

Together We Make a Difference

The Bird Rescue Flyer

Volume XXIV, No. 2

Spring 2007

Upcoming Events for April Through July 2007:

Unless otherwise noted
events are to be held at
the Center.

Field Rescue

*Call the Center at
523-BIRD to reserve a spot.*

Volunteer Orientations

Tues., May 8, 7:00pm
Sun., May 20, 3:00pm
Tues., June 5, 7:00pm
Sun., June 17, 3:00pm
Fri., July 6, 7:00pm
Sun., July 15, 3:00pm

*Call the Center at
523-BIRD with any
questions.*

Phone Team Training

*Please call Janet at
the Center at 523-BIRD
with any questions.*

Junior Volunteer Training

*Please call Kate at
the Center at 523-BIRD
for information.*

**Contact the Center
in late August for the
dates for the Fall Raptor
Lecture series.**

Presidents' Message

Baby bird season has arrived! We received our first baby bird, a mourning dove, the first week of April. Mela Brassett rescued a nest full of baby mallards about a week later. We will be starting the baby bird season 2-shift per day schedule on April 15th and the Phone Team will be starting to field calls from the Center at the same time. If you want to help our local birds this year and have not yet contacted us, please call the 523-BIRD line for information.

Anyone can help! We have evening shifts to accommodate those who work all day but want to help by donating a couple of hours after work. We have morning and afternoon shifts for those of you with more time available during the week days. We have weekend shifts for those of you who do not have time during the work-week. We can accommodate almost any schedule!

If feeding baby birds is not your thing, we also need volunteers to answer the 523-BIRD line. The phone team volunteers perform a much needed service by helping the public with their questions and concerns, dispatching field rescue volunteers when needed, receiving birds at the Admissions Desk, and much more.

We provide all needed training so complete bird-novices are also welcome for any and all positions. Bring yourself! Bring your friends! We welcome people of all ages and have volunteers ranging in age from 13 to 85. The possibilities and opportunities are endless!!

Please remember that we need your generous donations of both time and money to enable us to care for all of the baby birds this season. Please take a few minutes to complete the donation form and write us a check. Your money will be put to good use and your generosity will be greatly appreciated! Our funding relies primarily on memberships and donations so please, take a few minutes to help a bird in need!

We are constantly striving to improve our operation. The Center is very lucky to have a wonderful group of volunteers, many of whom assume leadership roles and responsibilities to become Area Coordinators. I am delighted to announce the addition of Gregor Nelson to this group. He will serve as the Coordinator for the Field

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Hospital hours for injured or orphaned wild native birds are 365 days a year. You are welcome to come see local hawks, falcons and owls used in education. Visiting hours are 1:00pm to 4:00pm on the first Saturday and the third Sunday of each month.

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Rescue volunteers. Gregor and his wife Christina volunteered in Rehab last year and then joined the Raptor Handlers group in the Fall. We received an overwhelming response to our call for new Field Rescue volunteers so Gregor will be busy working with both the new and seasoned volunteers who perform the vital role of rescuing all species of birds. If you have a spirit of adventure and enjoy seeing new parts of the County, you may want to consider joining this group. The opportunity for good stories and unusual experiences are unending! We provide hands-on training.

The Rehab staff devoted a large amount of time and energy this fall and winter to compile information from last baby bird season. The goal was to evaluate the growth and health of the 2006 baby songbirds. Led by the Rehab Coordinator, Tom Whiteman, the supervisors researched the dietary needs, natural history and local quirks of our most common species. They amassed an impressive volume of information and are now using it to refining our diets and maximize our effectiveness for this coming season. I want to thank all of them for their effort in this project. It is because of their work and time that I can say that I look forward to 2007 being our best baby bird season yet!

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Center! Please remember that The Bird Rescue Center needs YOU if we are to help the orphaned and injured birds of the County. Call now to volunteer your time and again, take a few minutes to send us a donation!

