Lucky Peak Site Improvements

By Greg Kaltenecker

It has been a long time coming, but a major site improvement project at Lucky Peak was completed in 2010 that significantly improved the site for visiting groups and the IBO fall crew. Improvements include a permanent restroom, leveling of camping pads for visiting groups and crew, and new wall tents for crew and public. These improvements provide larger and more comfortable camping sites for visiting groups and IBO crews, better on-site parking, a level pad to accommodate groups around the songbird banding station, wall tents for a crew kitchen and visitors, better individual camping sites for crew members, less dust, and of course, the benefits of having a permanent restroom are obvious!

Over two years of planning involving local architects, engineers, and developers, high-ranking officials from Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Boise State University, local landscapers, and local volunteers finally came together in August 2010. It took about a month to complete all of the improvements, but by September, visitors and crews were reaping the benefits! We heard so many compliments from visitors in appreciation of the new improvements. Scout groups, school groups, and families all loved the new camping area. The crew loved the new wall tent, complete with custom furniture, wood-burning heaters, and propane cook stoves. The IBO's field research station at Lucky Peak no longer looks like a trailer park! No more junky camp trailers!

We could not have accomplished the Lucky Peak "facelift" without the generous contributions from numerous local businesses and individuals, not to mention volunteer labor from Idaho Fish and Game employees and volunteers, and the IBO crew. The site improvements were valued at an estimated $57,452.31. However, thanks to donations and volunteer contributions, the total cost (in cash) to the IBO for site improvements was only $13,750.97. Thank you to all who made this possible. For more details about this effort, read more about it in our 2010 annual report on our website (http://www.idahobirdobservatory.org/index.html); click on Programs/Publications.

Many thanks to the following organizations, businesses, and individuals for making the Lucky Peak site improvements happen!

- Boise State University
- Cornel Larson Architects
- Dig! Custom Landscaping
- Glenn Mouser
- Henderson Corporation
- IBO 2010 Fall Field Crew
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game Volunteers
- The Russell Corporation
- Steve Hall
- Think Green Landscaping
- W.H. Moore Co.

We’re Not Done!

We need your help! We still have plans for more site improvements. We need another wall tent (~$2,500) and we hope to purchase a yurt (~$10,000) for a new songbird banding station and visitor’s center. Can you help? These items would complete the new look of the Lucky Peak field camp, making it neat, tidy, professional, and functional!

For details, or to contribute, please contact the Director: gregorykaltenecker@boisestate.edu
Dear Dr. Kustra,

I just wanted to take a moment to bring to your attention an outstanding program that the Boise State University Biology Department provides. I had the pleasure of taking the day off earlier this week and spending the entire day up at the Idaho Bird Observatory. I met Greg Kaltenecker, Executive Director of the program and faculty with Boise State, who guided my wife and I up the mountain to the location of the Observatory, where we spent the morning assisting the students, employees and other volunteers capturing and tagging migrating songbirds, and then an eye-popping experience in the afternoon working with Jay Carlisle, Research Director and faculty, on capturing and tagging larger raptors.

In short, this was an incredible experience...but not just from the stand-point of getting to work with such incredible birds!! I was more impressed by the knowledge and passion of the individuals associated with the program. Greg and Jay have created a wonderful learning and educational experience for those who visit the IBO. Their passion was only amplified by the students and other employees of the program who were very patient, kind and caring as we assisted throughout the day.

This was an incredible educational experience for us and one we will not soon forget.
Blaine Eckles
Director, Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities
Boise State University

Feedback From Our Fans

Dear Idaho Bird Observatory,

My wife JoAnne and I went to the Observatory last Sunday and left very impressed with the program, volunteers and staff.

As long time local Audubon club members, we have read with interest about the banding program and the numbers of birds of various species, but were not prepared for the scientific data being captured. The volunteers and staff were quite knowledgeable and enjoyable as they explained about the data being collected. Holding a song bird and then releasing it was an unbelievable experience for every visitor that day.

