

Tracks



Volume 16
Number 2
Fall/Winter 2010



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Dina Hawkins*

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Message from the President

When I was asked to write this message for *Tracks*, I browsed through my past issues to see what everyone else had written about. I came across the 2003 issue which caught my eye as that is the year I first became associated with WCSV. We had a board retreat in Scotts Valley at which we envisioned a future five years out. The number one goal we agreed on was to ensure immediate, superlative, cutting edge care for local wildlife, to be provided by a dedicated and skilled team of professional staff and volunteers including on-site staff veterinarians. We don't have the veterinarians yet, but the rest certainly did come true. The animal care we now provide has been elevated to a much higher level over the last two seasons; for example, incoming

us to add a Western Screech Owl, "Olive", to the Center's existing roster of education animals, "Jet", our Red-shouldered Hawk, and our albino American Crow, "Fala" (see story on page 11).

We've just successfully completed our search for a new Executive Director as we welcome Anita Templer who will be guiding us in the execution of our mission in the coming years. With the opportunities we see that are potentially available to us, we believe we can significantly benefit from the knowledge of an experienced professional. We want to expand our education program, form partnerships with other nonprofits and organizations, establish a stronger volunteer base, provide

Our existence is proof that the community cares and values wildlife, and we will continue to uphold the Center's mission as long as the desire is alive.

animals receive 30-40% more exam time when they are admitted to our facility. In addition, the Center is now considered an emergency hospital, able to administer blood work and other diagnostic tests to each animal upon admission. We are very proud of the accomplishments of the Animal Care staff and the progress that has been made.

Some additional accomplishments this year, besides improved animal care, include recruiting two new board members: Mac Makhni and Robin Ross. We welcome them to the board and are grateful for their many talents and skills which will help us carry out our mission. Congratulations are also due to our Grant committee, which was instrumental in securing a \$50,000 grant this year, the largest one our organization has ever received! We are very excited! Last, but not least, Jen Constantin has done a tremendous job in securing the permit that has allowed

our staff with more training, support and leadership, and build on our relationships with our donors, the financial backbone of WCSV. We welcome Anita's new leadership!

Our board, staff and volunteers work together diligently and passionately to run a nonprofit organization that serves a vital purpose in the local community. Our existence is proof that the community cares and values wildlife, and we will continue to uphold the Center's mission as long as the desire is alive.

Thank you for your generosity, passion and support which is evident in your donations, attendance at our events, and volunteerism. We are very fortunate to have you to help fulfill the important work of WCSV.

Joan Giampaolo,
President, Board of Directors

Tracks...

Tracks is a publication of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley.

Our Mission

To provide high quality care and rehabilitation of injured, sick and orphaned wildlife within the Silicon Valley community. Through educational programs, we foster a positive coexistence between the general public and wildlife and encourage an interest in and concern for wildlife conservation issues.

Board of Directors

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Bill Paker, Robin Ross

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Outreach and Education Coordinator –
Jennifer Constantin

Wildlife Rehabilitation Supervisor –
Ashley Kinney

Wildlife Rehabilitation Assistant –
Andrea Rojas

Tracks Editor – Paula Massa

Layout and Design – Lisa Smith

Cover Photo by Dina Hawkins

This female fawn came to Dina Hawkins for care on April 22. Dina is a member of the WCSV's Deer Team.



Christmas Bird Count 2010

By Margaret Hu

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me... “The Twelve Days of Christmas” just wouldn’t be the same if not for the festive partridge, the delightful turtle doves, the holiday hens, the convivial calling birds and so on. What better way to honor your favorite childhood Christmas carol than by participating in the National Audubon Society’s annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)?

From December 14 of this year to January 5 of the next, thousands of dedicated volunteers in the Americas, compelled by their love of nature and their desire to make a difference, will take part in a magnificent bird census.

