



Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release

Feathers and Fur

Helping Keep Wildlife Wild

January
2009

WRR to Present Annual Meeting Jan. 24; Annual Training March 21

Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release will present the 2008 Annual "Critter Report" at its **annual meeting** Saturday, Jan. 24.

The report details all the birds and animals we've cared for in 2008. Each of the teams will give updates as well.

The meeting will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Madeline Helling Library Community Room in Nevada City.

We will also hold our annual Election of Officers (see article on page 5, this newsletter). There will be a special video wrap up of the year as well as drawings for fun prizes.

Come meet old friends and greet new ones.

WRR will hold its **annual training** Saturday, March 21 at the Grass Valley Methodist Church. Time will be announced later.

Our 2009 Annual Training promises will be an exciting wildlife day for both experienced rehabbers, WRR

members, and potential volunteers. This all-day affair will begin with a continental breakfast, and will include lunch.

Speakers include Dr. Brooks Bloomfield, noted exotic animal veterinarian from the Doctor's Office for Pets in Truckee. Dr. Bloomfield works specifically with raptors and has contributed greatly to the successful release rate of our birds of prey.

We will also have a presentation by the Hungry Owl Project of Marin County. The mission of these dedicated volunteers is the conservation of owls as natural predators. Learn what you can do to preserve these magnificent hunters.

WRR Teams will make presentations on songbirds, raptors, fawns, small mammals, and bats.

Come spend a day "walking on the wild side." Visit the WRR website (www.cawildlife911.org) in late February for details and to register.

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Shivering in the snow at Nevada City's Victorian Christmas are, from left, Ellyn Cook, Janet Goodban, Laurel Gunderson, Kari Freidig, Janey Powers, Janet Helminiak and Laura Vanderpool. For more on the event, see page 3.

Common Poisons Can Kill Raptors

Dead Cooper's Hawks have been showing up in backyards in Berkeley, CA. Testing showed that the hawks' liver tissue tested positive for brodifacoum, a potent anticoagulant rodenticide.

Brodifacoum is the lethal ingredient in D-Con and Havoc rodent bait. The rodents who consume these baits don't die immediately; they may continue to feed on the poisoned bait for several days as the bait builds up to toxic levels.

In the meantime, the rodents may wander outside, where they are vulnerable to wild predators and domestic pets.

The American Bird Conservancy's database of pesticide poisoning

incidents contains hundreds of records of birds of prey – red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks, Great Horned Owls, screech owls, Golden Eagles – killed by brodifacoum. Even mountain lions have fallen victim.



Kim Franza, raptor team co-leader, holds an injured Red-shouldered Hawk

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed restricting the use of brodifacoum. In the meantime, the best defense against rodent problems is sanitation and exclusion plus removing food sources and sealing openings in structures.

At WRR's Annual Training on March 21 the bay area rehabilitation group, Wild Care,

will be sending representatives from its Hungry Owl Project to speak about the use of owls as natural predators. Mark your calendars and attend this important presentation.



Shikoba Needs Your Help

One of the most important challenges facing the world today is the preservation and protection of our natural resources. The environmental decisions made today will have a monumental impact on wildlife on a global scale and affect the overall quality of life for mankind. We must strive to restore and maintain the natural balance in nature and minimize the rate at which species of animals, plants and other natural resources are declining. We believe that education is the key to these efforts.

It is with this perspective that WRR has developed our *Wildlife Education Program*. This is our effort to help promote wildlife conservation in schools and the community. We have enlisted several education birds, our avian ambassadors, to assist us in our efforts.

One of these birds is a Red-tailed Hawk that was senselessly shot by an uncaring person. Her injuries were too severe for her to be released back into the wild. This beautiful female hawk was named Shikoba, (Native American word for feather) and over the years she has spent much of her time visiting schools and community groups, teaching them about her kind, and the importance of protecting and preserving our wildlife.

Recently Shikoba contracted a respiratory ailment which may threaten her life. The treatment for this condition is costly. WRR is calling on the generosity of the community to help Shikoba by donating funds for her medical care. With your help, Shikoba will be able to return to her important work in the classrooms and the community. If you can help, please send your contribution to the address below. Every donation, no matter how small, will help. THANK YOU!

Shikoba
c/o Wildlife Rehab & Release
PO Box 868
Penn Valley, CA 95946

Membership Committee Reports Holiday Promotion Brings in New Members

By Bev Myers

It has been a busy end of year. Not only have several previous members and rehabbers renewed their membership for 2009, we have several new members. Our Holiday promotion has been very successful. We would like to thank everyone for their support of Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release, especially new members for 2009:

- Renee Bartels
- Sherry Bartolucci
- JoAnn Basile
- Cathleen Borncamp
- Pamela & Raymond Bryars
- David Jepsen
- Ginny & Jim Knott
- Gayle Moore
- Elan Rafferty

Be sure to check out this section in the next newsletter to see who is new!