– Your Board President, Alida Morzenti

Honoring BRC Volunteers

Two BRC volunteers were recently recognized for their efforts by the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County. Mela Brassett and Tom Whiteman, both members of the Center's Operation Committee, were honored at the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon held at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel in Santa Rosa.

Mela was honored for her work as assistant supervisor, raptor handler and trainer, field rescuer and for maintaining the Center's garden areas. Tom was recognized for serving as the Rehabilitation Coordinator, meaning he puts in as many as 25 hours a week overseeing the staff and volunteers in the hospital.

Both Mela and Tom are indispensable to the operation of BRC and we are very fortunate to have them.

Join BRC's Human Race Team

The Bird Rescue Center needs all volunteers who can walk or run for our team participating in the 2007 Human Race. Mark your calendars for Saturday May 12, 2007. Sonoma County's Human Race is the most successful event of its kind in the nation and we want BRC to be a big part of this year's race. You will be able to pick up pledge sheets at the center or you can contact Janeann Erickson at erickson@ap.net for more details. Participants can do either a 3K or 10K course. The route is through Howarth and Spring Lake Parks and is absolutely gorgeous on an early May morning.

The Human Race is one of our biggest fund raisers of the year, and one of the most fun. So come on out and help support the BRC!

**Bird Rescue is always available
online at:**

www.birdrescuecenter.org

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Articles, pictures and information for The Bird Rescue Flyer are to be e-mailed to Pamela Kennemore at kcorners1@comcast.net or mailed to:
The Bird Rescue Center,
P.O. Box 475, Santa Rosa, CA 95402
Attn: Pamela Kennemore

Special thanks from BRC to...

Dr. David Rupiper and Dr. Ray Visco,
for their donations of supplies, as well as their
time and their continuing veterinary care of our
resident and rehab birds.

Windsor Raley's Market

Thomas Kitchen, produce manager and John
Moore, store director for their continuing supply
of fruits and vegetables each week.

The Teddy Foundation

for continuing significant donor support
of the BRC's programs.

Sonoma Mountain Journal

1-10-07 Millie comes home from the emergency clinic—minus a big fish hook AND a piece of underwear elastic, threads of which had caught on stick and grass parts that had already passed into the intestine, which triggered everything to be thrown out. I sleep downstairs with Millie but at 3 a.m. I'm up to check on: tree frogs calling, owls hooting, and then a "wind" whooshing around the house. At the same time Bryant heard a thump, thinking I'd fallen. An earthquake! Even Millie got up when it thumped. Unsettling times! The red-shouldered hawks are noisy and active very early today.

1-12-07 Dentata (toothwort back east but here known as milkmaids) are blooming along the wooded trail: white mustard-family blossoms with toothed edges to the leaves. The earliest spring flower I watch for each year!

2-7-07 Up to the left behind the house an owl hoots. I go to the window to try to better locate the sounds. A second owl calls from the front yard. As I watch she glides in from the front and lands in the shallow water of the pond. It's about 4 inches deep there. She looks all around, waits, then dips forward and dunks her head. She leans forward again and swirls her head in a circle, to splash water around and over her---a shower effect. Her wings are arched up and pump into the water to get more splashing. Again she stops, looks, and listens, then returns to her bathing. After the 3rd series of splashing she flies off—wet, low, strong. I've enjoyed watching; it was not the time to go for a camera then find that the opportunity has flown away!

2-8-07 Hutton's vireos sing this morning from several directions. A wave of them must have arrived. Plain titmice are very noisy and vocal, and their counterparts the chickadees come in twos and sixes to eat seed. Black sunflower and peanut chips are their favorites. Two Nuttall's woodpeckers drum and rattle; a hairy woodpecker joins the din. The broken trees are an attractant for the woodpeckers and the brush piles are active as well. I go down the hill and along Petaluma Hill Road the surprise is a merlin—just truckin' by! Two red-tails perch side by side on top of a barn owl box in the middle of a vineyard. A good raptor perch

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Gratitude to All Our Juniors Volunteers!

