

# Tracks



Volume 12  
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Spring 2006



*cover photo: Janet Alexander*

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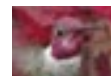
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# From the President...

Happy Spring! We hope you find this issue of Tracks full of interesting and informative articles. Many things have happened around the Center since our last publication, and inside this newsletter you can read all about them. We have built a new predatory mammal enclosure, which means we will be able to give coyotes, bobcats and foxes very high-quality care. We have also recently hired a part-time animal care assistant to help our animal care coordinator direct 150 volunteers in caring for 5,000 animals each year. One of our proudest achievements of 2005 was in raising, with the help of our generous and caring members, more than \$5,000 to help rebuild two wildlife centers that were destroyed during Hurricane Katrina. In addition, in this first issue of the year, we provide our financial report and animal intake logs for 2005.

We accomplished a lot last year, and we hope to make 2006 equally productive. We plan to improve existing animal enclosures, offer more classes both for our volunteers as well as for the public, begin translating educational materials into other languages to reach a broader audience, and to try at all times to be a voice for the animals.

All of these goals will take money. Have you ever thought about all of the good that WCSV does in the valley, and wished you were able to increase your donation to WCSV? How would you like to make more funds available for our worthwhile programs in a way that won't cost you a cent? A variety of opportunities are available that make giving painless. WCSV is registered with both eScrip and iGive.com. Once you enroll with them, every time you shop, they donate a portion of your sales to us.



*Kathleen Cahill, President*

## Here's how it works

**eScrip** Go to [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com) and register your Safeway card or credit cards, select WCSV as your cause, and every time you use those cards, a percentage goes to us. Already registered with eScrip? That's okay! You can be registered for up to three charities or schools.

**iGive** "Online shopping for good." iGive works differently than eScrip. If you are a fan of purchasing items online, then iGive is for you! Almost 450 stores have registered with iGive. Just use it as your gateway to all online purchases, and WCSV sees the benefit. Stores donate 2%, 5%, 10% or even more, and include Barnes and Noble, Dell, CompUSA, Eddie Bauer, Lands' End, PETCO, The Body Shop, Tower Records, and many more! To register, go to [www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com).

Confidentiality is completely protected at both sites, and they will not sell your name. Last year, WCSV earned more than \$7,000 with eScrip alone. Just think how much good you can help us do if you sign up! Thank you, and happy reading!



# Tracks... ↓ ↓

**Tracks** is the newsletter for the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley. Submit photos and articles to Janet Alexander at [janet@wcsv.org](mailto:janet@wcsv.org) for consideration.

## 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

President: Kathleen Cahill  
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Director of City Relations: Marci Hayden  
Education Coordinator: Trudi Burney  
Animal Care Coordinator: Carmel de Bertaut  
Operations Assistant: Frances Ruiz  
Animal Care Assistant: Ashley Kinney



*Fox Squirrel  
Shelley Stratton*



## Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*

are orioles' nests, which are much larger.) The opening at the top is connected via a tunnel to the bowl-shaped chamber at the bottom where the eggs are laid. This impressive structure can take anywhere from two weeks to two months for the pair to construct! In some areas of the country, such as Arizona, non-breeding helpers will assist the pair with nest building, but this behavior has not been observed in California.

Bushtits adapt well to urban settings and can be seen year-round in many yards and parks throughout the Bay Area. They serve a beneficial role by helping to keep pests under control; most of their diet is small insects that they find on plants, and you will often see them hanging upside down to get at the underside of leaves. If you're lucky enough to have a bushtit pair nest in your yard, make every effort not to disturb the area since bushtits are easily bothered during nest building and incubation, often abandoning their nests to start from scratch elsewhere.



# Who Am I?

by Shira Gruhl

What is small, brownish grey with a long tail and extremely gregarious? A bushtit! These tiny birds are just slightly larger than a hummingbird and travel in large flocks ranging from a dozen to sixty or more individuals. Males and females are similar in appearance but can be distinguished up close by their eye color; females have pale cream eyes while males have dark brown eyes.

They might not be striking to look at, but like with so many little brown birds, there is more than first meets the eye. These birds have a fascinating social life, whose dynamics remain largely a mystery. Studies indicate that flocks are made up of family groups that stay together from year to year. One function of the flock is to help individuals survive cold nights-- a matter of life and death when you only weigh five grams (the weight of two pennies). Unlike the similarly sized hummingbird, which enters a torpor - a mini-hibernation - after dark, bushtits use their numbers to stay warm by huddling together and thus conserve enough energy to survive until morning.