Snow Falls on WRR's Victorian Christmas Booth

Wildlife Rehab and Release participated in its first Nevada City Victorian Christmas on Sunday, Dec. 14. Not only was it our first venture into a craft fair type event but it was also the date of the first big snowfall for our area.

At 1:00 p.m. we unloaded at our designated spot in front of Broad Street Books. The snow was lightly falling creating a most picturesque scene. By the time we completed our set-up, the picturesque light snowfall had turned into a real winter storm. It was amazing to see so many people out strolling the streets enjoying the snow; and judging by their high spirits, enjoying the feeling of Christmas that only a Victorian small town in a snow storm can bring.

Many well-wishers stopped by our booth, especially when our educational ambassadors, Lancelot the Brahma Rooster and Oliver the Western Screech Owl, were present. While Oliver wisely opted to stay in the relative safety of the booth interior, Lance, outfitted in a dashing red and white striped knit hat with



Braving the elements, from left, are Janet Helminiak, Ellyn Cook, Laura Vanderpool



matching scarf, took to the street in front of the booth, safely tucked in the warmth of his handler's (Janey) wool shawl.

"If only we had charged \$1 for each picture taken of Lance and Oliver," said Ellyn Cook, "we could have made \$100!"

As the afternoon passed, so did the delighted feeling of working a snow booth. The wind, which had been relatively quiet,

began to pick up and the snow began to swirl into the interior of the booth.

Thankfully Janet Helminiak had donated the use of her new high-tech pop-up canopy, which came complete with sides. About 4:00 p.m., the sides began to billow in and out from the steadily rising wind.

The intrepid WRR booth folks decided that it was time to fold their tent and steal away.

In an amazingly short period of



Lance shows off his holiday duds.

time, merchandise was boxed up, tables were disassembled, canopy was unpopped, and everything moved back into the transport vehicles. While everyone agreed it was an adventure to remember, everyone also agreed that snow and craft events are not the best of mixes!

Thanks go to all the December 14th Victorian Christmas adventurers: Ellyn Cook, Connie Dorland, Janet Goodban, Laurel Gunderson, Kari Freidig, Janet Helminiak, Laura Vanderpool, Janey Powers, Lance and Oliver. A special thanks goes to our booth and merchandise wranglers, Keith Cook and John Powers.

Case Study: Female Great Horned Owl

November, 2008

A Sutter County Animal Control Officer found this female Great Horned Owl late one night in the middle of the road near the town of Sutter. She showed signs of head trauma and had two large deep gashes in her lower abdomen. It was assumed a car had hit her.

After spending the night in the Sutter County Shelter, she was picked up by rehabilitators from Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release and taken to a local veterinarian for assessment. The local vet thought her injuries were too grievous to repair. This bird was so beautiful and strong that the rehabbers in charge of her care decided to get a second opinion.

Dr. Brooks Bloomfield in Truckee examined the bird and thought he could do something for her, even though the surgery presented a huge challenge. Her abdominal wounds were thoroughly cleaned. Dr. Bloomfield stretched the skin over the gaping holes and stitched them closed. A tear in the left shoulder was stitched.

Her surgery was successful. She is currently recuperating from the sur-



gery in a large, quiet outdoor facility built especially for raptors. She is also being treated for parasites.

Her prognosis is good and we hope to return her to the wild in time for the Great Horned Owl pairing/breeding season that occurs in the winter.

Laurel Gunderson reports that she is probably the largest, strongest, and grumpiest owl we have ever treated.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Memberships in Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release are due on a calendar basis. All memberships must be renewed in January of every year, regardless of when you first joined. However, if you are a recent *new* member who joined in October, November, or December of 2008, then your membership will carry over for 2009. Many members renewed their membership for 2009 in December 2008. (Thank you for "taking care of business" in such a timely manner.) If you pay your 2009 dues before January 18, 2009, your 2009 membership card will be ready for you to pick up at the annual meeting on January 24 (see article, pg. 1, this issue).

