

## Endangered Raptors Enrapture Artist – Victorious Inaugural Flag Expedition

*Renowned Canadian artist returns from the jungles of Panama to share his experience online*

**Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (March 6, 2006)**— David Kitler is back on familiar terra firma, yet his spirit is still soaring. Having recently returned from a month away into the jungles of Panama where he and the endangered Harpy Eagle shared the same forest canopy, Kitler had this to say about his exhilarating and incredible experience, made possible through a US\$5,000 grant from the Worldwide Nature Artists' Group (WNAG) Flag Expeditions Program.

"We saw it all and we were blown away. We had deliberately kept our expectations low. To sit there and observe a mother and her chick was something we had only dreamed about. To have had this opportunity from day one and then spend nine days under the nest was the highlight of our amazing experience."

David Kitler's journey began on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, when he and his wife Ly left Calgary, Canada and headed into unknown territory to observe and portray the endangered Harpy Eagle. What awaited them was something beyond their wildest expectations. On December 7, accompanied by their guide Guido Berguido, the Kitlers set out into Panama's Darién jungle to a native village called Llano Bonito (meaning beautiful plain.) What was extraordinary about this particular village was that within a half-hour's walk there was the ideal Harpy Eagle nesting site. Secretive by nature, the few Harpy Eagle pairs left in the wild also range over a wide territory, which make them extremely hard to find. The Kitlers had not anticipated that their good fortune would come so early into the journey.

Perched on a hillside, sitting eye-level looking into the nest, Kitler captured the life and habits of the Harpy mother and her eaglet. "It was the next best thing to sitting in the nest," an enthusiastic Kitler declares, as he talks about positioning his hammock adjacent to the nest for yet another night of sleeping under the stars. "To be in nature is to be exposed to all its natural beauty, and away from overly manmade environments"

"We are excited and proud to have enabled David to undertake this important expedition, the first under our Flag Expeditions Program, to draw attention to this highly threatened raptor and its fragile habitat. This was the most comprehensive artistic study ever undertaken of the species in the wild. Our intention is to enable field trips off the beaten path, such as this one, in order to create awareness of worthy environmental issues, and David has successfully done just that," concludes WNAG president and founder Jeffrey Whiting.

Kitler's experience is captured in hundreds of photographs and a special journal containing nearly 150 pages of sketches, writings, paintings and collages. A special section on the WNAG Web site has been dedicated to showcase this incredible body of work produced almost entirely in-situ, in the remote rainforests of Panama ([www.natureartists.com/flagexpeditions](http://www.natureartists.com/flagexpeditions)).

**About the WNAG Flag Program:** The objective of the program is to make possible the field study and artistic rendering of endangered species or habitats deserving of greater public attention with strong emphasis on the study of unique and threatened habitats and rare or endangered species in remote parts of the world.

### About the Worldwide Nature Artists Group (WNAG)

The Worldwide Nature Artists Group is an exclusive, international, non-profit society of world-class nature artists dedicated to the celebration and preservation of the natural world. With a total membership of nearly 500 members, the WNAG is internationally recognized as one of the largest and most prestigious organizations in the nature art community. The Group's mission is to build a community of world-class

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artists who share a common interest in nature art and nature conservancy. Invited members derive exclusive opportunities to showcase and sell their artwork to a global audience, while promoting the sustainability and conservation of the natural world through art, education and special initiatives. Founded in 1997 by Jeffrey Whiting—renowned Canadian artist, author and biologist—the Group’s membership reads like a “Who’s Who” of nature art, and includes John Banovich, Robert Bateman, Glen Loates, Rosetta, Gamini Ratnavira and David Shepherd, to name a few. For more information, please visit [www.natureartists.com](http://www.natureartists.com).

For more information on the Worldwide Nature Artists’ Group (WNAG) please visit: [www.natureartists.com](http://www.natureartists.com).

To arrange an interview with Artist David Kitler, or to sponsor an upcoming Flag Expedition, please coordinate with the media contact below.

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