

Kara grew up in Colorado and graduated with a degree in Zoology from Colorado State University. She moved to Ithaca, New York in 1987 and worked as a Research Assistant at Cornell University for several years before landing a dream job as a Naturalist and Environmental Educator for New York State Parks. For twelve years she led hikes and taught visitors about the rich diversity of the Eastern woods.

For five years, Kara volunteered at the Cornell Hawk Barn where she learned about the behavior and individual personalities of many species of raptors. In 1997 Kara was encouraged to adopt and train, Sunshine, an un-releasable Red-tailed Hawk, for her nature programs at New York State Parks. In 1999 her husband got a job as a Professor at Cal-Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA and Kara agreed to move, as long as Sunshine could come with them. For 22 years, Kara and Sunshine have presented hundreds of programs focusing on the beauty, behavior and value of these beautiful birds.

Kara's true love has always been Environmental Education and Writing to create a sense of wonder and respect for the natural world. In 2010, she wrote, directed and produced a film called "Sunshine's Surprise" which was selected for the San Luis International Film Festival. In 2011 she wrote "Sunshine's Mothering Miracle" about Sunshine raising Red-shouldered Hawks. And in 2017 she adapted her film into a Children's book, "Hawk Mother" which received numerous awards including "Best Nonfiction Book of 2018" from NY Bank Street College. *Publishers Weekly* calls it, "A tender story of cross-species relationships—most movingly, perhaps, the one between Sunshine and the author. *Kid's Bookshelf* says, "A great story about overcoming challenges and adjusting to new situations".

Kara and Sunshine have been friends for over 20 years and they continue to enrich each other's lives!