

## In Memoriam: *Richard L. Glinski, 1950–2025*



Rich Glinski holding a Gray Hawk trapped for banding and research purposes. Photo by Michael Stewart.

Richard L. Glinski passed away on 24 January 2025, at his home in Arivaca in southern Arizona, USA. With his passing, many believe the raptor research and conservation community lost one of its most effective advocates. He was well known for his love of Arizona raptors, for his many studies of them, and for his relentless efforts to protect and preserve their habitat.

Rich was born in Hammond, Indiana, on 5 March 1950. The Glinski family moved to Tucson, Arizona, in 1968, Rich's senior year in high school. He attended the University of Arizona, and earned a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology in 1972. Soon after graduation, Rich went to work in Alaska's remote and wild Aleutian Islands diving to collect data on a sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*) project. There he met Clayton White, and, according to Clay, despite working on charismatic sea otters, Rich mainly wanted to talk about raptors. Rich's earliest raptor projects were in graduate school with Robert Ohmart, his MS advisor at Arizona State University. During this research, Rich piloted a Cessna 182 in search of raptor nests throughout Arizona (see Ellis 1982). Rich and Robert worked together

on Common Black Hawks (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) and Gray Hawks (*Buteo plagiatus*) primarily, but also on other raptors throughout the state.

Rich had a 20-year career at the Arizona Department of Game and Fish from 1980 to 2000, starting as a game manager, and eventually becoming the research and nongame program manager. In this latter capacity, Rich initiated novel and important raptor research projects on multiple species in Arizona. Following his retirement from Arizona Game and Fish, Rich worked for 15 years as director of the Desert Outdoor Center at Lake Pleasant, Arizona. There he was instrumental in leading, teaching, and inspiring visitors and Arizona residents about the beauty and importance of wildlife, with emphasis on raptors and their ecosystems.

Rich was well traveled and lived for field work. In official and unofficial capacities, Rich assisted his peers, friends, and colleagues on countless raptor projects worldwide. As examples of this wanderlust to benefit raptors, in 1973, he and Bill Mader studied Harris's Hawks (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) in northwest Tucson, Arizona. Rich did an in-depth study of Mississippi Kites (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) in 1978

along the lower San Pedro River in Arizona (Glinski and Ohmart 1983). One of his more adventurous trips was in 1979 with David Ellis and Dwight Smith, traveling more than 29,000 km over nearly four months throughout South America conducting roadside counts of all raptors they observed (Ellis and Glinski 1980, Ellis et al. 1990). Rich assisted in trapping and radio-tagging Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) at Lake Mead, Nevada, with Bud Anderson, and along the Yukon River in Alaska with Skip Ambrose. He also assisted Bud Anderson in Peregrine Falcon surveys in the Cape Verde Islands in Africa. As part of his Arizona Game and Fish position, Rich was instrumental in Arizona studies on Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Driscoll et al. 1999) and Peregrine Falcons (Brown et al. 1992). In 2007, Rich started working with Doug Jenness on Crested Caracaras (*Caracara plancus*). In 2015, Joan Morrison joined this work and collaborated with Rich and others for a decade until his death.

Rich will long be remembered as one of the world's few experts on Gray Hawks and Zone-tailed Hawks (*Buteo albonotatus*, Bibles et al. 2020, Johnson et al. 2020). Fittingly, when Rich retired to Arivaca, he discovered Gray Hawks nesting on his property and worked with his neighbor and fellow Arizonian ornithologist Kathy Groschupf in trapping and radio-tagging one of the Gray Hawks as part of a larger study on the species.

Rich was a favored collaborator and ornithological author. He was an editor, co-editor, and co-author of several books on raptors in Arizona, including *The Raptors of Arizona* (Glinski 1998), *Southwest Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop* (Glinski et al. 1986) and *Birds of Prey in the American West* (Vezo and Glinski 2002).

Rich was more than an exceptional raptor biologist. He was an activist, and his efforts led to the conservation and permanent protection of many areas in Arizona for future generations of humans and raptors. He was an author, not only of scientific papers, government-oriented reports and manuscripts, and books, but also books of fiction that, not surprisingly, are relevant to core issues in today's political landscape. Rich's fiction book, *Satan's Crossing, When Walls Won't Work* (Glinski 2018) is about migrants heading north into the United States.

Rich was a great friend to many, many people. His numerous friends, peers, and colleagues will miss his wonderful, warm personality and the thoughtful conversations flavored with a wicked and delightful sense

of humor. For more, see Jenness (2025).—**Skip Ambrose, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Retired. Fairbanks, AK, USA.**

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Bibles, B. D., R. L. Glinski, and R. R. Johnson (2020). Gray Hawk (*Buteo plagiatu*s), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (A. F. Poole and F. B. Gill, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. doi:[10.2173/bow.gryhaw2.01](https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.gryhaw2.01).
- Brown, B. T., G. S. Mills, R. L. Glinski, and S. W. Hoffman (1992). Density of nesting Peregrine Falcons in Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona. *Southwestern Naturalist* 37:188–193.
- Driscoll, D. E., R. E. Jackman, G. W. Hunt, G. L. Beatty, J. T. Driscoll, R. L. Glinski, T. A. Gatz, and R. I. Mesta (1999). Status of nesting Bald Eagles in Arizona. *Journal of Raptor Research* 33:218–226.
- Ellis, D. H. (1982). The Peregrine Falcon in Arizona: Habitat Utilization and Management Recommendations. Institute for Raptor Studies Research Reports. Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD, USA.
- Ellis, D. H., and R. L. Glinski (1980). Some unusual records for the Peregrine and Pallid Falcons in South America. *The Condor* 82:350–351. doi:[10.2307/1367410](https://doi.org/10.2307/1367410).
- Ellis, D. H., R. L. Glinski, and D. G. Smith (1990). Raptor road surveys in South America. *Journal of Raptor Research* 24:98–106.
- Glinski, R. (Editor) (1998). *The Raptors of Arizona*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, AZ, USA.
- Glinski, R. L. (2018). *Satan's Crossing: When Walls Won't Work*. Published by the author, AZ, USA.
- Glinski, R. L., and R. D. Ohmart (1983). Breeding ecology of the Mississippi Kite in Arizona. *The Condor* 85: 200–207. doi:[10.2307/1367256](https://doi.org/10.2307/1367256).
- Glinski, R. L., B. G. Pendleton, M. B. Moss, M. N. LeFranc, Jr., B. A. Millsap, and S. W. Hoffman (Editors) (1986). *Southwest Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop, 1986*. National Wildlife Federation Scientific and Technical Series, No. 11. Institute for Wildlife Research of the National Wildlife Federation, Washington, DC, USA.
- Jenness, D. (2025). In Memorium: Richard Louis Glinski. *Arizona Birds - Journal of Arizona Field Ornithologists* 19:23–27. <https://arizonabirds.org/journal/2025/arizona-birds-richard-glinski-memorial.pdf>.
- Johnson, R. R., R. L. Glinski, and S. W. Matteson (2020). Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (A. F. Poole and F. B. Gill, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. doi:[10.2173/bow.zothaw.01](https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.zothaw.01).
- Vezo, T., and R. L. Glinski (2002). *Birds of Prey in the American West*. Rio Nuevo Publishers, Tucson, AZ, USA.

In Memoriam Editor: Joel E. (Jeep) Pagel