

The *Bird Rescue Flyer*

Volume XXIII, No. 1 • Winter 2006

BIRD RESCUE CENTER
 P.O. Box 475 • Santa Rosa, CA 95402
 (707) 523-BIRD • www.birdrescuecenter.org

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Winter 2006



Upcoming Events
 for January
 thru April, 2006:

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

**Community
 Education Basics**

Sun., Feb. 5th, 2-4:30pm
 Tue., Mar. 21st, 6:30-9:00pm
 Call Diane at 523-BIRD
 with any questions.

Field Rescue

Sat., Feb. 4th, at 10-12:30pm
 Wed., Mar. 8th, at 6:30-9pm
 Call Roberta at 523-BIRD
 with any questions.

Volunteer Orientations

Sat., Mar. 4th, at 3:30pm
 Sun., Mar. 19th, at 3:30pm
 Sat., April 1st, at 10:00am
 April 5th, at 6:30pm
 Sun. April 9th, at 12:00
 Call Roberta at 523-BIRD
 with any questions.

Junior Volunteer Training

In January, February
 and April
 Please call Kate at 523-BIRD
 for information.

Looking Back On '05

As I write this, the year is rapidly drawing to a close. As I look back on 2005, I am pleased with the many accomplishments that we have made.

The new mews are complete. I understand from Kit that rental applications, complete with references, have been submitted for various raptors so interest and demand are high. The new occupants should be in residence by the first of the year. Many thanks to Johann, Steve and Warren for their perseverance and dedication in seeing this project through to completion. Weather permitting, Mela will begin landscaping and this phase of our construction will be completed. Please come by and visit the finished mews and remodeled tackroom.

In the Rehabilitation area, our new floor is now a beautiful reality! We have a continuous floor covering from the double doors into the exam room all the way back through the laundry room to the back doors. All of the side rooms have also been done. And, in case you are thinking that we only have concerns for the birds, all of you who volunteer at the Center will be delighted to know that we not only put a new floor in the bathroom, we also have a new toilet and a new paint job! Many thanks to everyone involved in this project including the Supervisors, Assistant Supervisors and many other volunteers helped in the preparation work. Special thanks to Tom Whiteman who headed-up the demolition and preparation work. Due to his organizational skills, work progressed smoothly and we were ready for the floor installers to begin their work. As always, Steve Branson was heavily involved in fixing, tearing out, repairing and generally doing everything and anything to make this project move forward. Also, thanks to Tosca's determination and Johann's efforts, we now have new cabinets and a countertop in the exam room. This is the final touch to making this area look much more professional and esthetically pleasing and functional as a work space.

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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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I want to again thank Dan Aguilar of Mission Valley Properties who donated \$4,000 to pay for this project and Arnie Carlson from World of Carpets who agreed to provide the labor and materials to complete the project within this budget. Many thanks also to Wes and Steve, the floor installers. Gratitude also to Barb for painting and doing whatever was necessary in the preparation effort and for spending her nights waxing the new floors – as Norma says, we will be able to skate on them by the time she is done. Credit is also due to the Supervisors, particularly Marielle, for managing to keep our rehabilitation efforts running smoothly while surrounded by the near-chaos of the demolition and remodeling efforts going on around her. Once again, we are so fortunate to have such dedicated, hard-working people as part of this organization. Thank you, thank you, thank you! You are all much appreciated!

I am sorry to report that Mark Riffle, long time volunteer, Board member and past Board President has left us and moved to Colorado. Mark will be sorely missed not only because of his contributions to the Organization but also because he was a good friend to many of us. I am also sorry to report that changes in his personal life have caused Leonard Diggs to resign from the Board. Although he was only with us for a few months, he made many contributions and will be missed. His departure is a loss for the Organization and he also was a good friend to many of us. We wish both Mark and Leonard well.

The Board had an excellent Retreat and we are more committed than ever to move forward with Board recruitment, business sponsorships and general fund-raising. Mary Ellen King's expertise in public relations and fund-raising is helping us to focus and maximize our efforts. I look forward to reporting good things in the coming months.

Finally, I have been asked by the Board to remain as President for 2006 and I have agreed. I will again be wearing two hats as Board President and Executive Director I look forward to working with all of you to build on our past achievements and to go on to even greater accomplishments!

