

P A T H I N P R A C T I C E

Foundations of Bird Storytelling

Session 1 of 2 • Day 1 Workbook



Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehabilitation Center

in partnership with Raindrop Naturalist



Saturday, April 11, 2026

T H I S W O R K B O O K B E L O N G S T O

Handler Name: _____

My Bird: _____

“Our hearts are huge — and they beat for the birds.”

— Lynne Ostergren, Program Coordinator, Soarin' Hawk

DAY 1 AGENDA — SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026

PATH Interpretive Communication Training • Foundations of Bird Storytelling

Facilitator: Monique Thompson, Raindrop Naturalist • Location: Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehabilitation Center

Time	Session	What to Expect
11:00 – 11:40	Welcome & Bird Introductions	Introduce yourself through your bird and your Why. PATH overview
11:40 – 12:15	People Pillar: Designing for Your Audience	Demo and quick practice: same bird, four different audiences.
12:15 – 12:30	Aim Pillar: Mission & Think / Feel / Do	Connect your bird's story to Soarin' Hawk's mission and stewardship goal. Learn the stewardship staircase and the four specific conservation actions you can share.
12:30 – 1:00	Lunch Break	30 minutes.
1:00 – 1:30	Superpower Language	Build vivid, awe-creating language for your bird's "superpower" adaptation.
1:30 – 2:10	Theme Pillar: Survival Superpowers + 5-Step Bird Story	Explore the Survival Superpowers theme. Learn the five step Bird Story.
2:10 – 2:20	Stretch Break	10 minutes.
2:20 – 2:45	H — How: First Draft	Use your planning card to anchor each of the 5 steps for your bird. Not a finished story — just the words and phrases that will guide you. You'll deliver from this in the next block.
2:45 – 3:30	Small-Group Bird Story Practice	Deliver your 60-second bird story. Receive Glow + Grow feedback from your group.
3:30 – 4:00	Reflection & Prep for Day 2	Exit ticket, preview of April 25 and your practice assignment.

A few things to know before we begin:

- Your workbook is yours to write in, markup, and keep.
- Start thinking about the questions audiences ask about your bird.
- Raise your hand any time something isn't clear — questions help everyone.
- We'll take breaks together — use them to refill water, stretch, and reset.

WHAT IS YOUR WHY?

Take a few minutes to reflect on why you showed up today. Your **Why** is your personal aim for this training.

You'll share a version of this with your bird group during introductions.

Why did you show up today?

What do you hope to gain from this training?

What do you want to do differently in your next Soarin' Hawk program?

Which bird are you working with right now — and what does that bird teach you?

THE PATH FRAMEWORK — YOUR INTERPRETIVE GPS

PATH is a GPS for communication. Every handler finds their own route — but all roads lead to the same destination: an audience that understands why raptors matter and knows one thing they can do about it.

P

People

Who is in the room? What do they already care about? What experience do you want to create for them before you share a single fact?

A

Aim

What do you want your audience to THINK, FEEL, or DO after your program? Your Aim connects your bird's story directly to Soarin' Hawk's mission.

T

Theme

What is the ONE big idea that ties all the birds in this program together? The right theme depends on your audience. Every handler's story should reinforce the same theme.

H

How

How do you deliver your story in a way that invites participation, not just attention? The How pillar is the 5-Step Bird Story, superpower language, and your conservation close.

The three moves inside every great PATH presentation:

1. Engage first

Create curiosity before any facts

2. Inform with purpose

Audience-specific message rooted in Soarin' Hawk's mission

3. Encourage to act

Invite one specific conservation action

PEOPLE PILLAR: DESIGNING FOR YOUR AUDIENCE

PATH's P pillar starts before you walk in the door. Who is in the room shapes the words that you share. This is the tool that keeps you from feeling locked into one style. Your bird doesn't change. Your language does.

Four Audience Types — Soarin' Hawk Programs

Elementary School Kid

Wants wow moments. Loves gross and extreme facts.

High School / College Age

Skeptical by default. Respects authenticity.

Adult

Moved by connection and curiosity.

Meet & Greet Visitor

60–90 seconds. Lead with the one thing they'll remember.

What changed with each audience during the live demo? What stayed the same?

