

Wing BEATS

A publication of Liberty Wildlife

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Minting a New Green Outlook

by Megan Mosby

It can be very demoralizing to listen to the horrors of environmental devastation and there are many instances of this to capture the attention of anyone awake in the world today. We may find ourselves turning away from this ugly picture, frustrated and overwhelmed with the desire to just give up. This article will shine a light on what is currently being done, what is planned for the future, and what you can do to become an active participant in the solution.

There appears to be a shift in direction. On a large scale, one need not look far in the U.S. to encounter action being taken to improve the environment. During August several leading publications including *Newsweek* and *Fortune Magazine* ran cover stories or articles on the "greening" activities of prominent American companies. This could be economics as usual - customizing business practices just to improve the bottom

line. But in some cases it starts purely from a consciousness viewpoint. Whatever the reason, the outcome is potentially very good for us all. Here are some examples of changes occurring in the corporate world.

- Honda has initiated an ad campaign called *Environmentology* that promotes their fuel friendly automobiles.

- Media coverage in major periodicals like *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *The New York Times*, the launching of a new magazine called *Verdant* (an upscale sustainable lifestyle offering), and articles on television or radio stations like *National Public Radio*, are indicative of the public's interest in the field of sustainability. Films like *An Inconvenient Truth* have captured the attention of large numbers of people from all walks of life and political affiliations.

- "Green or Sustainable Building" is becoming more the norm in both office buildings and individual homes. Materials are vastly improved, are being bought closer to home, and are utilizing recycled materials. Energy saving devices are becoming more affordable.



photo by Robert Mesta

Natural beauty abounds with native landscaping in this xeriscaped yard

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Groundbreaking News

If you sense a crackle in the air, it could be more than just the hint of fall around the corner. I think what you are feeling is the razzle-dazzle of positive change moving in and settling on the horizon. It creates an electricity with it that snaps you to attention and makes you pause to catch the beat. This swish of the pendulum can be witnessed as a new interest from corporate America, and cities and communities around the nation. Our lead story addresses the positive environmental trends that are happening in this country and reminds you how important you are in the process. In fact it can't succeed without you.

We are seeing positive changes at Liberty Wildlife also. New forays into fund raising events will give you more opportunities to help us do our jobs. Two athletic events have benefited us this year in two different ways. Beverage sales from the **Tour de Scottsdale** and partial entry fees at the **Fountain Mountain Half Iron Man Distance Triathlon** at Saguaro Lake added to the coffers. A new event, **Casino Night**, will be added to our calendar in January and should be a fun new way to get the public involved in our efforts to "Nurture the Nature of Arizona." Our traditional fund raiser, **Wishes for Wildlife**, will become non traditional on April 21,

2007 and please you with a new location, new things to do, and new entertainment. And, in case you are interested in wearing your awareness, check out our new "Charity Charm" opportunity outlined on page 7.

We hope you catch up with our progress through our "Year in Review" and hope even more that our Photo Gallery brings you closer in touch with some of the animals we have helped this year and some of the more intimate moments of the year gone by. It is critical that, if you can, you take the time to experience nature in real time. Take a hike and take your kids along, photograph your experiences, and do it ethically and with a low impact on the surroundings. We don't want to love nature to death. Be a Citizen Steward and teach the children to follow in your footsteps.

The real excitement, however, is the "Groundbreaking News" about the groundbreaking for our new facility in Papago Park. On October 26th the assembled group blessed the ground, viewed the model and our education ambassadors, released a rehabilitated raptor, and shoveled up the dirt. This is the next step in realizing our

dream of a state-of-the-art facility using sustainable building principles that will allow us to treat and care for an increasing number of native wildlife. It will also enable us to provide additional on site educational opportunities along with our popular outreach programs. We are a distance from completion, but it is a start. If you are interested in helping, now is the time to jump on the band wagon. To our beloved donors, whose faith in us brought us this far, we say a huge thanks....thanks for your confidence, thanks for the resources, and thanks for helping us turn a spade or two. It is and has been a long process, but the positive news is that it is happening....it is indeed

"Groundbreaking News"!

Megan Mosby
Megan Mosby
Executive Director

WingBeats is an annual publication of Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation Foundation issued to supporting members of the Foundation.

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Printing and mailing provided by APS



*Groundbreaking invitation - topography of new site
Design by Made in Space, Inc. Los Angeles, CA*

New Green Outlook continued from page 1

- DuPont intends to reduce its green house gas emissions by 65% by 2010. GE is doubling its investment in environmental technology to \$1.5 billion by 2010. Goldman Sachs is putting a \$1 billion investment into clean technology. Intel plans to reduce emissions by 10% from its 1995 level by 2010. UPS is adding 1500 alternative fuel vehicles to its fleet and has ordered 50 hybrid electric delivery trucks to drastically reduce its fuel consumption.