– Your Board President, Alida Morzenti

Attention Junior Volunteers!

Training will start in April. The schedule will appear in the next Flyer! Please contact Kate Johnson directly at the Center (523-BIRD) for info.

COMMUNITY Smart Card---a painless way to help support BRC

Last year we registered Bird Rescue with the COMMUNITYsmart program. Now we need your increased participation. It takes 5 minutes and it helps Bird Rescue for the whole year. If you call us (523-2473) we will send you the application (or you can pick it up at the Center). Once it's filled out and sent in you present the card when you do your shopping at your usual places: Friedman's, Oliver's Markets, Mission Car Wash, McLea's Tire + Brake, Pacific Market, Copperfield's, La Vera Pizza plus many other restaurants, hardware centers, tire stores and other merchants. They have agreed to give a small percentage of your purchase to the nonprofit of your choice. We want it to be The Bird Rescue Center. We received over \$500 from the program last year with only twelve of us using our cards. If you join us we can do better! And help the birds as well! Please contact us to be part of COMMUNITYsmart .

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Circulation Managers
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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 Benefactors

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

Donations of \$50 or more

Rosalyn Dilillo
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In Memory of...

Anne Marie Ortola
from Kristina Stig
Anne Marie Ortola
from Renee Dertner
Anne Marie Ortola
from Lu Johnson
Anne Marie Ortola
from Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Keefer, Jr.

Owl stories by Mark A. Riffle

A Hoot

One evening last fall I had the pleasure of speaking with a group of scouts at the Bird Rescue Center about birds, Bird Rescue, and the importance of birds in our environment.

At dusk and towards the end of their visit to the Center we were all standing out in the educational compound area talking about great horned owls in general, and more specifically about the resident great horned that was standing on my gloved hand. Suddenly one of the boys pointed back over my shoulder and said "there's one now". Sure enough, about 50 yards away and high in a tree a large great horn perched well out in the open and easy for all of us to see. Within a couple of minutes the wild bird flew from the tree, crossed the compound fence a few feet from where we stood, and landed on a dead snag about 20 feet away. During this entire encounter the great horned owl on my glove was very attentive, never taking her eyes from the wild bird. It became clear at this point that the wild bird was not putting on this demonstration for the likes of the human spectators; the two owls began to hoot; and hoot...and hoot. Leaning way forwards on their perches and looking intensely at each other, as owls do, this pair hooted back and forth until I returned

Knuckles to her aviary. The young scouts, they were for the first time since their visit began, speechless.

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walking and rearrange themselves in the dark. The fog hangs at the bottom of the driveway, over the grassland; it's always colder there. A few bats fly out—they must be hungry since it's chilly for getting insect food. Martha has called, searching for a ride for a hummingbird that hit a window in Gualala. Success! We find a North Coast neighbor who will be driving a person to Santa Rosa in the morning for medical treatment; they'll bring the hummingbird along for its treatment at Bird Rescue Center as well. At 5:07 in the chill dusk the owl moves nearer and hoots. His time has come. He alights on the tiniest top of a fir tree. His shape stands out but the binoculars add a lot of definition. His head swivels as he keeps watch and listens. At the distant owl's call he nearly loses his balance and his wings are spread to adjust himself. He's silhouetted—tall, dark and handsome—at the high corner of our yard.

12-8-05 Once again this year the owl is perched during rain under his bay tree umbrella of thick leaves.

12-9-05 Seven deer mill around near the pond. We've been watching a developing "spike" buck but several new ones are sporting antler growth: one shows a left antler 3 inches high but a right of barely one half inch! I watch the quail move up the hill along the driveway...scurry across in single file, mill around as a group, sidestep the deer. I get to 55 and still counting! There must be a convention of the neighborhood quail and the end to a very good year!

– Diane Hichwa

Honored Volunteers:

Here is an article spotlighting a volunteer who is continually contributing with experience from the past and continuing into the present. A founding member and valuable asset to the day to day workings at the Center. She has assisted with advice and knowledge as well as a helping hand for the past 25 years.

