



The Raptors of Iowa (Bur Oak Book)

Dean M Roosa, Jon W. Stravers, Bruce Ehresman, Rich Patterson

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This long-awaited collection of James Landenberger's paintings of Iowa birds of prey presents thirty-two full-page, full-color species, from the common turkey vulture to the red-shouldered hawk of Mississippi River woodlands to the little northern saw-whet owl. Four naturalists who have devoted their lives to conserving wilderness habitats and species have written essays to complement the paintings. Thanks to state and federal laws and a shift in public attitude, birds of prey are no longer seen as incarnations of ferocity but as creatures superbly attuned to their lives and surroundings. Although Iowa unfortunately leads the way in the amount of wildlife habitat that has been destroyed, conservation organisations and state agencies have also led the way toward successful raptor restoration projects, among them a roadside nest box program for the American kestrel, a project to restore peregrine falcons to their historic eyries, and a relocation program that should ensure a sustainable population of ospreys. The recent spectacular recovery of the bald eagle, whose nests had vanished from the state for seventy years, is particularly encouraging. There can be no substitute for seeing thousands of broad-winged hawks soaring high overhead during migration, a great horned owl perching in silhouette at dusk, or a Cooper's hawk plunging toward its prey along the roadside. But Jim Landenberger's meticulously detailed paintings go a long way toward conveying the remarkable beauty of the American kestrel and other falcons, the grace of the swallow-tailed kite, the immaculate mystery of the snowy owl and its fellow owls, the glistening head feathers of an adult bald eagle, and the piercing defiance so characteristic of our larger hawks

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