

Biography
Dr. Charles R. Preston, PhD
The Willis McDonald IV Senior Curator of Natural Science
of the Draper Natural History Museum

Dr. Charles R. Preston is a wildlife ecologist who explores the influence of climate, landscape characteristics, and human attitudes and activities on wildlife. He is widely recognized as a leading authority on wildlife and human-wildlife relationships in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. He is a strong advocate for the role of natural science museums as forums for understanding human-wildlife conflicts and fostering sustainable conservation strategies.

Preston is the first Willis McDonald IV Senior Curator of Natural Science, and Founding Curator-in-Charge of the Draper Natural History Museum and Draper Museum Raptor Experience at the world-renowned Buffalo Bill Center of the West, in Cody, Wyoming. He has received national and international acclaim for his “visionary” leadership of the Draper’s design and development (1998 – 2002), and the Draper has become a model for a new genre of highly immersive natural science museums focused on communicating the process and product of science and the relationships binding people and nature. Preston established and continues to oversee the Draper’s popular lecture series, live raptor education program, and innovative suite of public programming.

Prior to his current appointment, Preston was Curator of Ornithology and Chairman of the Department of Zoology at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Before that he was a tenured Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He holds or has held adjunct faculty appointments in the Haub School for Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Wyoming, Biology and Environmental Science at the University of Colorado (Boulder and Denver campuses), Environmental Policy and Management at the University of Denver, and Biological Sciences at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Preston is a dynamic leader and public speaker and a highly sought-after media resource. He sits on numerous national and regional boards and advisory committees and promotes understanding of the dynamics of coupled human and natural systems through his writing, teaching, public appearances, and museum exhibits and programs. He has authored/edited seven books and more than seventy scholarly and popular articles dealing with wildlife behavior and ecology, human dimensions of wildlife management, and the role of working scientists as public educators and interpreters.