We were particularly impressed with how the volunteers related with the youth that were there, and I am sure all went away with a new perspective and awareness of birds in our valley. We think we saw “birders” being born that day!

Thank you again for providing the opportunity to visit the Observatory. We will return.

It is a fine research program for Boise State.
Sincerely,
Dan and JoAnne Wertz

“Thank you for helping me catch raptors. That Prairie Falcon was awesome. I hope you catch a lot of birds......”

Brooklyn, 5th Grade

“Thank you for inviting us to IBO. My favorite part was releasing the birds. I hope you catch more owls this year......”

Andrew, 5th Grade

“....I never knew the IBO existed. I got to hold my first Cooper’s Hawk. My favorite activity was to catch hawks in the hawk blind. I didn’t know that hawks could fly super speed! Do you celebrate any holidays at IBO? I hope you have a good fall!!!”

Lucas, 5th Grade

—continued on last page
By Greg Kaltenecker

It has finally caught up with us. The recent economic slowdown has certainly resulted in fewer private foundation grants and corporate sponsorships in support of our annual fall migration research and education project. We understand: foundation grants are somewhat based on performance of the stock market, and when business is slow, companies don’t have an excess of discretionary cash laying around, either. But, for the past few fall seasons, we have continued to receive significant (even increased) support from our federal partners, namely the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Personal donations from our members and donors have also contributed greatly to our fall budgets. However, fall 2011 is not looking good. The recent federal budget cuts are going to hit us hard this year. Both the USFWS and USFS have had significant cuts to their current budgets, and it does not look like they will be able to support our important annual monitoring this year (next year is uncertain, also). Combined, support received from these two partners accounts for over half of our annual budget for this project.

These kids from the Foothills School’s Early Learners program hope there is an IBO next year to visit!

The trouble with long-term population monitoring is just that: it is...uh...long term. Over the years, hundreds of partners and donors have helped to support our fall migration work. But it is very difficult to find regular, stable sources of support that can contribute year after year after year. Long-term monitoring, to be successful in determining population trends, has to be done the same way, year after year, so that results can be directly compared. How else would we know when populations are declining or increasing?

We have learned to run this project efficiently and quite cheaply by using volunteer labor, in-kind donations, and contributions from our many partners, but we do have some hard costs associated with Lucky Peak. How much does it take each year? We require about $30,000 annually to successfully complete standardized monitoring of songbirds, raptors, and owls during autumn migration. This $30,000 supports 10-12 full-time volunteers, buys equipment and supplies, fuel for project vehicles, and other related (and necessary) expenses. Since Lucky Peak is at the core of what we do as an organization, it is hard to think that we might not be able to continue this work after 18 years. We need your help! If we ever needed your personal donation, now is the time. Haven’t renewed your membership in a while? Please do so. We greatly appreciate your support. THANK YOU!

Alara wants to be able to do this again when she is older!

Long-Range Vision

In case you are interested in or able to contribute to IBO’s long-term financial stability, our strategic planning effort has identified long-range fundraising goals of 3 new endowments to support IBO staff positions and core activities. One of these endowments of $1.5M would insure the continuation and growth of our fall migration monitoring project forever. The Lucky Peak project is the IBO; it exemplifies everything that we do and brings our mission to life!
M y first experience with the Idaho Bird Observatory was a birthday gift from my wife. She successfully bid on “A Birding Day with Jay Carlisle” at a fundraising auction. Busy with managing small businesses and life in general, it was nearly a year later before we were finally able to coordinate a trip to the Snake River Birds of Prey Area. On a clear but cool Saturday in April of 2009, my wife Kecia, brother-in-law Brian Nicholas, dear friend Terri Olson, and my father Arnold met up with Jay Carlisle and Heidi Ware for a day of birding at the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.

The Boys piled in one car and the Girls in another and off we went. We hit it off right away. Our group was not comprised of avid birders but rather friends and family who shared a genuine love for the natural world. We enjoyed conversation with Jay as he gave us an overview of his life as a biologist.

