



Back by Popular Demand ~

California Condors and Aplomado Falcons in the American West

- Free lecture with Trish Nixon, raptor educator with The Peregrine Fund/World Center for Birds of Prey
- Includes photo-ops with a live bird of prey
- Wednesday, September 26th, 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- Wood River Dining Room, ISU Student Union Building



Sponsored by the Idaho Museum of Natural History
and Best Western CottonTree Inn with additional
support from ISU Cultural Affairs Committee and
Marsh Valley Middle School

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IMNH Brings Birds of Prey to Pocatello Raptor Specialist, Trish Nixon, to Give Public Lecture and Visit Area Schools

Pocatello, ID – The Idaho Museum of Natural History is excited to host Trish Nixon with *The Peregrine Fund / World Center for Birds of Prey* from September 25-27. During her three-day visit Nixon will bring several of her raptors to visit with area schools including Marsh Valley Middle School, Roosevelt Academy, Pocatello Charter School, and ISU's Dept. of Biological Sciences.

Additionally, Nixon will present a free public lecture on Wednesday, September 26, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the Wood River Dining Room in the Student Union on ISU's campus. The visit is sponsored by the Best Western CottonTree Inn with additional support from ISU Cultural Affairs Committee and Marsh Valley Middle School.

Nixon's public lecture is entitled, "Back by Popular Demand; California Condors and Aplomado Falcons in the American West." She will present information on *The Peregrine Fund's* captive breeding and release of these two endangered birds of prey and give audience members an opportunity to gaze into the eyes of a bird of prey up close and personal. The presentation will also include photo-ops and a Q&A session.

The Aplomado falcon is the last falcon on the endangered species list in North America. Aplomado (meaning 'lead-colored' or 'gray') falcon populations declined steadily in the United States and Northern Mexico throughout the 1900s, mainly as a result of land-use changes and pesticides. *The Peregrine Fund* began a captive breeding project focusing on this bird in 1993 and is currently releasing Aplomado falcons in their former habitats of Texas and New Mexico. Nixon will discuss the success of this program and share with the audience unique photos of the breeding and release process from hatching to the juvenile's first flights in the wild. In addition, she'll describe Aplomado falcon's hunting habits, prey preferences, nesting requirements, and describe their niche in the food chain.

The California Condor reintroduction project will also be covered. These members of the scavenger branch of the bird-of-prey family have been on the Endangered Species list for decades and continue to be one of the world's most endangered species. With an 8 to 9½ foot wingspan, the California Condor is an awe-inspiring sight to behold. Once found throughout mountainous regions of the Pacific Coast from British Columbia to Baja, the Condor's numbers declined alarmingly until just 22 birds remained by the mid 1980s. Since the early 1990s,

through the reintroduction of captive-bred birds, the number of California Condors has risen dramatically to over 250. Condors hatched in captivity at *The Peregrine Fund's* headquarters in Boise are released into the Grand Canyon area of Arizona and are producing young on their own in the wild.

Nixon will share with her audience some rare and wonderful images of the California Condor project, and show an Emmy-award winning movie on the Condors of the Grand Canyon. After the presentation, Trish will answer questions from the audience and allow the audience to take photos of the live birds of prey brought along for the presentation.

Trish Nixon is currently the trainer and care-taker for 17 birds of prey housed at *The Peregrine Fund*, including eagles, owls, falcons, hawks, and a turkey vulture. She travels throughout the United States presenting programs such as these and introducing birds of prey to audiences of all ages. She shares information about identifying raptors in the wild, how and what they hunt, where they nest, why they migrate, and, most importantly, why it's imperative that they maintain their niches in the environment. This mission is important because according to Nixon, "The more people understand the value of raptors in the environment, the greater their interest in conserving these magnificent birds."

The Peregrine Fund is a non-profit organization working around the world to save birds of prey and the environments in which they live. The organization was founded in 1970 and has worked in over 30 countries with birds such as Peregrine Falcons, Bald Eagles, Orange Breasted falcons, Madagascar Fish-eagles, Harpy eagles, White-backed vultures, California Condors, Aplomado falcons, and many others. Over 30, 000 people visit the interpretive visitors' center in Boise each year where they enjoy movies, hands-on displays, interpretive talks, and one of the most impressive collections of birds of prey in the United States. For more information, see its website at www.peregrinefund.org.

For more information about Trish Nixon's visit to Pocatello, please contact Kristin Fletcher at the Idaho Museum of Natural History at (208) 282-2262 or fletkris@isu.edu.

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