As we gear up for yet another baby bird season I have the opportunity to welcome back our dedicated returning Junior Volunteers. These young people are tireless, enthusiastic and hardworking,



and without them it would be difficult to accomplish our goals. The daily work can be stressful and not in the least glamorous but these responsible youths never complain, whether they clean enclosures, prepare diets, do laundry, or other assorted "dirty" jobs. Our Junior Program has become a major component to our team's success. We

appreciate each and every one of them and would like to honor them for their commitment. They have made the difference!

Special mention goes to those who worked over 70 hours during last season. In no particular order: Ali Force, Emily Carreno, Carolyn Kerr, Claire Clickner, Emma Salzman, Eric Pratoussy, Genesis Paredes, Gus Leveque-Eichhorn, Joleen Wiggins, Maria Krainiouk, Reeva Milligan, Morgan Bartoo, Maleny Sayago, Izzy Sellers, Lee Watson, Saffron Williams, Griffin Weizer, Griffin Place, Jessica Lord, Gates Kenemore, Amber DeVore, Kayla Cutler, Grayson Dew, Allen Gillespie, Bret Barner, Meredith Porter, Catlin Bower, Kate Wilmore, Megan Morrissey, and Laura Ramey. Many of these returning juniors have logged over 250 hours in just a couple years!



Our current training season starts the last week in April. Any Junior over 12, interested in applying to the program, can call 523-BIRD for details.

Without these special Junior Volunteers, The Bird Rescue Center would not be able to thrive.

Thank you all, so much, for your contribution!

—Kate Johnson, Junior Volunteer Coordinator

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h2-9-07 At 8 a.m. I'm driving down to Sonoma State. A great egret stands in the field at the park. At 8:30 when I return he still stands there; they do eat mice and voles, not just fish. Is he resting? Or had no luck getting breakfast? It begins to rain—hard. There's till lots of bird activity around the pond. Seven Steller's jays and one scrub jay pay no mind to the rain; or maybe they are mindful and need to stoke up to stay warm. Two California quail wait under the Madrone; the rest have scurried for thicker cover. A line of 16 stand under the overhang of the big log. A photo-op that's too dark, too wet and too far; too bad! One feeder has caging around it to only let small birds in and to keep jays and squirrels out. The feeder I'm using is too long and not secured properly. A squirrel sits totally INSIDE the cage, eating heartily.

2-13-07 Two owls duet at dusk. They're across the street in the neighbor's trees so Millie and I sit down on the driveway to watch, listen and enjoy. One bat flies over. I've not seen one above the garage cupboard for several weeks but my workmen try to help the bats out. We've replaced the wooden door into the house, due to bat damage over the years. So a worker cuts a piece of the old door, with its smells and residual scratches, and hangs it just to the left of the new door. He's hoping it will attract the bats to that spot and asks if I want him to mask off the new door so bats won't use it. But my reply is "No. I'm not worried if the bats come back.....I'm really hoping they will!" C'est la vie! It will just mean another new door years down the road.

2-15-07 This morning both owls are in the tree above the pond. They sit about 8 feet apart, one above the other. I can get a long, narrow, rectangular photo with both sleeping on branches. This is a photo-op! Gloria is coming to get food from Bird Rescue's freezer later in the morning; I'll have to show her where to look for the owls. Pink-flowering currant blooms by the pond.

2-20-07 At an early hour, 6:00 a.m., one owl makes his presence known—calling and sitting in view. Our Botswana

visitor still sleeps; I hope the owl will stay awhile. Grant brings his breakfast coffee outside and we admire the owl in the tree. The owl too is sleeping in. We scout for birds: dark-eyed juncos flash their white outer-tail feathers, a glimpse of bright yellow is a Townsend's warbler working through the oak, the plainer California towhee is actually a new bird for Grant! We hear the Hutton's vireo in repetition, then we go in search of a drumming woodpecker. Nice! It's a red-breasted sapsucker—not often seen in the yard. The hairy woodpecker that I'd assumed was the drummer is working out beyond the pond. Grant would like to reacquaint himself with California quail but they came and went while he still slept. Finally the noisy but well-hidden spotted towhee sits on top of the fence to show his spots! Grant has seen the Eastern rufous-sided towhee—a look-alike except for white spots on the upper back of our western one. As I head downhill a great white egret is in the park; just beyond is a 2nd one. A northern harrier flies low over the vineyard and grassland..