- Four billion gallons of ethanol based fuel is being produced this year offsetting the 140 billion gallons of oil based fuel burned in the U.S. in 2006.

- Wal-Mart is striding towards the "democratization of environmentalism" in several ways. By numbers alone, the world's largest retailer could have a huge impact on the environment by adopting pro-environmental practices. Among other things they plan to increase efficiency of vehicles in their fleet by 25% in three years. It is their goal to eliminate by 30% the energy usage in each store and reduce by 25% the solid waste produced in three years. They are investing \$500 million in sustainability projects. These actions grow exponentially as the company also insists that their suppliers strive for more sustainable practices. They plan to support organic farming and green industrial methods, to buy fish from certified sustainable fisheries, to sell organic milk, pursue products made from organic cotton, and to cut down on unnecessary packaging. This will put more environmentally sound products in the hands of every person...not just the well-to-do and well-intended.

- There is even a new national marketing category referred to as LOHS - Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability.

There are other large scale efforts brewing, but the largest effort of all could be made by the individual-multiplied by millions. It is the power of the one, You. Here are some things that You can do to be kind to the planet.

- Start out at home. Replace old inefficient appliances with new energy efficient ones. Use eco-friendly techniques when you remodel or build. Use certified

wood, double pane glass, solar panels, low energy light bulbs, recycled materials, xeriscape your yard, use water saving devices on all hydrants, and recycle your own refuse.

- Use native plants in all of your landscaping.

- Buy locally grown organic foods when possible.

- Use dry cleaners that clean with non-toxic products instead of petroleum based products.

- Drive less, walk, bicycle, and use mass transit whenever possible. When you must drive use an eco-friendly automobile and carpool.

- Support green companies and invest in private equity firms that invest in clean technology.

- Join groups that support sustainable life styles and environmental awareness. Bird watching and gardening have become two of the fastest growing outdoor recreational activities. Membership in the Sierra Club is greatly increased.

- And, remember to support businesses, corporations, politicians, and others who act as wise stewards of the environment.

For eons there has been a segment of the population that has proclaimed the importance of tending to the well being of the planet. They have been single minded, stalwart, and unyielding in their concern. However, political concern for the environment and the health of the planet has waxed and waned over the years. With the current diverse and widespread attention from the American public, it is hopeful that the movement toward environmental health is on an upswing. Maybe it is fanned by economic necessity; maybe it is fanned by a sincere desire to make things better

for future generations. No matter what the reason, we will all surely benefit from this monumental change in awareness.

After tending to our own country, the next big step is essential and that is to take the word abroad to emerging economies. There must be global awareness in this closely related world. If our American ingenuity and work ethic could be directed at creating affordable, clean technology to spread around the world, the planet would have what is needed for the healing to begin. It is necessary to take care of the only planet we have. And, this by no means covers all issues. There are still "biggies" to deal with. Loss of species to extinction can't be undone and must stop now. But, we can clean the air, water, and soil. We can learn to conserve resources. We can strive to save habitat. And, we must. At this time, applaud the pendulum swing in favor of conservation consciousness and insist that it grows to include all other needs.

Major sources of information: Fortune, August 7, 2006; Newsweek, July 17, 2006



Bird watching at Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area

photo by Terry Stevens

New Green Outlook continued from page 1

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Bird watching at Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area

photo by Terry Stevens

Shooting Wildlife! *(the right way)*

by Terry Stevens



Terry Stevens captures the spirit through the lens of his camera.

photo by Joyce Heath

so dependent on fate. Even without exotic and expensive equipment, almost anyone can take good nature and wildlife photos if they use their heads and their eyes.

If you want to get action shots, unless you have a camera that has adjustable shutter speed, you have to follow the subject in the view finder before you shoot, as you press the button, and follow through after the camera noise stops. This is why even when using point-and-shoot cameras I use the view finder as opposed to the LCD display screen. With this technique, your target will hopefully be in focus and relatively sharp, with the background showing some motion blur. This gives the viewer the feeling of speed. Remember that the auto-focus feature in this type of camera

When I was asked to write an article about wildlife photography for Wing-Beats, I immediately had thoughts of ISO settings, F-stops, and shutter speeds flying through my head. I was trained early by a totally cool guy, my dad. A true Renaissance man, he was versed in various artistic media, including photography. He even built a darkroom in our basement where I learned about mixing chemicals, developing film, and making prints. Along with this came lessons in the basics of camera work which led to the purchase of my first SLR camera and a position as a photographer on my high school year-book staff.

Now, what does all this have to do with wildlife photography? Well, with the advances in camera technology and the advent of digital equipment, not much, really. With the possible exception of the basic principles of how cameras work, the digital revolution has changed how images are made forever. This being said, I will make most of my remarks with digital equipment in mind.

