

What are Raptors?



Raptors are sometimes referred to as birds of prey. According to Merriam-Webster, this is the definition of raptor:



Rap-tor (noun)

:carnivorous medium-to large-sized bird (such as a hawk, eagle, or owl) that has a hooked beak and large sharp talons and that feeds wholly or chiefly on meat taken by hunting or on carrion

Etymology

Latin *raptor* “plunderer”

Animals such as eagles, hawks, falcons, and owls are considered raptors. These birds are known for hunting live prey, but they also eat carrion.

Raptors are divided into two categories, diurnal raptors and nocturnal raptors. Diurnal raptors are active during the daylight. This group includes hawks, eagles, and falcons. Nocturnal raptors are active at night. These raptors include different species of owls.

Raptors have adapted to their environment to help them become highly efficient predators. Despite being light in weight, they are powerful for their size. Raptors have sharp talons that help them seize and tear their prey. Their hooked beaks are also sharp and, like their talons, are used to tear apart their food. Keen eyesight allows them to detect prey from great distances. Their wings and flight muscles assist each species with their hunting technique how they hunt. Like other birds, their bones are hollow and lightweight, allowing them to fly.

Raptors are an important part of a healthy ecosystem. As predators, they help to regulate populations of small mammals, other birds, fish, and reptiles. An ecosystem becomes imbalanced if the raptor population is threatened. In the past, human use of chemicals has threatened raptors. Scientists and conservationists have worked together to help improve and protect their health.



Response:

Are raptors considered good birds of prey? What adaptations did you read about that helped you form your response?

Your response should be a paragraph that is five to six complete sentences. Be sure to restate the questions in your response. Words within the reading should be spelled correctly. You will not use additional sources for your response.