

Volume 30 • Number 1 • Fall 2023



Tracks

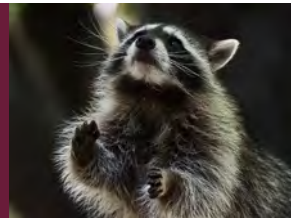
A Publication of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley



Looking
Back



Exciting
News



Release
Highlights

MESSAGE FROM ASHLEY AND HOLLY

Ashley Kinney, Hospital Manager



Over the last 19 years, I have experienced so many wonderful things at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley. We have grown in many aspects, including enclosure development, animal care protocol improvements, staff improvement, internship program improvement, relationships with community members, and so on. Being part of our mission has made this job exceptionally rewarding. In my career, WCSV has cared for over 100,000 wild patients, some of which really left an impact on me: from a Peregrine falcon that sustained electrical shock trauma, an American Beaver that was fighting internal infections, to neonate coyotes needing round-the-clock feedings and

an entire colony of young white-throated swifts that required feedings every 45 minutes. Every single case is unique and impactful – especially when you witness these patients make a full recovery and are set free to live out their wild life. Working with such an amazing organization filled with many dedicated staff and volunteers has been an honor. I am looking forward to the exciting changes to come in our near future.

Holly Cormier, Development Manager

Looking back over the years I have been at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, I feel nostalgic. I have had so many good memories that will last me a lifetime. Being so close to wildlife and part of caring for and rehabilitating animals in need and releasing them back into the wild has been amazing. There have been so many memorable releases, but I think one of my favorites was being present at the release of two orphaned bobcat kits in Monterey County. The two kits were orphaned, and WCSV spent months raising them until they were ready to be returned to the wild. Seeing them tear out of the kennels together, healthy and free, brought tears to my eyes and made me realize how critical our life-saving work is. Also, being able to share hands-on the experience of wildlife rehabilitation for so many volunteers and interns over the years is priceless. I am honored to have been part of such a great organization that, even with a small budget, has been able to help thousands of animals. Though sad, I am hopeful and excited about the new opportunity that lies ahead for us in the wildlife rehabilitation world.



Ashley Kinney and Holly Cormier have worked together for many years, and have experienced many positive changes together. We have built wonderful relationships in our community, as well as local governing agencies, and local wildlife groups. The work WCSV has done for the last thirty years is beyond exceptional and we are both so proud of all we have accomplished in our time. Our success over the years would not have been possible without the support from our donors, and our team of dedicated volunteers. Because of all of you, WCSV has grown in ways we never thought were possible.

The announcement of our merger with PHS/SPCA is such a win for wildlife and our community, as we will be stronger together. As a new chapter unfolds, we are excited for the future! This merger is not the end of our work, it is simply setting the stage for even more lifesaving work to come. We cannot wait to start the next leg of our journey with all of you as PHS/SPCA at the Larry Ellison Conservation Center for Wildlife Care. Here's to new beginnings! We are looking forward to sharing this next chapter with each and every one of you.

The Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley is dedicated to providing sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife with exceptional free care, rehabilitation, and the opportunity for release. We also aim to educate the public about coexisting peacefully with local wildlife.

If you see an animal in distress, find helpful information at:

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

You can also find us on social media:

wcsv.org/facebook
wcsv.org/twitter
wcsv.org/instagram
wcsv.org/linkedin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Anthony Tansimore
Secretary: Mary Sjostrom
Treasurer: Larry Stites
Members:
Patience Davidson-Lutz, Katie Dinneen,
Aaron Frank, Lisa Van Buskirk, Ken
White

STAFF

Development Manager: Holly Cormier
Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator:
Michael Chen
Administrative Assistant:
Emanuel Henriquez
Development Assistant: Sarah Demirhan
Veterinarian: Dr. Jacqueline Hansted, DVM
Hospital Manager: Ashley Kinney
Wildlife Supervisor: Ashley Damm
Wildlife Technicians:
Sylvia Boyzo, Anna Lion, Tiffany Luu,
Karina Montes, Ruth Spence, Evan Tobin

TRACKS

Editor: Michael Chen
Layout and Design:
Renae Killen, Ruth McDunn

Tracks is a biannual publication of the
Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley.



RELEASE HIGHLIGHTS

One of the most satisfying parts of wildlife rehabilitation is successfully returning the animals to the wild and giving them a second chance at a wild life. Please enjoy these stories about patients we released this past summer!

Glue Trap Northern Mockingbird

Glue traps are a sticky situation for all those involved, and unfortunately, we continue to receive patients inadvertently caught by them. Typically meant for insects, glue traps frequently ensnare reptiles or birds trying to eat insects off of the traps, and these caught animals often fatally injure themselves trying to escape off of the traps. If the entire trap is brought to the Center in time, our staff is often able to safely remove the animals. Depending on the extent of the damage, some of these rescues become long term patients while growing their skin, feathers, or fur back.