Taking a great photograph is like making a good landing in an A-320: After you do all your careful planning and take great care to set it up perfectly, if you're lucky, it turns out pretty good! Actually, taking good photos is a little easier and not quite



Sandhill Crane at Bosque del Apache

might not be able to keep up with a constantly changing range. If you are perpendicular to the direction of your subject's movement, that will help. Action shots are cool, but maybe the most difficult to obtain, especially with more inexpensive equipment. Don't be discouraged. Keep shooting and with practice, you'll get some totally awesome pictures!

Getting close to your subject is important if detail is your aim. Remember that what you see in the viewfinder (or LCD screen, if that's what you use) will almost always look smaller in the final image. If you're using a point-and-shoot type camera with

one fixed lens, telephotography will be limited. Make use of the "zoom" feature if you have one, but not "digital zoom" as your picture will be pixilated, or comprised of small squares that are the by-product of digital enlargement. Just as in wildlife rescue, patience and stealth are your best assets. Move toward your subject slowly and quietly, not using any large or rapid movements. Try to have the camera in shooting position as you approach. Raising it to your eye at the last minute might frighten your subject and long minutes of stalking will be wasted. Coming at your target with the sun or other light source behind you will produce better illumination, but watch out for shadows, especially your own! I think oblique lighting and even back lit shots can be artistic and enchanting.

Once you get as close as you can without spooking your prey, frame your shot. Composition is an art and although some cropping and adjustment can be done in the computer, it's best to crop with the camera if at all possible. Remember that most digital cameras have a lag in the auto-focus feature, so hold your breath and press the button slowly to allow the A/F feature to work before the shutter opens. If you can, take more than one shot if the target is willing. This will give you the chance to pick the best of the frames when you get home (another advantage of the digital world!). Above all, be careful not to disturb the animal you are imaging. Too many photographers, professionals included, will barge past barriers and protective foliage just to "get the shot". Migrating and breeding wildlife, especially birds, are easily driven off sensitive nests and feeding areas by unthinking people bent on taking that one great picture. Remember you are a guest in their homes...don't act like boorish in-laws! If you think you might cause a panic reaction in a bird or mammal and keep them from doing what they need to do, let it go.

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So you took your time, didn't scare him off, got some good shots of the preening bald eagle and you didn't fall into the river. Then you got a couple of good flight shots as he took off to return to his hunting perch. You still have some daylight left and your storage card isn't full yet. Don't forget beautiful creatures often live in beautiful habitat. Panoramic shots of wildlife in their natural surroundings are just as effective in telling their story as close-ups. Clouds, sky, scenery, even fog or snow can be a wonderful frame for a wildlife picture, or even as a subject itself.



Add an interesting setting to your photos.

Don't limit yourself or your portfolio to just one type of shot. It's easy to spot artists who have fallen into a rut with their work, so diversify if you can. Again, since digital imagery is so inexpensive (at least once the initial equipment purchase is made), don't pass up the breathtaking sunset or cloud lighting effect because there is no bird flying through the field of vision. And if your camera allows a change of settings, experiment! Most

people never use anything but a small percentage of the capabilities of their modern equipment.

If you never get that "National Geographic Cover Shot," it doesn't really matter.



Use direct lighting to enhance the photo of the acorn woodpecker.

But even if you never get beyond the point-and-shoot camera set to "auto," you are still a winner since you are out in the natural world and watching totally cool things in their environment.

The very best "storage media" are your brain and your heart. The images recorded here will be with you forever and you don't need a fancy monitor to enjoy them!



Don't be afraid to use interesting textures in your photos.

*Photos In This Article
by Terry Stevens*

Terry Stevens has been an institution at Liberty Wildlife for many years. He is a commercial pilot, expert bird handler, photographer, writer, head of the Rescue and Transport crew and owner of the blog avianresq.spaces.msn.com. He too, is a Renaissance man.

Citizen Stewardship Program

Liberty Wildlife is continuing into the second year of our Citizen Stewardship Program funded by the Arizona Community Foundation. We are participating with The Phoenix Zoo, The Arizona Animal Welfare League, the Tucson Audubon, The Grand Canyon Trust, and the Second Chance Center in Flagstaff. The group is working on a template to promote/teach Citizen Stewardship with a goal of improving people's relationships with and understanding of our natural heritage, in particular animals and their habitat, so that everyone may lead more sustainable lifestyles. Dissemination of these programs to a broader audience will help extend the reach of each of the individual participants in the program. We are looking forward to the completion of a package in the near future.

Hummingbird Banding:

Net Gain is Information

by Craig Fischer

Six years ago, I first ran across Dr. George West and his wife Ellie at Beatty's bed-and-breakfast in Miller Canyon, a birding destination in the Huachuca Mountains. Well into his 60s, Dr. West looks like a senior Dennis the Menace. He has the full head of white hair with an unruly cowlick, a quick smile and a child's wide-eyed wonder at every bird that comes before him, whether he's seen his 20th Broad-billed Hummingbird of the morning or a Cooper's Hawk making a surprise attack on the birds at a nearby feeder.