How did the Christmas Bird Count all begin? Before the 1900s people engaged in traditional Christmas “Side Hunts.” Individuals chose a

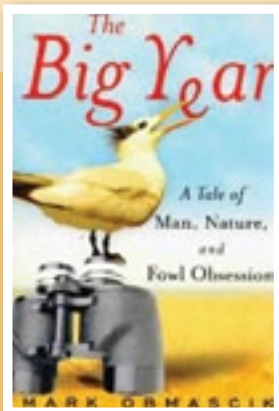
team or “side,” then the teams would compete for the most number of birds shot. Concerned about the depopulation of birds, famed ornithologist Frank Chapman proposed to count birds during Christmas rather than kill them. Today, one hundred and ten years since the founding of the Christmas Bird Count, over 50,000 counters at 2,000 locations, from above the Arctic Circle to the Drake Passage of Tierra del Fuego, carry on the annual tradition of counting and identifying birds of North and South America.

Data collected by observers help researchers and conservationists study and promote the bird populations of the Americas. The changing numbers of several species—from the disappearance of the Eastern Bewick Wren to the expansion of doves—are analyzed and published by the Audubon Society. In effect, several conservation measures have been realized

as a result of documentation by the Christmas Bird Count.

Deemed by CBC Director Geoff LeBaron as “epitomiz[ing] Audubon’s approach to bird conservation, involving people to help birds,” the Christmas Bird Count serves not only to gather vital information but also to engage citizens from various nations around the world in ecological efforts, fostering a uniting culture of conservation. The organization’s initiative is currently the longest running Citizen Science program in the world. Take delight in joining the 111th Christmas Bird Count and don’t forget the golden ring-necks, the geese-a-laying, and the swans-a-swimming as you carol away this joyful Christmas Holiday.

For more info and to get involved in the CBC, please visit <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>.



30-Second Book Reviews

By Kathleen Cahill

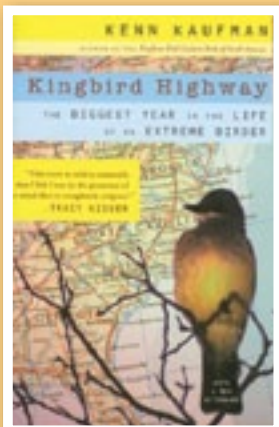
The Big Year: A tale of man, nature, and fowl obsession
by Mark Obmascik, Simon and Schuster

Kingbird Highway: The story of a natural obsession that got a little out of hand
by Kenn Kaufman, Houghton Mifflin

Many a dedicated bird-watcher will occasionally get up at dawn and spend the morning craning their neck skyward scanning for birds. Multiply that experience by three hundred and sixty five and you are participating in a Big Year, a competition to see as many bird species as possible in North America. Birding as a sporting event! Two very engaging publications cover this topic in books so readable that even the “non-birder” will enjoy.

The Big Year by Mark Obmascik is well-written, alternating between wit and poignancy, and follows three very different personalities with the same goal: to be the person who sees more birds in one year than anyone else in history. This book takes place twenty five years after Kaufman’s Big Year, and in that time the game has become much more sophisticated and competitive.

Kingbird Highway, by Kenn Kaufman (author of a number of bird guides) looks back to 1973 when he was nineteen years old, hitchhiking his way across America while attempting a Big Year. This is also a coming-of-age story. By year’s end, not only has Kaufman seen many birds, but he has grown as a person. The book also gives a good look at birding just as it was exploding in popularity.



Welcome Anita Templer

For those of you who haven't yet had a chance to meet her, Anita Templer is the newest addition to WCSV staff. As the Center's Executive Director, Anita brings to this role an extensive background in areas such as management, fundraising, and consulting with local nonprofits as well as national organizations. Her work at the Center will encompass all aspects of its oversight, from staffing to raising funds in support of the Center's mission.

"I'm very excited about joining the Wildlife Center team and look forward to helping to build on the solid foundation that has already been established," Anita says.

The board, staff and volunteers are glad to welcome Anita to the Center. Readers will hear more about—and from—Anita in upcoming issues of *Tracks*.



Cory Barfield, Dedicated Volunteer Landscaper

By Patricia Abreu and Jennifer Constantin

Cory Barfield invests over 1500 hours a year creating and maintaining the beautiful gardens at WCSV. He has an artist's eye for shape and color and has painted the landscape by designing with and nurturing plants. In recognition of his work, Cory was awarded a certificate of achievement at the Junior League of San Jose's 41st Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, held at the Santa Clara Marriott, on May 7, 2010.