These little birds also have the distinction of building a rather unusual nest. Their sock-shaped, foot-long nest, which is made out of a variety of soft materials— moss, grass, leaves, bits of paper— and held together by spider webs, typically hangs 4-25 feet above the ground. (The only other nests that reassemble this in our area

Bushtit young are notoriously difficult to raise in rehabilitation due to their small size at hatching. They are about the size of a bumblebee. For this reason, please call the Center before intervening on the behalf of a nestling or fledgling bushtit as every effort should be made to re-unite them with their parents before removing them from the wild. In addition, many of the nestlings and fledglings that are brought in to the Center have been cat-caught, so it is a good idea to keep outdoor cats inside if at all possible while there are active nests in your neighborhood.



If you want to see a bushtit nest up close, feel free to stop by the Center and visit our display in the lobby. We have two bushtit nests as part of our collection, and the staff would be happy to point them out to you. Who knows, once you've seen one nest, you might start to see them everywhere!

**Come and see us...  
we're online!**

**[www.wcsv.org](http://www.wcsv.org)**



The Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley is online and available to everyone. With information about what you can do to help wildlife in your area to animal descriptions to frequently asked questions, this site has it all. There is even a kid's section devoted to helping children learn about the natural world in which they live.

In addition, this newsletter will be available for download in Adobe PDF format.

# WCSV Welcomes Two New Staff Members

by Janet Alexander

Spring has sprung and times are a-changing!

Frances Ruiz joined the WCSV staff in late February as our new Operations Assistant. She replaces Mika Snowbarger, who is leaving us to continue her educational pursuits.



Frances earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Communications with a minor in Pre-Law and Spanish Language at California State University of Monterey Bay. She is very interested and deeply concerned about the struggles faced by wildlife preservation efforts and is eager to contribute her varied skills to help. She also possesses a strong desire to work in the non-profit industry to further her career. We are very glad to have Frances on our team.

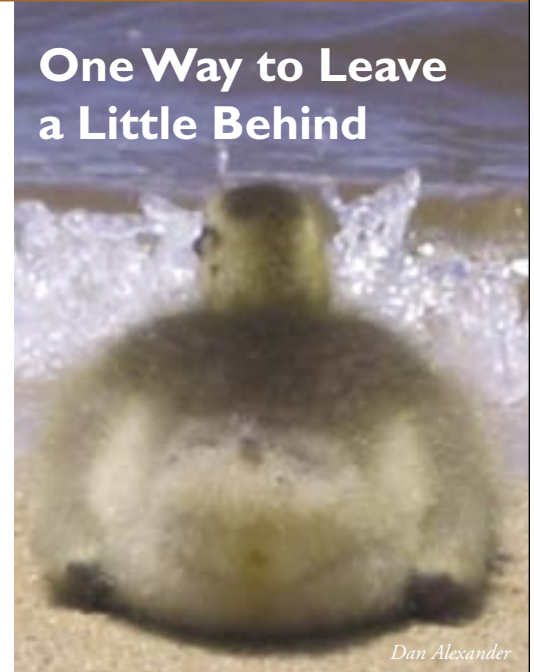
WCSV is pleased to add an Animal Care Assistant to our roster of staff members. This is currently a part-time seasonal position with the hope that it will grow to a year-round one as finances allow. We welcome long-time volunteer Ashley Kinney as our newest staff member. Ashley has been a WCSV volunteer since 2002, providing hands-on animal care and



husbandry for patients at the Center. She has also gained animal care experience volunteering at Youth Science Institute at Alum Rock Park caring for non-releasable educational animals for the last several years. Ashley hopes to enroll in Foothill College's Veterinary Technology program. We are delighted to have Ashley join our animal care staff.



## One Way to Leave a Little Behind



Dan Alexander

None of us knows what the future holds. It's hard to think about. We do know that our precious wildlife needs to be protected or future generations won't have it to appreciate. Won't you please consider us in your will or trust? Your contribution can be a way to continue giving if you include WCSV in your will or estate plan. You can rest easy knowing that you've made a difference for the local animals!

# Bill Paker Wins Junior League Crystal Bowl Award

by Patricia Abreu

William Paker, our 2005 WCSV Volunteer of the Year, makes a difference every day with each animal that he helps, with every injured wing that he wraps, with every meal that he prepares for the animals. In addition to these thousands of acts of kindness, Bill makes lasting improvements that affect every volunteer and every animal that comes through our doors.