My Quick Practice — My fact: _____ My audience: _____
My info:

Hold your audience in mind as we work through today. Every tool we build is only as strong as your understanding of who you're building it for.

AIM PILLAR: MISSION, THINK / FEEL / DO

Soarin' Hawk's Mission

Conserve our raptor population through education and rehabilitation.

"We are stewards of nature — and we want to share that stewardship with everybody."

— Lynne Ostergren, Program Coordinator

The Stewardship Staircase

Every audience starts somewhere on this staircase. Your Aim is to move them at least one step up. Where are they when they walk in? Where do you want them when they leave?

Stewardship

Takes personal action to protect raptors and their habitat.

Appreciation

Values raptors and what they do — feels genuine care.

Understanding

Knows how raptors work and why they matter.

Awareness

Recognizes that raptors exist and are part of the local ecosystem.

Curiosity

Wants to know more — open and ready to learn.

Dragged Along

Didn't choose to be here. That's okay. Your Hook is for them.

Where does your typical audience start? _____ Where do you want them to be when they leave?

Your Bird's Aim — Think / Feel / Do

	Eastern Screech Owl Elementary School Program	Eastern Screech Owl Weekend Library (adults & teenagers)
THINK	<i>This tiny owl can hear a mouse moving under snow — in total darkness — using ears that aren't even in the same place on its head. Nature built this.</i>	<i>The Eastern Screech Owl is proof that extraordinary engineering comes in a package you could hold in one hand. Every adaptation is a solution to a survival problem.</i>
FEEL	<i>Amazed and a little bit delighted. I had no idea something this small could be this powerful.</i>	<i>Impressed and curious. I want to know more about the birds already living near me.</i>
DO	<i>Tell one person at home the one surprising fact about owls they learned today.</i>	<i>Look up what raptors live in your neighborhood. Put up a nest box. Let them work.</i>

	Turkey Vulture Elementary School Program	Turkey Vulture Weekend Library (adults & teenagers)
THINK	<i>This bird eats things that would make us sick — and that keeps our neighborhood safe. She's a superhero built out of stomach acid and a really good nose.</i>	<i>Turkey vultures are nature's sanitation system — and without them, every carcass near your neighborhood becomes a disease vector for the whole community.</i>
FEEL	<i>Grossed out, then kind of amazed. I didn't know birds could do that.</i>	<i>Surprised, then grateful. I underestimated this bird completely.</i>
DO	<i>Stop throwing food out the car window. That trash creates the problem she has to clean up.</i>	<i>Choose non-lead alternatives when hunting or fishing. Support the birds that keep the ecosystem clean.</i>

Now fill in YOUR bird's Aim:

	Program Type 1: _____	Program Type 2: _____
THINK	_____	_____
FEEL	_____	_____
DO	_____	_____

You already know these. Today you'll learn how to bring one of them in at exactly the right moment in the right story.

Soarin' Hawk's Four Conservation Do Options — Circle the one that fits your bird's story:

O	1. Don't use rat poison. Do seal entry points and invite owls to your property by putting up nest boxes, and - if you must - use spin traps. A poisoned rodent is easier prey — the raptor eats it and gets poisoned too.
O	2. Don't litter. Do keep food waste in your car or bag until you reach a trash can. Food at roadsides draws rodents — raptors dive for that prey and are struck by cars.
O	3. Don't use lead ammunition or lead fishing equipment. A piece of lead the size of a grain of rice kills an eagle. Also, lead fragments left in gut piles or water poison raptors through the food chain. Do choose non-lead alternatives.
O	4. Support Soarin' Hawk — volunteer, donate, report injured birds: 260-241-0134.

THE PROGRAM THEME: SURVIVAL SUPERPOWERS

Every handler in a Soarin' Hawk program is pointing at the same truth: raptors are built to survive in extraordinary ways — and the world around us depends on that. “Survival Superpowers” is the shorthand. You’ll say it in your own words, for your own audience, through your own bird. The theme is the main message your audience should walk away with — and your job isn’t to say it out loud. It’s to tell your bird’s story so well that your audience arrives there on their own.

SURVIVAL SUPERPOWERS

Hawks, owls, falcons, eagles — every raptor has extraordinary adaptations that let it thrive exactly where it lives.

