



## FIELD TRIP REPORT

**LOCATION:** Carolina Raptor Center .

**DATE:** 10/24/2009 **TIME:** (from) 09:00 am (to) 01:00 pm

**WEATHER:** overcast and cloudy .

**LEADER(S):** Brenda Combs .

### Sightings and Notes:

Five members of the HCA took a trip to the Carolina Raptor Center on October 24, 2009. The center has a self-guided tour on a 3/4 mile nature trail. The nature trail is inside of the Latta Plantation Nature Preserve on the banks of Mountain Island Lake. Over 23 different species of raptors can be seen along the trail. We were lucky enough to be at the Peregrine Falcons when a volunteer was feeding the Falcons. She had to bring the male outside to eat because they had recently introduced a female and the male would try to take her food. The volunteer gladly answered our questions and gave us time to take pictures of the Peregrine Falcon. We wandered around the trail until 11:00 am when another volunteer was exhibiting 3 birds, Athena (a red-tailed hawk), Dudley (a great horned owl), and Sozo (a red faze screech owl.) After learning quite a lot of interesting facts about the birds on exhibit we continued our walk around the center.

The Carolina Raptor Center was an interesting way to get up close to raptors. The HCA might also be interested in the Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. The preserve has over 1,343 acres and is the source for educational programs and information on the preserve's natural communities, flora, and fauna. The preserve, Mecklenburg County's largest, forms a green peninsula extending into Mountain Island Lake and protects a natural heritage site and several endangered plants. Mountain Island Lake (MIL) is a 14-mile stretch of the Catawba River situated downstream of Lake Norman and upstream to Lake Wylie. MIL has long been known as a migratory stopover and wintering area for thousands of waterfowl. Twenty-one species of waterfowl have been documented on the lake and sites such as Duck Cove were even named for the large congregations of ducks and geese, sometimes exceeding thousands of individuals, that winter there.