

# rescuing birds of prey in China

**5,300+**

raptors that have been admitted to IFAW BRRC

**53.4%**

rate of rescued birds of prey released back to the wild

**3,700**

people reached through public education lectures and technical exchange activities in 2020

► BRRC rehabilitators checking the wing and feathers of the sedated Upland Buzzard.



## IFAW Beijing Raptor Rescue Center

IFAW’s Beijing Raptor Rescue Center (IFAW BRRC) was established to rescue, rehabilitate and return to the wild sick and injured birds of prey as well as those confiscated from illegal trade. Co-founded in 2001 by IFAW and Beijing Normal University (BNU) with endorsement from the Wildlife Protection Station of the Beijing Forestry Bureau, IFAW BRRC sits on the campus of BNU. As one of IFAW’s examples of animal welfare excellence and the only designated raptor rescue center by the Beijing Municipality, IFAW BRRC is committed to improving the standards of care for rescued birds of prey in China, demonstrating best practice in raptor rescue and rehabilitation to local peer organizations and motivating the public to engage in wildlife protection.

IFAW BRRC’s mission is to bring China’s wildlife rescue up to international standards and to promote animal welfare and wildlife conservation awareness.

## About birds of prey

Bird of prey, also known as raptor, refers to bird species that hunt and feed on rodents and other small animals. These birds are characterized by keen vision that allows them to detect and catch prey during flight with their powerful talons and beaks. As top predators in the sky, raptors play an important ecological role in maintaining the environmental health in their natural habitat. China’s Wildlife Protection Law categorizes all raptors as Class I & II protected animals, which are strictly prohibited from hunting, trafficking and trading.

## Threats to raptors

Beijing is home to and a key migratory corridor for many raptor species. However, environmental pollution, rapid urbanization and illegal trade not only destroy the natural habitat for birds of prey but impose tremendous suffering on individual animals. Patients admitted by IFAW BRRC routinely suffer from an array of injuries from malnutrition and fatigue due to inadequate prey in the wild, to pesticide ingestion and gunshot wounds. In addition to bodily injuries, many of the birds of prey coming into BRRC exhibit behavioral problems due to improper captivity as exotic pet and for falconry.



## 365

days a year rehabilitators and the raptor ambulance have been on call in the last 20 years

## 165

media reports IFAW BRRRC generated in 2020

- ◀ Rehabilitators hide behind a glove-puppet to feed the chicks to reduce the risk of imprinting.
- ▶ Rehabilitator explains and guides the trainees to practice how to do subcutaneous (SQ) fluids, using a frozen chicken.

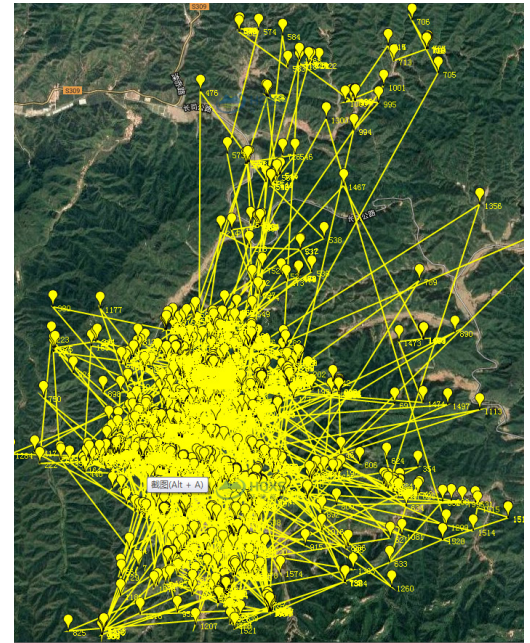
### Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release

IFAW BRRRC is a dedicated birds of prey hospital staffed by professional raptor rehabilitators and veterinarians. Rehabilitators field rescue requests on the phone, identify and confirm the bird species, and retrieve the injured birds of prey to BRRRC. In the past 20 years, our rehabilitators and their raptor ambulance were on call 7 days a week, 365 days a year, rescuing over 5,300 birds of prey from all over Beijing. Upon admission, each raptor patient is given a thorough and systematic medical check. Based on the primary diagnosis, a treatment plan is developed. These medical files are put into the global RaptorMed system, to create a permanent record, as well as allowing veterinarian experts anywhere in the world to review and provide advice if needed.

The center is equipped with state of the art medical equipment and a surgical suite. Rehabilitators have the ability to perform lab analyses and other diagnostics on site to assist in formulating a treatment plan for each raptor. Treatment measures generally include fluid infusion, drug administration, suture and bandaging, fracture repair and

other therapy. At the same time, rehabilitators also formulate individual nutritional support programs, and conduct regular physical examinations during the entire rehabilitation period, so as to routinely adjust the treatment plan to achieve the best rehabilitation effect.

In addition to physical health, the rehabilitation process also takes behavioral and psychological well-being into account. To reduce the likelihood of habituation to humans which could compromise post-release survival, rehabilitators minimize the raptors' exposure to humans while performing daily medical checks and treatments. The ward or aviaries are designed to provide an enriched captive environment. This, in combination with a daily enrichment program, allows birds to feel secure, reduces stress, promotes exercise and encourages natural behaviors. Once the patients meet physical standards for release, a behavioral assessment is performed to determine if the animal is fully restored with its flying competency and natural instinct against human approach. If all parameters are met, the recovered patient is ready to return back to the sky.



## 34 million

people reached through PSAs to promote IFAW BRRC raptor protection in 6 cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Suzhou, Guangzhou and Foshan

◀ Golden Eagle released to the wild on March 27, 2019.

▶ Data received from transmitters everyday indicates that the eagle is thriving in the wild.

### Post-release monitoring (PRM)

The ultimate success of each rescue is not determined at release. IFAW BRRC conducts a post-release monitoring (PRM) program to ensure the well-being of released animals and to inform data-driven adjustments to the rehabilitation and treatment process. At present, we are tracking an Upland Buzzard and a Golden Eagle with solar powered GPS transmitters. Data indicates that both birds are thriving in the wild.

### Scientific research

Scientific research conducted at IFAW BRRC has been adopted into conservation policy. A toxicity study by BNU students utilizing samples from raptors that have died, informed government policy to control environmental pollution. Based on data supplied by IFAW BRRC, the Beijing government established the first ever compensation scheme for poultry farmers in order to reduce retaliatory killing of birds of prey.

The media coverage of the rehabilitation at IFAW BRRC of two Goshawks and three Common Buzzards rescued from illegal wildlife trade, prompted the Vice Minister of China's Police to order a crackdown of wildlife markets.

### Raise animal welfare standards and awareness

To improve animal welfare standards in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, BRRC rehabilitators routinely share expertise and collaborate with peer organizations across China.

IFAW BRRC is also committed to provide the public – especially school students – with scientific facts and the opportunity to learn more about the biology, ecology and conservation of birds. IFAW BRRC utilizes its own academic expertise in a variety of public outreach programs: lectures, live and virtual IFAW BRRC tours, and interactive activities which are very popular among school children.

IFAW BRRC was named 'Center of Excellence in Wildlife Conservation' by the Chinese government in 2011. With the increasing support for wildlife conservation from the Chinese public, IFAW BRRC will continue to showcase the importance of animal welfare in wildlife protection.

▶ see how at [ifaw.org](http://ifaw.org)



#RescueAnimalsInNeed

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