How will the eclipse affect animals and birds?

**Suggested activity**
Create a chart to compare animals’ activities:

- 3 to 5 days before the eclipse
- the day of the eclipse
- 3 to 5 days after the eclipse

Each observation should be for the same length of time and be done over the same time period as the eclipse will occur. Here is a map that shows when the eclipse is passing through Missouri: [https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/eclipse-maps](https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/eclipse-maps)

Take careful notes. As sunlight decreases, what do you see?

- Will birds and insects act like they do at dusk?
- Will chickens roost as the sky darkens when the moon passes in front of the sun?
- Will songbirds return to their nests?
- As sunlight returns, will they begin chirping as they do at dawn?
- Will the temperature drop?
- Will larger livestock be more “playful” than usual on a hot summer day?
- Will animals start returning to the barn as they do at night?

If you have animals or can observe animals that have GPS ear tags, it would be interesting to track and compare their movements before during and after the eclipse.

**How will the eclipse affect animals and birds?**

**Through the Eyes of a Scientist**

**Our Specialist**

**Brenda Schreck**
MU Extension livestock and 4-H youth development specialist and Lewis County program director

**Abby Rainwater**
Coordinator of the Raptor Rehabilitation Program, College of Veterinary Medicine (with Jacob, a red tail hawk)

The Raptor Rehabilitation Project ([http://raptorrehab.cvm.missouri.edu](http://raptorrehab.cvm.missouri.edu)) helps injured raptors recover and return to the wild and cares for resident birds. Volunteers give presentations throughout central Missouri to teach people about the ecological and cultural importance of raptors. Raptors are birds of prey like eagles, hawks, falcons and owls.

The project is caring for about 20 birds now. About eight of those birds are owls, a nocturnal bird that is active at night and sleeps during the day.

I believe our nocturnal birds will be more alert, vocal and active during the time leading up to and during the eclipse.

**I expect our diurnal birds will begin their “nighttime routine” — moving towards their nighttime roosts and being quieter.**

Photo by Kyle Spradley

**For More Information:**
[missouri.edu/eclipse](http://missouri.edu/eclipse)