Jay was amazing, pointing out various birds of prey in flight and perched in trees as we drove out toward the interpretive trail overlook at Dedication Point.

We pulled off the road several times to glass for birds of prey with binoculars and spotting scopes. Jay could readily tell male from female and what species they were even though these magnificent raptors appeared as mere specks in the sky high above the Snake River Plain. Each time we stopped, Jay and Heidi jabbed at each other about who saw what along the way. It was obvious they had a running competition of sightings while out in the field. The excitement and interest the two of them shared with each of us was contagious! We intended to switch seats in each vehicle during the outing but soon realized the day was turning into a competition—it was the Boys vs. the Girls.

Lunchtime found us in the park at Swan Falls Dam where we took a break to enjoy an amazingly delicious meal. Lunch was briefly interrupted as a group of truly avid birders stopped by to say hello to Heidi and Jay. They enthusiastically shared a sighting of a red-naped sapsucker, which was still high in a cottonwood tree in the park, searching for snacks. We did tally bird sighting totals; I can’t quite recall the outcome, but I’m sure the Boys won!

I was quite impressed with Jay and Heidi. They did an excellent job teaching, sharing and simply enjoying the day with us, sharing their love of birding really made the day special. They made such a positive impression on our group that day.

I cherish the memories of that day in a very personal way, as my father was slowly losing ground on his fight with cancer. He grew up in Idaho and lived in the Boston area for most of his adult life. Idaho was always near and dear to his heart and a magical place he shared with all of his 7 children. I knew this was most likely his last opportunity to experience the Snake River Birds of Prey Area. My father had introduced me to this area many years ago and it was a special gift to experience it again with him, especially this time, guided by experts in the birding field.

I felt compelled to lend support when I read in the Spring 2010 IBO newsletter a request for help with Lucky Peak Site Improvements. In an email to Greg Kaltenecker the day after reading the newsletter I offered tools, equipment, labor, and over 26 years of landscape construction management expertise. My offer, along with the generous input from many others, allowed a plan to start coming together to make the needed improvements at the Lucky Peak site. Greg put me in touch with Randy Lancaster of Dig! Custom Gardening (see Volunteer Spotlight, Spring 2010 IBO Newsletter), and with his assistance, we put the plan into action. When it came time for the work to begin, a dedicated contingent of Idaho Fish and Game volunteers, IBO staff, and many others all pitched in to make the Lucky Peak site improvements a reality.

My experience with the IBO has been nothing short of positive. I willingly provided my time, energy, money, and expertise to assist a deserving organization in realizing their goals. I did so in large part as a memorial tribute to my father. He gave me the gift of a lifelong love for the natural world coupled with the ability to help others in need. I hope this contribution to the IBO in his memory will become a beacon of light for others to follow.

The Idaho Bird Observatory is a quality organization made up of uniquely qualified people who deserve thoughtful consideration from those who have time, expertise, or financial ability to lend a hand.

My father passed away on March 2nd, 2011.

In Loving memory of Arnold Dwight Carlson, October 29, 1930–March 2, 2011.

David D. Carlson
President, Think Green, Inc.
IBO Advisory Board

By Greg Kaltenecker

We have recently established a new Advisory Board to assist us with strategic planning for future growth. The Board is made up of a variety of IBO supporters and “family”, each bringing different skills and a different perspective to this planning process. The Board includes long-time IBO volunteers, university representatives, local businessmen, parents, and folks with extensive experience leading non-profit organizations, but all with one thing in common: they all want to see the IBO grow and prosper. Their diverse backgrounds, intelligence, and enthusiasm are the perfect mix to bring new life and a sense of purpose to future planning for the IBO.