This Northern Mockingbird came in covered in glue, and was missing all its tail feathers. Our hospital manager determined during the initial exam that the bird was otherwise in good condition overall and had no injuries. Due to the stress of the ordeal, after removal from the trap, the bird was prescribed anti-inflammatory medication and moved to our baby bird barn to calm down overnight. The next day, staff carefully cleaned the bird's feathers, and placed it in a soft-sided enclosure for observation. Luckily, the glue residue came off quickly and easily with no further damage. The mockingbird soon showed excellent flight abilities in our outdoor enclosure, and our interns released the bird in its old neighborhood to fly free once again.



Striped Skunk



In July, an animal control officer found this male striped skunk with its left paw caught in a gopher trap in a neighborhood near a country club. The inhumane trap had amputated the index digit, and upon further examination, staff discovered additional necrotic tissue near the site of the lost toe. After cleaning the wound, technicians gave the skunk anti-inflammatories and antibiotics to treat any possible infection. For three weeks, staff cleaned the wound daily, and carefully monitored the skunk's gait to make sure he retained proper mobility. Healing of the wound was slow, but luckily the infection did not spread, and no further damage occurred. Our veterinarian also checked to make sure the animal's paw had proper blood flow through all remaining digits before deeming the patient ready for release. Once fully-healed, the skunk was released in early August, returned to his territory, but safely away from the location of the harrowing ordeal that brought him to us.



Gopher Snake



In late September, a park ranger found this young gopher snake stuck to a piece of duct tape. An animal care technician was able to carefully remove the tape immediately after intake. After conducting a thorough examination of the snake, our technician was relieved that the snake had suffered no injuries, and only required a simple cleaning of the remaining adhesive residue. Reptile wounds can require a prolonged period of time to heal, as serious wounds affect their ability to shed, leaving them vulnerable to parasites and disease. The snake was deemed fully healthy, and we were able to promptly release the snake.



EXCITING NEWS

For 30 years, the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley has been a local leader in providing sick, injured and orphaned wildlife with exceptional free care, rehabilitation and the opportunity for release, while educating the public about coexisting peacefully with local wildlife. Originally located in a couple of trailers on Senter Rd, WCSV has spent the last 23 years in its current location in Penitencia Creek Park, operating out of a pair of portable modular building units. Over the years, we have added numerous outdoor enclosures, and continue to serve the entire South Bay Area to this day. We are grateful for the extensive community support we have received for the last three decades.



Today, we have exciting news to share! Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (PHS/SPCA) has been granted an amazing opportunity to greatly expand its service to local wildlife in need. Bay Area entrepreneur and philanthropist, Larry Ellison, is building a state-of-the-art wildlife rehabilitation center in Saratoga, and he has asked PHS/SPCA to operate the new facility. This is a unique chance to help care even more for the beautiful and abundant wildlife that makes the Peninsula such a beloved part of the world and an incredible place to call home.



EXCITING NEWS



When the new center opens, the goal is to care for wildlife from a greatly expanded region, including Santa Clara County. To accomplish this, PHS/SPCA will be joining forces with WCSV. PHS/SPCA sought an affiliation with WCSV because the organization believes working together allows all of us to bring the very best experts to bear on caring for local wildlife. This is an exciting opportunity for both organizations, who will now operate as one: Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA. We will be twice as strong, and better positioned than ever to serve the wildlife in our region.

The Larry Ellison Conservation Center for Wildlife Care (LECCWC) will provide comprehensive, state-of-the-art intake-to-release rehabilitative care for sick, injured and orphaned native wildlife, drawing animals from San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, eventually returning them to their natural habitats. LECCWC will also have a captive propagation program of small, endangered/imperiled native species, that will seek to arrest and even reverse the imminent demise of threatened and endangered small California animals, such as the Mission Blue Butterfly and the San Francisco Garter Snake.

While WCSV will remain open for intake, and we will have a transport program, members of the public will be encouraged to bring wild animals in need to our intake building on the property. Visitors to the intake building will be able to interact with educational exhibits that demonstrate the interdependence and the need to share the surrounding habitats with all animals. Docent tours will be offered.

The LECCWC expects to open in 2024 – please keep an eye out on PHS/SPCA and WCSV social media channels for more information to be released.

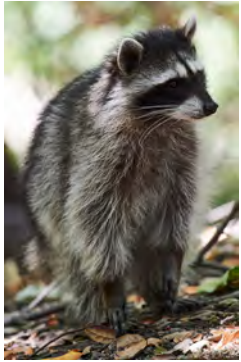
RELEASE HIGHLIGHTS

One of the most satisfying parts of wildlife rehabilitation is successfully returning the animals to the wild and giving them a second chance at a wild life. Please enjoy these additional stories about patients we released this past summer!