Owl

Superpower: Two mismatched non-symmetrically located ears triangulate sound with sub-millisecond precision — hunts in total darkness by hearing alone.

Why It Matters: One barn owl family consumes thousands of rodents a year — doing pest control for free, every night, without poison.

Hawk

Superpower: Vision eight times sharper than yours — can read a sign from across a football field while flying.

Why It Matters: That hawk on the telephone pole isn’t resting — it’s actively scanning a quarter mile of territory, hunting the rodents that damage crops and spread disease.

Falcon

Superpower: Built for speed — the fastest animal on earth in a dive, reaching over 200 mph with precision aerial control.

Why It Matters: Falcons keep bird and rodent populations in check across every habitat — including cities, where Peregrine Falcons now nest on bridges and ledges near you.

Eagle

Superpower: Wingspan up to seven feet and grip strength four times that of a human hand — built to carry prey twice its own weight across open sky.

Why It Matters: Eagles sit at the top of the food chain — when eagles return, the whole ecosystem is healthier. Indiana bald eagles came back from the edge of extinction in our lifetime because people made different choices.

Vulture

Superpower: One of the most acute senses of smell in the bird world, paired with stomach acid that destroys anthrax, botulism, and rabies — nature's sanitation system, processing what would kill everything else.

Why It Matters: Every carcass on a road near you gets cleaned up by vultures. Without them, those become disease vectors for the whole community — including your pets and family.

My Bird: _____

My bird's Survival Superpower in one vivid sentence:

Why It Matters:

THE HOOK MENU — EIGHT WAYS TO OPEN

Your Hook creates curiosity before any information arrives. Eight types — pick what fits your voice.

Circle one hook you want to try.

Sensory	<i>Close your eyes. Imagine hearing a sound so precise it locates a mouse under six inches of snow in total darkness.</i>
Mystery	<i>How does an owl hunt in complete darkness without seeing a thing?</i>
Superlative	<i>The fastest animal on earth. On my glove.</i>
Relatable	<i>You know how hard it is to spot a mouse in the grass? This bird does it from 100 feet in the air.</i>
Story	<i>Monet flew by me the other day. And he didn't make a sound.</i>
Contradiction	<i>This bird eats dead animals. And she saves lives.</i>
Personal Connection	<i>Thumbs up if you've ever watched a hawk sit perfectly still and wondered what it was doing.</i>
Local	<i>Right now, in a field within a mile of here, a raptor is hunting. You just don't know it yet.</i>

See It in Action — One Hook, Five Birds

One example of each hook type written for owls, hawks, falcons, eagles, and vultures. If your bird isn't one of these five, find the closest match — Harris Hawks borrow from the Hawk column, Barred and Eagle Owls borrow from the Owl column.