The process is being facilitated by Bill Drake, founder and leader of the successful local marketing firm Drake Cooper. Bill serves on the College of Arts and Sciences Board, and has volunteered to not only lead IBO’s Board through this process, but also supervise a series of interns to work on marketing IBO to “bring us up to the next level.” Among other things, we hope to broaden our membership base and raise the awareness of IBO in the local community. The group is helping to identify strategies for growth of IBO’s research and education capacities by increasing revenue and support.

One of the first things the group has done is to help draft new Mission and Vision statements for the IBO, and identify core values of the organization. The Mission defines what we currently do and why we exist, and also points out how we are unique. The Vision briefly describes where we want to be and how we want to be perceived by partners, cooperators, and the public.

New IBO Mission Statement

“Impacting human lives and significantly contributing to conservation through a unique combination of cooperative research focusing on migratory birds, education, discovery of the natural world, and community engagement.”

New IBO Vision Statement

“To be a self-sustaining, world class center that promotes an ethic of conservation through research focusing on migratory birds, education, stewardship, and community outreach.”

New IBO Mission Statement

By Greg Kaltenecker

We have maintained a superior volunteer involvement program associated with our fall migration project at Lucky Peak. In 2010, over 35 volunteers contributed over 7,500 hours of volunteer service valued at over $200,000! Keeping in line with our mission of volunteer involvement and community engagement, these volunteers assist each year with banding, hawk watch, raptor banding, public education, data entry, report writing, and more. Mary Dudley, Idaho Fish and Game Volunteer Coordinator for the Southwest Region, helps coordinate and document this volunteer service. If you would like to help us with our field research, please call Mary at 208-327-7099.

However, the recent strategic planning effort for IBO has identified several needs for other services that we currently don’t have the staff to provide. In addition to the volunteers that help us conduct our field work, it has been recognized that for IBO to continue to grow and prosper, we really need help from volunteers with other skills-professional skills. We need help maintaining data bases, mailing lists, and acknowledging donors. We need help fundraising. We need help organizing and putting on community events. We need a webmaster to update and maintain our website and email lists. We need help sending regular updates to our members. We need help designing, printing, and mailing our newsletter. We need help with marketing. We need to compile and maintain a data base of bird and IBO-related photos. We need a volunteer to help us coordinate all of these other volunteers! Do you have any of these skills, time, and the desire to help IBO? Please contact the Director. gregorykaltenecker@boisestate.edu

Please help with these things!

- Membership Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Fundraising
- Event Coordination and planning
- Webmaster
- Marketing
- Organizing Photos
- Newsletter Design, Mailing
HELLO! My name is Jessica Pollock and I recently joined the IBO team working on a nesting inventory throughout southern Idaho for Golden Eagles. So far we have found many nests and have witnessed some very interesting eagle courtship behavior!

A bit about myself – I grew up along the west coast of British Columbia and worked with the Rocky Point Bird Observatory for five years where I got hooked on songbird banding, raptor migration counts, and seabird surveys. My passion for birds continued and I moved to Moscow to attend the University of Idaho for my Master’s degree on cavity-nesting birds. I joined the consulting world for a few years, but always knew I wanted to return to work for a bird observatory. Last November I contacted IBO and here I am! My goals at IBO include wanting to contribute to landbird conservation through work at Lucky Peak, and also to conduct public education through presentations and banding demonstrations.

In late April, Jay and I went to southeastern Arizona to a Hummingbird Monitoring Network workshop to become certified hummingbird banders! I previously banded with the Hummingbird Monitoring Network in Canada, and my current goal is to establish a hummingbird banding station in the Boise area to contribute to hummingbird conservation and to engage the public in hummingbird ecology. I plan to establish one site along the Boise River at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, but I am also looking for a site at higher elevation that supports breeding Calliope hummingbirds. If you know of anyone who may live at a higher elevation and would be interested in having a banding site at their home (the only commitments are keeping your hummingbird feeders filled and letting me come there two mornings a month), please let me know. There is a knowledge gap in the migration of Calliope hummingbirds, so I am striving to help add data to the Hummingbird Monitoring Network (http://www.hummonnet.org).