Anna's hummingbird

His attention is on the hummingbirds. West is a volunteer with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, trapping and banding the winged jewels to discover the secrets of their migration and their breeding life.

"Arizona has been in an extended drought for the past three years," West related. "There hasn't been sufficient amounts of summer monsoon showers and the winter rains have been nonexistent. That lack of moisture takes its toll on the vegetation and in turn the wildlife."

"Hummingbirds are one vital link in determining how critical this drought is because they feed directly on the nectar of the plants, supplementing that with some insects. If there's not enough moisture, the plants don't produce the flowers and nectar and the hummingbirds don't have enough food sources to

produce young and nurture a family."

West and his small cadre of volunteers had set up traps around the hummingbird feeders. A picnic table became a miniature laboratory.

Just after sunrise, the birds were swarming around the feeders, but they weren't getting too close to the sugar water. The traps were something new and a reason for the birds to be cautious. Eventually a pair decided that they were hungry enough, dropping to the red feeders for a quick sip and ...

SNAP! Ellie West released her string, causing the trap to drop and catch two birds at one time. The netting is set about 10 inches away from the feeder itself, allowing the birds plenty of movement inside and not entangling their delicate wings in the nets, saving them from possible injury. Sometimes it works, sometimes the birds slip away and the net has to be reset.

As the morning progressed, the hummingbirds became more active. The traps captured more than a dozen birds every hour -- Anna's, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Broad-billed, and Magnificent. Only the mature males have the striking iridescent colors that make hummingbird watching spectacular, but several birds were females or second year

birds that hadn't acquired their adult coloration.

West gently withdrew each bird from the net and gave it a thorough examination. He took a small metallic band, placed it in a crimper and attached the band around the bird's leg. Next to him, an assistant was ready with pencil and paper to take each measurement.

"Number 34, Broad-billed, second-year male," West said, reciting the needed information by rote. "Gorget is about 30 percent metallic, no extreme feather wear."

He picked up a small steel ruler and carefully took the bird's vital measurements: length of bill, length of wing, length of primary and secondary feathers, length and shape of tail feathers. He loosely wrapped the bird in a small piece of screen and placed it on an electronic scale.

"Three-point-four grams. That seems to be the norm today."

continued next page



Costa's hummingbird

LIBERTY'S ORPHANS



Foster Great Horned Owl,
Hogan and baby



It's getting crowded in here!

*Photography by
Terry Stevens*



Three
baby
raccoon
amigos

Orphaned coyote



PHOTO GALLERY DESIGN BY LESLEY GUENTHER

LIBERTY'S ORPHANS



Foster Great Horned Owl,
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PHOTO GALLERY DESIGN BY LESLEY GUENTHER

Mistaken Identity

by James Badman

The phone rings, it is another tortoise identification question. I always love the questions. The caller says, "I have a brownish tortoise, medium size." It could be anything really. I give them some simple care instructions and directions to Liberty Wildlife, and a day or so later Jan Miller calls to tell me that a box turtle has arrived at Liberty. We take in any turtle or tortoise that needs a home, regardless of its condition.

Identification has become easier with phone cameras and the internet, and within a few hours I can have pictures and typically can tell what kind of animal we have. Thinking back when I was a phone volunteer, it was never that easy. If you have been a phone volunteer for any time you can relate; the caller says "I have an eagle baby that has fallen from the tree." The problem is, this is a pigeon, or it could be an owl or kestrel hatchling. You try to get an accurate description from a caller, which is sometimes an impossible feat.

When it comes to turtles and tortoises, it becomes even harder, as everyone thinks whatever they have found is a desert tortoise. I remember a call from a distressed woman asking if I could pick up a desert tortoise. She described a grey "tortoise" and said she knew what a desert tortoise was and that this was one. She said she was afraid of it because it tried to bite her. She actually lived near me, and I told her I would get off work in an hour and she could bring it to my house. She told me again she was afraid of it. She asked if they could have rabies. I replied that they are unable to carry the virus. I asked her if she was able to get close enough to pick it up from behind. She said she would be too afraid to do that. I was starting to think this was not a desert tortoise. I told her to take a shovel and lift it into a box. An hour later she arrived with this tortoise in her trunk. She was too afraid to have it near her in the car. I opened the trunk to find a large, very upset, common snapping turtle hissing and spitting. I carefully lifted him from the trunk and put him in a large container. I showed her a desert tortoise and pointed out some differences between turtles and tortoises. I was so thankful she

did not try to pick him up. It reminded me that there are so many exotics out there that I need to be careful with the information I provide. I do not want the caller or the animal to get hurt.