Hook Type	Owl	Hawk	Falcon	Eagle	Vulture
Sensory	<i>Close your eyes. Imagine hearing a mouse move under six inches of snow in total darkness.</i>	<i>Picture locking onto a moving target from 100 feet up — without moving your head.</i>	<i>Feel wind resistance at 200 mph. Now imagine steering through it with precision.</i>	<i>Imagine a wingspan wide enough to cast a shadow across this entire room.</i>	<i>Imagine smelling something dead from over a mile away — and flying straight to it.</i>
Mystery	<i>How does an owl hunt in complete darkness without seeing a thing?</i>	<i>Why does a hawk sit perfectly still for hours — then explode into motion?</i>	<i>What's the fastest animal on earth, and why have most people never seen one hunt?</i>	<i>How did a bird once listed as endangered become a symbol of recovery in our lifetime?</i>	<i>How does a bird eat anthrax, botulism, and rabies — and survive?</i>
Superlative	<i>The most precise hearing in the animal kingdom. Standing right here.</i>	<i>Eight times sharper vision than yours. On a fence post. Right now.</i>	<i>The fastest animal on earth with a "tooth" on its beak.</i>	<i>Seven-foot wingspan. 10 times stronger than a human hand.</i>	<i>The only bird whose stomach acid destroys rabies. Standing right here.</i>
Relatable	<i>You know how hard it is to find your keys in the grass? He does it with his ears.</i>	<i>You know how hard it is to spot a mouse in the grass? She does it from 100 feet up.</i>	<i>You know how hard it is to catch a fly ball? He catches prey at 200 mph.</i>	<i>You know how it feels to walk into a big house? That's what a 10 feet 2000 pound nest feels like.</i>	<i>You know how you avoid touching roadkill? She makes a living eating it — and keeps disease out of your neighborhood.</i>
Story	<i>I watched Monet in flight last week- he didn't make a sound.</i>	<i>I watched Orion sit on that fence post for 40 minutes. Then she moved. Once.</i>	<i>I watched a Peregrine Falcon stoop from 1,000 feet — it was just a blur!</i>	<i>I remember the day I first saw Jefferson spread his wings. The room went silent.</i>	<i>I watched Ehr step onto the glove and survey the room. She was completely unbothered.</i>
Contradiction	<i>This bird can't see in the dark. He hunts in total darkness anyway.</i>	<i>This bird weighs about two pounds. She controls a territory the size of your neighborhood.</i>	<i>She looks like a songbird at the feeder. She hunts like a falcon.</i>	<i>This bird was nearly extinct in Indiana. Today he nests here again.</i>	<i>This bird eats dead animals. And she is the reason your neighborhood isn't a disease zone.</i>
Personal Connection	<i>Touch your ear if you've ever heard something outside at night and wondered what it was.</i>	<i>Point up if you've ever spotted a hawk on a telephone pole and wondered what it was doing.</i>	<i>Thumbs up if you've ever seen a small bird dive-bomb a larger one and thought — wait, what just happened?</i>	<i>Touch your heart if you've ever seen a bald eagle and felt something shift in your chest.</i>	<i>Nod if you've ever seen a vulture circling and felt uneasy. That discomfort is exactly why she matters.</i>
Local	<i>Right now, within a mile of here, an owl is hunting. You just can't hear it.</i>	<i>That hawk on the telephone pole on your way in? Still there. Still working.</i>	<i>Peregrine Falcons nest on ledges and bridges near cities — including cities near here.</i>	<i>Indiana bald eagles were nearly gone. Now they nest here again. That happened in our lifetime.</i>	<i>Every piece of roadkill you drove past this week — vultures cleaned it up before it became a health hazard.</i>

My best Hook for my bird — write it here:

THE 5-STEP BIRD STORY — MODELED EXAMPLES

Before you fill in your own planning card, study how the framework works in practice. Four Soarin' Hawk birds — each step labeled. Notice how Step 5 hands the audience to the next presenter.

BARN OWL — Monet

60-Second Version

This bird can hear a mouse under two feet of snow — in total darkness, without moving a muscle. Two mismatched, asymmetrically placed ears — one hears high frequencies, one hears low — combine into a precise sound map. No GPS comes close. Monet is quiet, watchful, and intensely focused. When he's on the glove, you can feel his attention shift before you can hear what he's tracking. One barn owl family consumes up to 6,000 rodents a year — your neighborhood's free pest control. Monet works in silence. The next bird doesn't need silence — she needs speed. Meet Orion.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>This bird can hunt in total darkness. He doesn't use his eyes. He uses his ears — and they are unlike anything else in the animal kingdom.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>One of Monet's ears is higher on his head than the other. One hears high frequencies, one hears low. His brain combines both signals and triangulates the exact location of his prey — under two feet of snow, in complete darkness, without seeing it at all. Sub-millisecond precision. No GPS comes close.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Monet is quiet, watchful, and intensely focused. When he's on the glove, you can feel his attention shift before you can hear what he's tracking.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Right now, in fields near your neighborhood, barn owls like Monet are working the night shift. One barn owl family can consume up to 6,000 rodents a year. That's better than any trap and it's free. His survival depends on open fields, old barns, and people who choose not to use rat poison.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Monet's entire world is built around sound. Our next bird throws all of that out — and replaces it with vision so precise it works like a targeting system. Meet Orion.</i>

