Paw Print

Sierra Wildlife Rescue Newsletter

Winter 2017 / Spring 2018 Volume 21 Issue 2

President's Message

Nurturing: Essential to Our Success

As Sierra Wildlife Rescue's 25th Anniversary Year draws to a close, I've been reflecting on all that has occurred to sustain us and enable us to venture into our next quarter-century of service. I've concluded that the act of nurturing, "the process of caring for and encouraging the growth or development of someone or something," has been an essential component, on many levels.

The El Dorado County Humane Society gifted SWR its property in Diamond Springs, which is now our permanent center—a dream come true!

The formation of SWR in 1992 was made possible through the dedication of a core group of rehabilitators, mentored by Wildlife Care Association of Sacramento, veterinarians and supporters, who recognized the need for a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation group to serve the increasing need in El Dorado County. Some of this core group of rehabilitators and volunteers are still actively serving in SWR. Over the past 25 years, we've continued to grow, increasing our membership base, expanding our volunteer and rehabilitator numbers, as well as adding to the number of species we have the resources to assist. This has been possible because SWR has been encouraged by many over the years, and has been able to nurture not only the wildlife coming into

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Save the Date!

SWR'S 2018 Toast to Wildlife Champagne Brunch

Sunday, March 4, 2018

Please put a note on your calendar for Sunday, March 4, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to attend a wonderful wildlife support experience at the Cameron Park Country Club, 3201 Royal Dr, Cameron Park. Be sure to get your tickets for the event ($45 per person) in advance. The event will include complimentary champagne, an elegant brunch catered by the club, and a no-host bar, as well as a large raffle, silent

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SIERRA WILDLIFE RESCUE'S MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of SWR is the preservation of El Dorado County's wildlife, which we work to achieve in two ways: First, we rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned wild animals. Second, we educate the public about living with wildlife and respecting its habitat. Each of these is important to the long-term health and well-being of our area's wildlife.

2000 Bird 'Cold Case' Solved

In August, 2000, SWR's Baby Bird Nursery was closing for the season when a rescuer brought in a small "finchy-looking" bird, unlike any that our nursery volunteers had ever seen. The bird, along with three dead siblings, had been found in a wood stove in Smith Flat. Unfortunately, the lone surviving bird, #679 on our records, died within a few hours of intake.

Although we try to identify every bird brought to the nursery, including those that do not survive, a few, usually tiny, featherless hatchlings, remain unidentified. But #679 was fully feathered, a fledgling. With bird in hand, identification should have been a snap. The mystery bird's most prominent feature was its bill—a stout, yellowish, conical beak which nearly covered its face, similar to that of a cardinal, but certainly not red. #679 looked like it had splashed in a puddle of blue ink, except for its brownish primary feathers.

I searched my well-used bird guide. There aren't that many blue-hued birds in North America. I could immediately rule out any of the jays and the Western bluebird, a dainty member of the thrush family. That left several buntings and a blue grosbeak. Both buntings, the Lazuli and the Indigo, were too small, and their bills, though conical, not as massive as that of the mystery bird. The blue grosbeak looked like a closer match, about the right size, with a similar stout bill, but had prominent red wing bars. Even considering that our bird was most likely sporting first-year plumage, which could be quite different from that of an adult, there were too many other differences to declare that it was a blue grosbeak.

I had photographed the bird posthumously. A wildlife biologist looked at the photos, but could not identify the bird. The only explanation remaining was that, in some unimaginable way, the birds trapped in the stove were wayward exotics. I then turned to an exotic bird hobbyist I thought might be familiar with the species.

Her response was, "Exotic bird fanciers collect only pretty birds, and that is not a pretty bird." No argument there!

End of story—until some three years later when, while casually thumbing through a current copy of a now-defunct weekly science magazine, I suddenly stopped. I couldn't believe it! There, at the top of the page, was a photo of a shiny, ink-blue bird with brownish flight feathers and an oversized, yellow conical beak. The subject, an indigobird, a small finch native to sub-Saharan Africa!