Selected as WCSV's 2005 Volunteer of the Year, Bill was one of the 15 individuals chosen for a 2006 Crystal Bowl Award from the Junior League of San Jose. Bill was chosen from out of 130 nominations of outstanding community volunteers for the 37th Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon (VRL). He embodies the theme of this year's VRL as he is a dedicated, compassionate man of vision and action. Bill has proven to be an indispensable, devoted volunteer who is creating a legacy at WCSV.

Last year he clocked well over 600 volunteer hours working with the wildlife at the WCSV as an Animal Care Supervisor. In addition to working with the wildlife, Bill takes on the job of managing the facilities. Bill takes pride in the Center and uses his many skills and talents to make major improvements. If Bill sees something that needs to be done, he gets it done.

Often Bill works with volunteer Joe Pollick on construction projects (so often that other volunteers fondly refer to them as P & P Construction). In 2005 we had a record number of healthy, juvenile raccoons. Bill designed an additional enclosure and on a small budget of \$1,200 he and Joe built the enclosure in a week. The temperature never dropped below 95 degrees that week, but the two of them constructed the much-needed enclosure for 40 young raccoons in record time, in record heat. Joe says, "When Bill invites me to join him on a project, I feel honored and it brings out the best in me because I don't want to let him down. I guess you could say he inspires me to better things."

Bill spent hours designing and building the countertops and tables that everyone at the Center uses every day. He also dedicated many hours to retrofitting the roofs on existing enclosures so that rain would not leak on the animals. Says Joe, "When I see him, I feel like smiling. I'm not sure if it is his infectious smile or his easy attitude, but he brightens my day. I always look forward to working with Bill because he is such a pleasure to work with, even when we both are staring at each other and scratching our heads about whether tab C goes into slot A or B."

Bill drove an injured waterbird to the International Bird Rescue Research Center (IBRRC), in Fairfield, for specialized care. While there, he saw that they had custom-built boxes for raising ducks and he thought, "I can make some of those." So he did. We now have a dozen duck boxes that are easy to clean, that are uniform (so the heat lamps are the proper distance from the ducklings), that have slotted floors that allow water and waste to fall through and that are safe for the ducks' feet, and that we can easily move around. Most years we take care of 500 ducklings in the spring and the little ones are all raised in Bill's custom duck boxes, making life better for the ducks and for the volunteers cleaning up after them.

Bill is someone who looks for work and who does not sit still. He is an active man with many interests (such as cooking) and a large family which includes five daughters, seven grandsons and one granddaughter. For years he worked as cost accountant for firms such as Atari and Sun, retiring from work in May of 2000. Rather than take it easy, he immediately started doing volunteer work joining WCSV the very month that he retired. His beloved wife died in March of 2002 after a valiant struggle with cancer; Bill was with her every step of her hard journey. Volunteer Billie Zwolinski says, "Bill is an excellent teacher who loves to teach, and he has an amazing sense of humor which makes him fun to work with."

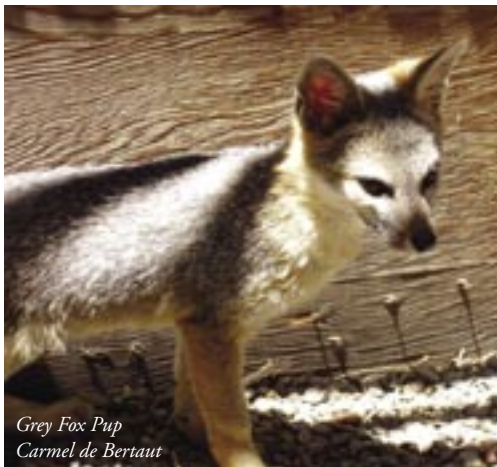
Janet Alexander, Director of Operations, says, "Not only is Bill an excellent Animal Care Supervisor, but he is always looking for ways to improve our site — whether it is fixing an enclosure, building boxes for ducklings or squirrels, or drawing up plans for new aviaries. I always look to Bill for his expertise and good advice for improving our Center."

Carmel de Bertaut, the Animal Care Coordinator at WCSV, agrees: "There is nothing Bill will not do. He is always there when he is needed whether it is to help with animal care or to help with facilities. Time and time again Bill has gone above and beyond for WCSV."

