Lara Butt, CPBT-KA, Senior Department Supervisor, Raptor Care and Programs, Mountsberg Raptor Centre, Conservation Halton

Employed by Conservation Halton since February 2000, Lara joined the education team at the Mountsberg and Crawford Lake Conservation Areas, as an Environmental educator in outdoor recreation, natural history, and Indigenous studies.

Lara quickly rose to embrace her growing interest in birds of prey, and through diligence and a serious commitment to raptor education, she is now the Senior Department Supervisor of Raptor Care and Programs, with the Mountsberg Raptor Centre, and Animal Programs Team. Lara has been working with, caring for, and training raptors for much of her career and is certified as a Professional Bird Trainer with the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE).

The Mountsberg Raptor Centre is home to 32 non-releasable raptors. As the centre's supervisor, Lara is responsible for developing high quality, curriculum based educational programming and training, and mentoring staff, while delivering in park, offsite, virtual, and public programs, alongside the raptor centre's team of eight. She has had tremendous success in her years of training raptors using cooperative care which involves training an animal to not only tolerate handling and husbandry procedures, but to be an active, willing participant in these experiences.

Lara's passion towards raising interest, awareness, and protection of Ontario's 27 native raptor species as well as a sharing a global focus on many raptor species found around the world, goes beyond just her job. She believes strongly that our words, and our actions, surrounding our precious environment, and a commitment to both, is a necessary part of doing our best to inspire others and ensure a healthier future for the natural world. Her work life plays a large part in who she is, how she is known, and how she conducts herself.

"It is where I thrive, find true joy, and have built a lifetime of friendships and incredible connections with our staff, our visitors, and of course our birds!"