LOOKING BACK THIRTY YEARS

Development Manager Holly Cormier and Hospital Manager Ashley Kinney reflect on the past 30 years at WCSV.

Thirty years ago, San Jose’s Animal Shelter was no longer able to take care of wildlife due to reduced funding. Luckily, a few dedicated volunteers decided to continue the mission of helping wildlife at a couple of trailers on Senter Rd – thus, the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley was born! In 2000, WCSV needed to move out of that location, and the city found a centrally located spot on Penitencia Creek Road, where WCSV stands to this day.

The first location averaged 4,000 animal intakes every year. Since then, the volume of patients has steadily increased, and we now take in over 7,000 animals each year.

The Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley has always functioned with a small staff and a tremendous amount of support from volunteers – they are the backbone of our organization! Whether on site or in home care, we would not be able to treat the number of animals we receive without their time and dedication. WCSV was able to expand its program in 2013, and started a summer internship program. Interns work 24 hours per week at the Center, enabling them to get more in-depth training and hands-on experience with wildlife.

Through WCSV’s outreach and education programs, we have been able to engage with thousands of people to educate them on what to do if they find wildlife in need of assistance. Our programs also aim to educate individuals about the importance of rehabilitating animals and releasing them back to their natural habitats.

The requirements for treating local wild animals make WCSV one of a kind. Our medical and husbandry protocols are constantly revised and updated based on the most current wildlife research, and WCSV is able to treat and release thousands of injured and orphaned wild animals year after year.

“I started at WCSV in 2012 as a volunteer manager and then transitioned into a new role as a development manager”, says Holly Cormier. “I feel lucky and blessed to see firsthand how we help save local wildlife and it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.”

Ashley Kinney, Hospital Manager, adds “In my 17 years at WCSV, I am still so proud of where we came from and all we have accomplished. So many cases have stuck with me – from reuniting orphaned coyotes, skunks, and raptors, to successfully raising and releasing neonate foxes, opossums, squirrels and beyond. Each animal, every enclosure upgrade, working with interns and volunteers, and sharing these experiences with fellow colleagues has made working for this organization more than I ever expected. I am looking forward to what the future holds.”

For the past thirty years, WCSV has been working to help the local wildlife that abounds in our community. We have been available to serve the public of Santa Clara County and beyond, seven days a week. We are proud to have helped thousands of animals over the years, and hope to continue serving the South Bay community, people and wildlife alike!
WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Our Employer Matching Program is a fantastic way to see your gift doubled! To find out if your employer participates, go to WCSV.org/donation-matching.

Type in the name of your employer, and all the necessary information will be at your fingertips: donation limits, who is eligible to participate, and even how to get any necessary paperwork from your employers to start the process of having your gift matched.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of WCSV and our mission to rehabilitate and release local wildlife. Every donation is meaningful, and none too small.

Other Ways to Help

Amazon Wish List: If you wish to buy a specific item that we need, try our wish list. To find it, go to WCSV.org/wishlist and you will be automatically redirected to Amazon.

Chewy Wish List: If you wish to buy a specific item that we need, try our wish list. To find it, go to WCSV.org/chewy and you will be automatically redirected to Chewy.

Vehicle Donations: Consider donating that old vehicle to CARS (Charitable Adult Rides & Services) as a way to help our local wildlife. Their programs turn any car, truck, boat, or RV into cash and deliver a high percent of net proceeds to nonprofits like us. Visit their website to learn more about how to donate a vehicle to help WCSV at: careasy.org

Sports Basement: Support WCSV by becoming a Sports Basement Basementeer and receive great discounts at the same time! For a one-time fee of $25 you get 10% off every item every day and WCSV gets 10% of the profits. You can join the Basementeer program online at WCSV.org/basement or at your next visit to Sports Basement. Register and select WCSV as your beneficiary.

Spread the Word: Like and share our posts on social media! WCSV is active on Facebook, Instagram, and more!

