

## National Elk Refuge News – July 26, 2013

*Two Programs This Week Draw Large Crowds*



*Top: In addition to being Program Director for the Teton Raptor Center, Jason Jones is a master falconer and professional handler.*

*Below: A youngster in the front row doesn't miss a thing as he carefully listens to all the details during Jones's presentation.*

Two programs at the Jackson Hole & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center entertained audiences of all ages this week, with a number of animals sharing starring roles in the educational presentations.

On Tuesday, Jason Jones of the Teton Raptor Center presented an hour-long program, featuring four birds from the non-profit organization. The Teton Raptor Center takes in injured, ill, and orphaned birds of prey year-round and provides veterinary care and rehabilitation in an effort to return raptors to the wild. Tuesday's program included a Great Horned Owl, a Harris Hawk, a Saker Falcon, and a Golden Eagle, which Jones brought out one at a time. With bird in hand, Jones gave

some background on each raptor and discussed its characteristics and habits. A crowd of 180 people participated in the program, including a number of children from day camps and organizations from throughout the community.

Friday morning, National Elk Refuge Facilities Maintenance Worker Amanda Soliday gave a search and rescue demonstration with the help of her search dogs, Roscoe and Otis. Soliday, Roscoe, and Otis volunteer with the Wyoming K-9 Search and Rescue program, a nonprofit organization committed to training competent search dog teams and assisting local, state, and federal authorities in search and rescue situations. Roscoe and Otis, 8 year-old and

1 year-old golden retrievers, respectively, have multiple certifications for different types of search work.

During Friday's presentation, Soliday had children hide behind trees and bushes to demonstrate basic search skills. The problems became more complex as Soliday hid other, smaller items in the grass. Despite complications from a brain tumor, Roscoe performed well and drew smiles and applause from the audience of 76 people. His shining moment came when Soliday took a hat off one of the children, then had the owner, along with three other children, step out onto the lawn. Without missing a beat, Roscoe smelled the cap, gave a few yelps, and, after only a few sniffs, ran directly to the hat's rightful owner.

The programs this week were sponsored by the generous support of the Grand Teton Association, a nonprofit cooperating association



*Above: Roscoe tugs on a toy he receives as a reward for a successful find. Below: Roscoe receives plenty of lovin' as he takes a break from his search and rescue demonstration.*

that operates bookstores in visitor centers and contact stations throughout the Greater Yellowstone Area. The Association helps fund a wide variety of projects and programs for the National Elk Refuge, Grand Teton National Park, and the Bridger-Teton and Caribou-Targhee National Forests. Proceeds from

all sales are returned to the federal agencies in support of art, education, and research.

This week, the Grand Teton Association celebrates its membership week. To learn more about membership benefits, visit [www.grandtetonpark.org/support-us/become-a-member/](http://www.grandtetonpark.org/support-us/become-a-member/).

