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LLPA brings new Animal Encounters with HawkWatch International *Aquarium guests can meet raptors up close*

DRAPER, Utah (October 3, 2016) - Have you ever met a raptor? Loveland Living Planet Aquarium is partnering with HawkWatch International to bring new animal encounters for our guests. On **Saturday, October 8**, HawkWatch will have raptors on display at the Aquarium from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. This furthers the Aquarium's mission to inspire people to Explore, Discover, and Learn about Earth's diverse ecosystems.

HawkWatch tracks and studies migrating raptors. Raptors are birds of prey that have three unique, specialized adaptations including exceptional vision, sharp talons, and a hooked upper bill. Worldwide, there are about 450 species of raptors. In North America, there are 54 species.

Hawks, eagles, falcons, and other raptors are often the first species to be affected by environmental change; therefore, they are a good indicator of the health of ecosystems. HawkWatch International researches population trends of raptors and works to ensure they can survive in their natural habitats.

"We are thrilled to be working with our friends at Loveland Living Planet Aquarium. The goal of introducing visitors to the importance and roles of the raptors found in our shared environment is one that both HawkWatch International and the Aquarium value. Visitors of all ages are in for a real treat; it certainly isn't every day that you get to be up close and personal with an apex predator," said Nikki Wayment, Education and Outreach Director for HawkWatch.

This event is free for Aquarium guests with admission or a membership. HawkWatch will be presenting the raptors near the entrance of Expedition: Asia. They will visit the Aquarium on the second Saturday of every month.

About Loveland Living Planet Aquarium

The Aquarium is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Aquarium's mission is to inspire people to explore, discover and learn about Earth's diverse ecosystems. Ticket sales help support the Aquarium's mission. Loveland Living Planet Aquarium is located at 12033 South Lone Peak Parkway in Draper, Utah.

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About HawkWatch International

A leader in raptor conservation for 30 years, HawkWatch International works to conserve the environment through education, long-term monitoring, and scientific research on birds of prey as indicators of ecosystem health. HawkWatch International operates 9 raptor migration research sites throughout the Western United States and Gulf Coast and engages more than 30,000 people each year through raptor education programs featuring our "raptor ambassadors." To attend a raptor program, become a volunteer, or learn more about our efforts, visit www.hawkwatch.org.

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