When asked recently what motivates him to come back day after day, Bill paused and said, "Why do I come back every day? There's a red-shouldered hawk in Building C who is alive today because of what I did for him yesterday. I made him comfortable and gave him a chance."

Bill Paker makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of people and thousands of wild animals in Silicon Valley. As friend and co-worker Joe Pollick says, "Bill is industrious, energetic, and forward-thinking. The animals don't know how lucky they are to have Bill on their side."





Grey Fox Pup  
Carmel de Bertaut

# Update: Predatory Mammal Enclosure

We didn't waste any time making arrangements for the contractors to begin. On March 1, 2006, Supervisor Pete McHugh and Santa Clara County Parks Director Lisa Killough joined staff and volunteers for a groundbreaking ceremony at the Center. When the speeches ended, the digging began! The crew worked almost non-stop for several days and got the fencing erected quickly, despite the stormy weather and very muddy conditions. The enclosure has two large rooms that can be divided by a sliding gate to separate species (or opened to integrate a larger family of the same species). There is even a small "introduction chamber" where a lone animal can acclimate while being able to smell and view others in the larger room.

approving a grant of \$12,000 to help pay for materials and construction of the addition to the site, and to all the generous donors who contributed to the Predatory Mammal Fund to make this happen. And-- this project would not have been possible to complete without the very generous help of volunteers Bill Paker and Joe Pollick who designed, planned and implemented this project. Our thanks cannot be overstated.

by Janet Alexander

After a long and tedious approval process, we finally got the go-ahead from both the County of Santa Clara and the City of San Jose to commence building the much needed and much anticipated predatory mammal enclosure.

As we go to print, we actually have a fox and a coyote waiting to be our very first tenants (see Rehab Corner for their stories)!



From left to right: Lisa Killough, Joe Pollick, Bill Paker and Supervisor Pete McHugh at groundbreaking ceremony. Photo: Carmel de Bertaut

Volunteer Bill Paker quickly put together two dens (one for each side of the enclosure). We ordered and installed several boulders for some natural habitat. Next steps are to build a recirculating pond inside for a watering hole and some trees and shrubs will be planted inside to make it comfortable and to act as natural hiding spots for the animals.

We are ever so grateful to Supervisor Pete McHugh for



Carmel de Bertaut

Supervisor Pete McHugh

## Wish List

Your help in acquiring these items would be greatly appreciated. Remember your generous donations are tax deductible.

### Equipment

- Heating pads (no auto shutoff please)
- Heat lamps
- Digital scales
- Baby bird incubator
- Pentium 4 or newer computers
- Flat screen monitors
- Laptops
- Projector

### Basics

- Copier paper
- Laundry detergent
- Unscented tissue
- Zip-loc baggies (any size)
- Paper towels
- Bleach (no UltraClorox)
- 15, 33-gal garbage bags
- Distilled water
- Canned cat food
- Bird seed - wild bird, finch, niger, plain millet
- Raw peanuts (in shell)
- Walnuts (in shell or chopped)
- Fresh/frozen whole fish



House Sparrow  
www.jbcphotos.com

# Katrina: What's happened to your donations?

By Leslie Larson

Last September we were all horrified at the damage done to the Gulf Coast. Wanting to do something to help, WCSV pledged to donate a percentage of contributions raised in our fall 2005 appeal letter to sister wildlife organizations hit by Katrina.

Your overwhelming generosity raised an amazing \$50,800 for both our local wildlife and for Katrina victims. In January, we mailed checks to two organizations in desperate need. This is an update on how your money is being spent.

## WRANPS

Wildlife Rehabilitation and Nature Preservation Society, the oldest and largest wildlife rescue organization in Mississippi, was utterly destroyed by Katrina's 42-foot coastal storm surge that hit just west of their center. Several volunteers died when they attempted, unbeknownst to anyone, to shelter at the center and protect the animals. Most animals were lost in the storm, including three teaching animals. Facilities, enclosures and records were all swept away. In addition, every board member and many volunteers experienced moderate to total destruction of their homes.

Devastation on this scale can hardly be imagined, but regrouping and recovery efforts have started. WRANPS and good Samaritan volunteers from several other local organizations have been salvaging whatever they can, using backhoes, trailers, chains and chainsaws. WRANPS was in the process of moving to a new location when Katrina hit. Now, while picking up the pieces of their own lives, WRANPS volunteers will build a new facility from scratch on state property under the aegis of the Mississippi Commission on Wildlife.