RED-TAILED HAWK — Orion or Freckles

60-Second Version

See that fence post at the far end of the parking lot? She can read a sign at that distance. While flying. Eight times sharper than yours. Tracks a mouse from 100 feet up at 40 mph. That's not good eyesight — that's a precision targeting system. Orion is relaxed and steady — but she'll let you know when she's done. She turns her back. She is never subtle. There is almost certainly a red-tail hunting within a mile of your home right now. You just didn't know it. Orion sees everything. Our next bird is a fraction of her size — but sees something she can't. Meet Georgie.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>See that fence post at the far end of the parking lot? She can read a sign at that distance. While flying.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>A red-tailed hawk's visual acuity is eight times sharper than yours. Her eyes have five times more light receptors, packed into an eyeball roughly the same size as yours. She tracks a mouse moving through grass from 100 feet in the air at 40 miles an hour. That is not good eyesight. That is a precision targeting system.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Orion is what we call an intermediate bird. She's relaxed and steady, but she'll let you know when she's done. Watch her posture — when she leans forward, she's engaged. When she turns her back, the program is over. She is never subtle.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Red-tailed hawks live on every continent except Antarctica — including your neighborhood. That hawk on the telephone pole on your way here this morning? That's a red-tail. She was hunting. You just didn't know it.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Orion sees the world with more precision than any camera you've ever owned. Our next bird is the smallest falcon in North America — and one of the most precise hunters on the continent. Meet Georgie.</i>

AMERICAN KESTREL — Georgie

60-Second Version

She weighs less than a baseball and sees a map invisible to every other animal on the planet. Kestrels see ultraviolet light. Rodent urine reflects UV. From the air, she can see runways glowing below her. It's not guessing — it's tracking. Georgie is calm, curious, and completely at home on the glove. A family named her George — until they found out she was female. Kestrels are the most widespread falcon in the Americas — and one of the most in decline. Open sky and unmowed edges support her needs. Georgie finds what others can't see. Our next bird is built for something even bigger — not precision, but power and presence. Meet Jefferson.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>She weighs less than a baseball. She is the smallest falcon in North America. And from the very first day she arrived at Soarin' Hawk, she stepped onto the glove like she'd been doing it her whole life.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>The American Kestrel can see ultraviolet light. Rodent urine reflects UV — so from the air, a kestrel doesn't just see a field. She sees runways glowing below her. She follows the trail, hovers with precision, and drops. It's not guessing. It's reading a map no one else can see.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Georgie is calm, curious, and completely comfortable on the glove — from the very first day she arrived. A family rescued her and named her George — until they found out she is female. She's been Georgie ever since.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Kestrels are the most widespread falcon in the Americas — and one of the most in decline. Open fields, fence posts, tree cavities, and nest boxes are all they need. Every unmowed edge of a road or park near you is potential kestrel habitat. She doesn't need wilderness. She needs us to leave a little space.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>That's Georgie — small, precise, and built for a world that still has open sky in it. Our final bird today is a symbol of what happens when that world is protected. Meet Jefferson.</i>

BALD EAGLE — Jefferson

60-Second Version

In 1990, fewer than a dozen nesting pairs of bald eagles in Indiana. Today there are hundreds. Jefferson is proof of what stewardship looks like. Seven-foot wingspan. Grip four times stronger than a human hand. Spots a fish from a mile away and hits the water at 75 mph. Jefferson is one of our most advanced birds. He changes the energy in a room the moment he enters. When he looks at you, you feel it. Bald eagles nearly disappeared from Indiana in our lifetime. They came back because people changed their behavior. The same choices exist today. Jefferson is the reason Soarin' Hawk exists — and the reason every program you deliver matters. Thank you for being here.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>In 1990, there were fewer than a dozen nesting pairs of bald eagles in Indiana. Today there are hundreds. Jefferson is proof of what happens when people decide to pay attention.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>Jefferson's wingspan reaches seven feet. His grip is four times stronger than a human hand — strong enough to carry prey twice his own weight across open sky. He can spot a fish from a mile away, fold his wings, and hit the water at 75 miles per hour. Every adaptation he has is built for one thing: survival at the top of the food chain.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Jefferson is one of our most advanced birds — experienced handlers only. He has a presence that changes the energy in a room the moment he enters. He's calm, deliberate, and aware of everything. When he looks at you, you feel it.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Bald eagles nearly disappeared from Indiana in our lifetime — pushed out by habitat loss, hunting, and pesticides. They came back because people changed their behavior. The same threats that once drove eagles away still exist. So do the choices that brought them back.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Jefferson is the reason Soarin' Hawk exists — and the reason every program you deliver matters. Thank you for being here.</i>

