



# Fur and Feathers

Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 2

September 2011

## Inside this issue:

Prehistoric with Personality	2
WR&R Microbiology Department	3
Chester's Blog	3
Intake Center Report	4
Fox-In-A-Jar	4
Your Very Active Education Committee Report	5
Flying Squirrel Release	5
Volunteers Needed	6
Membership	6

## President's Message -by President Kim Franza

Greetings! WR&R is again having a very busy year rehabilitating wildlife from Nevada, Sutter, Butte, Yuba, Plumas and Sierra counties. Mammals and songbirds are to date the highest number of animals taken into care. Total species count and success release rates from the team leaders of fawns, raptors, mammals, songbirds, reptiles and waterfowl will be available in February of 2012.

It has been a very busy year in terms of fund raising for WR&R. We were so fortunate to have won the Pepsi Contest at the beginning of the year as well as receiving many generous donations and memberships from individuals in our community. A sincere heartfelt "Thank You" must be given to all

the people who voted for WR&R in the Pepsi contest and to the WR&R members who spent hundreds of hours for months soliciting votes for the contest. The funds from Pepsi along with generous private donations have helped us with veterinary expenses, caging, food, education, and training of new volunteers.

We have also accomplished dozens of successful presentations of the Educational Ambassadors. Our presentations in many schools, organizations, resource centers and events at the Nevada County Fairgrounds have allowed us to spotlight our place in the community in the rehabilitation of wildlife and the importance of protecting it.

Our website will soon have an "Adopt an Ambassador" page. Look for it in the fall.

The most important asset WR&R has is the selfless, generous and dedicated volunteers who are the foundation of the success of WR&R. I am amazed and grateful every day for all of the WR&R volunteers who will each go to astounding efforts to save an animal. I am very proud to work with all of you.

Let's see what the rest of the year has to bring and how we can continue to work together for the magnificent animals we all love so much.



## Midterm Pepsi Grant Money Report

A mid term report is required by the Pepsi Refresh Everything Grant program outlining the expenditures and activities of the organization before the receipt of the second half of the \$25,000 grant. Jim Crummit, a small mammal rehabber and member of the Board, wrote that report. This summary is taken from his report.

Equipment acquired to help complete the Intake Center included: a large food freezer, microscope, incubator, full spectrum lighting, and installation of outdoor safety lighting.

Much needed caging was a major use of the funds. A large flight cage was built specifically for corvids. Two new large outdoor cages that required concrete pads were built for skunks and raccoons, and a large rabbit enclosure was built.

Money was spent on food needs some of which are the usual dog and cat food and some more exotic. Such as fish, insects, frogs, minnows and crayfish for birds and waterfowl. Raptors have a need for live mice for practice in capturing prey. A large freezer was obtained for the fawn team for the storage of donated goat's milk which reduced their food costs considerably.

For use in educational activities a much needed laptop computer and digital projector were purchased. The laptop is also used by our treasurer for accounting purposes.

The second requirement of the midterm report was an accounting of our accomplishment of our social and community goals. As written elsewhere in this newsletter the Education Volunteers were quite busy in this respect. We feel we have numerous ways of reaching the public and informing them of our mission, the protection of and the recognition of wildlife as integral to our environmental wholeness.

## WR&R Board of Directors:

Kim Franza, President  
 Laurel Gunderson, Vice President  
 Lynn Archer, Secretary  
 Bev Myers, Treasurer  
 Donna Betz, Director at Large  
 Janet Goodban, Director at Large  
 Jim Crummitt, Director at Large

## Prehistoric with Personality -by Linda Adams



Hérons and egrets are members of the family Ardeidae in the order of birds called Ciconiiformes (storks, cranes, herons, and New World Vultures). They are medium to large sized wading birds with long necks and legs, and harpoon like bills. Herons and egrets are amongst the most glamorous of all birds. In the late 1800's, the Snowy Egret (SNEG) was one of the most sought-after for its delicate, re-curved back plumes used to adorn women's hats. At one time plumes were valued at an astounding \$32 per ounce, twice the price of gold. The larger species, the Great Blue Heron and Great Egrets, are often seen hunting together. To some, they resemble birds of a prehistoric era. Watching them launch into the air, with slow and graceful wing beats, long necks pulled into an "s" shape, and loud echoing, "croak...croak", one can almost sense the presence of other long extinct animals.