The money that was donated to WRANPS will help buy the storage buildings, clinic equipment, clinic supplies, furnishings, office equipment, cages, food and medical supplies needed to get up and running again. The board and volunteers of WRANPS would like you to know how grateful they are for your support and they send their heartfelt thanks for your generosity.

## WCRC

While wildlife rehab centers north of Jackson, Mississippi, far away from the coast, fared reasonably well, Wildlife Care and Rescue, Inc., in Biloxi, was hit full force. Alison Sharpe, the driving force behind WCRC, lost everything – her home and everything in it. She had 23 enclosures, only two of which survived in dilapidated condition. The hospital building stands but is not in good shape. A FEMA inspector indicates that many of the buildings are growing black mold, which is a serious health issue and may render the few places left standing uninhabitable.

Alison wants everyone to know how touched she is to hear that so many people care and are willing to help her rebuild WCRC.



*WRANPS after Katrina hit*



*890th Seabee Squadron backhoe salvage*



*Because commercial fishing inside the barrier islands has not resumed, habitats are largely undisturbed and abundant fish and invertebrates are available for these soon-to-be-released river otters.*

# 2005 Annual Report

## Native Birds

Acorn Woodpecker	5
Allen's Hummingbird	2
American Bittern	1
American Coot	7
American Crow	237
American Goldfinch	10
American Kestrel	12
American Robin	78
Anna's Hummingbird	125
Band-tailed Pigeon	14
Barn Swallow	1
Bewick's Wren	4
Black Phoebe	15
Black-capped Chickadee	1
Black-chinned Sparrow	1
Black-crowned Night Heron	4
Black-headed Grosbeak	4
Brandt's Cormorant	3
Brewer's Blackbird	27
Brown-headed Cowbird	27
Bullock's Oriole	21
Burrowing Owl	1
Bushtit	60
California Gull	27
California Quail	11
California Towhee	64
Canada Goose	30
Cedar Waxwing	9
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	12
Cliff Swallow	39
Common Barn Owl	51
Common Merganser	2
Common Raven	2
Common Snipe	1
Cooper's Hawk	46
Dark-eyed Junco	10
Double-crested Cormorant	5
Downy Woodpecker	1
Dusky-capped Flycatcher	1
Eared Grebe	2
Fox Sparrow	6
Glaucous-winged Gull	2
Golden-crowned Sparrow	9
Great Blue Heron	1
Great Egret	4
Great-horned Owl	7
Green Heron	4
Hermit Thrush	6
Herring Gull	1
House Finch	299
Killdeer	8
Lawrence's Goldfinch	6

Lesser Goldfinch	40
Mallard	345
Merlin	2
Mew Gull	4
Mourning Dove	496
Northern Flicker	6
Northern Fulmar	1
Northern Mockingbird	125
Northern Pintail	1
Northern Pygmy Owl	1
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	1
Northern Shoveler	1
Nuttall's Woodpecker	6
Oak Titmouse	9
Orchard Oriole	1
Peregrine Falcon	2
Pied-billed Grebe	2
Pine Siskin	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	29
Red-tailed Hawk	22
Red-winged Blackbird	2
Ring-billed Gull	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Rufous Hummingbird	1
Savannah Sparrow	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6
Short-billed Dowitcher	1
Snowy Egret	3
Sora	1
Spotted Towhee	3
Steller's Jay	3
Swainson's Hawk	2
Swainson's Thrush	1
Tree Swallow	1
Turkey Vulture	4
Unidentified Duck	4
Unidentified Songbird	5
Unidentified Swallow	1
Varied Thrush	1
Vaux's Swift	6
Virginia Rail	1
Western Bluebird	1
Western Gull	1
Western Screech Owl	14
Western Scrub Jay	101
Western Tanager	3
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
White-tailed Kite	2
White-throated Swift	8
Wild Turkey	6
Wilson's Warbler	1
Winter Wren	1
Yellow-billed Magpie	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>2625</b>