The 10 indigobird species, all similar looking, are brood parasites. That is, they shirk parenting duties by laying their eggs in the nests of other birds, very similarly to our native cowbird. But the cowbird isn't choosy in selecting a foster nest, and the brood is often unsuccessful. In comparison, indigobirds are very host-specific, each of the ten-species laying its eggs only in the nests of a chosen species of firefinch. The intruders' young mimic the host species in both mouth patterns and voice. Researchers have studied captive indigobirds at several U.S. universities.

I compared my photos to the magazine picture. Allowing for the difference in plumage between a sleek, breeding adult and a scruffy juvenile, I was convinced that #679 was indeed an African indigobird. But that does not completely resolve the mystery. Smith Flat is a long, long way from Africa.

—*Betty Shannon*

Indigobird (Sub-Saharan Africa)

Hot-roddin' Rabbits

There goes the phone again, I thought—hmm, caller I.D. says it's the Dodge dealership in Folsom. I wonder if my husband is making a surprise purchase? I do have a birthday coming up soon. As soon as I answer the phone, my hopes are dashed when the caller asks if this is Sierra Wildlife Rescue for rabbits. One of the service maintenance representatives tells me they have two older rabbits at the dealership.

Apparently, an adult and juvenile cottontail had gotten up into the engine compartment of a car before the owner drove to the dealership for service. The service technician got quite a surprise when he opened up the hood and found two equally-surprised rabbits staring up at him. Luckily, the two rabbits were frozen with fear and didn't take off in the service area, which would have made for quite a chase!

The technicians were very helpful and were able to get the rabbits in a box, and put them in a quiet place. My husband (who apparently *wasn't* buying me a new car for my birthday) and I made a quick trip down the hill to pick them up. After getting them home, we gave them some medication for shock and then some quiet time to recover a little. After examining the rabbits (now named Dodger and Dakota), we were amazed at the lack of injuries after their ride in the engine. The adult only had a small abrasion and some singed fur on her nose, and the juvenile had an irritated left eye.

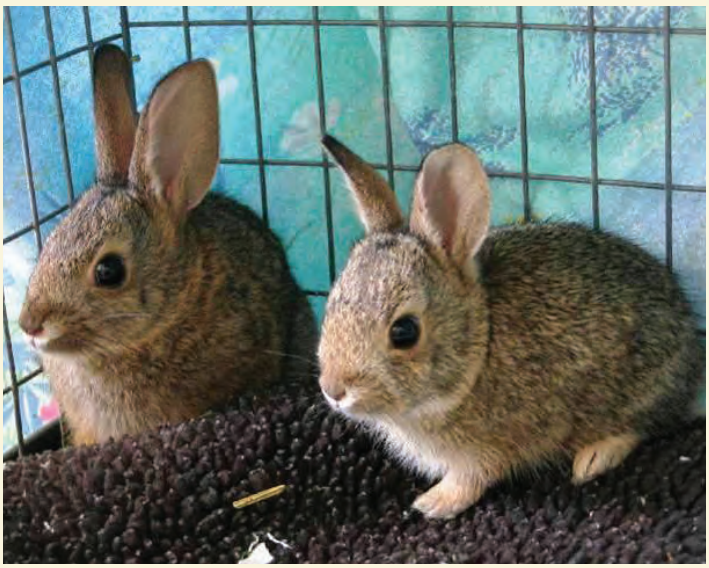
Imagine the service tech's surprise upon popping the hood and discovering a pair of rabbits!

They were both dehydrated and, since they weren't drinking out of a dish or taking any water from a syringe, we gave them fluids by injection. We also applied ointment to the nose abrasion and eye drops to the eye irritation. The next morning the rabbits were still pretty scared, but they had eaten a lot of wild grasses and their hydration was much better. We continued with the medications for a few more days. They became much spookier and harder to handle, which our animals usually are when feeling better.