I am happy to be joining the IBO team!

Interested in hummingbird banding?

We will be banding on the Boise River at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival on June 11, June 26, July 9, July 23, August 6, August 20, and possibly September 3. Banding will start at sunrise and continue for 5½ hours each morning. Please contact me if you want to observe or participate as these dates are tentative at this time.

jessicapollock@boisestate.edu
IBO and Golden Eagle Audubon – A Heartfelt THANKS!

By Greg Kaltenecker

For over 15 years now, the Idaho Bird Observatory has had a close relationship with Golden Eagle Audubon Society (GEAS). The local chapter has supported our work on the Boise Ridge with generous donations each year. GEAS organizes at least three field trips each fall to observe and participate in our research and monitoring at Lucky Peak. In addition to these organized field trips, Audubon members visit our research sites throughout the season. Audubon folks form a solid core of our volunteer involvement programs, helping with songbird banding, hawk watch, and raptor banding operations. It was the support of GEAS that really got IBO “off the ground” back in the early years of the project. This support from the local chapter has spread and grown into support from the broader community, but GEAS is still there and is still an integral part of the IBO.

Each year, GEAS holds a banquet and silent auction for their members. Held in March at the Owyhee Plaza Hotel, this event is a great fundraiser for the chapter. Banquet proceeds are split among Audubon’s main priorities, but IBO typically is the recipient of a significant portion of what is raised. This contribution to IBO helps support our annual research and education project on the Boise Ridge. The 2011 banquet was no exception. Held on March 12th, a record 170 people attended. Banquet speaker Alvaro Jamarillo, a biologist with the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and professional tour guide for Guide, Inc., gave a great talk on bird identification and kept the crowd’s attention until late into the evening. The banquet auction was a huge success, bringing in almost $8,000 to GEAS. Dozens of people can be credited for the banquet’s great success (follow link to GEAS newsletter (http://www.goldeneagleaudubon.org/newsletter-pdfs/nl11/geas1104.pdf), but the banquet committee consisted of Susan Norton, Susan Werner, Stephany Erwin, Danette Henderson, Louise Maley, Jeanne Koeberlein, Susan Hazelton, and Hope Denney. The chapter has voted to share $2,000 with IBO for fall 2011 activities at Lucky Peak. We couldn’t do this project each year without the continued support of the local chapter. Thank you GEAS!

Research and Conservation Update

Popular Articles
This article in *Birding* magazine by IBO supporter Elise Faike is a great introduction to the IBO and all that we do. It captures the personalities and the spirits of our great IBO crews.

Scientific Papers

Heather Rogers was a Boise State graduate student in the Raptor Biology M.S. program. This publication shares her main findings on stress in migrating raptors with the scientific community.


Rob Miller, a Boise State undergraduate at the time, summarized 14 years of songbird capture and hawk count data from Lucky Peak as it relates to major cold front patterns and local weather variables.


This paper evaluates the risk of injury and mortality to birds during standard mist-netting activities.


Eric Nolte, a graduate student in the Raptor Biology M.S. program at Boise State will publish a summary of his thesis findings on detectability of raptors at Lucky Peak in the journal of the North American Hawk Migration Association.

Conference Presentations
JAY CARLISLE: presented paper about Flammulated Owl surveys in Idaho at the joint American Ornithologist’s Union/Canadian Ornithologist’s conference, February 2010, San Diego, CA.

ROB MILLER: presented cold front and weather paper at the joint American Ornithologist’s Union/Canadian Ornithologist’s conference, February 2010, San Diego, CA.