It can be quite sad when former pets come in; this is especially true when an accident has happened. I took a call some years back; a woman could not keep her tortoise anymore. She said it also had some old shell damage from her dog. I gave her directions to Liberty Wildlife. Jan called me later that day to tell me it was sent to Dr. Ritt Enderson, who used to help us with tortoises when he owned a vet clinic in Mesa. I asked Jan how



Now that's a desert tortoise

severe the dog maul was. Jan replied the tortoise was missing the front right corner of its shell, it really smelled and had maggots all over in the wound. HMMM.... minor shell damage from a dog. I arrived at Ritt's vet clinic where he had already begun flushing the wound, and picking maggots out of the wound. Over the next few days we picked maggots, Ritt debrided the wounds and began force feeding him. That tortoise was a survivor. He took months of work. The wound began to heal over, beginning to get a leathery covering. The tortoise is named Alpo, and is used in education programs at Liberty Wildlife today.

Sometimes former owners are desperate to find homes and are not too honest with what they are bringing in.

A guy called last year with two desert tortoises. He could no longer keep them because he was moving and heard we took them in. He lived near Animal Medical Center in Scottsdale, a vet clinic my wife, Kirsten, works for. They allow me to take "drop offs", as Kirsten can then bring them home later. I gave the gentlemen directions and let the vet clinic know they were coming, as Kirsten had already left for the day. Kirsten called and said to get over to the clinic right away. The former owner had dropped off quite a load, including a rhino iguana, a ball python, a reticulated python and of course, two African spurred tortoises.

There were no desert tortoises. The gentleman pulled up in a U-Haul and told the receptionist he was dropping animals off for me. I quickly made some phone calls to place as many of the animals as possible. It is great to have friends willing to take on the "drop offs".

Liberty Wildlife does receive desert tortoises. Like the many avian species that come to Liberty, there are periods of the year when we receive more calls; usually spring and fall. They are repaired if needed, and because they cannot be returned to the wild once

they have been in captivity, we find caring homes through our adoption program. Liberty Wildlife also provides husbandry tips thru the web site. For more information, go to www.libertywildlife.org.

James Badman is a long time Liberty Wildlife volunteer and Animal Care Manager of the ASU Department of Animal Care and Technologies.

The Wind Masters by Pete Dunne

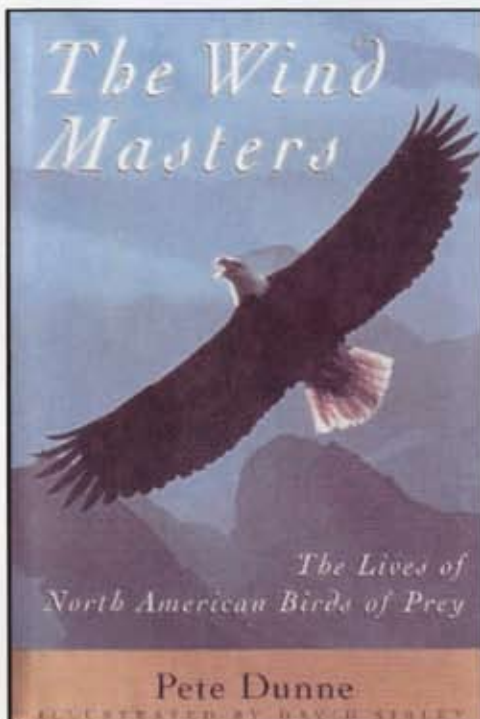
A book review by Terry Stevens

I am convinced that someday, when it is time for Pete Dunne to depart this world for worlds beyond, his spirit will be borne by those of eagles, hawks, falcons, and vultures about which he writes in his book *"The Wind Masters,"* now available in paperback.

This book, published by Houghton Mifflin and illustrated by David Sibley, truly is a treasure. Richly informative, it provides details of identification and natural biology of 33 different species of North American diurnal raptors. However, unlike other scholarly texts such as Johnsgard or Craighead, Dunne presents his data not in dry textbook fashion, but in allegorical vignettes of the everyday lives of these birds. Through mystic prose, reminiscent of the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery, we are shown intimate glimpses of what these hunters of the sky endure daily. We are invited to witness their innermost thought processes, privy even to the dreams of a migrating hawk, a breeding condor and a dying eagle.

His use of evocative imagery is mesmerizing. The poetry he uses in this description of the swallow-tailed kite is only one example. "The bird continued to move along the tree line, weaving like a figure skater through invisible obstacles, making light of the storm's best buffeting efforts. Time and gravity seemed suspended. Friction could find no hold. The great

blue-black bird with the silver wings and deeply forked tail flew the way angels must in their dreams - but if an angel, then a killer angel; and if viewed from the multi-chambered eyes of a dragonfly, then a nightmare and not a dream."



Ordinarily we discourage anthropomorphizing when speaking about birds, but Dunne's use of literary device is forgivable, if not justified. The technique is sometimes humorous, other times heartrending, but always informative.