Last Labor Day weekend the Bird Rescue Center passed its 25th anniversary since it began work at the current location off Chanate Rd. Maybe it is time now to look back at the BRC's early history before it is lost forever.

I am frequently introduced as "the lady who started Bird Rescue", but that is a long way from the truth. The beginning really dates from the early 1970's when Evalyn Bowen, founder of the Madrone Audubon Society, received a phone call from a young woman named Catherine Riley. She had a very simple request "I just love to take care of baby birds. If you receive any calls about them will you refer the caller to me?"

Evalyn said to me, "Will I! People are always calling and asking me what to do. What can I tell them, we have no way to help them." And so the Bird Rescue Center began from that phone call back in about 1973. At that time wildlife rehab organizations were just starting. In fact the only ones



I knew of were the Lindsay Museum in Walnut Creek and the Raptor Center at U.C. Davis. Of course the Dept. of Fish and Game soon learned of Cathy's work and local wardens were happy to foster it. But the Dept. had a policy: they would give a permit only to an individual who might disappear. So they came

to Madrone Audubon, where I happened to be President at the time and asked us to accept a permit for Cathy's work.

Oh, the Board meetings about that permit!



Half the Board members thought it was a great idea; half thought it was beyond our capabilities. Eventually it was rejected by Audubon.

What could we do then to legitimize Cathy's work? We needed to set up a new corporation. And so the Bird Inter-County Rescue and Development Sanctuary (acronym BIRDS) was incorporated in 1976 and Cathy began work in the yard of her home near the County Fairgrounds. Very soon we all began to learn that the nay-sayers in Audubon were all too right. From the beginning there was too much work, too

few volunteers and too little expertise.

We limped along for a couple of years getting weaker and weaker and then we were forced to close. But some patent stubborn instinct forced me to keep the incorporation records up to date.

Fast forward two or three years to the spring of 1980 when a woman phoned saying that Jack Arnold, emeritus founder of SSU's Biology Dept. had given her my name. It was a lady named Alida Morzenti, the founder of the Raptor Center at U.C. Davis. The University was transferring the Center from the Avian Sciences Dept. to the Veterinary School. Alida was seeking a new rehab center with which to work and a new home for several of the resident birds at Davis. BIRDS was about to return as The Bird Rescue Center!



...(to be continued)

Stay tuned, in the next issue of the Flyer we will continue this interesting story.

Special thanks from BRC to...

Dr. David Rupiper, 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.

Alisandra Brewer

for hosting our website on her server.

The Teddy Foundation

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

A thank You to...

Art's 2001 Photo

and Tim Fleming for donating the sponsor-a-bird photo prints.

A BIG thank You to...

Vickie & Eric Worden of Redwood Concrete Pump Service and Jim Hill of Norcal,

for their time and talents and the wonderful work they did helping us with the construction of the new mews.

Also...

Arnie Carlson and World of Carpets

for labor and materials to complete the installation of the flooring at the Center. Thankyou for your incredible generosity!

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A thank you to all the wonderful donors who added to our holiday gift shop: wonderful bird photos from Eileen Chadwick, sachets from Ann Rogalski, bird-embroidered table linens from Laura Cline, aprons and gift bags from Carol Trimmingham and Sharon Urquhart's photos of the red tailed hawk and barn owl and assistance making our mug, T-shirt and tote bag.

Sonoma Mountain Journal

8-31-05 Flycatchers "whip"....probably a Pacific slope flycatcher family giving partial calls: one note of three. An owl flew from the big tree and two different kinds of bats zip around—different wingbeats.

9-12-05 The deer must be searching hard for food. I left a plastic bin of yard waste in the driveway and they trimmed all leaves hanging outside the bin. My brush pile of trimmings—apple tree's broken branch, buddleia uprights and the ever-

enveloping white climbing rose—are all nibbled by the two does and their sets of twins. This a.m. I hear a pileated's piercing call; he's drumming on a tall dead snag. I hope he'll stay around this time!

9-13-05 The pileated is in the yard—somewhere close. I can hear him chipping away and I carefully slip up the steps just out from the back porch. I'm not careful enough as he scares up from a dead trunk on the ground only 10 feet in front of me. I wasn't expecting him there! A noisy day as neighbors are having those big dead trees removed, maybe to slow the spread of Sudden Oak Death.