## Mammals

Black-tailed Deer	23
Black-tailed Jackrabbit	10
Bobcat	2
Brush Rabbit	9
California Ground Squirrel	49
Cottontail Rabbit	8
Coyote	3
Deer Mouse	2
Domestic Rabbit	3
Domestic Rodent	2
Eastern Fox Squirrel	101
Eastern Gray Squirrel	502
Field Mouse	23
Gray Fox	8
Hoary Bat	2
Mexican Free-tailed Bat	13
Pallid Bat	1
Pocket Gopher	12
Raccoon	105
Red Fox	3
Roof Rat	13
Striped Skunk	8
Townsend's Gopher	1
Townsend's Mole	1
Unidentified Mouse	7
Unidentified Rabbit	1
Unidentified Rat	10
Unidentified Rodent	1
Unidentified Squirrel	29
Virginia Opossum	399
Western Gray Squirrel	2
Wood Rat	1
Yuma Bat	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1355</b>

## Reptiles

Western Pond Turtle	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>

## Domestic/Exotic

Chukar	2
Domestic Chicken	4
Domestic Dove	30
Domestic Duck	17
Domestic Finch	1
Domestic Goose	3
Domestic Pigeon	418
Domestic Quail	13
European Starling	69
Guinea Pig	1
House Sparrow	287
Peafowl	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	1
Unidentified Domestic Bird	1
Unidentified Hybrid Duck	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>850</b>

**GRAND TOTAL 4831**



# 2005 Financial Overview

## INCOME

Aggressive fundraising tactics including membership drives, direct mail appeals and special events made 2005 a successful year for WCSV.

Direct Mail	\$48,734.25
City Funding	99,783.10 *
eScrip	6,964.07
Events	27,159.00
Grants	5,730.00
Interest	1,169.10
Donations & Membership	117,657.85
Merchandise	1,534.99
Restricted Funds	27,964.43
Education Fees	470.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$337,166.79</b>

\*120,476 contracted for, but the date payments are received doesn't always correspond to WCSV's exact fiscal year.

## EXPENSES

In the midst of economic challenges WCSV continued its services by expense analysis and reduction, investigating pro-bono assistance, and seeking avenues of potential shared resources.

Programs*	\$141,884.99 (51%)
	(Education: 53,512.26)
	(Wildlife Care: 88,372.73)
Support Services	84,909.69 (30%)
Fundraising	53,059.95 (19%)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$279,854.63</b>

\*Education and Wildlife Care

**NET INCOME \$57,312.16**

**Education:** Wildlife Awareness Day, education and outreach program, Tracks, literature, phone education

**Wildlife Care:** Food, medical supplies, direct animal care, enclosures

**Support Services:** Accounting, administration, office supplies and equipment, human resources, insurance, building maintenance

**Fundraising:** Events, city funding, merchandise, direct mail

## Impounds by City

The Wildlife Center does not limit its cases to native or uncommon wildlife. Each animal throughout the county is given equal respect and care with the goal of a healthy release back into local habitat.

City	%
Campbell	3.6%
Cupertino	3.8%
Los Gatos	4.2%
Milpitas	3.1%
Monte Sereno	--
San Jose	55%
Santa Clara	6.3%
Saratoga	2%
Sunnyvale	4.4%
Other	17.8%

## Phone Support

WCSV receives thousands of phone calls each year concerning wildlife issues. Staff is available seven days a week to help with inquiries ranging from nuisance complaints and potential rescues, to species specific questions. After hours, calls are monitored and supported by volunteers.

City	%
Campbell	4%
Cupertino	5%
Los Gatos	4%
Milpitas	3%
Monte Sereno	1%
San Jose	63%
Santa Clara	6%
Saratoga	3%
Sunnyvale	5%
Other	6%

## Employer Matching Programs for Charitable Contributions

Employer matching programs are a great way to boost your donation to the Wildlife Center. Check today to see if your company offers such a program. It's a great way to double your donation!



Scrub Jay  
Carmel de Bertaut

## Many Thanks!

We cannot continue our efforts without the help of the public, the cities we serve and especially our volunteers, who provide care and medical attention to the thousands of sick, injured and orphaned animals each year.



by Carmel de Bertaut

Well, we are having a slow start to our spring/summer season this year. To date we have received young hummingbirds, squirrels, ducks, opossums, hares and rabbits. We expect to see young songbirds, birds of prey and predatory mammals in the next month.

But in the meantime, adult predatory mammals have been keeping us busy. On February 25<sup>th</sup> we received an adult coyote with a fractured radius and ulna. We applied a splint and treated her with antibiotics and antiparasitics. She has responded well to treatment and is now being housed in a small enclosure. We will be getting her into a larger one soon so she can work the injured leg and build the muscles back up.