TURKEY VULTURE — Ehr or Poe

60-Second Version

This bird can smell death from over a mile away. And that superpower is the reason your neighborhood isn't a disease zone. Their stomach acid destroys anthrax, botulism, and rabies. She eats what would kill everything else. She is nature's sanitation system. Ehr is one of our most advanced birds. Deliberate, watchful, completely unbothered. She has a quiet dignity and intelligence that surprises people who expect menacing. Every carcass on a road near you gets cleaned up by vultures. Without them, those become disease vectors. She does it for free. Ehr cleans up what death leaves behind. Our next bird prevents death from happening in the first place.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>This bird can smell death from over a mile away. And that superpower is the reason your neighborhood isn't a disease zone.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>Ehr has one of the most acute senses of smell in the bird world — able to detect a single decaying animal from over a mile away. Her stomach acid is so strong it destroys anthrax, botulism, and rabies. She eats what would kill everything else. She is nature's sanitation system — and she does it for free.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Ehr is one of our most advanced birds. She is deliberate, watchful, and completely unbothered. She has a quiet dignity and intelligence that surprises people who expect a bird called a vulture to be menacing. When she's on the glove, she is still. Present. Unhurried. And do not let that fool you. She has figured out how to open puzzle toys at our facility — dog toys I sometimes have difficulty putting back together. That is not a bird running on instinct. That is a bird paying attention.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Every time a deer, raccoon, or squirrel dies on a road near you, Ehr's cousins are the cleanup crew. Without vultures, those carcasses become disease vectors for the entire community. She does this work silently, without recognition, every single day.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Ehr cleans up what death leaves behind. Our next bird is the one that rules the night sky above it all. Meet Athena.</i>

GREAT HORNED OWL — Athena

60-Second Version

She can crush with a grip stronger than your full hand — in total silence, in total darkness, without warning. Three hundred pounds per square inch of talon pressure. Serrated feather edges that break up airflow. Great horned owls have few natural predators. Athena is powerful and self-possessed. She decides when the program is over, not you. When she's engaged, there is no more commanding bird in a room. Great horned owls have few natural predators. They sit at the top of the nocturnal food chain across your entire region. Right now one is hunting within two miles of here. Athena is the queen of the night sky. But there's one more bird today — and when she walks in, the room gets quiet. Meet Sheyenne.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>Athena can crush with a grip stronger than your full hand — in total silence, in total darkness, without warning.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>Athena's talons exert over 300 pounds per square inch of pressure — strong enough to pierce the skull of prey instantly. Her feathers are serrated at the edges, breaking up airflow so she produces almost no sound in flight. Great horned owls have few natural predators.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Athena is powerful and self-possessed — she decides when the program is over, not you. She came to us as a nestling and has been with Soarin' Hawk ever since. When she's engaged, there is no bird more commanding in the room. When she's done, you will know.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Great horned owls have few natural predators. They are the top of the nocturnal food chain across your entire region — hunting rabbits, skunks, other raptors, and even other owls. Right now, one is hunting within two miles of where you're sitting.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Athena rules the night. Every bird you've met today has a different superpower. Every one of them needs the same thing: open sky, clean habitat, and people who know their story.</i>

HARRIS HAWK — Sheyenne

60-Second Version

Most raptors hunt alone. Sheyenne doesn't. Harris Hawks live and hunt together in family units — coordinating like wolves, flushing prey, taking turns. That cooperative intelligence is exactly what makes them ideal falconry birds — working with a human handler becomes a natural extension of how they already think. Hunting together is just what they do. She talks to her handlers. She wags her tail. She is the most socially expressive bird we have — because her species was built for company. Meet Sheyenne.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>Most raptors hunt alone. This one doesn't. Harris Hawks hunt in coordinated family groups — like wolves, but with wings.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>Social intelligence. Harris Hawks are built for cooperation — the only raptor that hunts in organized family groups, communicating and coordinating in real time.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Sheyenne talks to her handlers — and wags her tail. She is the most socially expressive bird at Soarin' Hawk. Which makes sense: her whole species was built for company.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Cooperative hunters that keep desert ecosystems in balance — controlling rodent populations across the southwest the same way a wolf pack controls prey on the plains.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Sheyenne survives through cooperation. Our next bird survives through something completely different — partnership with humans, and the patience that comes with it. Meet Peabody.</i>