The stories show us, on a very personal level, how unforgiving the world is for wildlife, both predator and prey. Life-and-death struggles, in which outcomes are based as much on luck as developed skills, take place on a daily, even hourly basis. We see constant references to "the balance" which nature strives to maintain. We also see how we, as a species, impact the environment, often to the detriment of these marvelous creatures.

This book will put knowledge in your head, joy in your heart, and a lump in your throat. If you can read the chapter on the sharp-shinned hawk or the golden eagle with dry eyes, your heart is cold, my friend! Buy this book - don't get it from the library. Pete Dunne deserves to get a little richer from *"The Wind Masters"* - for you will be much richer for having read it!



Want to keep abreast of the happenings at Liberty Wildlife?

Register to receive our monthly e-newsletter Nature News by visiting our website at www.Libertywildlife.org. Be sure to check out the KidStuff section for fun animal puzzles and games for kids.

Every magnificent animal that is rehabilitated and released to the wild by Liberty Wildlife, be it a glowing red tail hawk or a pearly grey mourning dove, is a celebration of the partnership and hard work of many people. Over four thousand animals came in the Liberty Wildlife door (and window) this year, each passing through the care of various volunteers on a path of rehabilitation and hopefully eventual freedom.

The first stage of every rehabilitation is discovery of the animal by a member of the public. The discoverer usually contacts Liberty Wildlife by calling our Hotline. Hotline volunteers work from home covering weekly shifts of several hours each. They pick up messages from the phone service and call the public back to give advice and help in getting the animals to our facility or an appropriate alternative. Isolated from the hustle and bustle of on-site work, they nevertheless play a key part in the rehabilitation of each and every animal. These volunteers are the voice of Liberty Wildlife and they encounter a wide range of calls.

Elaine Allen is the backbone of the group, working a Hotline shift six days of every week. Elaine has been on the Hotline nearly ten years and she has fielded most every kind of call. She still chuckles over the caller who was practically screaming that there was an alligator in her sink. "Are you sure it's an alligator?" Elaine questioned and the woman responded, "I know an alligator when I see one!" As Elaine prepared to refer the woman to someone who could help, the caller said, "Oh never mind. My husband killed it." And she hung up. Elaine's entry in her call log was Alligator in sink. Husband killed. She decided she had better go back and add "it" to that second short sentence.

She also chuckles over the descriptions she gets from callers of the birds they have found. "Well, it's a normal every day bird!" Or, "it's definitely an outside bird." She is pleased to be able to teach callers to recognize bird markings and help them to identify the bird they have taken in.

If the animal that has been discovered is a mammal or a raptor, the Hotline volunteer will call in the Rescue and Transport crew. This group of volunteers does not have a regular weekly shift, but instead is on call to pick up animals found in their general locale and transport them to Liberty Wildlife. They have undergone training in the safe capture of



photo by Kenny Wilkins

Release of a Red-tailed Hawk

animals and have committed to drop whatever they are doing whenever possible, and drive the miles to save an animal.

Carl Price is a veteran Rescue and Transport volunteer who travels the Valley and beyond to pick up injured wildlife. He refers to his ancient truck as the skunk wagon because he has transported over 200 skunks in it over his years helping Liberty Wildlife. "Only three rode in the cab though," he claims. Carl recently came up against his first miss in the skunk department. A spotted skunk, "the size of a hefty hamster" slipped away into a hole in the plaster wall of a post office where he had made his home for two weeks - nibbling on computer wires and perhaps enjoying the air conditioning.

Carl says this year he has noticed a phenomenal increase in the

number of swamp birds, waders attracted to the Valley's many artificial lakes and waterways.

"The desert valley is turning into a swamp valley," Carl maintains. The number of cormorants, egrets and three species of heron has soared. Great blue herons are a large and potentially dangerous animal, and although beautiful, a force to be reckoned with for rescue volunteers. Black-crowned night herons are smaller, but still can be tough customers. "Even the parents don't take care of them once they have jumped out of the nest," Carl says. Another heron that frequents the Valley is a little green heron.

When the animal gets to the facility, it comes in to the Medical Services area. To learn to treat various common injuries and illnesses Medical Services volunteers train for forty hours and mentor for many more. They see the animals when they are suffering the worst of their trauma. **Terry Stevens** rescued the Great Horned Owl that landed on a transformer. The bird was observed going up in a flash of smoke. Like any good burn victim the owl stopped, dropped and rolled - and luckily for him, the flames were extinguished. When Terry brought the bird into Liberty Wildlife all of its feathers were burned off to the shaft. It had severe burns on its foot and right wing. Medical Services treated the burns with Elastigel which dulled the pain and kept the wound moisturized. Miraculously, the bird survived and has been rehabilitating for nine months. The owl must grow in all new feathers which will take a year or more. In the meantime this raggedy looking survivor has been mentoring juvenile Great Horned Owls, teaching them to hunt and kill their food in preparation for their release.