2-22-07 The park is now sporting three egrets! There is a wet drainage and maybe frogs are available. This is the first year I've seen even one egret there.

2-28-07 Winter: rain showers then hail. The porch is covered in slippery white hail so Millie gets an iceball to munch on. I walk with her out front to check the flowers of Spring and there are four calypso orchids in bloom. Trillium are pushing up stalks and buds but will need a week or two before blooming.

3-1-07 The weather is cold but improving. Two owls start calling. One perches under the umbrella cover of the tree by the pond. The entire day she sits, then at dusk gives a solicitation erk or two then silently vanishes. Many varied thrush are around—possibly staging for their northward trek? A Hutton's vireo calls steadily, then a possible Cassin's or solitary vireo call. I wish it would sing again to confirm. Since there were a few calypso out front, I slip out the back gate to search the woods....67 blossoms.

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The Bird Rescue Center has two primary missions:

First: To rescue, rehabilitate and release orphaned, injured or ill native wild birds, and,...

Second: To educate the public regarding the ecological importance and natural history of these birds.

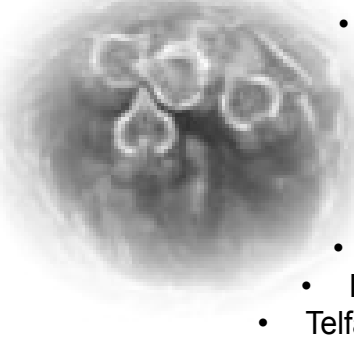
Bird Rescue Wish List

Large Items

- Anatomically correct, plastic bird skeleton

Everyday Items

- Ziplock freezer bags, gallon size
- Vet wrap (1" to 2" wide)
- Rolls of 1" x1/2" welded wire, 18" and 24" widths
- Movers (heavy duty cardboard) boxes, 2'x2' or 3'x3'(new or slightly used)



- 2-ply toilet paper Kleenex (w/o lotion)
- Scissors (bandage, surgical and office)
- Manila folders w/attached fasteners
- Dust-free pine shavings, by the bale
- Viva brand paper towels
- Sunflower seeds, in the shell or chips
- Dawn dish soap
- Suet cake (insect and/or nut varieties)
- Bleach (no Clorox Ultra, it contains lye)
- Interior "walk off" door mats, 3'x4' or larger
- Telfa pads & gauze pads 4"x4" and 2"x 2"

Many Hands Supporting Back into the Sky

This is a true story about the many hands that lifted a Red-tailed Hawk off of the highway and back into the sky.

The story begins on February 5th as Diane Hichwa, education coordinator for BRC, was driving on highway 1, between Sea Ranch and Fort Ross. Passing a Red-tailed Hawk standing in the middle of the road Diane thought -- "that's not what a Red-tail is supposed to do!" A quick U-turn, and a skillful toss of her dog's car blanket let Diane secure a very dazed and quiet hawk. An hour and a half later Diane was walking into BRC and presented a still very subdued bird to the rehab team on duty that day: Tosca Schauer, (Head Supervisor), Audrey Nickles, (new supervisor in training) and Mela Brasslet, volunteer, who is also rehab raptor coordinator. At this point the bird was logged in as RTHA 639 (the 639th Red-tailed Hawk brought to BRC for care).

Examination found the bird was lucky and had no broken bones or head injuries, but was badly bruised on one side of its body, and had traces of blood in its throat. A 48-hour regimen of vitamin K injections helped control internal bleeding, and after ten-days of quiet and supportive "box rest" the bird's range of wing motion was assessed as symmetrical and strong.

On 639's eleventh day of care at BRC Rob Diebold and I took the bird to a nearby soccer field for flight evaluation on a creance line (a long, light leash attached to the bird's legs).