BARRED OWL — Peabody

60-Second Version

Peabody is a Barred Owl — and the first thing you notice is that call. Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all? That's exactly what this owl sounds like. But the real superpower isn't the voice — it's the silence. Barred owls hunt day and night, and their wing feathers are designed so that the air doesn't make a sound when they fly. Peabody shares his mew with Indy, our other Barred Owl. They're a bonded pair — when one comes back from a program, they both start talking. Every time one of them takes flight, some mouse nearby never heard it coming. Check out the eye color on our next bird — Chewie's orange eyes are a long way from Peabody's dark ones.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all? Did you know this owl's call sounds just like that? That's what Peabody says — every single night.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all? That phrase is the Barred Owl's signature call — one of the most recognizable sounds in the eastern forest. Peabody says it too.</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Silent flight. Their wing feathers have tiny comb-like fringes that break up rushing air. No whoosh. Prey never hears them coming.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Barred owls are crepuscular — most active at dawn and dusk, though they will hunt day and night when needed. Their secret is in their feathers. The front edges have tiny, serrated fringes that break up airflow so there's no whooshing sound. Their broad wings let them glide slowly with fewer flaps. A mouse has no warning. None. That is what silent flight means.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Peabody shares his mew with Indy, our other Barred Owl. They're a bonded pair. When one comes home from a program, they both start talking. It's something to hear.</i>

EURASIAN EAGLE OWL — Chewie

60-Second Version

He is the second-largest owl on earth. And he is standing right here. Six-foot wingspan. Eyes fixed in his skull so he rotates his head 270 degrees. Locates prey in near-complete darkness using hearing alone. Chewie's presence in a room is immediate — people go quiet without being asked. He is calm and self-assured in a way that feels ancient. When his orange eyes find yours, it is not subtle. Eurasian Eagle Owls are native to Europe and Asia. His cousins hunt foxes, hares, and other birds of prey. They are the owls that other owls fear. Chewie shows us what a raptor looks like at the very top. Every bird you've met today — from the smallest to the largest — is built to survive and thrive right where it lives. That is the Survival Superpower.

Full 3–5 Minute Version

Step 1: Hook	<i>He is the second-largest owl on earth. And he is standing right here.</i>
Step 2: Superpower	<i>The Eurasian Eagle Owl has a wingspan of up to six feet and ear tufts that act as communication signals — raised when alert, flattened when uneasy or agitated. His eyes are fixed in his skull, so he compensates with a 270-degree head rotation. He can locate prey in near-complete darkness using hearing alone. Slicked back tufts — watch out!</i>
Step 3: Personality	<i>Chewie is one of our most advanced birds. His presence in a room is immediate — people go quiet without being asked. He is calm and self-assured in a way that feels ancient. When he fixes his orange eyes on you, it is not subtle. It is a reckoning.</i>
Step 4: Connection	<i>Eurasian Eagle Owls are native to Europe and Asia — Chewie is here because he cannot survive in the wild. But his cousins are the apex owl predators of two continents. They hunt foxes, hares, and other birds of prey. They are the owls that other owls fear.</i>
Step 5: Transition	<i>Chewie shows us what a raptor looks like at the very top. Every bird you've met today — from the smallest to the largest — is built for exactly one thing: to survive, and to thrive, right where it lives. That is the Survival Superpower.</i>

HANDLER PLANNING SHEET

Handler: _____ Bird: _____ Program: _____ Audience: _____

SURVIVAL SUPERPOWERS

Raptors have extraordinary adaptations that help them survive — and they play an important role in the world around us.

P — PEOPLE: Who is in my audience today?

Audience type (circle one): Elementary School Kid · High School / College Age · Adult · Meet & Greet Visitor

What does this audience already care about? What experience do I want to create before a single fact arrives?

A — AIM: What do I want my audience to think, feel, and do?

THINK	
FEEL	
DO	

T — THEME: My bird's angle on the program message

The program message: Raptors have extraordinary adaptations that help them survive — and they play an important role in the world around us.

My bird's mini-theme — the specific angle my bird takes on that truth:

e.g. "Sometimes survival depends on staying unseen." (Screech Owl) "Small size doesn't limit power — it changes how survival looks." (Kestrel)

H — HOW: My 5-Step Bird Story

Anchor words and phrases for each step — not a script. Use these to guide you, not to read from.

