

CASE STUDY: Wildlife Center Uses Custom Signage to Educate & Engage

Egyptian Vulture

Bald and beautiful, the Egyptian Vulture plays an important environmental role as a carnivore scavenging for dead leftovers. At about six years of age this species gets a brand new look as its plumage changes from dingy brown to white with black wings and a bright yellow head. Like all vultures, the Egyptian Vulture's, head remains feather-free to prevent food from sticking to its face when it is neck deep in a rotting dinner.

(*Neophron percnopterus*)

EGYPTIAN VULTURE

EAT PREY LIVE

The Egyptian Vulture is found in arid and rocky regions across southwestern Europe, East Africa, and India. Adults live in pairs but will congregate in large flocks while roosting at night on ledges or resting on rotting carcasses. Often the Egyptian Vulture will hang out near garbage dumps or slaughterhouses to take advantage of yummy leftovers. Although this species has a dirty job of cleaning up the dead stuff in the wild, someone has to do it!

IT TOOK FOR THE JOB

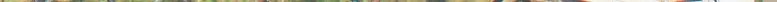
Resourceful, the Egyptian Vulture is one of the few birds observed using tools. To crack open an enormous ostrich egg, it will grasp a small rock repeatedly until it can break the egg's contents general and ever.

They certainly are one of the smartest, charismatic, and most unique looking clean-up crews around!

STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

The first species in history to become "protected" was the Egyptian Vulture. A pharaoh of ancient Egypt had become so fond of the bird that he named it the "Pharaoh's Chicken" and passed a decree preventing any harm. Unfortunately the species has recently become endangered and faces serious declines due to the poisoning of its food supply. Aging cattle are treated with an anti-inflammatory drug that is fatally ingested by vultures feeding on dead cattle remains. The drug is now banned and groups are working together to bring back this important and unique species.

LENGTH: 22 - 30 in
WEIGHT: 3.5 - 4.5 lb
WINGSPAN: 5 - 5.5 ft
HABITAT: Dry plains and rocky regions
RANGE: Throughout southwestern Europe, East Africa, and India
LIFE EXPECTANCY: Up to 37 yrs
YOUNG: Chick
GROUP: Vulture or kettle



Customer Background:

Hawk Creek Wildlife Center is one of the largest not-for-profit educational outreach and rehabilitation centers in New York State, and has been featured on PBS, National Geographic, Rachael Ray, Late Night with Conan O'Brien, and CBS's The Early Show. The Center treats roughly 500 animals per year in addition to providing over 2,500 educational programs that aim to connect people and nature. Some of the animals that come to Hawk Creek cannot be released back into the wild due to injury or for health reasons, and instead continue to reside there and serve as "wildlife ambassadors" for public education.



Serval

What's happening? Our serval can purr for up to 15 minutes at a time! Listen with your heart.

SCARCELY TO SURVIVE

The Serval's population is declining, mostly because of habitat loss and degradation, predation by farmers, and illegal trapping. In Africa, servals are often trapped, despite being listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

PRINCIPAL HABITAT

Open woodlands, savannas, and grasslands.

EAT PREY LIVE

Servals are carnivores that hunt primarily small mammals, birds, and insects. They are also known to eat fruits and vegetables.

HABITAT

Grasslands, savannas, and woodlands.

RANGE

Africa, southern Asia, and the southern Cape of Africa.

For 3 years now, Emedco has donated custom signs to help Hawk Creek identify its animals and educate visitors



Project Requirements:

Hawk Creek relies on volunteers and private funding to care for its wildlife ambassadors and to provide fun, educational events for its many visitors every year. They needed creative, interactive sign solutions that would get visitors interested, while teaching them about animals in an entertaining, imaginative way.