WRR WEBSITE: A VALUABLE INFORMATION SOURCE

Our WRR website is an attractive, professional site that contains information on WRR (who we are, what we do, how to join, etc.). It is a valuable wildlife information source as well. A reader can learn about wildlife emergencies, about different species of wildlife (Do you know how to handle a raccoon? How to care for a bird that hit your window? etc.) and more – all available at www.cawildlife911.org. And, WRR volunteers can see themselves in action; just go to the website and click on "Volunteers." It's the best way to find out about upcoming events and read the latest WRR newspaper articles. Visit it often as it is constantly updated.

Skunk Mythbusters

The skunk has learned to thrive among people. Because of the skunk's ability to spray, people are more cautious of them and rarely harass them. Here are some interesting facts and myths about them.

Skunks will spray you without warning. *Fact or myth?*

Myth – skunks rarely spray, but when they do, it is usually because they have been cornered or surprised. If you do corner a skunk, he or she will threaten you first and give you warning signs to back off. He/she will stamp his/her feet, puff up his/her tail, and turn around to aim before releasing the "smell missile." Dogs often don't know how to read a skunk's body language and are prime targets.

Tomato juice is the best solution to use to neutralize skunk odor. *Fact or myth?*

Myth – tomato juice only masks the odor temporarily. Better products are on sale or you can make your own. If your pet has been sprayed, bathe him in a freshly-made mixture of 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide, ¼ cup of baking soda, and a teaspoon of liquid detergent. After five minutes, rinse him with water. Repeat if necessary. For clothing and surfaces, chlorine bleach solution will neutralize the odor.

Skunks have no predators. *Fact or myth?*

Myth – skunks don't have a lot of predators, but Great-horned Owls don't have a good sense of smell and find them very satisfying.

Trapping and relocating a nuisance skunk will solve the problem humanely. *Fact or myth?*

Myth – relocating any wild animal is illegal because it spreads diseases to other populations, shifts the problem to someone else, and usually causes the death of the animal.



Actual skunk paw print size:
Front-1 3/4" Tall x 1 3/4",
Hind-2 5/8" Tall x 1 1/2"

2009 Slate of Officers to be Presented at Annual Meeting

Wildlife Rehabilitation's annual election of officers will take place on January 24 as part of the 2009 annual meeting.

The meeting will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Madeline Helling Library Community Room in Nevada City (see accompanying article, pg. 1).

The slate of officers is as follows:

President: Janey Powers

A wildlife rehabilitator specializing in the care of injured adult songbirds. Janey serves as a Songbird Team Leader and educator/mentor to new songbird volunteers. She has been with WRR since 2002 and has served as President for two years. She is the newsletter editor for our local Audubon Society and serves as a Director for the Nevada County Resource Conservation District. In her past life, she was Vice President of Marketing for a Bay Area financial institution. She obtained a Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology with graduate studies in Guidance and Counseling.

Vice President: Kari Freidig

Kari is a wildlife rehabilitator specializing in raptors (birds of prey) and mammals. Kari is a member of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators' Association, the California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators and the California Hawking Club. She is a Commissioner on the Placer County Fish and Game Commission and holds a Master's Degree in Education specializing in science and mathematics.

Secretary: Laura Vanderpool

Laura is a wildlife rehabilitator specializing in the care of small mammals. She is also active on the fund raising committee. Laura's career has been in the IT industry for the last 25+ years (mainly in database management and networking) but

her passion has always been with helping animals of all kinds. She obtained a B.S. degree from U.C. Davis in Psychology specializing in Animal Behavior, is a certified dog trainer, and received Vet Tech training at De Anza College.

Treasurer: Bev Myers

Bev Myers has worked as a book-keeper/accountant for over 35 years, owning her own practice for about 25 years. She has an extensive background working with non-profit organizations. Her speciality at Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release is raptors.

Director-at-Large: Ellyn Cook

Ellyn has been with WRR since 2004, first as a member of the Raptor Team and later elected to the Board in 2005. She has served on several committees as well as helping to coordinate events such as the annual training and community benefits.

Director-at-Large:

Laurel Gunderson

Laurel began her volunteer work with Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release in 2007 and is a member of the Raptor Team. Laurel holds a B.S. degree in Zoology (Entomology) from San Jose State University and a second B.S. degree from U.C. Davis in Landscape Architecture. Laurel shares her passion for all wildlife, especially raptors and ravens, with her husband Eric.

Director-at-Large: Donna Betz

Donna started working with the WRR Raptor Team in 2005 and has been a Tuesday morning volunteer ever since. Donna is a medical doctor and had an internist practice in Walnut Creek until her retirement in 1991. She finds her scientific background very useful in animal rehabilitation. She is interested in athletics, particularly tennis, and loves to travel and enjoy the outdoor life. Donna finds working with raptors and WRR to be exciting and challenging.

Thank You!