9-14-05 Now I'm primed for Fall and migration phenomena. I load Bryant into the car at 6 p.m. and we speed to Healdsburg to watch the Vaux swifts. Seven THOUSAND of them swirling down into ONE chimney before dark! (Granted, it is a big chimney, but still....) This is the West Coast migration as they gather and head to Central America. And some mayhem when a merlin takes a pass but misses. Nice looks at him as he perches nonchalantly and preens after his miss.

9-16-05 A wave of tiny birds spreads through the trees—Wilson's + yellow warblers, a Townsend's flash of bright yellow with ruby-crowned kinglets and, by sound, possibly golden-crowned kinglets as well.

9-22-05 The morning looks nice, so I pack a lunch and go to Hawk Hill (Hill 129 in the Marin Headlands). There beside the Golden Gate all eyes look up as three broad-winged hawks pass, one directly overhead. Red-taileds and accipiters are the common ones. One merlin has been trapped and banded; just as he's released the fog swirls in so heavily that you can't even see the bird! Golden-crowned sparrows have arrived in my yard with their "sad" calls, "Oh dear me. Oh dear me."

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Hawks and Owls and Vultures, Oh My!

The Bird Rescue Center gets out into the community in many ways. One very important and special way is through our education programs. As we summarize our 2005 activities I thank all the volunteers who assisted our resident birds in their visits to 60 classrooms of students and adult venues. We reached a wonderful variety of ages. We presented to a junior high class camping at Sugarloaf, to nursery schools and Montessori classes, to after-school Cool School classrooms, to summer camps and to K-5 classrooms in many different towns. We



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10-4-05 I believe I've heard a varied thrush. Fun! And the great horneds are duetting.

10-5-05 I know I've heard a varied thrush today. Another signal of fall, with it's single pitched high note. And I think that was a fox sparrow that just darted between dark leafy overhung patches of ground. Another winter arrival. A few calls perk up my ears, then an accipiter sits for a moment, then zips away.

10-7-05 A screech owl trills early, before dawn. Another wave of little birds: this time lots of ruby-crowneds plus a titmouse and one golden-crowned kinglet. All of them seem agitated but I can't locate a cause. A red-shouldered hawk screams, but he's way far away. Two spotted towhees skirmish by the pond, jumping, chasing, feet at each other in mid-air. What's up? A third one, a drab female, watches.....the cause of their interaction? Many deer pass through the bird feeding area, looking for any greenery or remnant seeds. It's the late, late dry time of year for them and food is scarce.

10-12-05 Late afternoon calling by the two owls comes from a big leafy squirrel's nest high up the hill. One roots around in the nest. Is it inspecting the nest itself? Or checking on a squirrel for dinner? The second owl stands nearby on a limb. As darkness falls it's chilly but a hermit thrush takes a late bath in the water dish. A varied thrush sings its one high note. Then three hermit thrush "chup" and flick their wings. A tiny winter wren is pssshed up to the top of the brush pile for a good look—he at me and I at him. The ground of the feeding area seems in motion—35 quail never stand still. Their heavy wingbeats pass overhead. The tuxedoed black phoebe sits prominently and calls from the old TV antenna that now serves as a perch for all avian passersby. As it darkens further I hear through the office window the coyotes calling together, that thin waivering warble. I step onto the front porch to listen but they all go silent. Are they closer than I thought? Rain is moving in.

10-17-05 I return home at 9:30 p.m. Bats are resting on

the door to the house inside the garage so, that access being blocked, I switch to the front door. Luckily I'm watching where I step and find that access has a praying mantis trying to climb onto the door sill! He's three inches long but moves very slowly as he climbs. I grab my camera and photograph him from every angle possible. He's only the second one I've seen in our yard. I decide to move him to the plant next to the porch steps. I fear that if I leave him in the open on the doorstep HE will become food for the pallid bat that hangs in the corner above the door late at night! (The pallid is our only bat that comes to the ground to pick up food, normally scorpions and potato bugs....so why not a praying mantis?)

