

James D. Elliott, Jr. – Founder and Executive Director of the Avian Conservation Center

Born and raised in the Lowcountry, Jim Elliott began his professional life as a commercial real estate broker; but his passion for birds and wildlife soon directed him down a different path. As a life-long student of birds, Elliott became aware of the critical need for access to professional medical care for injured birds of prey in South Carolina. These apex predators serve as unparalleled indicators of the overall health of our ecosystem and by extension, human health. In 1991, Elliott launched the nonprofit Charleston Raptor Center, which has now evolved into the multi-faceted Avian Conservation Center.

The impact of Elliott's vision cannot be easily overstated. The Avian Conservation Center and its most prominent division, the Center for Birds of Prey, have evolved into a preeminent medical, scientific, and educational institution that has treated more than 8,000 birds, published groundbreaking research, and engaged hundreds of thousands of individuals. Jim has worked with individuals and organizations in the Lowcountry, across the US and abroad, to recognize the status of wild birds as relevant to our lives.

Jim's many recognitions and awards include a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southeastern Wildlife Exhibition and the Order of the Palmetto, awarded by the Governor of South Carolina.

Father of two, with four grandchildren, Jim is a lifelong mariner, with a Captain's license from the U.S. Coast Guard. When not working to advance avian science and the protection of wild bird populations, Jim can be found with Trip, his Springer Spaniel, often enjoying the breathtaking beauty of coastal South Carolina on his boat *Wing*.