To **Dr. Minard** at the **Yuba Sutter Vet clinic** for taking his free time to examine and give advice on injured birds and mammals at no cost and to **Country Vet Clinic** for giving a discount on examination and closing of a wound on a Jackrabbit that came from the Dobbins fire

To **Carlos**, one of the owners of **The Northridge Restaurant**, who opened his restaurant for us for our "Dine Out for Wildlife" fundraiser. He remembers everyone who worked on that fundraiser and greets us like old friends. He is anxious to do another fundraiser. He asks about Chester all the time as Chester made an appearance at the fundraiser. He asked for a donation jar to put in his Penn Valley restaurant as well as the Nevada City Northridge.

To **Shawnee and Gary** at **Machado's** in Bowman. They let us pick up the ground fruit from their orchards for our fawns.

WRR Duo Rescue, Rehab a Little Owl

By Janet Goodban

As I was putting up my Christmas decorations last Sunday, my phone rang. I groaned, just knowing that it would be a raptor rescue call. It was, but this one was different. It was from Jan Helminiak, one of the songbird rehabbers, telling me that a Pygmy Owl had just slammed into her window, and she had put him in a cat carrier in her back room. She said he was laying on his back, and said "I know about songbirds, but don't know about raptors! What should I do?"

After meeting her in the Kmart parking lot (isn't that where all "bird deals" are done?) and putting the owl in a box that I had brought, she went with me to the raptor clinic to check him out.

Now, if you have ever seen a

Northern Pygmy owl, you are very lucky, because even though they are common in this area, they are very rarely seen. For those who haven't, you are missing something. They are only about 5" high full-grown, and just about the cutest things on the planet. They are also one of the fiercest of the small raptors, known to take prey larger than themselves, such as doves and even California quail. They are diurnal, which means they hunt during the day, rather than at night with the rest of the owls. This one was probably hunting the songbirds at Jan's feeding station, and was watching his



prey, rather than watching where he was going.

He was unusually quiet for this type of bird, although I could find no discernable outward physical problems with him. His wings, his legs and even his little razor-sharp talons all worked fine (as attested to by a few neat little puncture marks in the palm of my hand. Shining a small flashlight into each of his eyes to test for reaction was the key to the problem. One pupil didn't react as quickly as the other. The diagnosis was "mild head trauma" (fairly obvious, since he had flown head-first into a window), and he was summarily put into one of the inside clinic cages to rest during the night. I left a small tray of tasty mouse bits in case he wanted to eat, although he was in good body weight.

The next morning he had not only eaten his food, he was much more active and aggressive. He was given another checkup, punctured someone else's hand this time, given more cut up mice. It was decided to keep him at least one more night until his eye was completely back to normal.

The following morning brought a surprise. Jan was to pick up the little owl so she could release him back where she found him. But, when she and raptor team member, Laurel Gunderson, looked into the clinic cage, they found the cage empty. The cage door was closed, but there was no bird inside. They looked everywhere and finally found him on one of the shelves. This bird was so small that he actually fit through the bars of the cage door. There is about a 2-inch opening where the corner of the door curves, and my guess is that he discovered that tiny opening and squeezed through. Amazing.

Jan was thrilled to take him back to her yard and release him back into his territory, so he can continue helping himself to her songbirds.

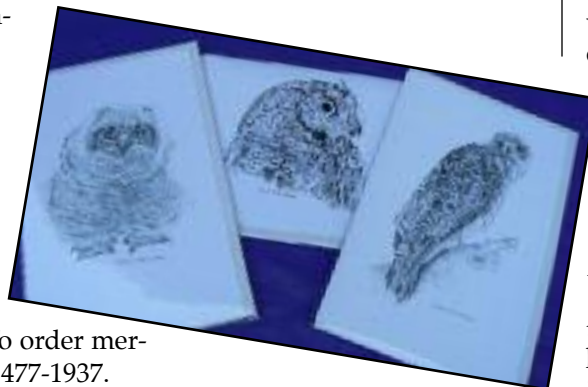
WRR Develops New Merchandise Line – from tasty to useful

Thanks to the creativity and talent of WRR members, a number of new items have been added to WRR's merchandise line-up. Linda Adams, songbird associate leader, is a talented artist who has developed beautiful note cards that feature a bird cared for by WRR. Laurel Gunderson and Janey Powers have created long and short-sleeved tee shirts featuring wildlife photos, all taken by WRR volunteers. Photo note cards are also available as well as attractive and informative bookmarks.