11-25-05 Another rainfall makes us stay inside and watch a DVD, "The Year of the Kestrel", shot in Scandinavia. We project it on a screen and, with a shot of a 3 foot by 2 foot kestrel introducing the film, Millie jumps off the couch barking at it...this BIG animal intruding in her living room!

11-28-05 As I pull up the driveway a 3:30 p.m. round of duetting great horneds is a great welcome home.

11-29-05 It's cold, wet and wintery but the owls are "singing in the rain". Twenty six quail near the feeding area look quite dapper and undaunted by the weather. Red-tailed and red-shouldered are both active and calling. They're loud and easily recognized (except when the Steller jays mimic convincingly) but the wee thin sounds are harder to I.D.—a creeper perhaps? Holiday colors come from the red leaves of wild California grape and red berries on the honeysuckle vine. Chickadees busily stock up on seed to ward off the chill. A hermit thrush stands on top of the stump, chups + wing-flicks from his prominent perch. A very soft distant call from an owl; in contrast the spotted towhee is loud, insistent, and right here. Pineapple sage blooms deep red and draws in a hummingbird—only Anna's at this time of year. The currant has lost most of its leaves but the fuschia's blooms still attract hummers. It's now dark. The quail are disturbed by my

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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

Astroturf (Daisy doormat) door mats
Frozen berries (blue, black, rasp, straw)
Bleach (no Clorox Ultra, it contains lye)
Clamp lights
Dawn dish soap
Dry erase markers
Elastic 3/8" and 1/2" in width
Kleenex (plain, no lotion)
Viva paper towels
Peanut butter (natural, no salt)
Vet wrap 2" to 3" wide
Suet cake any variety

Sunflower chips
Telfa pads & gauze pads 4"x4" or 2"x2"
Dixie cups small
Pine shavings bale, dust free
Scissors bandage, surgical, office
Ziploc freezer bags gallon size
Folders with fasteners attached
Rolls of 1" x 1/2" welded wire 18" and 24" widths
Fax Machine
Anatomically correct bird skeleton plastic
Cable ties 12" and bigger
Hemostats

Our Residents...

This is one article in a series of articles that feature one of our many resident birds.



ground and could not fly. After a short search by the field rescue person, the owl was found under a bush. She made no attempt to escape or defend herself until she was picked up. A quick field inspection showed that there were no obvious injuries, but the flight feathers on the right wing were gone. With these feathers missing, the bird could not fly and would be easy prey for foxes, dogs etc. She was brought back to the Bird Rescue Center where her lost flight feathers were, at first, a mystery. When the flight feathers did not grow back as expected, due to a genetic defect or damage to the wing, it was decided to keep her as one of our resident raptors.

— Richard Wasson

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also worked with a girl scout troop and their farmworker housing unit where the scout leader translated as we spoke; even more effective was when our volunteer Lupe brought out the red-tailed hawk and rattled off her part of the talk in her native Spanish! Scouts and brownies met to question us about birds and about the environment and fulfill badge requirements. An Audubon group of children with their parents focused on the owls of Sonoma County. We use a story with props to teach younger children. Older students see a slide show, but the birds are always the hook. Whether it is the artistic beauty or the environmental importance, seeing the birds draws in the audience. We thank the Active 20/30 Club for continuing their support, helping us reach disadvantaged children in the Santa Rosa area.

Besides the formal presentations we also sent volunteers to staff tables at 34 events around the county, from the County Fair to Farmer's Markets, a Martin Luther King Celebration and Ag Days with

250 children streaming by each half day; Family nights at Howarth Park and Earth Day events at colleges and parks reach a different clientele. We are actively seeking new venues for the BRC teaching program to explore. Our volunteers regularly welcome families and neighbors to drop in at the Center's Visitor Days every first Saturday and third Sunday from 1-4 p.m. to meet the resident hawks, owls, falcons, and vultures. Please invite your friends and neighbors to visit the birds!

All of us are excited to have reached out to 2000 children, 1300 adults and countless others during the Fair and general events.

Our team consists of our educational ambassadors, the birds themselves, and of volunteers who have completed training as raptor handlers. But we also welcome as presenters those teachers, parents, and general volunteers who will speak from their love of birds and interest in saving the environment. Please contact Diane at 523-2473 to learn more or come to the Education Presentation Class.