Cory's loyalty and dedication to the WCSV began in 2001, but his resume of volunteer work in the community spans more than 30 years. In 1972 he was the founder and director of the Lancer Marching Unit of Piedmont Middle School, which he ran until 1989. He was also a founder of the Santa Clara County California Teacher's Association. For 30 years, Cory was active as a chairperson for the Berryessa Art and Wine Festival. In 2001 his passion for wildlife and nature inspired him to begin volunteering at the WCSV.

Cory started at the Center by doing animal care but he decided that his hands were

just not cut out for feeding those tiny baby birds! Quite simply Cory saw the need for landscaping—the exterior grounds were weedy and unattractive—and he took it upon himself to use his green thumb to dramatically improve our space within Penitencia Creek Park.

At that time, the WCSV had just relocated to its current location and the area around the Center was bare. Cory planted hardy, drought-resistant vines, bushes, grasses and flowers. He set up a drip sprinkler system and signs to identify many of the plants. In 2006, he applied for and received a grant from San Jose Beautiful to partially fund an expansion of the native gardens that run along WCSV's fence. The gardens are seen by the many visitors to Penitencia Creek Park. Jen Constantin, our Outreach and Education Coordinator, says "His extraordinary work has inspired many people to compliment the landscaping and take photographs of the plants in bloom. We get many favorable comments about the native garden from people bringing us animals and from others walking in the park."

As our master gardener, Cory does everything including grounds layout, shopping for plants,

working with donors who contribute to our gardens, training new gardening volunteers, and the planting, trimming, weeding, and garden maintenance. He has taken the initiative to research and write grants that resulted in the donation of trees and hundreds of daffodil bulbs, which he then planted. He has donated thousands of dollars of his own money, buying plants and equipment for the grounds, and much to everyone's delight, he brings in donuts to share every Friday.

The Center's lease with Santa Clara County requires that we maintain the premises. Cory's efforts on our behalf have been outstanding and we truly cannot thank him enough. He deserves recognition for his ten years of exemplary service. Cory is hardworking, reliable, creative, and devoted. He easily puts in 30 hours each week, usually working alone, maintaining the grounds. His work is a labor of love, and the beauty and order that Cory creates is here at WCSV for all to enjoy.



Walking on the Wild Side

How long can a Red-shouldered Hawk live? What do squirrels eat? What does a snake feel like? How many animals does the Wildlife Center receive in a year? These were some of the many questions asked—and answered—at the Center’s Walk on the Wild Side event. Held annually, the event invites the community to learn more about the Center and the animal ‘clients’ that come through its doors.

Highlights from this year’s special day included:

- Informational presentations with educational animals such as Jet, the Red-shouldered Hawk

- Through the participation of Youth Science Institute (YSI), an up-close encounter with a Common King snake, whose smooth skin fascinated those who were brave enough to gently touch it
- A peek at a sleeping bat (in an enclosure), courtesy of the California Bat Conservation Fund
- Make-it-yourself crafts for kids
- Artwork by Eleanor Barrow and Michelle Waters

Especially popular were guided tours of the outdoor enclosures. Guests had the rare opportunity to see where some of the animals are housed while they recover from injuries or illness, or grow to a releasable age. This behind-the-scenes look gave visitors a unique perspective on the important work that is made possible through their donations.

Center staff and volunteers were very happy to have shared the day with so many friends and neighbors and hope that everyone will be back next year to once again Walk on the Wild Side.