All herons depend to some degree on aquatic habitats, however their nest sites may be far from any large body of water. Black-crowned Night Herons (BCNH) and SNEG nest together in large rookeries in small towns outlying the Feather, Yuba, and Sacramento Rivers. Green Herons (GRHE) can be found in all counties inhabiting dense woody vegetation that fringes ponds, rivers, and lakes. GRHE may nest solitarily or in colonies, over or near a pond or lake. Herons and egrets are carnivorous, eating mostly fish but they are also generalists, and will take a variety of small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. When they leave their nesting grounds, the birds forage in nearby flooded rice fields that are rich in a variety of foods.



### Waterbird Rehabilitation Basics

Rehabilitation of wild herons and egrets is very challenging. It's important to understand how the different species live in the wild so proper diet and housing requirements can be duplicated. Local populations should be observed to learn where birds nest, feed and roost. When admitted, birds are given colored bands so individual weights can be monitored. However, some individuals can be recognized by their different "personality" types expressed by vocalizations and particular body language. There is a definite dominance hierarchy within the flight cage. Some birds are more aggressive than others and occupy a "mini" territory, guarding a perch and being first to feed. It is critical to their survival in the wild that they be allowed to practice defense, branching, and flight while in captivity. GRHE, being a more solitary species, require hiding places within the outdoor enclosure. When approached, they stretch up tall, neck fully extended, beak pointed up, and binocular eyes staring forward. They have the appearance of a tall reed.



Most of the herons admitted for care are nestling and fledgling BCNH and GRHE, with an occasional SNEG or GBHE. Adults admitted are often injured by gun-shot and rarely survive their wounds. Wounded herons and egrets are nearly impossible to catch and can be extremely dangerous. Hatchling or nestling herons fall out of nest trees for many reasons due to natural causes or disturbances by human activity. Fledgling GRHE have been found wandering around busy parking lots. One lady reported a nestling GRHE fell right onto their picnic table. Another GRHE nestling fell into a robin's nest and the whole nest, along with 4 baby robins, fell to the ground. The whole "family" (nestling robins & heron) were rescued, rehabilitated, and released. Once herons and egrets fall from their nests, they are rarely fed by parents on the ground, unless the rookery is nowhere near humans. Defenseless young usually succumb to the elements, starve to death, and/or are attacked by dogs, cats, cruelty by humans, and natural predators.



Hatchling and nestling herons must be kept in incubators maintained at 100 F until they can regulate their own body temperature. They will take thawed fish from the hand or dish. Frozen fish must be supplemented with calcium and thiamine. When young birds are able to thermoregulate, they are placed in large pens within the flight cage, so they can get sunshine and see other herons. When they are big enough to contend with older birds, the pen door is left open so "fledgling" birds can retreat to safety for a while, if needed. All cages and flight enclosure are furnished with natural branches of various sizes and angles to make the birds climb and use their legs. Herons must be provided a pool for bathing and wading. Birds are ready for release when they reach a particular weight, have good muscle tone, can fly across the flight cage, can climb well, are waterproof, and can live kill. Birds are taken back to their natal areas, sometimes a 4-6 hour roundtrip for the rehabilitator, and are released in feeding grounds a few miles from their home rookery.