In an organization run ninety nine percent by volunteers, reliability and dedication are priceless attributes. **Kristen Dahl** is recognized as a most valuable volunteer in the Critical Medical services area. Kristen attended one of Liberty Wildlife's first Medical Services classes and has been a rock of dependability ever since.

continued next page

She holds down the Sunday evening shift come heck or high water. Kristen has a fine understanding of the process of rehabilitation and keeps everyone informed. She has also mentored many volunteers.

Once the animal has been stabilized, care is provided by the Daily Care crew. These people are the nuts and bolts of the organization. They are Liberty Wildlife's eyes and ears as they keep tabs on the progress of each animal. Every one of them is a treasure to the organization as they keep the animals fed and cared for, but the following volunteers are recognized for their stellar contributions.

Max Orlando always shows up. He does the work of two volunteers every week, and never complains about anything. He notices the small details that can be crucial to the success of the recuperating animals.

Darlene Thompson has been a volunteer for many years and can be depended on to be pleasant, helpful and to always work hard.

Claudia Kirscher steps up to the plate and fills in for others in addition to her own Daily Care shift and a Medical Services shift (she has also trained to take birds on programs with the Education team). She is always upbeat and eager to learn, and brings delicious baked treats to share.

Kristine Williams is famous for how well she cleans. She is a roll up the sleeves scrubber, and when a bird is taken out of its cage for treatment she goes in and does a deep cleaning.

Joyce Heath is considered the right arm of the Daily Care organization. She is tremendously dedicated and has great knowledge of rehabilitation and animals. She also takes birds out on Education programs and is a best friend with Bailey, the Education turkey vulture, known far and wide across the valley for his showmanship.

A huge thanks is due to all of these committed people.

The birds that recover, but are not able to be released to the wild due to their injuries, are candidates for Liberty Wildlife's Education program. Not every bird is trainable, but the chosen birds are taught to stand on a glove and to go calmly in and out of travel crates. Education volunteers go through an eight week training to learn

their beauty, their mystery, and the fact that they are close up and personal. Goose bumps are a common reaction for those held in the yellow glare of a Great Horned Owl. Children and adults thrill to see the otherworldly artwork of a ferruginous hawk's plumage, or to observe a colorful kestrel preen and rouse.

Liberty Wildlife brought all this to over 400 classrooms and civic events across the Valley last year.

This year's season is shaping up equally strong.

As with many volunteer groups, there are a few carrying disproportional weight. Due to her belief in the Liberty Wildlife mission, as well as her love of the animals and the children she teaches about them, **Mona Berrier** was the champion of the Education group. Mona took Education animals to more than 160 programs during the past nine month season. A nurse and a grandmother, Mona's folksy style puts everyone at ease, and even after all of these programs she

is still clearly awe struck by the beauty of the wild animals.

Joanne Mayer fulfills many duties around Liberty Wildlife, hand-feeding the education animals and taking charge of many Education programs during the week. She is a common sight at the facility, sitting with a hawk or an owl on her glove while the

bird tears into its meal. Joanne is a great story teller, engaging audiences with facts and information on the animals.

Max Bessler is a fixture at day long Education programs where he presents the birds as well as information on their natural history. Max



photos by Terry Stevens

Severely injured Great Horned Owl



Medical Services provides relief

about the individual animals and their natural history. Then they train further with individual birds until they are qualified to take them out to programs.

A hot commodity in classrooms and events through the valley, the Liberty Wildlife Education animals wow everyone who sees them with

Year In Review Continued

can stand all day with a large hawk and at least half a day with a turkey vulture on his glove. In addition to stamina he is valued for his ability to balance a full time job with the many hours he devotes to Liberty Wildlife, for his famous lemon squares and home made eggnog, and for leading some 77 programs in the last season.

August of this year Liberty Wildlife had to say farewell to an old friend and Director, **Darlene Fitchet**, who moved with her husband back to Tampa, Florida. It wasn't easy to do, she had been with us for 20 years. Darlene was a pioneer at Liberty Wildlife—an integral

part of our history and institution. She kept us on track, made us laugh, and dedicated a huge amount of herself to the betterment of Liberty Wildlife and the wildlife of Arizona. Although she is great at staying in touch, it just isn't the same without her smiling face. Replacing her isn't possible, so we will just have to do the best we can and grudgingly wish her well in this new adventure with alligators in her back yard and sand hill cranes in the front yard.

Again, it is entirely because of these dedicated people and many more that Liberty Wildlife is able to save lives and help preserve nature in Arizona.



Daily Care volunteer supervised by Acoma, a Red-tailed hawk Education Ambassador

Why Do I Give to Liberty Wildlife?

by Tracey Westerhausen

Money and effort. They are, in my view, the keys to a successful non-profit organization. I've tried to do my part in the effort category, by serving as a hands-on volunteer from 1988 to 1999. Let me talk first about effort, and then about money.