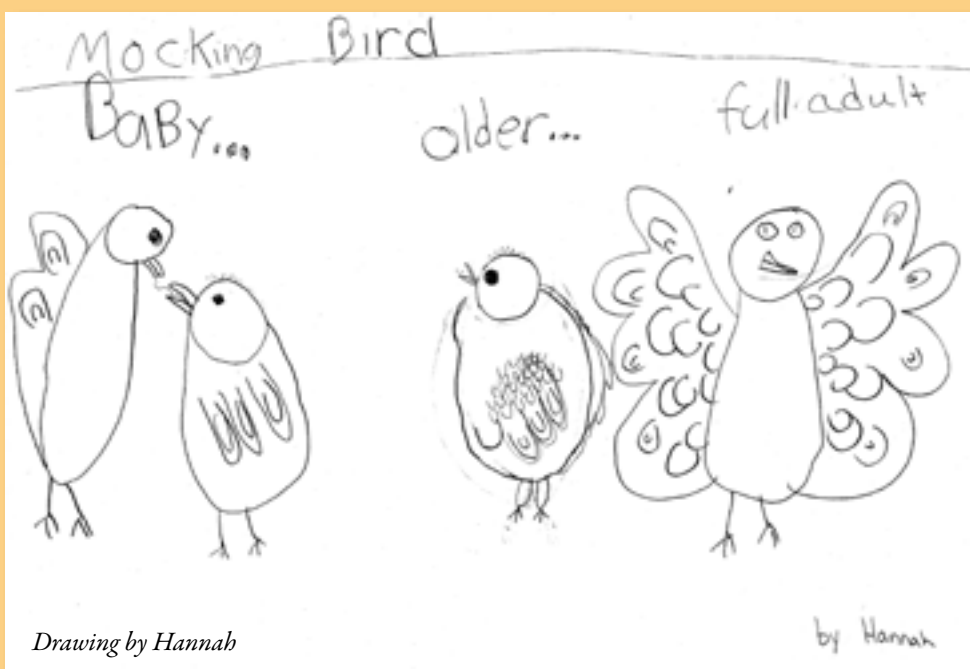
Photos: Paula Massa

Two Little Lives

The chance to make a positive difference in the world can often be found in our own yards. When children are involved in making that difference, a brighter future opens for us all. Two families found themselves in that situation earlier this year and were gracious enough to share their stories with the Center.

Hannah's story was written by the 8½ year old herself in a piece originally published by San Jose Animal Care Advocates in their September newsletter. Hannah tells of finding a baby bird fallen from its nest, discovering that it was injured, and helping her mother gently place the bird in a towel-lined box. A subsequent email to neighbors asking for advice led Hannah and her mother to the WCSV: "A lot of very nice people suggested we take it to the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, so we did!"

At the Center, Hannah learned that the little survivor was a fledgling mockingbird.



She and her mother received a case number and an invitation to inquire about the bird's well-being after a few days. Hannah reported "When I called the following week, they

said the bird was getting very strong and will be eventually strong enough to be released. I was very happy that I helped save a baby bird!"

The second example of a caring family comes from Pamela Nerney. Pamela expressed thanks to the Center for her positive experience in rescuing a baby squirrel that had fallen from its nest. "We called you guys for advice and you dutifully called back with good advice," she said. After moving the little one into warm bedding (clean rags placed in a small box), Pamela and her two 15 year olds brought their cats indoors then left the baby squirrel where its mother could find it, near the tree it had fallen from. They waited 24 hours, then seeing no sign of the mother they brought the squirrel to the Center. The family was graciously received, Pamela reported, and left feeling relief that the animal would receive care. "You guys are our heroes. One little life, but it means so much. In this crazy, often apathetic world, the Wildlife Center is an oasis of hope and we support and applaud you!"

Through their compassion the families in these stories made a positive difference, demonstrating a heartwarming level of concern for the small creatures they assisted. Hannah's mother and Pamela Nerney made the experiences something special for their children by encouraging the kids' involvement in these good deeds.



Shaped by such gentle and respectful encounters with wildlife the children will surely become more compassionate adults and all of us in the community, in our little corner of the world, will benefit.

For more information on San Jose Animal Care Advocates, please visit their website: www.sjanimaladvocates.org

No Room at the Predatory Mammal “Inn!”

By Bill Paker

Prior to the availability of a predatory mammal enclosure, the only available housing for coyotes and foxes brought to the WCSV was a bird enclosure or some other form of temporary structure. That solution was always inadequate because the bird enclosures were too small and unnatural for the mammals, and those enclosures could possibly contribute to cross-contamination of diseases between birds and mammals.

The Center acknowledged its need for an enclosure specifically for predatory mammals and in 2005 made plans to build one. This was communicated to the general public through an article in the San Jose Mercury News that generated almost \$13,000 from individual donors. An additional \$12,000 of funding was received from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The enclosure was completed in the spring of 2006.