Now the only issue was the weather. We had been unable to get any information on the car owner's address, so we couldn't take them back to their original area, and we were getting a lot of storms coming in. I didn't want to release the rabbits in the rain in a new location. Fortunately, the weather cleared up in a few more days, so off we went to release them. Hopefully, this would be the last car ride for Dodger and Dakota! The release site has other cottontail and brush rabbits around, and a year-round pond, so it will be a great new home for them. After a couple of minutes of looking around and getting their bearings, they both took off into some brush.

As they were leaving, I gave them my little Release Day blessing, "Be safe, be strong and live long," with an extra warning to stay away from cars in the future!

— *Lisa Stewart*



Cottontail bunnies

Good Samaritans, CHP Rescue Fawns

Good Samaritan Kian Salstrand

Two stranded orphans get a second chance, thanks to local residents and law enforcement, with help from SWR.

Ashtyn and Sibley calming fawn

It was Friday evening, June 23, and Kian Salstrand was heading into Placerville from his home in Pollock Pines with his daughter, Sibley (12) and his niece, Ashtyn (15) to have some sushi for dinner. As they moved through the off-ramp at Schnell School Rd., Kian slowed down to avoid what he thought were two dogs in the road. As he got closer to them, Kian realized that the "dogs" were actually two very young fawns! Kian pulled off to the side to park, and then he and the girls tried to corral the fawns to keep them safe. One fawn (a female they later named Hope) cooperated and just flattened out in front of them. The other (a male they named Chance) tried to run off, and then hid up the hill by a tree.

Kian had called Sheriff's Dispatch, who had contacted the CHP, and Officer Bryan Schneider showed up before long to manage the offramp traffic so both

Officer Bryan Schneider with fawn

YOU CAN HELP EL DORADO COUNTY WILDLIFE!

Sierra Wildlife Rescue is an all-volunteer organization, supported primarily by memberships and donated funds and materials. Please mail your tax-deductible donation to P.O. Box 2127, Placerville, CA 95667. To donate supplies or become a member, volunteer or rehabber, call 530-621-4661 for more information. You can also go online to **www.sierrawildliferescue.org** to look up your areas of interest as a volunteer under the "Join Us" heading.

The fawns arrived at Marty Owen's, where they met others their age.

the fawns and their human rescuers were kept safe. While all this went on, the fawns were offered water several times, and actually lapped some up. This was fairly unusual, since fawns of this age (less than a week old) typically get all of their moisture from their mom's milk, and seldom drink standing water.

Sierra Wildlife Rescue was called and I was the next to arrive on the scene. I've been a member of the SWR Fawn Team for many years, so knew to offer them lactated ringers (which has a lot of vitamins and minerals) in a bottle. They each drank quite a bit, a sign that they were indeed orphans, and needed to be taken in to rehab. It was time to say goodbye, so I headed off with the fawns, while Officer Schneider got back on the freeway, and Kian and the girls had to search for a different place for dinner: They had been on the side of the offramp for a couple of hours and the sushi place was closed!

The next stop for the fawns was Joanne Pryor's home-rehab facility in Shingle Springs. Hope and Chance arrived a little after 9:00 and after another round of ringers, they were tucked into an isolation cage. By the next morning, they were starting to take meals of fawn formula and were becoming familiar with Joanne's feeding routine. The fawns spent the next few weeks being cared for by Joanne, her husband Earl and Tori Yeager, another member of the Fawn Team. The fawns ate well and grew quickly. Fortunately, they didn't go through any of the typical "childhood diseases" that fawns often experience, illnesses that, while not deadly, can create certain problems and slow their growth rate. The little fawns were becoming big fawns at a fast pace!

On July 14, I took Hope and Chance up to Marty Owen's home-rehab facility, where they were installed in a large enclosure with many other fawns. From this point forward, they were fed remotely* and had no human contact. They wouldn't see their human caretakers again until release day on November 1.

