What’s Inside
Remembering Justin Peckham
Night-time Adventure
Wildlife Releases
Newest Members
Windows into Wildlife
Benefit
Calendar

Spring 2010

Brant Goose Successful Release by Virginia Flaherty

PWC rarely gets Brant Geese to be rehabilitated, but this past December we had three Brants come in on the same day! Two of them had been shot, but not killed, in Morro Bay. Both of them, unfortunately, died shortly after coming to the Rehab Center. The third had a fractured wing (not from a gunshot wound) but the break looked like it could heal and the bird would be able to fly again.

Brant geese are very high-strung in captivity and after about a week of being in our facility, he was sent north, along with his favorite food from Morro Bay, a large bag of eel grass and bay mud, to the International Bird Rescue Research Center (IBRRC) in Fairfield, California. IBRRC has a very large facility where the bird could rehabilitate in a more solitary environment than we were able to provide for the full month it would take for the wing to heal.

After the month was up, IBRRC returned the bird to PWC so that he could be released back into the Estuary. Brant geese are very mate and family-flock-oriented so we wanted him to be able to return to his family.

My husband & I took him out in our kayak and paddled to the spot near where he was found in the back of the Estuary between Baywood Park and Cuesta by the Sea. He spent the kayak ride honking in his carrier and when we neared a flock of geese and he heard them honking, he became very excited, moving around in the carrier and honking like crazy!

When I opened the door of the crate, he stepped right out onto the rail of the kayak and took off immediately, honking all the way. He flew off across the Estuary until he was out of sight. A very happy, satisfying send-off for the Brant Goose!

4 ways to help baby wildlife this spring

1. Fawns - If you find an uninjured fawn, do not pick it up! Keep people and dogs away so that the mother can return. Fawns are often left alone for long periods of time while the mother (doe) goes off and forages for food.

2. Baby Birds - If the bird has no feathers, it is a nestling and it needs to be put back in the nest. If you cannot find the nest, you can make one and place it near the original nest-site. If parents do not return after a couple of hours to care for a naked, nestling bird, call the PWC hotline 543-WILD.

3. Young Fledgling Birds - Most fledgling birds cannot fly when they leave the nest. They are often found on the ground. Keep pets and children away. The parents will continue to care for the bird. This is an important learning period in the little bird’s life and lasts only a few days. The bird does not need rescuing.

4. Baby Mammals - We get calls regarding raccoons and opossums whose parents have been trapped, with babies left to die. Do not trap and relocate opossums, raccoons, or skunks. The babies will soon grow up and the family will usually go on its way. If you need help, call our hotline for solutions.

Well-meaning individuals sometimes try to raise orphaned wild animals. It is illegal to do so. Wild babies have specialized dietary needs and can become ill or die from improper diet. Licensed rehabilitators have the skills to feed these animals properly and to keep them wild so they can be returned to their natural habitat. Share this info with friends & neighbors.
In Memory of Justin Peckham

I met Justin as an animated little boy who kept his Mom fully engaged as she shopped in my Morro Bay health food store. As he grew up, I found out he loved wildlife and had expressed a wish to volunteer at Pacific Wildlife Care. As the Director, I wanted to engage any young person who had the desire to help care for rehabilitating wildlife, but I worried about a young boy in the company of potentially dangerous animals. As a compromise, I agreed to a trial period with a shorter than normal volunteer “shift”. So I mentored Justin on Saturdays. He proved an amiable companion with boundless energy, a thirst for knowledge, and courageous compassion to his volunteer time. We became pals right away and I began to look forward to our Saturday mornings together.

“We have a special bird here today,” I told Justin on his first day. He couldn't wait to see the Golden Eagle, but conscientiously dug into the first cleaning job I gave him, and finished it in record time. The first time we went out on a rescue together was a summer day in August. I watched Justin puff up with pride as we rescued a Brown Pelican from Cayucos Beach, while a group of impressed beach goers looked on. With maturity beyond his years, Justin also helped me with a memorable rescue from the rocks that surround Morro Rock. We received word that a Pelican had swallowed something very large and was grounded on the rocks. We found the bird with a huge fish carcass stuck in its pouch – not a pretty picture. Together, we carried the bird (and the smelly carcass) to the safety of the Rehabilitation Center.

A year ago, Justin’s young life was cut short by an unfortunate accident. As a lasting tribute, the PWC Board of Directors approved the planting of a California native Toyon tree in the native plant garden at the Rehabilitation Center. The tree is marked by a plaque that serves as a tribute from all of Justin’s friends at PWC. At the dedication, everyone had a story to tell about their experiences with Justin, underscoring the remarkable impact one young person can make, in a very short time. As the Toyon tree grows to maturity and provides food to our native songbirds, we will remember the loss of such a special soul who will remain in our hearts.