Later that year, eight of the 11 coyotes received at the Center were housed in the new enclosure; the remaining three coyotes along with several foxes still had to be sheltered in bird enclosures.



Photo: Stephen Rosenthal

With the construction of this enclosure and the growing awareness of WCSV's expertise and capabilities in the rehabilitation of predatory mammals, the Center began to receive requests from neighboring wildlife rehabilitation facilities to accept some of their predatory mammals. By the end of 2008, it became clear the Center needed a second predatory mammal enclosure.

Once again, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved a \$12,000 grant to partially fund the new enclosure with the balance of the cost being received from individual donors. The structure, 50 feet long by 17 feet wide and 10 feet in height, was constructed in early spring 2010. Climbing structures were incorporated into the design because when foxes are housed in the enclosure, they like being above the surrounding terrain. The water source was constructed with a unique design that allows it to be emptied and refilled from outside the structure without disturbing the occupants. Lastly, native plants were added to enhance the naturalness of the environment.

Even before the structure was completed, the Center received two very small fox pups. They were placed in the enclosure as soon as the critical final touches were completed, and they developed very well in their surroundings and were released in early November in the east San Jose foothills. From now on, it seems, there will be room at the Predatory Mammal Inn.



Photo: Paula Massa

Annual Meeting

WCSV Annual Meeting

Thursday, Feb 17, 2011, 6:00pm

Sobrato Community

Conference Center, Bldg. 5

600 Valley Way, Milpitas, CA 95035

Annual Meeting Agenda

- Welcome
- Board Introductions
- 2010 Review
- 2011 Objectives and Challenges
- Open Discussion
- Appreciation and Close



Winging It for a Good Cause

September 18 was a warm and lovely day in the town of Saratoga and as evening approached, 80 guests and volunteers from the Center made their way through town to the slightly cooler foothills for a fundraiser. "Winging It at the Winery" was held this year at Savannah Channele, a perfect setting for guests to sample wines, enjoy good food, and participate in the silent

auction and raffles. Crowning the evening was the release at dusk of a rehabilitated Great Horned Owl, which popped its head up from the carrier then flew off to the forested hillside to shelter. The event raised over \$10,000. To all the guests, sponsors, donors and volunteers, the WCSV extends its warmest thanks, and an invitation to join us again next year!



Photo: Ashley Kinney

Wildlife Hotline

If you find a wild animal that needs assistance, secure it in a well-ventilated, paper towel-lined box and place it in a warm, dark and quiet place. Call the Center for advice. Trained staff and volunteers can assess the situation and determine what course of action to take. Please do not feed or handle the animal; every species has different dietary requirements and giving the wrong food can be detrimental.

408-929-WILD



**Help the Environment:
Please Recycle
This Newsletter**

Wild Turkey

What is four feet long from bill to tail, has a highly developed social system, and dark glossy plumage? The Wild Turkey, of course! One of the larger birds we see at the Center, turkeys are the only North American animal widely domesticated, though they also exist in the wild. Able to fly short distances, they roost in trees in the evening. They were once abundant through much of the continent, and in fact almost became our national emblem, losing out by one vote in congress to the Bald Eagle.

WCSV cares for a number of Wild Turkeys each year. This summer we received an adult female with a severe head injury after a compassionate person noticed that she was unable to stand and alerted San Jose Animal Control. The initial exam revealed she was highly stressed and had difficulty

breathing. She was well-nourished but lethargic and off balance, with cloudiness in one eye. Her head injury was so deep that her skull was exposed, but fortunately there was no fracture. Fluids were administered and her wound was cleaned. She was given pain medication and antibiotics. For the first week she was tube-fed a nutritional supplement and received physical therapy on her legs.

A volunteer who cares for the bird says it especially enjoys eating corn on the cob.

After one week she was more alert and was able to stand. After three weeks she was moved outside, and soon transferred to an aviary at the home of one of our volunteers. So far, the cloudiness in her eye has not improved, but her



Photo: Ann Jeghers

vision does not appear to be affected. Ann Jeghers, a volunteer, says the bird especially loves eating corn on the cob. She is very wild, and gets highly stressed when Ann approaches to feed her or clean her enclosure. Once the turkey has regained full health, she will be released in a local park, where a Wild Turkey flock makes their home.