– presented cold front and weather paper at the Idaho Chapter of The Wildlife Society

– presented cold front and weather paper at the Boise State University Undergraduate Research Conference

HEIDI WARE: presented a poster titled “Population Dynamics of Ten Avian Species Breeding at Lucky Peak, Boise Foothills, Idaho” at the Boise State University Undergraduate Research Conference

ERIC NOLTE: presented poster on detectability in hawk migration counts at the Boise State University Undergraduate Research Conference

Awards
ROB MILLER: Received best Undergraduate Research Presentation at

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In the last IBO newsletter we announced that the first-ever IBO lifetime membership was awarded to the Western Field Ornithologists (WFO) in 2010. With their $1000 donation, WFO requested that they be given this honor. WFO started a movement, and we received more requests for lifetime memberships after our newsletter came out last spring. In the past year, IBO has awarded eight additional lifetime memberships for donations of $1000 or more. We wanted to make sure to publicly acknowledge these donors and say THANK YOU! What does this mean? Lifetime members are publicly acknowledged, will receive our newsletter and updates forever, and will live happily thereafter knowing that they have significantly contributed to the growth and stability of the IBO! Does this distinction mean that we won’t ever ask you to support us again? Well, no, but you will become a member of an elite group of dedicated IBO supporters (more like “family”). We welcome you to become IBO Lifetime Members! Your contribution will really make a difference.

Want to become an IBO Lifetime Member? Please contact the Director or send in your donation today.

gregorykaltenecker@boisestate.edu

IBO Lifetime Members

• Ann and Doug Christensen
• Charles Conn and Family
• Dennis and Tracie Fitzpatrick
• Golden Eagle Audubon Society
• Lightfoot Foundation
• Jan and Shery Packwood
• Southwestern Idaho Birders Association
• Winston and Diane Moore Family
• Western Field Ornithologists

Follow IBO Online

If you haven’t done so already, check out the following IBO websites:

• www.idahobirdobservatory.org/
• http://idahobirdobservatory.blogspot.com/
• http://baldeagledays.blogspot.com/

Also, Become a fan of IBO on Facebook!

Donate to IBO

IBO’s research and education programs are supported almost entirely through small grants, contributions from corporations and local businesses, and donations from private individuals and foundations. We can’t continue without support from people like you!

Contributions can be made directly to the IBO through the Boise State University Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is a tax-deductible gift to a state educational institution. Please make a contribution to the IBO using the self-addressed envelope provided in this newsletter, or mail your gift to the address listed below. Thank you!

Idaho Bird Observatory
C/O Boise State University Foundation, Inc.
1910 University Dr.
Boise, ID 83725
Thank You!

The IBO is truly a cooperative project. The following organizations provide funding, in-kind support, and guidance each year. Without their contributions, the IBO could not continue its research, monitoring, and education programs.

- Boise State University
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- U.S. Forest Service
- Golden Eagle Chapter, Audubon Society
- Boise State University Raptor Research Center
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management

We are grateful to the following individuals, businesses, and organizations that have made much-needed cash or in-kind donations to IBO. Without these contributions, IBO could not continue to its research, monitoring, and education programs.

- Anser of Idaho, Inc.
- Dr. Sumer and Barbara Aygen
- Robert Baker
- Lynne Barnes
- Kathryn Besteman
- Boise State University
- Patrick Boye
- Holley Carlisle
- Christensen Family Foundation
- Liese Clebsch-Dean
- Charles Conn and Beverley Robertson
- Brian Cooper
- Jill Cooper
- Cornel Larson Architects
- Richard Cornwell
- D.B. Fitzpatrick and Company, Inc.
- Jesse Devoe
- Nancy DeWitt
- Dig! Custom Landscaping
- Robert Ellis
- Stephany Erwin
- Thomas Gable
- Robin and Lee Garwood
- Glenn Mouser

In addition to funding, IBO requires other types of support to continue its yearly programs. Do you have an ATV you could donate? Do you own a restaurant or other food service business? Can you make a donation of gift certificates, day-olds, or coupons?