— Dani Nicholson

A night transport from SLO to San Miguel wine country

By Gaye Richardson, PWC Transporter

Jeri Roberts nurtured a beautiful young Barn Owl back to health and it was ready for release. The young owl had come from a wine-growing property in San Miguel. It was found listless and starving when the winery owner found it in the bushes near her house.

Upon our arrival at Jeri’s property in SLO she tutored us on owls and showed us her birds, including a Great Horned Owl in one of her two good-sized aviaries. It was clear Jeri had a passion for working with raptors. Before leaving she detailed how to do a safe release so as not to cause the owl any harm.

Jeri wanted as close to a night release as possible because Barn Owl's eyes are sensitive to light. Being able to see clearly would help ensure its safety from night predators such as the Great Horned Owl.

We set out from Jeri’s at 7:15 p.m. Luckily, my brother was visiting; he was curious to explore the backcountry east of San Miguel. I was glad to have him along as we drove the lonesome winding back roads. I never knew there were so many large wineries tucked into North County.

It was near dusk when we finally arrived. The winery lady came out to greet us and watch the release of the young owl. Several owls were flitting about in a huge stand of tall trees nearby. I aimed the carrier away from the last rays of the setting sun, towards a tall tree. I gingerly lifted the top off of the “X-large tub” carrier and hid behind the lid. Nothing happened! Seconds later, I peeked over the top of the raised lid. I was face to face with the stupefied young owl staring up from the tub (I had meant to face the owl toward the tree – not me!).

Smartly, he figured it out – and made a FAST beeline out of the tub toward the tree. We all gave a BIG whoop...and were so happy to see him fly away... well and free. The owl was back with his owl family, in the familiar habitat he knew. The winery owner was happy!: My brother and I were happy! We had all experienced something special and wild. It was a truly a “feel good” moment.

The winery owner was so grateful that she gifted Jeri and me with four bottles of expensive red wine. (Jeri and I later toasted a glass together and it was really good!)

My brother and I learned many new things about owls that evening. Plus, we had a unique adventure into the scenic back country of San Miguel.

It certainly beat watching T.V. – hands down!
Calendar Dates

February 20-21
International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council
Basic Training in Salinas, CA

March 20
Wildlife Transporter Training
10-11 AM
RSVP solarken@att.net

March 28
Windows into Wildlife II
2:00-5:30 PM
Edna Valley Winery. Tickets $85

April 17
Wildlife Transporter Training
10-11 AM
RSVP solarken@att.net

April
Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation
Training for Rehab Center Volunteers
check web-site for date/time

Releases Total 119

October-December

Acorn Woodpecker 1
American Coot 1
Anna's Hummingbird 1
Barn Owl 1
Brandt's Cormorant 1
Brown Pelican 11
Cackling Goose 2
California Gull 1
California Quail 2
Common Loon 1
Common Murre 1
Cottontail 1
Eared Grebe 3
Eurasian Collared-Dove 10
Field Mouse 3
Goose (Domestic) 1
Great Blue Heron 1
Great Horned Owl 2
Green-winged Teal 1
House Finch 3
Lesser Goldfinch 1
Mew Gull 1
Mourning Dove 1
Muscovy Duck 1
Opossum 34
Pacific Pond Turtle 3
Pied-billed Grebe 1
Red-shafted Flicker 1
Red-shouldered Hawk 1
Red-tailed Hawk 1
Ring-billed Gull 1
Rock Dove 2
Ruddy Duck 2
Turkey Vulture 2
Virginia Rail 1
Western Bluebird 1
Western Grebe 8
Western Gull 8
Wood Rat 1

2nd Annual
Windows into Wildlife Benefit
Sunday, March 28, 2010, 2:00-5:30 PM
at Edna Valley Winery

For nearly 25 years PWC had been caring for the wildlife of San Luis Obispo County (mainly in private homes). With the opening of the Rehabilitation Center in 2007 and the increased number of wildlife patients, it became apparent that there was a new need to raise more funds beyond the membership dues. The Board with the help of Penny Fitzgerald envisioned a wine-country event paired with wildlife and created the concept of Windows into Wildlife. The first event was held at Bianchi Vineyards & Robert Hall Winery in Paso Robles in 2009. Attendees enjoyed food, wine, educational animals, as well as a silent auction featuring art, gift baskets, trips and more.

This year’s event will feature an afternoon of delicious hors d'oeuvres, fabulous wine and our star attractions: our wildlife ambassadors.

We are asking all PWC members to support this event in whatever way you can: by purchasing a ticket, gifting a ticket, sponsoring the event, soliciting auction items or inviting friends and family to attend. Tickets are limited so reserve early. You will be receiving an invitation in the mail. Please call 543-WILD and leave a message or email us at pwcinfo@pacificwildlifecare.org if you do not.

