

Carolina Raptor Center Background:

Carolina Raptor Center (CRC) is a leading conservation, education, and wildlife rehabilitation organization serving the greater Charlotte region. CRC is a nonprofit dedicated to igniting a passion for raptors and a responsibility for our shared natural world. CRC's mission is advanced through its dynamic education programs, extensive public engagement, and nationally recognized Raptor Hospital, together offering meaningful connections between people and raptors while promoting environmental stewardship.

Education and Public Engagement:

At the heart of CRC's visitor experience is the Raptor Trail, a three-quarter-mile outdoor walking trail and zoological facility that permanently houses and exhibits more than 25 birds of prey from around the world. These raptors serve as avian ambassadors, helping guests explore both local and global species diversity and ecological principles in an immersive environment. In addition to trail exhibits, CRC features ambassador raptors that participate in onsite and outreach educational programming.

CRC delivers science-based learning opportunities for schools, community groups, and the general public. This includes private educational presentations, Keeper Chats, and free-flight Bird Shows, all designed to deepen understanding of conservation, biology, and species protection. Education ambassadors are trained using industry-leading avian care methodologies, emphasizing positive reinforcement, behavioral choice, and animal welfare best practices.

Each year, CRC welcomes over 40,000 visitors and engages approximately 10,000 students through hands-on environmental education programs. Seasonal programming, such as the summer Bird Show, which attracts more than 2,000 attendees annually, further expands public access to wildlife learning experiences.

Raptor Care and Rehabilitation:

CRC also operates one of the region's most experienced and best-equipped raptor hospitals, providing comprehensive medical care to 800–1,000 injured, sick, or orphaned raptors every year. With more than 27,000 patients treated to date, the hospital manages all aspects of avian medical care including intake, triage, diagnostics, surgery, long-term rehabilitation, and monitored release.