students and community members to protect and sustain healthy populations of birds of prey and raptor habitat.
- **Rescue and Rehabilitation** - Teton Raptor Center takes in injured, ill and orphaned birds of prey year-round, providing veterinary care and rehabilitation in an effort to return raptors to the wild. If you find an injured raptor, please call our Injured Raptor Line: 307.200.6019.

**History**

Field biologists and environmental educators Roger Smith and Margaret Creel established Teton Raptor Center (formerly known as the Raptor Fund) in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) organization, securing both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and State of Wyoming raptor rehabilitation and education permits. Roger and Margaret began their commitment to rehabilitating birds of prey in 1991 with limited facilities in their home and eventually acquired expanded space at 3 Creek Ranch’s Nature Center. At that time, Roger was working as a research biologist in Grand Teton National Park. He and Margaret recognized that raptors are an integral part of the Teton environment. Eagles, owls, hawks, falcons and osprey each have an important role in the balance of our environment and are each, to varying degrees, threatened by human encroachment. With rare dedication and resolve the couple began assisting injured raptors. Over the years they have saved dozens of birds and provided hundreds of educational programs, reaching thousands of students of all ages.

In response to increasing patient numbers and requests for educational programs with live birds, Roger began searching for an appropriate space to locate and grow a community-based raptor education and conservation program in Jackson.

Also recognizing the need for a larger and more effective organization, the Raptor Fund expanded to include five new board members and changed its name to Teton Raptor Center in February 2008. It was then that TRC was able to negotiate a long-term lease with the Jackson Hole Land Trust, and work began to establish our Center at the Hardeman Ranch, a Jackson Hole Land Trust protected property, in Wilson, Wyoming. The Teton County Commissioners subsequently granted TRC a conditional use permit to operate a rehabilitation and educational center on the historic property. Teton Raptor Center currently leases the small horse barn, which serves as the main office and employee residence and the old machine shed, which was renovated with volunteer labor to become the Raptor Barn, encompassing our rehab clinic and nine bird chambers. Construction of the Raptor barn began October 1, 2008 and was completed in December 2009.

Board Member Porgy McClelland spearheaded the project, assisted by a crew of dedicated volunteers. Originally built by Garrett Hardeman as a calving shed, the original open face post and beam structure of the barn was replicated by the former Snake River Institute in 1990 when they were tenants of the property. TRC went to work transforming the three-sided pole barn into a fully functional raptor rehabilitation center. Insulated walls and ceiling were installed, a polished concrete floor poured and mews erected to house the resident and injured raptors. The 1,400 square-foot structure houses nine individual birds chambers...
connected by a hallway to a 500-square-foot space. This section of the barn houses freezers, a medical examination space and intensive care unit.

TRC celebrated its new home at the Hardeman Barns with a Grand Opening on June 21, 2009, with over 600 community members who were treated to a “flighted” exhibition of falcons and hawks, live music, kids arts and great food.

THE HARDEMAN BARNs

In the early 1940s, Major Mosley built what are now called the Hardeman barns. For seventy years, the gracefully arching structure of the big barn has been the visual hub of Wilson, Wyoming. When Gerrit Hardeman bought Mosley’s ranch in 1956 and moved his herd of prize winning Herefords from Kelly, the property flourished under his hard working stewardship. During the late eighties, when property values went out of sight, the pastoral 137-acre property south of Hwy 22 moved into the cross hairs of land developers. The price of beef could not keep pace with the value of real estate, and by 1989 the land along with the iconic buildings were slated for sub-division. The cultural value of this property to the people of this valley became apparent as a young Jackson Hole Land Trust (JHLT) harnessed the enormous support of people wishing to preserve the Barns and surrounding acreage. A bold offer and down payment allowed the Land Trust to turn the passion for preservation into real dollars. Through the contributions of many, most notably Gil and Marge Ordway, the Hardeman family soon had a viable alternative to development. Today, the property is still owned by the JHLT and is protected by a conservation easement.

While not always feasible within a conservation easement, the JHLT has always believed in the value of creating public use and access to protected properties. The tenants during the last twenty years included the 4-H and the Snake River Institute. Both welcomed the community interaction fostered by the Land Trust. It was fortunate that, when Roger Smith was looking to create the Teton Raptor Center and utilize space other than his own house for the care of injured birds of prey, the Hardeman Barns were without a tenant. It did not take long for the parties to formalize a lease cementing what has been termed a natural fit. The Teton Raptor Center is excited by the synergies that exist between the Jackson Hole Land Trust and us. Our mission dovetails with the conservation of open spaces, and new opportunities exist for the public to interact with our birds of prey, become more acquainted with the world we live in, and get a glimpse of our ranching heritage. We are proud to be the main character in the next chapter of the Hardeman Barns.

RESIDENT RAPTORS

Owly – Great Horned Owl

Owly is a female Great Horned Owl that hatched in 2004. In the fall of 2004, Owly was brought to Teton Raptor Center after breaking her wing as a result of being struck by a vehicle. Unfortunately, Owly’s break extended into her wrist joint and after the break healed the joint no longer functioned properly. Owly gained a new purpose as the first Resident Raptor of Teton Raptor Center.

