



WILD TIMES

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Winter 2006

The Difference Between Ordinary & Extraordinary Is Just That Little Extra

by Reva Lux, Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator/ SWRA Helpline Coordinator



The SWRA Wildlife HELPLINE answered 1,468 calls in 2005!

A lot of these calls were advice calls on how to coexist with wildlife instead of trapping and relocating them. We took many calls that we think of as mitigation calls: informing the public about federal and state laws

protecting wildlife. We had a memorable experience with the rescue of a Bald Eagle and we dealt with the tragic distemper epidemic in raccoons.

The most rewarding calls I received were ones where I felt I made an impact on the caller's thinking. Several callers wanted to know "how to get that stinky skunk out of my yard." They didn't even want them wandering through. I explained that skunks excel at rodent control and love finding underground yellow jacket nests. I also explained that skunks have docile personalities and as long as they aren't threatened, they rarely spray. As a result of these conversations, many of the callers decided that having skunks on their property isn't such a bad thing after all!

It's a challenge getting folks to think beyond themselves, especially when it concerns their homes. When people complain about a swallow building a nest above a porch light, I say, "I would feel honored to have them nesting anywhere on my house, but they haven't chosen mine yet." I explain about the wonderful job swallows do eating pesky insects like mosquitos! I also explain about dwindling habitat and the difficulty many birds experience finding nesting sites. Allowing swifts to nest in one's chimney is a way of helping this insect eater raise its family.

Suddenly, the home owner takes a personal interest in the welfare of the bird!

I've had community members come by and look at the birds in rehab care. It's such a good sharing and learning experience and creates a bond with animals like nothing else.



So many good things have happened since SWRA started the Wildlife HELPLINE; it's clear that we're providing a much-needed service to our community. I've had the pleasure of getting to know our caring HELPLINE volunteers: **Diana Bowen, Joni Brewer, Stephanie Brewer, Judy Brunkal, Tari Edmonds, Susie Hardin, Lisa Martenmaas, Jeanie Sloan, and Melinda Brooks.** Their integrity and dedication have touched me deeply and are two of the reasons I came out of "rehabilitator retirement." I'm glad I did!

People...Purpose...and...Potlucks!

Volunteers are the heart, soul, and **elbow grease** of small non-profit organizations like SWRA. Our volunteers work long hours— often in difficult situations (standing in icy pond water for 45 minutes until an injured duck floats within reach of the net). *And, as someone once said, "We cannot pay our volunteers— not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless!"* Please join us on Thursday, February 2, at 6 PM at the Bethany Baptist Church for a potluck dinner as we celebrate our wonderful volunteers.

Please bring one of the following: appetizer, salad, main dish, or dessert. SWRA will supply drinks, plates, napkins, and cutlery.

To find the church, turn east onto Hilfiker Street off south Commercial Street (behind the Albertson's Store). Then turn right into the church parking lot. *We look forward to seeing you!*



"So with a boundless heart should one cherish all living things."
—The Buddha

How will we ever thank patron **David Burkhart** for his boundless generosity? David is a longtime advocate for wildlife, and we are endlessly grateful for his faithful support. We are also grateful to **Sarah Hecht, Pat Anderson, and Joan Nelson** for their generous donations.

We appreciate **Ash Creek Animal Clinic and Oak Hills Veterinary Clinic** for their ongoing support of our efforts to help wildlife in need.

~Wanted~

Looking for property to set up long-term care facility for exotic parrot rescue. Need space away from town: small acreage with outbuildings or barn. Call **Tari Edmonds**, Wildlife Rehabilitator, at 503-362-1982. Thanks!

Annual Meeting Scheduled

SWRA's annual meeting will be held at 6 PM on Thursday, March 2, 2006 at the Bethany Baptist Church. We will review our accomplishments of the past year and set goals for the new fiscal year (March 1 2006 to February 28, 2007). We will also elect officers. Our current board members have stated that they are willing to remain in their positions another year. They are: **Maggie Meikle**, President; **Reva Lux**, Vice President, and **Joni Brewer**, Secretary/Treasurer. However, if YOU are interested in one of those positions, please contact Joni Brewer at 503-585-5577.

To find the church, turn east onto Hilfiker Street off south Commercial Street (behind the Albertson's Store). Then turn right into the church parking lot. We hope you'll attend this important meeting!

Keep This Information Handy!!

If you find an animal needing assistance, please contact the WILDLIFE HELPLINE, 503-856-8242. HELPLINE volunteers will triage your call and refer you to the appropriate rehabilitator if the situation requires in-care treatment. Many situations can be resolved through triage.



Editor's Desk

No, we didn't lose your address. The summer and fall newsletters took a vacation! I'm sure our wildlife rehabilitators wish they'd been able to do the same. It was—as usual—a very busy baby bird and animal season. I'd like to update you on our activities since the publication of last spring's newsletter. Like all Americans, we were shocked and appalled at the damage wreaked by Hurricane Katrina. Many Gulf Coast wildlife sanctuaries and rehab centers suffered total devastation. SWRA donated \$250 to the Wildlife Care and Rescue Center in Biloxi, Mississippi. We also supported a group of Mill City citizens who traveled to Louisiana to help with pet rescue.