### Conservation

Loss of wetlands threatens all water associated birds. California leads the nation in loss of wetland habitat, with 90% converted into agricultural land. As a result, many species of wading birds that depend on these habitats have suffered significant population reductions, with some populations still in decline. The effects of pesticides and herbicides on wading birds and their food sources also contribute to the decline. Illegal shooting is not a solution of "population control" in urban rookeries. Protecting and properly managing existing wetland communities can help maintain and enhance populations of wading birds, and other wildlife species that live in similar habitats.

Photos by Linda Adams (in order): Juv SNEG Juv BCNH, hatchling GRHE, resting hatchling BCNH, injured (shot) adult BCNH. Author and Waterbird Rehabilitator (with WRR): Linda Adams, [www.linda.horsefeathers@dishmail.net](mailto:www.linda.horsefeathers@dishmail.net).

## WR&R Microbiology Department

Parasitic infections are a frequent problem with wildlife. Parasites may require an expensive visit to the veterinarian and require that a stool sample be sent to a reference laboratory for parasite identification. Several years ago it was decided to do virtually all of our parasitology in house in order to reduce costs and improve turnaround times.

Don and Jan Williams, husband and wife rehabbers with WR&R, both happen to be retired clinical microbiologists. They decided that they would undertake the parasitology problem for our organization. They set up a laboratory in a small room in their garage and went to work.

Stool samples are obtained by individual rehabbers as deemed

necessary and delivered to Don or Jan. They then perform microscopic examinations in their lab and report the types of parasites found so appropriate treatment can be administered. Formal laboratory reports are generated for each result to be kept with the chart or record of each bird or mammal.

A wide variety of parasites are found in our rehab birds and mammals.

Coccidia, various types of tapeworms and roundworms, and also flukes are frequently found. Heavy infestations of some of these types of parasites can be extremely debilitating or even fatal.

Don and Jan are currently performing between 150 and 200 microscopic examinations for parasites each year. Reference laboratories are now charging \$40.00 for each fecal parasite exam.



That being the case, it would obviously mean considerable savings to WR&R to do these tests ourselves as opposed to sending them to a reference laboratory for examination.

*Editor's Note:* This kind of expertise is a huge blessing for WR&R.

## Chester's Blog



**Good Morning, Chester Owl here:**

-Chester Owl

Well, it is school time and it starts to get everyone thinking about learning and sharing information. One of the most important things that Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release does is educate the public about living with wildlife. WRR goes to schools, community meetings, other get-togethers, fairs, and celebrations.

They have different themes and lessons from owls and owl pellets, to trash and wildlife, to living with wildlife.

At one time I was going to introduce one

of our Education Ambassadors each newsletter. But I have decided to introduce them all at one time. We are going to be busy soon and you will see us all around town. We will have been at the Prospector Nursery on Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>, and at the Celtic Festival - we get to meet the Queen again! The Audubon Club on Oct. 6. We are always visiting classrooms in the area.

Of course you all know me, Chester the Great Horned Owl. WRR also has a Red-tailed Hawk by the name of Tecumseh. There is an American Kestrel who WRR named Bravehart. We have a Western Screech Owl by the name of Kajika who is the "new kid on the block". Of course you must have seen our American Crow, Sir Winston Churchill Crow. He is the smartest of the group (or so he says). Then last, but not least, is the Band-tailed Pigeon, Widget. Oh yes, we have another new member of the education group, a California King Snake who is named Oreo because he is stripped black and white. We are quite a group and have lots and lots of information to share. We come with different presentations and soon we'll have an Adopt an Ambassador page on the website.

Be sure to visit our website. It gives you

lots of information about what to do before you call, if you find an injured wildlife. The website is [www.cawildlife911.org](http://www.cawildlife911.org). Please visit the website.

I have heard Bev talking about the fact that WRR needs to get the word out about people keeping wildlife. You can't! It's the law! WRR can. They have special permits from both the Dept. of Fish and Game from California and the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife from the federal government. WRR has special food and knows what to feed different wild animals. They also know what needs to be done if the animals are sick or hurt. So give WRR a call. They are the best!