To our delight it lifted strongly off of the ground and flew very well. It was ready to return home.

Several phone calls and email exchanges confirmed that Rita Peck and Craig Tooley, BRC's regular and well experienced field rescuers from the Sea Ranch area were going to be in Santa Rosa on personal business the next day and were able to return 639 to the area where it had been found. They reported back that after carrying the bird in its transport box into a field away from the highway and carefully opening the box the bird "shot into the air like a rocket", circled overhead gaining

altitude, and then "headed for the hills".

As I was looking over RTHA 639's file for a last time before putting it into the archive file I was suddenly struck by the realization of just how many people, almost all volunteers, contributed to the bird's return to its wild home.

During the course of the bird's immediate care:

- Three volunteers doing field rescue and release
- Three shift supervisors, four volunteer assistant supervisors, and eight volunteers in the rehabilitation section
- Two volunteers doing flight assessment

But those doing the immediate care are backed up a resource team that assures that a steady supply of appropriate food is always available for both the rehab and the resident program raptors. Every day when the rehab team reached into the freezer for food for 639 -- and for others -- it was there. Gloria Heinzl and Kit Dane lead this team, supported by a half dozen other volunteers from the raptor handlers.

And, supporting and knitting the whole range of BRC activity together is the phone team led by Janet Bosshard and the administrative support of BRC's volunteer business manager and its Board.

In the 12 days RTHA 639 was at BRC a caring team of more than 35 people, mostly volunteers, brought their specialized skills together and shared in the coordinated effort that lifted the bird to once again fly free. This is the story of just one of the more than 2,500 native birds ... from hummingbirds to golden eagles ... that come to BRC for care each year. The details of the story may change for each, but the caring team is always there.

– Tom Whiteman

Birds Need Healthy Diets And To Be Left To Nature.

Have you heard of a goose nest-condo?

One of our rescuers went out to check on a goose sitting on a nest, full of eggs. It was at a local County park, near the main entrance to the community center. The goose seemed to be alert and healthy.

There were cracker and bread crumbs scattered around the nearby area. At a closer look, there was a small hole going under the nest, at one edge. A mouse had taken up residence under the nest. It is a perfect place to live, with ready-made meals outside its door.

Bread, crackers, cookies, and other odd food stuffs are not a good diet for wild or domestic waterfowl or any bird species. The nutrient value is very low and chemical additives can be toxic to the bird. What is not eaten, on the ground, can be an attractant to rodents, opossums, and squirrels, which can carry diseases.



So, what can someone feed these waterfowl? Nothing.

It is best not to feed ducks, geese and swans anything. They become tame and act friendly toward people. They can also become threatening, and sometimes very aggressive. A large goose can be very scary to a small child. The bird may be protecting a nest or mate. If a bird becomes aggressive it will most likely need to be captured and destroyed. Waterfowl eat a variety of different foods in the environment. Nature takes care of its own. The foods that people eat

are not compatible with the digestive systems of birds. When there is an abundance of food, birds have more babies. When there is less food, the clutches are smaller, so that every one will get enough to eat.

Please, appreciate the waterfowl at our parks and let them live as nature provides.

– *By Janet Bosshard*

Hey Mom, Here I am!...Where Are You?

It weighs almost as much as a penny - a little fluff of green feathers that sits in the palm of your hand shrieking “Eep, eep, eep. Your dog nosed it out under a shrub, a fledgeling Anna’s Hummingbird. Now what are you going to do with it? Of course, take it to the Bird Rescue Center. Wait a minute. Is that really the best thing to do? Actually it often is not.

About three weeks after hatching baby hummingbirds find the nest is absolutely unbearably crowded. So they sort of flutter - flop to a nearby twig and perch there. But they still need their mother to regurgitate food for them. So they sit and call with an astonishingly penetrating shrill squeek, and mom responds.