Ruby – Red-tailed Hawk

Ruby is a female Red-tailed Hawk that was originally brought to a rehabilitation center in California after being struck by a vehicle. After caring for Ruby for some time, it became apparent that she had lost most of her eyesight as a result of head injuries sustained in the collision. Ruby needed a permanent home and was transferred to Teton Raptor Center from California several years ago.
Gus - Golden Eagle
Gus, is a magnificent male Golden Eagle who hatched in 2005. He was found by a rancher who noticed that he had not fledged when he should have. In 2007, Gus was transferred to TRC to be an ambassador for his species. Due to either an injury or a birth defect, Gus has a permanent impairment to his right wing and has never been able to fly. He is the largest Resident Raptor at TRC.

Baxter – Peregrine Falcon
On August 23, 2014, this handsome male Peregrine Falcon was found in Powell, Wyoming suspected to have been hit by a car. He was brought to Ironside Bird Rescue in Cody, Wyoming where he received excellent care and rehabilitation for a fracture to his left radius and ulna. Unfortunately, the injury was not surgically reparable, leaving this young bird, which hatched in 2014, without the ability to fly and hunt well enough to lead a successful life in the wild. In December 2014, with the great help of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, this Peregrine arrived at Teton Raptor Center to embark on his role as an educational avian ambassador for his magnificent species – the fastest member of the animal kingdom.

River - American Bald Eagle
River is a three-year-old immature American Bald Eagle. She was found sternal on the ice of the Missouri River in the Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge (MO) in January of 2014. After several weeks of evaluation it was determined that she had a rare mycobacterial infection affecting her left carpal joint (wrist). For the next 8-10 weeks she underwent rigorous antibiotic treatments with regular X-rays of the left wing to evaluate progress. It was determined in late April 2014 that she would likely survive the treatment and that her long-term prognosis was promising, but that she would not regain enough flight control to be released, so the University of Missouri Raptor Center placed her information on the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council’s website seeking placement (after the National Native American Eagle facilities were notified). Final X-rays showed stability in the carpal joint and she exhibited no signs of discomfort or problems. She has control with basic hops and short flights, but her overall flight ability is compromised.

K2 - Eurasian Eagle-owl
Our new Eurasian Eagle-owl is a 2004 hatch from the World Bird Sanctuary in St. Louis, MO. She spent her first four years with the Kelley Bartlett Conservancy in Montgomery, AL and was transferred to a residential environmental education program collection in the Fall of 2008. She joined the Teton Raptor Center Resident Raptor team in March 2015. Eurasian Eagle-owls are found throughout Europe, Russia and Asia. They are among the heaviest owl species on the planet and routinely take down prey such as badger and even a small species of European deer.

Mendel - Hybrid Eagle-owl
Mendel hatched on Cinco de Mayo 2008 at the Center for Birds of Prey in Charleston, SC. He is the accidental offspring of an African Spotted Eagle-owl and Vermiculated Eagle-owl who were housed together under the false belief that both were male. He is named for Gregor Mendel, the famous monk that hybridized pea plants and gave us an early understanding of dominant and recessive traits. Mendel spent his first six and a half years with an education
program in central Alabama before arriving at TRC in February 2015. Owls are raptors with their own set of unique adaptations. Their eyes can consume up to 50% of their head! Many owl species are crepuscular, choosing to hunt around sunrise and sunset. They have fringes along the edges of their feathers that cut the air in such a way as to allow for almost silent flight.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR RAPTOR POSSESSION

All raptors are protected by state and federal regulations. It is illegal to capture or kill a raptor, possess a raptor (living or dead), or any pieces or parts of raptors, including feathers, without proper permits from state and federal government agencies. We operate under several federal and state permits granting us the authority to do the activities we do at Teton Raptor Center.

Teton Raptor Center rehabilitates wild raptors and holds live birds and specimens for educational programs under Federal and State permits. The current year permits are displayed in the raptor barn, found in the “Current Year Permits” folder in the office and there is a travelling folder that must accompany all transports.

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
All birds native to North America are protected by at least one, and sometimes many more, federal laws. Additionally, many states, including Wyoming, also regulate the possession of wild birds

SPECIAL PURPOSE POSSESSION – LIVE AND DEAD MIGRATORY BIRDS FOR EDUCATIONAL USE, WITH SALVAGE

Education Permit: This permit allows us to possess and use our great horned owl and red-tailed hawk for education purposes. It also allows us to possess the various non-living raptor parts for education.

Salvage Permit: This permit allows us to collect dead raptors, which we had no part in killing, and transfer these carcasses or parts to our SP-Possession permit to use them for education.

LIVE EAGLE EXHIBITION
Our Golden Eagle Gus is authorized for use in educational programs by the Live Eagle Exhibition permit. It allows essentially the same activities that our SP-Possession permit allows for us to do with non-eagle raptors. Teton Raptor Center must send any dead eagles or eagle parts to a National Repository for redistribution to permitted members of Native American tribes for ceremonial purposes.

FEDERAL REHABILITATION
This permit allows us to rehab federally protected migratory birds. TRC may not salvage and must immediately report any dead birds from potentially criminal activities. We are not permitted to turn deceased rehab patients into educational specimens.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

CH. 33 – SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, EDUCATIONAL/DISPLAY OR SPECIAL PURPOSES
This permit covers TRC’s Resident Raptors, scientific specimens and the Osprey DNA research project.

CH. 45 – REHAB
This permit covers the rehabilitation of injured, ill and orphaned birds of prey at Teton Raptor Center with the goal of getting them in a condition fit for release to the wild. We do not show rehab birds to the public, it is a violation of the permit and is counterproductive for the recovering raptors. This permit allows us to possess these raptors for 180 days