Northern Raccoons



At the end of February, Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority brought in three orphaned raccoons. They had fallen out of a tree being trimmed; one had a laceration on his back, and the other two had minor injuries sustained during their fall. Staff quickly treated all three kits, cleaning and bandaging their wounds before placing them in an incubator. Young patients such as these often cannot survive outside of the incubator, as they are unable to maintain proper body temperature.



These raccoons were at first fed species-specific formula before being weaned onto solid foods. Once old enough, they moved to an outdoor enclosure to practice climbing, foraging for food and other skills needed to thrive on their own out in the wild. Young predatory mammals are raised together with conspecifics with minimal human interaction to prevent habituation. After a summer in care, these raccoons successfully recovered from their injuries, and were released to begin their young adult lives as free wild animals.



Great Horned Owls



These five orphaned great horned owls came in within days of each other in April. Great horned owls often nest in tall trees, reusing nests or cavities left behind by other species of birds, or even squirrels. As they grow up, young owls explore the branches around the nest even before they are able to fly – sometimes, they fall to the ground and become separated from their families, and that is how they end up at the Center!

Great horned owls must stay in care until they are approximately eight months old, so orphans become long term patients each summer. Staff placed them together to learn natural behaviors from each other, and followed strict protocols to prevent them from becoming habituated to human interaction. After spending about a month indoors, the owls were fully-fledged and moved outdoors to practice flying and hunting. At this point in their development, they each consume up to 20 mice per day. The owls spent approximately three additional months in our outdoor aviaries sharpening their natural skills until they were ready for release.



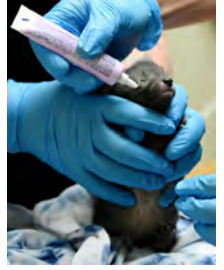
Once the owls were ready for release, we separated the conspecifics so they could each be returned to their natural territories from where they came. In September, we were able to get all five of the owls safely released. At WCSV, we go through great lengths to make sure animals are returned to the proper locations to allow all of our patients to thrive upon return to the wild.



RELEASE HIGHLIGHTS

Gray Foxes

We received these two orphaned male foxes in late April within three days of each other. The older fox came in suffering from a lice infestation – staff spent many hours combing the lice eggs out of the poor animal's fur, and giving it baths using special shampoo. It took over a month for all the lice eggs to be eliminated, after which the fox was moved to a small predatory mammal enclosure to receive its vaccines, and to acclimate to living outdoors, before moving to the larger fox enclosure to prepare for release. Due to its young age, the smaller fox required special feeding techniques to get it to take formula. After three weeks in care, the fox was fully self-feeding and staff began to wean the fox off of formula and onto solid foods. Staff rehabbed these two foxes in close proximity to form a new family unit, or skulk, but carefully kept the new siblings physically separate until both animals were completely vaccinated and healthy.



Gray foxes disperse naturally in the fall in search of their own territory. Foxes are the only true climbers in the canine family, with strong hooked claws that allow them to scramble up trees to access hanging fruit and avoid predators. After a long spring and summer stay at the Center honing their skills outdoors, this tiny skulk was released to roam free for the first time as young adults.



Waterfowl Releases



Every year, we receive over 500 orphaned ducklings and goslings. While many baby waterfowl are precocial in that they can walk, swim, and feed on their own within an hour of hatching from the egg, they rely on their parents to protect them and find them food and shelter. As such, it is very difficult for young ducklings and goslings to survive if they are not in the care of the parents, which is why orphaned waterfowl require refuge at the Center if they have not yet reached young adulthood.

While in care, ducklings and goslings are kept isolated from volunteers and staff to prevent them from imprinting on people and associating them with food, preserving the necessary fear of humans to remain safe in the wild. The

youngest birds are housed indoors and given heat lamps to maintain proper body temperature. Once their adult feathers start growing in, they are moved to outdoor areas with appropriate vegetation and pools of water so they can learn to forage for food as if in the wild. Visual barriers are utilized the entire time waterfowl patients are here at the Center, minimizing the amount of human contact.

Once the young birds have grown up into ducks and geese, volunteers and staff drive them to near where they were found, releasing them in safe locations with plenty of food and water for them to thrive. We are proud to continue to offer many ducks and geese a second chance at a wild life.





WILDLIFE CENTER OF SILICON VALLEY

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
SAN JOSE, CA
PERMIT #693

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.



WCSV HELPED OVER 260 HUMMINGBIRDS IN 2023