A Special THANK YOU to our Invaluable Partners in Service

- Greg Abramson
- Neren Argente
- Bay Raptor Rescue
- Robert Bicknell
- Coco Bonneville
- Frank & Lisa Bourgault
- California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Davidson Family Foundation
- Farrington Historical Foundation
- Kenneth Gilbeau
- Glide Foundation
- The Edith Goode Residuary Trust
- Leslie Grant & Walt Walraven
- Hear Clear LLC
- Heather Hohlowski
- The Home Depot
- Indoor Atmosphere
- International Bird Rescue
- John & Lori Manfroy
- Fred & Marilyn Kromrey
- Los Gatos Birdwatcher
- Macdonald-Peterson Foundation
- Ruth McDunn
- City of Milpitas
- Mission City Community Fund
- Native Animal Rescue
- Native Songbird Care & Conservation
- New Rez LLC
- Peninsula Humane Society
- San Jose Animal Care and Services
- Santa Clara County Animal Care and Control
- Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation
- Brad & Janice Santos
- Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority
- S. Bowie Snyder
- SPCA for Monterey County
- Stanford Redwood City
- City of Sunnyvale
- Thomas Walls
- Joanne Watts
- Carol Wilson & Alfie Mulzet
- Whole Foods
- YIP Latino Family Fund
- Robert & Christine Young
- Carol Scott Zimmerman
PATIENT HIGHLIGHTS

For our 30th year, here is a look back at some of our most memorable patients in recent history here at WCSV.

PG&E Peregrine Falcon

In February 2010, a female peregrine falcon flew into a high voltage electric tower and was suspended there for 12 hours before being rescued by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) employees. Animal care staff discovered that all of the flight feathers on her left wing were completely burned off, and that she also had severe injuries to her talons. Prognosis for survival was grim, but staff and volunteers rose to the challenge of providing constant care, including burn treatment and pain management. After a long year of treatment at WCSV, the falcon was able to resume flying to rebuild her flight strength.

Longtime volunteer Jackie Turner vividly recalls this peregrine falcon, describing her as the most memorable patient during her time here. “After two weeks of practice, she was ready to go. As she left the [Center] to be released back to the wild, she looked so majestic… there wasn’t a dry eye in the place.” The falcon was released in Mountain View in April of 2011, soaring free once again. PG&E generously helped financially support the recovery of the falcon through their Avian Protection Plan, which seeks to protect migratory, threatened, and endangered birds.

Ferruginous Hawk

We received this adult male ferruginous hawk in February of 2015. He had sustained a fracture of its left wing after a collision with a model airplane in Morgan Hill. The bird was alert and feisty upon intake, attempting to bite staff members during the initial exam. After taking radiographs to confirm the fracture, staff prescribed pain and anti-inflammatory medications, along with preventative treatment for any possible parasites or infection.

To stabilize the injured wing, staff applied a figure eight wrap, which they changed every three days. Fortunately, no surgery was needed. The hawk was extremely stressed while in care, and initially would not eat without staff carefully force-feeding him. After nearly a month in care, he resumed self-feeding, and was able to begin flying around in his outdoor enclosure. To rebuild his flight strength, the bird was moved to our largest flight enclosure, where he spent approximately two more weeks in care before being released to fly free once again.

In our 30 years, we have only ever received two of these large hawks. Ferruginous hawks are migratory, with a large range extending from southern Canada to northern Mexico, and they are only found in the San Francisco Bay Area during the winter. Their diet consists of small mammals such as ground squirrels and rabbits. Larger than the more common red-tailed hawks, they can be seen circling overhead in the southern regions of the Bay Area.
Almaden Coyotes

On May 4, 2017, a vehicle struck and killed a female coyote in Almaden Valley. Three days later, five orphaned coyote pups – the offspring of the deceased coyote – were discovered nearby in a concerned resident’s backyard. The coyotes were rescued and brought to WCSV for care. After treating them for fleas, Hospital Manager Ashley Kinney tended to the five pups around the clock to ensure the coyotes remained stable while adjusting to being cared for at the Center. For young orphaned animals, the early hours are often the most critical to setting the patient up for a successful rehabilitation and release. The pups first ate soft foods, and were slowly weaned onto solid foods. The coyotes grew quickly, and once old enough, were moved into an outdoor enclosure to practice digging, and to build up the required strength and skills needed to survive in the wild. The five siblings thrived in care, displaying great aptitude at hunting and foraging for food. After a five month stay at the Center, the coyotes were ready to be returned to the wild. Ashley Kinney coordinated with County Parks to find a suitable location near where the pups were found, and on September 20, 2017, we released them at a beautiful location near Mt. Umunhum in San Jose. Caring for orphaned predatory mammals is incredibly expensive, and it cost nearly $10,000 to raise and release these animals.