Until next time...its Chester Owl saying, "be sure to look for us around town!"

*Writer's Note:*

*Of course it almost goes without saying it isn't really Chester talking. These are the thoughts of Bev Myers as she might think that Chester would think if he was human. Chester is a wild animal and*

## Intake Center Report -by Bev Myers, IC Director

It's hard to believe that the Intake Center has closed for the season. It seems like we just opened up a couple of weeks ago. The season at the IC ran from May 1<sup>st</sup> to Sept 1<sup>st</sup>.

Looking back on the season I found that we put in over 1900 volunteer hours! Several people logged in 100+ hours. These included Linda Adams (her 100+ hours were over and above her paid hours as Triage Coordinator),



Connie Anderson, Janice Barbary, Millie Delaney, Randy Koerber, Margie Mirken, Diana Robinson, and Bev Myers.

We had a wonderful group of volunteers this year. We had two students and several college age

people along with our other volunteers that ranged in age from about 30-something to about 80-something. Everyone pitched in where needed and covered for each other during absences. The Intake Center ran very smoothly and we were all always learning.

We didn't have as many Songbirds coming through the IC this year as past years but we did talk a lot of people into re-nesting those frisky, know-it-all fledglings who would fall out of their nests. Putting the little ones back in their nests with their parents is the best thing for the birds. We did have more water birds due to some uninformed, uncaring person shooting Black-crowned Night Heron parents and leaving orphaned babies. This kept Linda busier than usual and all the rest of us learning a lot. We really want to thank the Wildwood Fishing and Hunting Club for supplying us with much needed fish for those orphans.

We did have more small mammals this year - bunnies, raccoons, field mice, a fawn, a couple of bats and even a bunch of baby voles.

We are finding that our Intake Center is



becoming invaluable in stepping in early to give the wildlife the immediate care that just might save lives. Now that the IC has closed for the year, we hope to get more new home rehabbers from that group to be able to help in our mission with the all teams.

A nice dream would be to have the Intake Center open year round to be there for all wildlife and their need for immediate care until they are moved to homes with caring rehabbers.



## Fox-in-a-Jar -by Jan Crowell

" On August 12, 2011 Allison Shaver of Auburn Road in Grass Valley spotted this female gray fox from her upstairs window with what looked like a jar stuck on its head. She got the family binoculars and determined that, indeed, it was a plastic mayonnaise jar. Her mom and dad helped keep the fox "corralled" while they called Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release. The call was forwarded to Small Mammal rehabbers Mark Roberts and Kelly Guthrie who immediately went to the Shaver home. Kelly captured the fox in a net. It was taken into the Shaver garage where Richard Shaver used snips to cut the jar off the fox's head. After a quick physical check and removal of ticks by Mark and Kelly the fox was released and happily went on its way.

Good job by all. This fox surely would have died if it had not been aided. Please keep our wildlife safe by properly disposing of garbage."



## Your Very Active Education Committee Report

Because we believe that wildlife is vital to the wholeness of the earth, WR&R embraces a second mission. That is, to strive to educate the public in understanding and protecting our local wildlife. We do this through presentations at schools, community organizations, and community events. To this end we have a very active Education Committee which consists of eight dedicated rehabbers and six non-releasable birds that we call Educational Ambassadors. These birds were presented as representatives of their species and their particular ecological niche on over thirty occasions so far this year. These activities are always very joyful and rewarding to everyone involved.

In addition the committee is preparing an Adopt an Ambassador link on the WR&R webpage which will allow an individual to donate to WR&R while receiving information and picture, etc., about their favorite teaching bird.

Another activity of the committee is to ensure that all handlers are well trained and the care of the bird is in



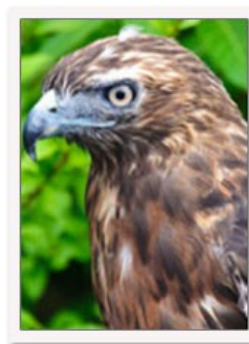
compliance with the Federal Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Department of Fish and Game regulations.