My job-title as a volunteer was "outside feeder and cleaner". This meant that I, along with my volunteer partner, Kay Beck, provided maid and room service to Liberty guests who resided on the property, every Thursday morning. We scraped up day old carcasses from the Red-tailed hawk enclosure, and recycled them to the vultures. We provided fresh water. We checked on the apparent health of our charges.

Sure, Kay and I were working for Liberty, but Liberty was also working for us. We learned how to tell a Red-tailed hawk from a Swainson's hawk. The individual birds made their personalities clear to us. And we often celebrated the hallmark of a Liberty success story: the release of one of our patients back into the wild.

The opportunity to serve as a volunteer also took Kay and me on other

journeys. Through the patience and knowledge of other volunteers, we were trained to take the Education birds into the community, to schools and civic groups, to talk about the wonders of Arizona's indigenous birds. I learned how to clean and maintain our "mouse factory," so that Liberty could provide inexpensive, fresh food for its predators.

It wasn't easy to work full time and make space for volunteer hours. It became even harder after my son Ethan came along.

Finally, life limited my hands-on opportunities to serve Liberty. I had to give up the treasured Thursday mornings. I've tried to compensate in other ways. Sometimes, I help at orientation classes, where prospective volunteers are convinced of their inner desire to contribute their time to Liberty. I serve on the Board of Directors.

My other contribution is money. Liberty is in the midst of an effort to move to Papago Park. The momentum increases each week. I add to that push in two ways. First, I make an end-of-the year contribution, earmarked for any area that Liberty needs most.

Second, I send Liberty an electronic transfer every month for the capital campaign. It was so easy to do this through the on-line banking service that my bank offers. I set up the specified amount, to be paid on a certain day of the month, to continue indefinitely. The money leaves my account the day after payday, so I never miss it.

My financial contributions aren't much. But Liberty appreciates every little bit. Won't you think about a regular on-line contribution, too?



Wishes for Wildlife

The 2006 Wishes for Wildlife Benefit and Auction was an enchanting evening of delicious food and great deals on some fantastic merchandise. It was made more celebratory by the recognition of our 25th Anniversary. Wine with a Liberty Wildlife label was gifted to special honorees who have been active with Liberty Wildlife over the past years. Wine glasses etched with the Liberty Wildlife logo and decorated with a wildlife charm went home with every guest. A special video donated by SRP recounted the history in visuals and interviews, giving everyone a laugh or two...hairdos and styles have changed greatly as has the growth of the organization. And, the thrill for everyone at the resort was the release of a rehabilitated Great Horned Owl who gracefully flew away after being released by Chip Weil, next year's Corporate Chair. Peggy Cole, the Benefit Chair, outdid herself to make the evening a perfect success. We are grateful to everyone who came out for the evening in support of Liberty Wildlife. The 2007 Wishes for Wildlife Benefit will be held in a new location that promises to add magic to the evening. Against the dramatic backdrop of the Phoenix Mountain Preserve, Liberty Wildlife will do our best to make your dreams come true...at least for an evening. Please plan to join us for this event **April 21, 2007.**



photos by Kevin Coons, SRP

*Treasures Galore at the
WISHES FOR WILDLIFE
Annual Benefit*

Casino Night

We plan to inaugurate a new fund raiser this year. Watch for more details on Casino Night, which will be held in January. A central Phoenix location will be the destination. No trip to Las Vegas is necessary. Bring your friends for a night on the town. You can help the planet, help wildlife, save on gas and stay in town to gamble the night away. Take a chance, risk a few coins and go away happy. No matter if the fates are kind or cruel to you, you will feel like a winner. Come join us at this fun new event.

Groundbreaking

Our new state-of-the-art facility at Papago Park has broken ground, now we all need to pitch in to help finish raising the funds to keep the project going. The realization of this dream will enable Liberty Wildlife to reach the public with our message on a greater scale. We will finally be open to the public in our sustainable building. You will be able to tour the facility seeing ways to live "softly" in the desert using green techniques. Eagle Feeding daily will allow you to watch the hand feeding of our education eagles. On site programs will finally be possible. Artists, photographers, and wood carvers will have a chance to see their models up close and personal. Internships will be available for veterinary students, biologists, environmental educational students, and as well as many other new program opportunities that will be offered. We will also be able to house, care, and release many more animals than our present space provides. Everyone can help us achieve these goals. Think about volunteering, donating funds or participating in one of our fund raising events. We appreciate all of your help. Be sure to check our growth progress when you visit Papago Park.

Join or renew!

It is with your help that Liberty Wildlife has furthered wildlife conservation through quality rehabilitation, education, and consultation services. Because of your support - and your interest in aiding wildlife - we hope that we can count on you to help us continue these programs.

Maybe it's a good time to add a gift membership for a friend - or maybe raise your own membership level.

Each member will receive the annual publication, *WingBeats*.

*Cut along the dotted line and mail with check to: P.O. Box 14345
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