On March 20<sup>th</sup> we received a grey fox. She was admitted with several badly infected puncture wounds that appeared to be dog bites. She was very weak and thin but after a week of flushing her wounds and antibiotic treatment she is now on the road to recovery. Free of infection, she is feeling better and has become quite feisty! We will keep her indoors for a while until she builds back up some fat reserves and can better tolerate low temperatures.

Other adults admitted over the winter months have been screech owls, Cooper's hawks, a peregrine falcon, raccoons and a hypothermic (extremely cold) skunk— who has recovered and will be released by the time we go to print.

Finally, by the time you are reading this we will be on 30-minute feeding schedules and 12-hour days as hungry young songbirds await their meals!



Great Egret  
Carmel de Bertaut

## Tips for Spring

by Shira Gruhl

With the arrival of spring, there are many things you can do to make your yard and neighborhood a more hospitable place for wildlife. Some things, such as not trimming trees and bushes until fall to avoid bringing down bird and squirrel nests, will have a direct impact on those animals that share your property with you. Others, like reducing pesticide use, will have more far reaching effects by improving the health of the whole Bay Area ecosystem.

Here are a few more ideas for ways to help wild animals:

### Do ...

**Consider growing native plants in your garden.** Native plants are the local cuisine of Silicon Valley's wildlife so they are a welcome addition for everything from butterflies to birds. For more information on what to get and where to get it, visit the website of the California Native Plant Society (<http://www.cnps.org/>).

**Clean your birdfeeders and birdbaths regularly.** Birdbaths that aren't emptied daily are potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus. There is also strong evidence linking the spread of salmonellosis (a bacterial disease that can kill birds and other animals) to dirty and overcrowded feeders. If you don't have time to clean your birdfeeders yourself, you can take them to The Wild Bird Center of Los Gatos, which offers a wonderful program on Mondays and Thursdays that lets you drop off your birdfeeders for a professional cleaning in return for a donation to one of several charities including WCSV.

**Try not to disturb nests - observe from a distance;** if at all possible keep outdoor cats inside for a few days when there is an active nest or newly fledged youngster in your neighborhood; keep dogs on leash in public parks. Many species become stressed when they are disturbed by humans or domestic animals and may abandon their nests entirely. For more info go to [www.abcbirds.org/cats/](http://www.abcbirds.org/cats/) for ideas on how to transition your cat to an indoor cat.

**Pick up litter** - especially fishing lines, lures and hooks - because this waste can be eaten by or become entangled with wild animals.



## Don't ...

**Don't pick up wild animals without first calling WCSV for advice on the specific situation.** It is normal for many young birds to spend their first few days away from the nest exploring under their parents' careful protection - even if you don't see the parents, there is a good chance they are around somewhere or will be back soon! If you get our voice mail listen carefully to the suggestions and if your question isn't answered please leave a message so we can get back to you as soon as possible.

**Don't drain your backyard pool or spa into the street** - whose storm drains flow directly to the bay - because pools contain contaminants that can harm wildlife in the ocean. Instead, use a sump pump to drain your pool into your sanitary sewer cleanout (or your bathtub). Also, don't rinse filters where the run-off will flow into the street. For more information call the San Jose environmental services at (408) 945-3000.

**Don't throw away toxic waste.** Many people don't know that it is now illegal to throw away computers in California because of the heavy metals found in them. Other commonly discarded toxic waste includes fluorescent lights (which contain mercury), batteries, paints and car oil. To schedule an appointment with Santa Clara's free county household hazardous waste disposal program call (408) 299-7300. All of these toxins directly affect wildlife.

**Don't use products that are poisonous to animals.** In particular, if you are going to put out chemicals to keep snails and slugs off your plants, use a chemical with iron as its active ingredient, not one containing the more toxic metaldehydes which can kill wildlife and domestic animals. Pesticides are toxic not only to insects that cause harm to your garden, but also to children, pets, wildlife, and beneficial insects. For more information please visit the Environmental Protection Agency's website at [www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm). click on "Household IPM" under Quick Resources, and then scroll down the page to Quick Finder and click on "Around the House."

by Trudi Burney

I've got exciting news to share about our outreach programs but first I'd like to summarize 2005 for you. Last year we:



- Visited over 60 venues and reached over 12,000 people
- Developed three new presentations including raptors, deer and mountain lions
- Met with Santa Clara County's Vector Control to collaborate efforts towards wildlife co-existence
- Established a mailing database to broaden our program reach, and
- Attended and presented to many venues concerning coyote truths and myths