Gray Fox

In mid-April a very small Gray Fox arrived at our Center. He was found at Yerba Buena Park by a caring individual who noticed that he was in distress. Not sure if he was a puppy, the person took him to Evergreen Vet Clinic where he was treated for shock. Determining that this was a wild mammal the clinic brought him to WCSV. Quick action by the veterinary staff, giving the fox kit supplemental oxygen and subcutaneous fluids before transporting him to our Center, may have saved his life.

Quick action by the veterinary staff may have saved his life.

Upon intake, Ashley Kinney, Wildlife Rehabilitation Supervisor, determined he was a mildly underweight four week-old male in a state of severe depression and covered in fleas. In addition, he was dehydrated and severely anemic. More fluids were administered and he was treated for fleas and given anti-inflammatory medication. To minimize stress he was initially kept in isolation, an environment with low stimulation. For the

first three days, he was lethargic and paid no attention to anyone cleaning his bedding or feeding him. However, he responded well to treatment and improved rapidly. On the fourth day he was running around in the kennel and nipping at people. In other words, he was acting like a fox!

Meanwhile, a female fox kit had also arrived at WCSV. To make sure no diseases would be transmitted, the little female – like all predatory mammals at WCSV – was kept in quarantine for fifteen days. Once that time had passed the



Photo: Ashley Kinney

two foxes were slowly introduced to each other to be raised as littermates. After some initial hesitation and aggression, the two got along very well and even curled up together to take naps.

In nature, fox kits become independent of their mother at five to seven months of age, which coincides with mid-October to early November. Having received approval from the California Department of Fish and Game, the foxes were released together in early November in the east San Jose foothills. Although the kits were released together, foxes are solitary animals. As with true littermates, each will ultimately go its own way.

WCSV would like to thank Evergreen Vet Clinic for their contribution to the successful rehabilitation of this Gray Fox. We would also like to thank the compassionate individuals who saw the distress in these animals and took the time to get them help.

With Heartfelt Thanks



The Wildlife Center is deeply indebted to the following organizations and individuals for their generous support of the work we do. Their financial contributions have made it possible for the WCSV to improve the quality of care we provide to the many animals that pass through our doors each year.



IBM Corporation – Responding to the need for a new educational bird enclosure, IBM employee Marian Sadowski obtained a \$1,500 grant from the company. IBM's generosity paid for the enclosure which is now home to Olive the Owl, the Center's newest educational animal (see related story on page 11).



PG&E – For the third consecutive year, PG&E demonstrated its commitment to the environment by awarding a grant to the Center. This year it generously increased the amount of the grant to \$2,000.



Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Seeking organizations that share their goal of achieving "significant, lasting and measurable results in environmental conservation," the Foundation gifted the Center with \$10,000. The funds are unrestricted so the Center will be able to apply them where they are most needed.



Thelma Doelger Trust for Animals
Another of the Center's partners, the Thelma Doelger Trust for Animals, solidly endorsed the Center with an extraordinarily generous \$50,000 grant, the largest the WCSV has ever received.



In addition to the organizations above, the Center gratefully acknowledges all those whose gifts of time and money have helped the WCSV to thrive and grow dramatically during the past year. Every donation we receive enables us to care for the many animals that depend on us to give them a second chance.



Join eScrip and Help the Animals While You Shop!

At **eScrip Online Mall**, shop at hundreds of name-brand merchants and earn up to 10% or more.

Rewards Network earns WCSV 5% of your purchases at thousands of participating restaurants throughout the United States and Canada.

Safeway Shoppers
Earn up to 4% when you shop at Safeway or safeway.com.

Macy's
When you use your Macy's card or shop at macys.com, earn 2-6% on qualified purchases.

Visit www.escrip.com and indicate you want to support the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley.

Every gift makes a significant difference!!