We have compiled a list of our most-needed items:

- ATV
- Wall Tents and Accessories
- Binoculars
- Camping Gear
- Food for Field Crews
- Laser Printer for new IBO office

If you wish to donate any of the above items, or anything else you think we can use, your tax-deductible donation can be made directly to IBO. Appraisals and receipts for tax purposes can be provided for more valuable donations. Please contact the Director if you are considering an in-kind donation. THANK YOU!

gregorykaltenecker@boisestate.edu

An ATV would greatly cut our fuel costs on field projects.

Research and Conservation Update

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the Boise State University Undergraduate Research Conference.

Also received the Mike Madders Field Research Award ($800) for his M.S. thesis project on Northern Goshawks in Idaho.

HEIDI WARE: Received 2nd place, student choice awards, at the Boise State University Undergraduate Research Conference.

MICHELLE LASKOWSKI: Received the Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research for $1000 for her M.S. project entitled “Using Molecular Techniques to Assess Haemosporidian Parasites and their Phylogenetic Relationships in Migrating Raptors,” which investigates the relationship between blood parasites and migrating raptors.
Discussions began about a year ago: how can we elevate awareness about IBO in the local community? The more people that are aware of the IBO and what we do, the more people we can reach with our unique blend of education and research. The more people we reach, the more support we will attract from the local community, adding to long-term stability and our ability to grow and expand our programs (so we can reach even more people!). It’s a simple concept, right?

To make a long story shorter, Howard Smith, Vice President of University Advancement, is a fan of the Idaho Bird Observatory on campus. Long-time friend and major IBO supporter, Winston Moore, is a friend of Howard’s, and the two agreed that something had to be done to “get the word out” about the IBO. How is the IBO related to Starbucks coffee, you might ask? Well, we are not, really, but there is more to the story.

The old Starbucks location at the corner of University Dr. and Capitol Blvd. is university property, and is right next to the University Advancement offices. Howard suggested that since there were no immediate uses planned for this space in the next few years, maybe IBO could move in there. Signage at this prominent location would certainly raise awareness and increase name recognition for our program. The space could be designed as more of a public visitor center in addition to offices. If done right, we could do public presentations there and hand out materials to the public, have educational signage, posters, etc. I said that it sounded great to me! Since we were being asked to move from our old location in the Raptor Research Department to a temporary spot in the Biology Department at about the same time (some internal shuffling of space), the timing was good, too.

Construction began in September 2010. The university transformed the old coffee house into fantastic office space for myself and Jay, workspace for additional employees or students, space for storage of all of our field equipment, a professional meeting area, restrooms, and that’s not all. One of the things we are most excited about is a small “auditorium space”, complete with wall-mounted digital projector. Yes, we have a space now where we can actually do public presentations. Once we are moved in and settled, we plan to start offering monthly (or more often) presentations for the public on our research and education programs. We can’t wait!

Thank you Boise State for supporting our program and seeing value in the research and community engagement that we do!
Student Spotlight

By Heidi Ware

Most of the people reading this article probably know me as “that girl who’s always at Lucky Peak”. And while it’s true that for the past 3 years I’ve been completely addicted to the Idaho Bird Observatory, and lived mere miles from it for my entire life before that, that’s actually not how I got my start as a biology fanatic. Rewind back to...well, probably as soon as I could walk, and I was already running around outside collecting rollie-pollies and other bugs. Then in 4th grade, one of my favorite teachers taught a unit on birds, and from there I was hooked! I started birdwatching then, but really only knew the birds in my backyard, and just a few songs. I continued to be interested in birds and insects through high school, and by the time I graduated I’d discovered my passion for both biology and teaching. At the time, I thought I either wanted to be a Fish and Game Biologist that worked with birds, or a high school Biology teacher...but that was about to change.