Uniform shirts and carrier covers will be sprucing up our appearances, and the birds will look nicer after they stop molting.

Below is a list of the events that WR&R has attended so far this year as educational out reach.

- Tall Pines Pre-School
- The Annual WR&R Recruiting Event
- Scotten School Science Fair
- Yonen-Maidu Spring Festival

- Wild Birds Unlimited Open House
- Northridge Pizza of Penn Valley Dine Out Night
- Sierra College Mural Dedication Open House
- Grass Valley Charter School
- Nevada Union High School
- Malakoff-Diggins State Park Campfire Program
- Gold Country Lake Wildwood Fishing and Hunting Club
- Gold Country Garden Club
- Lake Wildwood Kid's Club
- Nevada City Children's Festival
- Gold Country Newcomers Club
- Nevada County Fair
- Prospector Nursery Fund Raising Event



## Flying Squirrel Release -by Don Williams



This summer, an adult flying squirrel was received at WRR by rehabbers Don and Jan Williams. It had been cat caught, but there were no apparent injuries to the squirrel. Following a five day regimen of antibiotics which is standard procedure for all cat caught animals, the squirrel was determined to be ready for release. It was decided to release the flyer on Eric and Laurel Gunderson's property above Grass Valley.

Eric mounted a flying squirrel nesting box high in a large pine tree. Bedding and food were placed into the box. Don carried the squirrel up the ladder where the squirrel quickly ran from his hand into the entrance hole of the nesting box.

It was a most successful release. Hopefully, the squirrel will live happily for many years on the Gunderson's property. It will have quite a story to tell its children and grandchildren!





**Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release**

P.O. Box 868

Penn Valley, CA 95946

[www.cawildlife911.org](http://www.cawildlife911.org)

Emergency wildlife phone: 530-432-5522



**Volunteers Needed**

Do you like caring for wild animals? Wildlife Rehabilitation and Release needs help in many areas including the actual work with songbirds and small mammals as well as other tasks always necessary in a non profit organization: Fund Raising, Education Programs, Publicity, and Intake Center Staffing. If you can help or want to know more call Kim Franza at 615-7718.

**Membership**

In 2010 we had 165 paid members. We also have several who we consider to be "Life Members" because of their wonderful generosity. These are:

Mike, Lesley, and Stacey Furtado - For the use of facilities in Penn Valley where Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release originated many years ago. Also for Mike's extensive experience and continued willingness to help and to teach.

Lillis Sherrin - Another who helped to start Wildlife Rehabilitation & Release and after many years as the "fawn lady" still helps with just about any kind of animal that needs help.

Carol & Bob Hamilton - Without whom we would not have the Intake Center, and who give us much needed support in so many different ways. Carol continues to share with us her experience in building our group.

Dr. Simi Lyss who honored us again in 2010

with a \$10,000 donation.

Also we want to thank the following businesses who are our Community Partners and who support us in many ways:

- C.J.'s Hay & Feed
- Eco Community Thrift
- Foothills Lions Club
- Landmark Construction
- Matteo's Public
- County of Nevada
- Northridge Restaurant
- Wildbirds Unlimited
- County of Yuba

Now it is 2011 and we would like to welcome the following new members:

**Wildlife Supporter:** Joan Briody, Anthony Chissie, Robert S. Sherins, M.D., and Robert Townsend

**Family:** Ronda & Kaleigh Applegarth, Roberta & Milton Herold, Maria Johnson, and Beth & Daniel Lohman

**Single & Seniors:** Michelle Fales, Val Gunter, Joseph D. Lambert, M.D., and Ann Maginnis

Thank you for your support. It means so much to us. Would you like to help support our nature wildlife by becoming a WR&R member? Call Bev at 530-432-7829 or visit our website at [www.ca.wildlife911.org](http://www.ca.wildlife911.org).