Sponsorship:
contact Yvon, ygresser@charter.net

Tickets online at:
www.pacificwildlifecare.org/wiw

Tickets by phone:
Leave a message at 543-WILD & someone will get back to you.

New Members! October-December

ALS Construction Co.
Adele Anderson
Amy Arnold
Jane and Edward Baker
Katie Baker
Lawrence Balthasar
Aless & Bob Bell
Carla Bernay
Richard Bienert
Linda Bordens
Shawn Brown
Charles Broderick
JoEllen Butler & Nolan Coogan
Lynne Caddy
Robert & Karen Chambers
Kathy & Peter Charbonneau
Matt & Theresa Clevenger
Patricia & James Clevenger
Thomas Clegg
Polly Cooper
Janet Cooper
Dorothy Correa & Garrett Foulke
Alyssa DeBenedetti
William Demnen
Eugenia Doyle
Mike & Jennifer Doyle
The Doyle Family
DSM Construction & Flooring
Dick & Judy Estler
Alex & Jim Ferguson
Robert & Marleta Warneke-Garner
Diane Garman
Elaine Genasi
Elizabeth Gillingham
Brenda Gonzalez
Karen & Wilburn Hairgrove
Alta Hall
Christine Harvey
Enn L. Harmon
George Hauser
Michael Hendrie
Sharon & Craig Heyne
Phyllis & Michael Hirschier
Marilyn & William Hornung
Amanda Howarth
Tamara Hurley
James Jackson Productions
Sharron Jackman
Colleen & Eric Johnson
Michele Johnson
Jackie Johnson
Jane Johnson
Anne Julian
Christina Kachulis
Dale Kaiser Real Estate
Janae Kazanjian
Peggy & Bill Kelley
Tom and Audrey Keylon
Becky and John Kincaid
Marilyn Kinsey
Chris & Mark Landgreen
Angie & Adam LaZarre
Dr. K. Ledesma & Michael Levine
Nancy Leichter
Gaby & Ken Levine
Claretta & Roger Longden
Nancy Mancini
The Manse on Marsh
Lonne & Grant Marcum
Joan Matthews
Lana McAdams
Jim Mentgen
Larry Moll & Ginny Irving
Cleve Nash IV
Lisa Nicholson
Joan O'Keefe
Patti Peak
Bob Peak
Cindy Ragatz
Joyce & Kenneth Renshaw
Suzy & Doug Reynolds
Ethan Richardson
Sandra Ricketts
Dorothy Rooney
Kabe Russell
Janet & Robert Salem
Salisbury Ltd
Dana Schliiter
Ashlyn Silva
Carol Singleton
Laura Snyder Oates
Karen Stanley
Cathy Stern
Kathleen Stone
Kyle Sweasey
Ms. B Teague
Morgan Thompson
Janna Tucker
Marcia & Arthur Walker
Jim Wells
Mary & Oscar Welch
The Wheelers
Chris Wilbert
Wanda Lo
Sam & Elizabeth Young
PWC is supported by memberships & donations. Please attend Windows into Wildlife March 28th!

Special PWC Thank Yous

Rob Kitzman, Culligan Water of Morro Bay - for water delivery
Giovanni’s Fish Market - for handling seabird food
California State Parks (Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area) - Reimbursement for training and transport services
Karen & James Clarke Charitable Fund, Renaissance Foundation & The Brown Family Foundation - for generous year-end donations
Jenny Brantlee - for taking pledges and organizing the January 1 Yoga-thon benefiting PWC
Clevé Nash III - for donating wildlife photos and putting PWC on his Christmas Wish List
Executive Janitorial - for cleaning the Center each week (they’re friendly, on-time & we appreciate them!)

And a Thank You to ALL of our members who are now monthly subscribers at $10, $15, $20, $50 and our “special angel” Kelly M. at $100 per month!

Membership/Donations

Visit us online at www.pacificwildlifecare.org to set up a monthly subscription or pay by credit card

Yes, I would like to give wildlife a second chance!

☐ Benefactor $2500  ☐ Supporter $100
☐ Patron $1000  ☐ Advocate $50
☐ Sponsor $500  ☐ Student/Senior/Volunteer $25
☐ Contributor $250

Name: ____________________________  Phone: ___________  Email: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
City: ____________________________  State: ______  Zip: ____________  Date: ________

Please check: ☐ New  ☐ Membership Renewal  ☐ Donation  ☐ I would like volunteer
Please mail completed form with check to: Pacific Wildlife Care, P.O. Box 1134, Morro Bay, CA 93443

www.pacificwildlifecare.org