Now for the big news! For the past four years, we've had limited resources to improve our outreach materials. Our "booth" has been limited to a table, chair, some brochures and a few exhibits. It has served us well but we really needed major improvements in order to make an impact at our events. In 2005, we applied for a grant from the Bill Graham Foundation to overhaul our outreach booth. I'm pleased to report our grant was approved and we are now in the process of producing a portable booth kit. The kit unfolds into a permanent display outlining our mission, educational programs and rehabilitation work. In addition, we've designed freestanding banners with images of our animal cases and the cycle of rehabilitation. And finally, all our printed materials will be organized into a standing literature holder. All booth elements are portable and professional looking. We will be unveiling our new look at upcoming spring venues. Please come check us out! Many thanks to Karen Tanner and Lisa Biakanja for their design work and the Bill Graham Foundation for the much needed funds to make this happen.



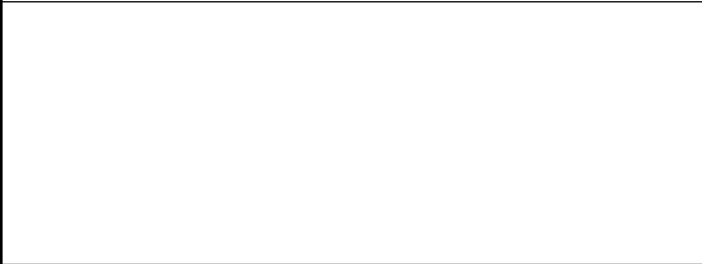


**Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley**  
**A Rehabilitation, Release & Educational Facility**  
 3027 Penitencia Creek Road • San Jose, CA 95132

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*Dan Alexander*



## *Jewels in Flight*

Help WCSV help our local wildlife, one animal at a time

*Saturday, May 13, 11am - 2:30pm*  
*Private home in the San Jose foothills*

*Buffet brunch among the hummingbirds*  
*Hummingbird release and fun activities*

*Hummingbird plant sale, silent auction and unique*  
*Mother's Day items*

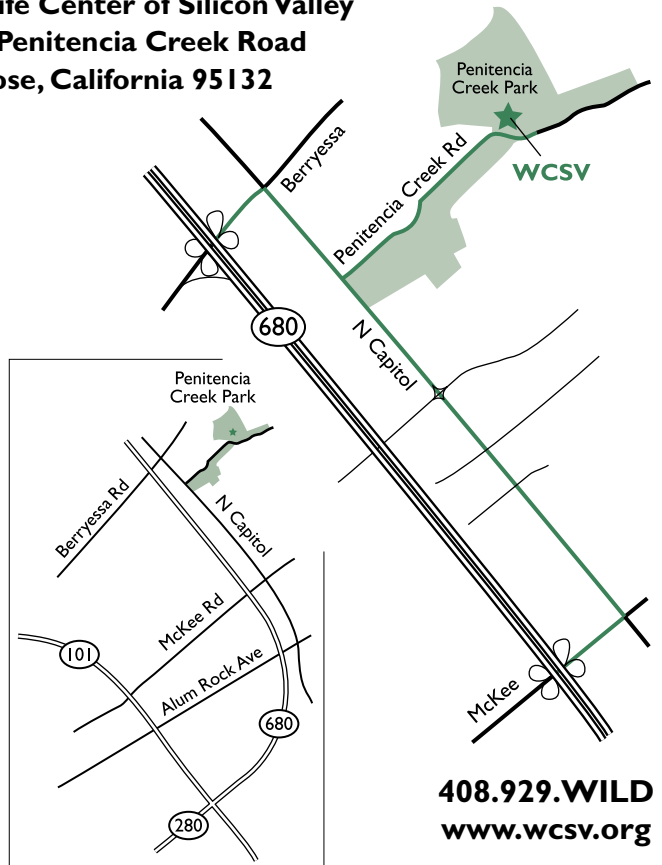
Wine donated by Clos La Chance  
 Call 408.929.9453 for ticket purchase and venue directions.  
 \$50/person.

Reservations required. Seating is limited. Thank you!

\$25 of your ticket is tax deductible. For more information, visit [www.wcsv.org](http://www.wcsv.org)

## How to Contact Us

**Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley**  
**3027 Penitencia Creek Road**  
**San Jose, California 95132**



**408.929.WILD**  
**[www.wcsv.org](http://www.wcsv.org)**

*this is a leased facility of the Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Department*