Perhaps the most "tasty" merchandise item is the WRR "Chocolate Hawk" bar. The hawk, a dark morph Swainson's Hawk, came to WRR badly injured from hitting power lines at a nearby Air Force Base. After six weeks of care, "Chocolate Hawk" was released back to the wild (see photo on pg. 7). Her beauty and courage (and chocolate coloring) was the inspiration behind the creation of these delicious premium dark chocolate confections.

A merchandise line-up would not be complete without license plate holders. These merchandise mainstays are now available for WRR fans to proudly display on their vehicles.

See the WRR merchandise line-up at the 2009 annual meeting (see article, pg. 1, this issue). To order merchandise, contact Janey Powers at 477-1937.



Diary of an Educational Ambassador

– as told to Bev Myers

Chester Owl here, again!

Boy have I been busy. I just started my own blog!!! You have to read it. Go to

<http://chesterghow.blogspot.com/>

Thought I would update you so you know what has been happening since the last newsletter and before I started the new blog.

Back in July Bev and her husband Gene built my new mew. I have a couple of tree perches and a stump I can sit on, also some rocks. It is so roomy and I will be able to flutter around in it. Since I can't fly very well, Bev has set up a ramp so I can climb up to the higher perch. When it came time to move out into the mew Bev was a little nervous. She said she would miss me in the house. But she said she would come out and walk with me every day.

Bev got comfortable with me moving outside. She comes to take me for a walk almost every day. Some days she doesn't, but she is so



busy with WR&R I understand. There are a lot of other animals out there and the organization is so busy. I heard there was a Golden Eagle at the Raptor Clinic. There are constantly injured birds and animals coming to the rehabbers (that is a person who helps an orphaned or injured bird or animal). There was another Great Horned Owl down, a Spotted Owl who was orphaned, lots of little Western Screech Owls hit by cars, small songbirds caught by cats, skunks hit by cars (I could take care of those, just let me at 'em), fawns stuck in ditches, and it just goes on.

Several of us Educational Ambassadors went to the Nevada County Fair. Was that an experience! We were right next to the Monster Trucks! I really don't know what Monster Trucks are, but boy are they loud!! Bev said I was a really, really good bird. She sounded so proud of me. Shikoba, Oliver, Lancelot and I talked all about living with wildlife. Well, I shouldn't really take any credit. It really was Shikoba and Oliver's handler Kari,

Laurel Gunderson releases the Chocolate Hawk.



Lancelot's handler Janey (who is also the President of WR&R), and my handler Bev.

Since then I have been to a couple of schools, to a Lions Club luncheon (but there were no lions there, thank

goodness), and some other community gatherings. I went to Stars at the Peak. That was so much fun because I just love to watch people. The people there were so

Comment from the President on the August 27th Dine Out for Wildlife

Wednesday, August 27, 2008

Thanks, everyone, for making our first "Dine Out for Wildlife" such a great success. It was great seeing so many folks from all our teams together, enjoying good food and good company. The staff at the Northridge said it was the best Tuesday night they have had in a long time!

A special thanks goes to Chester, the Great-horned Owl and Educational Ambassador for his special appearance. He won many friends for WRR.

-janey

nice to talk with. Bev kept telling all about me and WR&R. I also went to a fundraiser at the Northridge Restaurant in Penn Valley. Boy did they love me there. We got lots of funds so I can be "kept in mice" as Bev puts it. Above is an email that the President sent to people that work with Wildlife Rehab. I was soooo excited – the President!!!!

Well I think that brings you up to date with my busy schedule. I will be "talkin' to you" in the blogs. If you have any questions or things you would like me to write about in my blog please send an email to me at chesterowl@gmail.com

Be seeing you!

Don't miss out on
the next newsletter!
Renew your membership now!



www.cawildlife911.org

Penn Valley, CA 95946
P.O. Box 868

Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release

Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release Contributing Member Donation Form

Please mail this form to: WRR, PO Box 868, Penn Valley, CA 95946

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

I am interested in helping care for wildlife. Please contact me.

I would like to be on a committee. Please contact me.

I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN AT THE FOLLOWING LEVEL:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Conservator | \$1000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Guardian | \$500.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Supporter | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$45.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single | \$35.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior/Senior | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation Only | \$ _____ |



Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, 100% volunteer group, dedicated to the rehabilitation and release of injured and orphaned wildlife. Our trained volunteers are licensed by the CA Dept. of Fish & Game and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to care for and release native wildlife. Each year we care for hundreds of birds and mammals. We depend on memberships, donations, and fundraisers to continue our work. All donations are tax-deductible. To learn more about us and other ways you can help, visit our website at www.cawildlife911.org. Thank you for your support.