This is what it costs to feed our patients for one week

\$5 Songbirds, waterbirds, and opossums

\$10 Raccoons

\$15 Squirrels

\$35 Hawks and Owls

\$70 Foxes

\$100-\$150 Bobcats and Coyotes



Olive, the Educational Western Screech Owl

By Jen Constantin

On March 6 of this year, San Jose Animal Care and Services transported an injured nestling Western Screech Owl to the WCSV. They were responding to notification from a concerned Los Gatos resident who found the young owl on the ground at the base of



Photo: Dave Constantin

a tree; she had somehow fallen from her nest cavity and fractured her left leg. Dr. Curt Nakamura at Adobe Animal Hospital completed a radiograph and carefully splinted and wrapped her leg, but after two months he confirmed that she would not be releasable. The leg fracture was in the worst possible place, the growth plate. Despite the splints, the bird's leg healed at a distinct inward angle and slightly shorter than her right leg – a combination that prevents her from hunting and ultimately being successful in the wild.

However, the owl's inquisitive nature, age, and injury made her an excellent candidate for the Center's Education Program which includes "animal ambassadors" in presentations that help spread awareness about the plight of local wildlife. Taking advantage of the opportunity to offer this young screech owl an alternative lifestyle rather than none at all, we began the

process called manning (indoctrinating her to human sights and sounds, unnatural in a wild setting).

Manning can only be done with non-releasable birds because it essentially socializes them to people. The best way to do this is in a home care setting, and so off Olive went to live in the spare bedroom of my apartment. The room, of course, had to be "owl-proofed." The bird had to have a large carrier to spend a good part of the day in, but needed the freedom to fly around the room at night when she would naturally be most active. She took to all of this remarkably well, exploring the room more and more each evening, gaining great flight strength even with human company.

The owl's inquisitive nature made her an excellent candidate for the Education Program.

Despite her misfortune in the wild, this owl had an auspicious start in captivity. Following a few months in home care, it was clear she had the necessary temperament for an educational bird and she needed a proper home. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game have very strict housing

requirements and living standards for licensed educational animals. WCSV's own amazing volunteer, Bill Paker, rose to yet another challenge and went to work designing a proper enclosure down to the last detail. We were just missing one very important component, the money to build it! Working with Marian Sadowski, a long time supporter of the Wildlife Center and IBM employee, we were able to secure a \$1,500 grant from IBM to build the enclosure. And in no time, Bill had crafted a gorgeous screech owl aviary at WCSV!

With Olive adjusting to her new home, we had to continue the manning process – glove training and jessing (acclimating the bird to a short strap fastened around its leg). Thanks to the extensive knowledge, incredible generosity, and exhaustive time commitment of Dorothy Johnson of the Youth Science Institute, this process has been going amazingly well.

For more information on IBM's philanthropic program, please visit them online at <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives/grant/giving/>.



Jen Constantin with Olive.

Photo: Ashley Kinney



Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley

A Rehabilitation, Release
& Educational Facility

3027 Penitencia Creek Road
San Jose, CA 95132



Photo: Dave Constantin

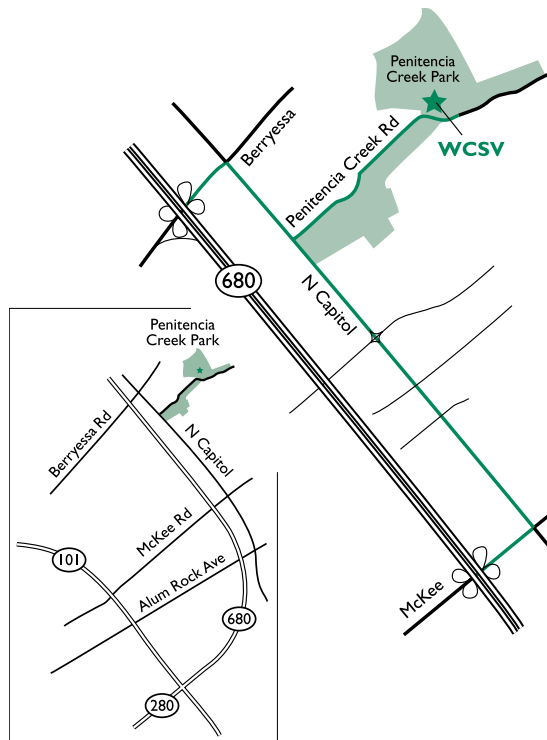
Find more Center highlights
including news, photos and
success stories on our website
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Photo: Stephen Rosenthal

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