Sometimes if it is very windy or there is no



convenient shrub near the nest, the baby you have found. So first of all just perch it on a nearby small twig. Then back off and observe it for a while. Often mama will dash in and resume feeding. Family revisited! ***Congratulations to you!***

Of course if you see no sign of mama after 40 minutes (better yet, one hour) do bring the baby to Bird Rescue. But all wild bird babies of any species will have a better chance of reaching maturity if they can be raised without human interference. For one thing parents can teach them to fear cats; humans can't. Now if only the parents could also teach them to look both ways when flying across the road!

– *Martha Bently*

Special Benefactors

Bird Rescue gratefully acknowledges the following generous contributions which enable us to carry on our work:

Donations of \$50 or more

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Yvonne Norrbom
Richard Sweet

Donations of \$100 or more

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Darla Rigard, Staff Nurse's Assoc.-
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Bruce Rodda
Robert Russell
Yayoi West
Elaine Woodriff

In Memory of...

Nancy Rutherford
from Rosalie Mahoney

Sponsor A Bird...

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Sustaining

Steve Branson
Virginia Craig

Joyce & Don Greenberg

Gus Kearney
Paula Zerzan

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Bright purplish-pink spots on the forest floor. Wow! I never have figured out their pollinator or how they spread. Flowers pop up each year in different areas. I imagine fine seeds must scatter on the wind. Millie and I walk to the mailbox. A steady commotion from a tree sounds like babies. Could the titmice have nested already? I'll need better light to search it out—tomorrow.

3-2-07 Gloria comes to fill the freezer but the "owl tree" is vacant; she now knows where to watch. Western meadowlarks sing across the road; their strong voices carry a long way. The pink-flowering currant is visited by a tiny rusty Allen's hummingbird, the first one I've seen back after the winter. An active chickadee flock works through the madrone. The quail flush and fly off while 2 mourning doves sit tight. Is there danger overhead? A red-tail calls from the vicinity of last year's nest. I head down the driveway at 4:00. As I turn left up Pressley the neighborhood red-shouldered hawk sits on a long tree branch. A 2nd one flies in and lands on her back, flapping his wings for balance as they mate. Spring's nesting season is underway! The tall white egret stands out against the green grass at the park. Red-winged blackbird males are spaced evenly along the fence, in territory mode. The park's white-tailed kite hovers, intently watching the grass below for any movement.

3-5-07 Millie quickly zeroes in on a ½ eaten quail. Over the fence it goes. White "snow" drifts down in the breeze, petals from the cherry blossoms. As I walk under the butterfly bush the "chirp" of an Anna's hummingbird seems just above my head. He displays: from 5 feet above me to 50 feet up, then plunges too fast to follow, chirps and heads up again.

The owls duet at dusk so I dash back to the house, calling Millie to follow. I can hear them, but not see them. She's giving a solicitation "erk" and suddenly it works. Wings are fluttering as she sits on the wooden corner fence post and he's balancing over her to mate. He's gone. She sits for quite a while as he calls from out front. She flies to the tall jagged snag, silhouetted as the sun sinks lower. Finally she flies, maneuvering through the woods and directly across the street to land on a tree top.

3-6-07 The four orchids out front increase to eleven. Millie's morning search finds a dead mouse in the woods—lost food? Up the street two red-tails perch on a telephone pole, one tearing vigorously at food. The owls call at dusk, erks and hoots, then he takes a long glide, gently lifting and swerving through the trees before disappearing across the road.

3-8-07 The bats are returning; twelve in a tight row darken the crevice above.

3-12-07 Warm weather has pushed the flowers into bloom. Fifty seven orchids bloom in front and beyond the back fence I stop counting after 200! They seem to prefer the open stretches of pine needles, not where green forbs are spreading as light hits the forest floor. Several upright white trillium are blooming. A little wren shoots out of the brush. The two owls sit 15 feet apart; dusk brings hoots and erks. Again he flies off—silently and buoyantly—through the trees to the front edge. There he sits, silhouetted; she preens, calls a few times then flies across the pond, through the trees and is gone. Bats talk before exiting from the crevice. By tonight the count is up to 36 big brown bats.

– Diane Hichwah