Signs needed to be:

- Durable enough to withstand the outdoor elements year-round
- Clear, legible, and visible at all times
- Safe to the touch for kids and grown-ups alike

How Emedco Helped:

Emedco donated a variety of customized signage for use at several of Hawk Creek's big community events. Working closely with Hawk Creek to take their "outside the box" concepts and turn them into eye-catching custom solutions, they created:

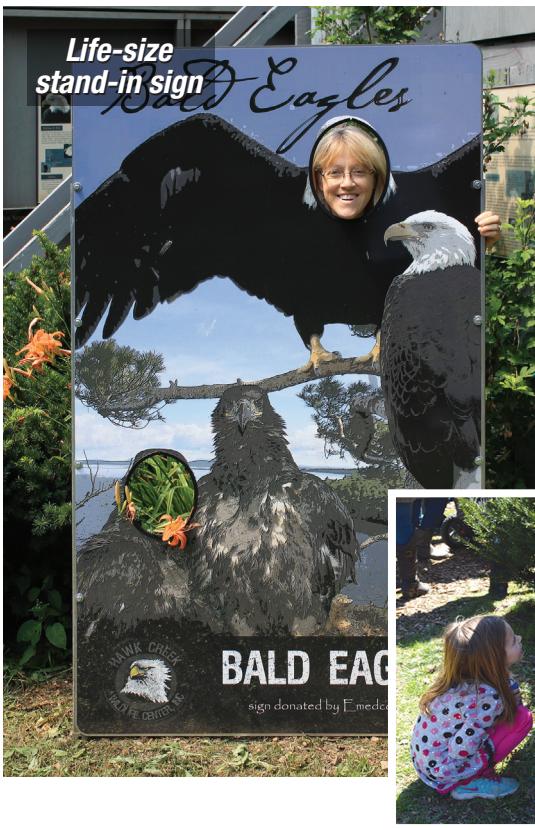
- Animal identification signage
- Q&A style flip signs
- Game signs
- Life-size stand-in signs
- A-frame road stands to advertise special events

Says David Ewert, Emedco Product Manager, "It's one small way in which we can give back to nature. Hawk Creek's mission of creating understanding and knowledge through wildlife rehabilitation, education, and conservation inspires us all to become better stewards of our natural resources."

"Hawk Creek's mission...inspires us all to become better stewards of our natural resources."

—David Ewert, Emedco Product Manager





Project Challenges:

To protect signs against fading and graffiti and fortify them for heavy outdoor use, Emedco staff constructed signs using .080" thick aluminum and then added Duroshield topcoat to shield signs from wear and tear for life (fun fact: signs we donated two years ago still look brand new!).

When it came to creating the life-size stand-in signs, Emedco staff took great care to precisely laser-cut each sign so visitors could put their head through a hole and it would appear as if it were atop the body of an animal. In order to ensure visitors wouldn't scratch or cut themselves on the aluminum edge, they attached special foam rubber protectors to the inside of each hole. This way no rough edges would harm exposed skin. Since these large signs needed to be able to stand on their own, they came up with a mounting solution of providing strong square posts with anchor bases so posts could be inserted and moved as needed.

Results & Future Opportunities:

Hawk Creek staff was thrilled to receive the sign donations. Loretta Jones, Executive Director of Hawk Creek, reported that this was the first time since the Center opened that they had species identification signs for all the animals – a vital piece of their public education program. Jones shares, “Emedco staff is professional and wonderful to work with in creating custom designs – whether it’s an informational sign or game. They produce an excellent product....we highly recommend them for any signage needs.” Emedco is excited to continue its partnership with Hawk Creek, offering custom sign solutions that will help them make all their future events a success!

“Unique and innovative signage is necessary to engage our visitors and Emedco helped bring all our ideas to life!”

*-Loretta Jones,
Executive Director, Hawk Creek Wildlife Center, Inc.*



Need an “outside the box” solution?

Give us a call today to learn about our **custom product capabilities!**
Contact our Solutions Team: **877-765-8386** or **emedco_solutions@emedco.com**