Here in the Willamette Valley, we worked with raccoon rehabilitator **Melanie Smith**, local citizens, and veterinarians to rescue raccoons sickened by canine distemper. Distemper is fatal; left in the wild, these animals die a slow, agonizing death from the disease. We are very grateful to the **Salem Veterinary Emergency Clinic** for undertaking the task of euthanizing over 200 raccoons. SWRA donated \$300 to the clinic to help with expenses.

It has come to our attention that Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center may have used our membership mailing list (without our knowledge) to send out letters announcing their opening. *Local wildlife needs all the advocates it can get, so we welcome the center to Salem's wildlife care community.* However, we want to reassure you that, as stated on the mailer page of each and every *Wild Times* newsletter, **we DO NOT share or sell our membership list.** SWRA and Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center are separate non-profit entities. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused you. We all get too much unsolicited mail. Here at SWRA, we are immensely appreciative of your continued support and will carry on with our mission of caring for local wildlife in need.

You may have seen the *Statesman Journal* article about the shooting of federally protected Cedar Waxwings at Willamette Winery. We thank all the SWRA members who contacted the winery **to express their outrage** over this unnecessary destruction of one of our loveliest native birds. Do contact our HELPLINE **whenever** you see or hear about crimes against wildlife.



Wildlife Rehab News

"All the arguments to prove man's superiority cannot shatter this hard fact: in suffering, the animals are our equals." –Peter Singer

There isn't a day of the year when raptor rehabilitator **Karen Costa** *doesn't* have animals in care. She's had an extremely busy year, and we're grateful to her for taking time to share these rehab progress notes.

Early last summer, this very young Red-tailed Hawk fell from his nest, located 80 to 90 feet above ground in the Brush College area of West Salem. He was approximately two and a half weeks old and sustained minor eye injuries and some scrapes on his



head. The tree was impossible to climb—even by a professional—so he had to be raised until fledging. Fortunately, Karen had four (!) adult Red-tails in rehab at the time, so when he was old enough to leave his basket and towel nest, he had plenty of opportunity for socialization and learning from his adopted aunts and uncles. In August, he was released back into the Salem West Hills. These photographs were taken two weeks apart.



This Osprey has a lady in Jefferson to thank for his rescue. She saw him fall from a power pole near her property and discovered a charred fish under the pole. The osprey was unable to fly. An exam showed no fractures or injuries other than some bruising. However, electrocution was a real possibility and typically, electrocution burns in raptors surface about five days after injury. Karen spent a very anxious week handfeeding fish (Osprey won't eat on their own in captivity) and checking him for burns. Amazingly, none developed; the electrical current must have hit only the fish he was carrying. At about this time, he started showing increasing strength: flapping his wings and attempting short flights. In another two weeks, he was ready to release. It was a wonderful sight to see this big, beautiful bird fly up and away toward the river.



This Green Heron youngster was found frightened and running down a residential street in Salem, not far from Mill Creek. Its left wing tip was fractured. While the wing was healing, the heron spent time learning to find insects in a tray of dirt and leaves. Three weeks later, the wing was ready for flight, but the bird needed practice flying so its muscles would strengthen. The bird also needed to become proficient at catching small fish in a pool. Herons' instincts are amazing; they figure out what to do—on their own—in a day or two and quickly become experts, eating 20-30 tiny fish a day.

This baby was found lying on the ground, unresponsive. It is not known what happened to him. He was very thin and weak and was given emergency treatment for shock. The next day he was strong enough for a trip to the veterinary clinic for x-rays, which showed a fractured wing. Screech Owls are tough birds, and the next day he was standing up and eating on his own! The wing healed nicely, and then it was time to let him practice hunting for live mice. Since he was injured so soon after leaving the nest, he probably missed out on hunting lessons from his parents. However, in three more weeks, he was ready to go!



This juvenile Barn Owl was too young to have left the nest, so he must have fallen out and walked near the road where he was discovered. He was well fed and had no obvious injuries but was not moving around or reacting to any stimulus. After a period of observation, it became apparent that he was not able to see, despite no injuries to the eyes. Blindness can occur from swelling due to a head injury, and the vision can return, as it did for this bird. After a week in care, he began showing reactions to light and movement; in another six days, his vision was normal. Now he had the job of growing up, growing feathers, learning to fly, and hunt.



Salem Wildlife Rehabilitation Association

P.O. Box 13868

Salem, OR 97309



Our Mission

To rehabilitate injured, orphaned, and diseased wildlife

To train others in rehabilitation skills

To educate the public on the importance of protection of wildlife

To promote conservation of all wildlife and wildlife habitat

Directory

Wildlife Helpline: 503-856-8242

SWRA Website: www.salemwildlife.org

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SWRA is a member of your community. Shouldn't you be a member of SWRA?

Membership levels are: \$15 for individuals, \$20 for families, \$50 for corporate sponsors, and \$35 for rehabilitator apprenticeships. Members receive a subscription to *Wild Times* newsletter. SWRA is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization; dues and contributions are tax deductible. Join today!

We DO NOT sell or share our mailing list!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I am interested in volunteer opportunities. Please call me! Yes _____ No _____

On behalf of the wildlife whose care your membership will support, we thank you.