Step 1: HOOK <i>What stops them before you say another word?</i>	
Step 2: SUPERPOWER <i>The extraordinary adaptation in vivid language.</i>	
Step 3: PERSONALITY <i>Who is THIS specific bird?</i>	
Step 4: CONNECTION <i>How does this connect to their world?</i>	
Step 5: TRANSITION <i>That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently.</i>	

MY 60-SECOND STORY — TO SHARE ON APRIL 11

Write your full story as one flowing paragraph. Use guideposts to anchor each step.

HOOK —

SUPERPOWER —

PERSONALITY —

CONNECTION —

TRANSITION —

TEAM PROGRAM OUTLINE

Program: _____ Audience: _____ Date: _____ Lead: _____

SURVIVAL SUPERPOWERS

Raptors have extraordinary adaptations that help them survive — and they play an important role in the world around us.

PEOPLE + AIM

Audience type (circle): Elementary School Kid · High School / College Age · Adult · Meet & Greet Visitor

As a team, what do we want this audience to THINK, FEEL, and DO?

HOW — THE PROGRAM IN ORDER

Each handler: confirm your bird, your mini-theme, and your transition line before you go on.

BIRD 1

Handler: _____ Bird: _____

Mini-theme: _____

TRANSITION LINE → That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently. Meet [name].

BIRD 2

Handler: _____ Bird: _____

Mini-theme: _____

TRANSITION LINE → That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently. Meet [name].

BIRD 3

Handler: _____ Bird: _____

Mini-theme: _____

TRANSITION LINE → That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently. Meet [name].

BIRD 4

Handler: _____ Bird: _____

Mini-theme: _____

TRANSITION LINE → That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently. Meet [name].

BIRD 5

Handler: _____ Bird: _____

Mini-theme: _____

TRANSITION LINE → That's how [bird] survives. Our next bird does it differently. Meet [name].

PROGRAM WRAP-UP

Closing message — echo the program message, send them out with one clear truth:

CONSERVATION ACTION

The one action we'll invite this audience to take:

TEAM NOTES

GLOW + GROW — PEER FEEDBACK CARD

One thing that shined. One thing to strengthen. Specific, warm, and tied to the 5-Step structure.

Listen for:

- Did the Hook create engagement before information arrived?
- Was the Superpower vivid and accessible for this audience?
- Did the Personality make this feel like a real, specific bird?
- Did the Connection make the bird's survival feel relevant to this specific audience's life?
- Did the Transition hand smoothly to the next presenter?

Handler 1:

Bird:

GLOW — one thing that shined:

GROW — one thing to strengthen:

Handler 2:

Bird:

GLOW — one thing that shined:

GROW — one thing to strengthen:

Handler 3:

Bird:

GLOW — one thing that shined:

GROW — one thing to strengthen:

EXIT TICKET — END OF SESSION 1

Take 10 minutes before you leave. Your answers shape the coaching you receive on Day 2.

1. In one sentence: how does your bird survive? That is your Step 2 Superpower. Write it here.

2. Which conservation action connects most directly to your bird's story?

3. What step in your 5-Step Bird Story do you most want to strengthen before April 25?

4. Think about injury questions audiences ask about your bird. We'll practice redirects together on Day 2 — jot your most common one here:

5. One question I still have:

YOUR PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT BEFORE DAY 2

- Review your 5-Step Planning Card.
- Practice your full bird story out loud five times.
If you haven't presented with a bird yet: practice in front of a mirror or record yourself on your phone.
- Think about the most common injury question audiences ask about your bird. We'll practice the redirect together on Day 2.
- Think about difficult questions your audience might ask, and how you respond. Jot down a few that come to mind so we can workshop responses together on Day 2.

A LOOK AHEAD — DAY 2 (April 25)

- Deliver your full bird story to the group and receive coached Glow + Grow feedback.
- Workshop the difficult and injury-related questions you brought from your practice.
- Build your team program: pair up with other handlers, sequence your birds, and rehearse the handoffs.

Bring your story. Bring your bird. Bring your voice.

See you April 25.

Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehabilitation Center • Raindrop Naturalist • PATH in Practice • April 2026