Just as I was finishing up my first year as a Biology major at Boise State University, I ran across the website for IBO. I emailed Jay and Greg about checking out the banding project, and got the prophetic response: “I’m always looking to train more people...and once you are trained, you could band with us each fall until you graduate. It’s a great opportunity.” My first day at Lucky Peak was for a breeding season (MAPS) banding day. I met super-volunteers Dave and Carol Wike much too early that morning for the drive up the mountain. Dave led me on my first net run and took me under his wing (haha, get it?) teaching me how to extract birds from the net. By the end of that first day I’d seen probably 10 new “lifer” bird species, and I was completely addicted! I continued to volunteer with Jay and the rest of the crew every day once migration started, and was tortured when I finally had to go back to school in the fall...and well, the rest is history! For the last two years I have worked with the IBO doing breeding season surveys all across southern Idaho as well as the fall migration study at Lucky Peak. More recently, I have also participated in the Undergraduate and Graduate Research Conferences at Boise State (along with many of my fellow bird-nerd undergraduate students) where we presented results from various original research conducted at Lucky Peak.

During my time with IBO, I have realized what I really want to be “when I grow up”. Before working at Lucky Peak, I had resigned myself to the fact that I had to pick either teaching or research, and that there was no real-life job that could combine them. But as anyone who’s visited us knows, IBO offers a unique and totally awesome combination of both important research and public outreach! It wasn’t long before I knew I wanted to be involved in something like that as a career. I truly love teaching families about the birds that I think are so cool, and I especially enjoy showing kids a different perspective on what a “scientist” is, and getting them excited about hands-on learning.

Not only has working with IBO given me invaluable job experience that would be tough to get anywhere else, but it has also opened doors for me to do what I love in the future. This family turned out to be the family of Dr. Rudin, who is the Vice President for Research at Boise State. It was through this connection to Dr. Rudin that I was eventually able to secure the assistantship I needed to stay at Boise State for my M.S. degree! This funding will allow me to do what I love at Lucky Peak while still working on my Master’s degree! It’s IBO’s strong connection with the university (unique among bird observatories) that makes great opportunities like this possible for students. And, thanks to this support from Dr. Rudin, I have found a great graduate adviser and thesis project that incorporates my desire to continue working with IBO with some very exciting (and hopefully groundbreaking!) conservation research.

I feel proud to be a part of this important time of growth for the IBO. As the program continues to expand, I know that more and more opportunities like the ones I’ve received will be available for the people of the Treasure Valley as well as Graduate and Undergraduate students at Boise State, and I can only hope to be a part of this great project for years to come!
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1910 University Drive
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“Thank you so much Jay, Ollie, Jack, Tiffany, Heidi, Sarah, Ian, Matt, Shawn, and Jesus. I really enjoyed the hawk watch because I got to hold a Sharp-shinned Hawk. I now understand that having a place like the IBO is very amazing! I wish I could go there more often. Thank you!”

Riley, 5th Grade

“Thank you for letting us come up and learn from you. I especially liked learning about birds and the hawks. I really enjoyed letting go of the songbirds.....I was wondering if you have caught a Golden Eagle before? I hope you catch more owls.”

Sammie, 5th Grade

“Thank you so much for showing us all those amazing birds. I was surprised that a Ruby-crowned Kinglet was so small. I remember them being a lot bigger last year. Maybe it was because I was smaller.”

Asher, 5th Grade

“Thank you for helping us learn about birds on fall trip. Some highlights of our trip were playing baseball and going to the hawk blind.....”

Sam, 5th Grade

Thank you for letting us visit the Idaho Bird Observatory. It was fun.”

Julia, 3rd Grade

---FOR SALE>>> IBO Shirts, Hats, and Sweatshirts---

The following garment designs are currently available. We have an assortment of sizes and colors in stock. We can special order and embroider the IBO logo on almost any article of clothing. Check with us for availability of shirts, hats, or for special-order items. We have other specialty items that are available such as vests or jackets. Contact us for pricing. Allow up to 6 weeks for delivery of out-of-stock items.

- T-shirts (100% cotton).................................$20.00
- Hats (Navy, Tan, Grey, Green; Cooper’s Hawk Embroidered on front) ............$20.00
- Zip-up Sweatshirts (Grey; Cooper’s Hawk and Warbler Designs)...............................$40.00

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