

Birds of Prey Program

St. John Missionary Baptist Church
Van Vleck Texas

By Neal McLain

Every year during March and April, EarthQuest brings the *Birds of Prey* program to Brazoria County in cooperation with Friends of the Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and local sponsors. During these weeks, Steve Hoddy, EarthQuest's wildlife handler, presents *Birds of Prey* shows in a variety of venues including schools, service clubs, and shopping malls. The series concludes with four shows at Migration Celebration. TMN-COT member Phil Huxford has been the driving force behind these shows, and he often serves as a sort of Master of Ceremonies.

In 2011, the Birds of Prey team presented a total of 34 programs for students in the Angleton, Bay City, Brazosport, Columbia-Brazoria, Damon, Danbury, Sweeny, and Tidehaven school districts. In addition, four programs were presented at parochial schools and churches, and four programs were presented at Migration Celebration.

This year's school show sponsors included EarthQuest, ConocoPhillips, Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, school Parent-Teacher Organizations, numerous local businesses, and individual donors.

On Saturday, April 9, 2011, the Birds of Prey team presented a program at St. John's Missionary Baptist Church in Van Vleck for students and members of the community. The event was organized by James Ashton, a ConocoPhillips employee who grew up in Van Vleck. He and his family are members of St. John's, and James has preached sermons there.



James arrives on his motorcycle while Phil assembles the bird perch

Birds of Prey Program



Have you kids seen the Birds of Prey program at school?



EarthQuest wildlife handler Steve Hoddy welcomes the audience

Birds of Prey Program



***Laredo* - Harris Hawk, male**



***Bubo* - Eurasian Eagle Owl, female**



***Igor* - Vulture, male**

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Storm - Andean Condor, female



Go home, Storm!

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After the show ended, Phil showed the kids how to use binoculars



Thank you for visiting us!



Can you see that bird?

For information about EarthQuest, see <http://earthquest.org/>



The Birds of Prey Team: James Ashton, Phil Huxford, Steve Hoddy