Zip Tie Virginia Opossum

At the end of February 2019, the Center received this female opossum with a cable tie fastened tightly around her body. We suspect this had been done intentionally, and that the animal had been suffering terribly for at least one week. Staff sedated her to clean the infected laceration left by the tie, and prescribed medication for pain. Her injury required daily dressing changes to keep it clean and prevent reinfection. The opossum healed completely, and we returned her to the wild after she spent 49 days in care. “The fact that someone could intentionally hurt an animal in such a way was eye-opening,” recalls Laura Hawkins, “Our talented staff was able to take the severely-injured animal and return her to perfect health and back to the wild. I am so proud of the difference WCSV makes in the lives of animals in need such as this one.”
Monterey Bobcats

WCSV received two tiny bobcats from the SPCA for Monterey County in May of 2020. Found orphaned in Monterey, they spent a total of ten months here at the Center. A male and female, these two were carefully raised together here by volunteers and staff. To avoid any chance of the bobcats becoming habituated to human contact, we followed strict protocols to minimize their exposure to us, and to keep them wild so they can have proper fear of humans.

Orphaned mammals such as these bobcats start off being fed species-specific formula before being weaned onto solid foods. Staff kept the two siblings isolated from other patients in our mammal shed, which is set up to facilitate the proper care of young predatory mammals. The reduced-stress environment provided by the mammal shed is key for early development of young mammals in care, and was made possible by a generous grant from the Thelma Doegler Trust for Animals. Once old enough, the bobcats were moved to a secluded outside enclosure where they practiced their necessary survival skills required to thrive in the wilderness. Animal care staff and experienced volunteers continued following special protocols when caring for the siblings to ensure that they remained wild.

In March of 2021, employees of Monterey County worked with the Center to find the perfect release spot at Jacks Peak Park. It was an emotional moment for all, with the employees and volunteers most involved with the care of the bobcats in attendance. The two siblings bolted out of their kennels and disappeared into the wilderness.

ANIMAL STATISTICS

Here is a quick look at just how many patients of various species of animals that we have received over the past decade. WCSV treats all animals native to California.

(January 2013 to January 2023)
Thirty Years of Volunteers

Sue Cukrov is our longest tenured volunteer, having started 23 years ago at the old location, and is very proud of the ways we have grown: “There have been many improvements in animal care, including their diets, enrichment, and medical care.” One instance of these improvements evident every single day is how we now organize squirrel feeds. “Volunteers used to be assigned [individual] cages on certain tables and racks, and it was up to them to get them all fed on time [during their shift],” recalls DJ Normark. Squirrel feeds are now organized by feeding time, with all volunteers converging in the main room to feed all the hungry mouths. “So much more efficient and stress-free!”

Jackie Turner has been volunteering since 2005, spending more than 10 years volunteering on-site before transitioning to our homecare team – a group of highly-trained volunteers working at satellite locations under our permit with the state. Jackie speaks highly of how rewarding it is to continue to volunteer year after year: “We all like to feel we make a difference in life, and this is a way that I can… I want to do this for as long as I am able. There is always so much to learn which is a good thing.” DJ shares Jackie’s sentiment regarding lifelong learning: “I continue to volunteer at [the Center] because it never gets old… I’m always learning something new.”

In addition to caring for patients, our volunteers take on many additional responsibilities. Here at the Center, our incredible facilities team constantly repairs and rebuilds enclosures, keeping everything in tip top shape. Gardening volunteers keep the outside neat and free of weeds. Away from the Center, outreach volunteers attend over 30 events per year, helping to educate the public about how to coexist peacefully with local wildlife and other selected topics. Transport volunteers deliver specialized food, supplies, and medications to our homecare team, and also drive patients to where they need to be. Back in 2020, one of our transport volunteers single-handedly covered 5,300 miles!

As we enter our 30th busy season, we will again rely on our amazing volunteers to continue our mission. If you are interested in becoming a part of what we do, apply now at WCSV.org/volunteer.
If you see a wild animal in distress, find helpful information at:

wcsv.org
(408) 929-9453
3027 Penitencia Creek Road
San Jose, CA 95132-2815

A leased facility of the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, funded in part by San Jose Animal Care & Services, the city of Milpitas, Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority and the city of Sunnyvale.

A free event with fun for all ages.
Walk On The Wild Side
Saturday, April 22, 2023