It was a beautiful day and a beautiful new place of large, open land for Hope and Chance and their half-dozen fawn buddies to be released. No longer wearing spots, these fawns now looked like small adult deer and were ready to take on the world, wild and free!
— *Dave Cook*

* Remote feeding involves an enclosure where nursing bottles (and then buckets) are set or hung up by a human caretaker, who then leaves so that the fawns can come in and "help themselves," without human assistance. This system is to avoid the fawns imprinting on humans, so that they become "wilded up." The same effort, using different approaches, is made with all of our animals in rehab, to ensure they are fully wild and able to care for themselves when released.

It was a beautiful Release Day.

And Then There Were Seven

The spring season was off to a slow start for the Raptor Team, but all that changed on June 1. I got a call from raptor rehabber Amber Ruonavarra late in the day. It would be the first of many calls from Amber that week. She had just picked up a fledgling barn owl from a residence on busy El Dorado Hills Boulevard near Highway 50. The owl was thin and frightened, and had taken shelter on the front porch. Amber planned to stabilize the owl overnight, and I would pick him up the next evening.

Little barn owls

By the time I went to pick up the owl, Amber had collected another fledgling barn owl that was found in the parking lot of a Big Box furniture store in Rancho Cordova. This was a good thing, because the owls were about the same size/age and could be raised together as "buddies," which is always better than raising a single bird alone.

As it turned out, I didn't need to worry about the owls being alone. The next day, Amber called again and was heading back to the furniture store to pick up another fledgling barn owl found in the parking lot. By the end of the day, she had made two more trips to the store. She brought me three more little barn owls that evening. I had gone from zero to five birds in my care in less than a week. But that was not the end.

A few days later Amber called again. "You will not believe this," she said. She had picked up yet another fledgling barn owl from the same parking lot. This time, Amber worked with a store employee to locate the nest, which appeared to be in a large drain pipe coming off the roof. She spoke with the management about ways to exclude the barn owls from nesting there next season. The next day, Amber picked up one more, slightly older fledgling from the same spot. It was almost ready to fly, but we decided that a busy parking lot was not a good place to leave a young bird.

The raptor season was off to a slow start...until one by one the fledgling barn owls started showing up!

I spent the next few weeks feeding and cleaning up after seven ravenous, growing barn owls. Fortunately, I have several small flight cages and one large flight cage, so they had ample room to stretch their wings. The four oldest, largest owls went into the big flight cage first and were released once they demonstrated that they knew how to catch and eat live mice. I continued to put out food for them on a feeding platform near the flight cage. The youngest three owls went into the large flight cage after that, and were subsequently released in the same manner. I continued to put out food for several weeks until the owls no longer came back for free meals.

Barn owl perching on front porch column

If you have never heard a barn owl's call, they make a piercing, screaming sound to communicate with each other. Multiply that sound times seven, and that was the nightly chorus at my house all summer long. I never received an inquiry from the sheriff, but I wonder what the neighbors thought!

— *Vivian Gaddie*

Skunk Highjinx

For some reason, adult skunks seem to get into more trouble than other species

This past wildlife rehabbing season was notable for the number of skunks that were rescued for rehab or from difficult situations.

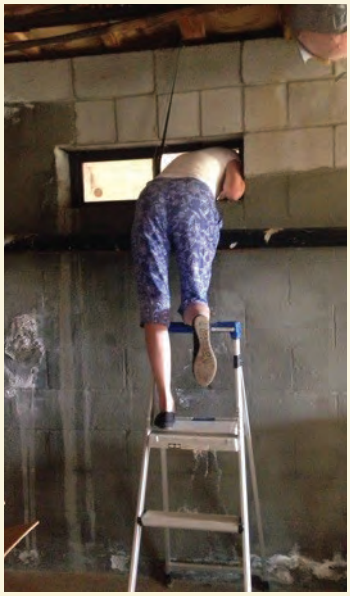
The first babies came in early May—two separate litters within a day of each other, one of nine (our record number for one litter ever!) and one of four, for a grand total of 13. Our (currently) sole skunk rehabber, Debbie Datilio, brilliantly handled the overflow of babies for the inside cages by using her second bathtub for some! Other babies followed during the rest of May and June, until we had received a total of 22 for the year.

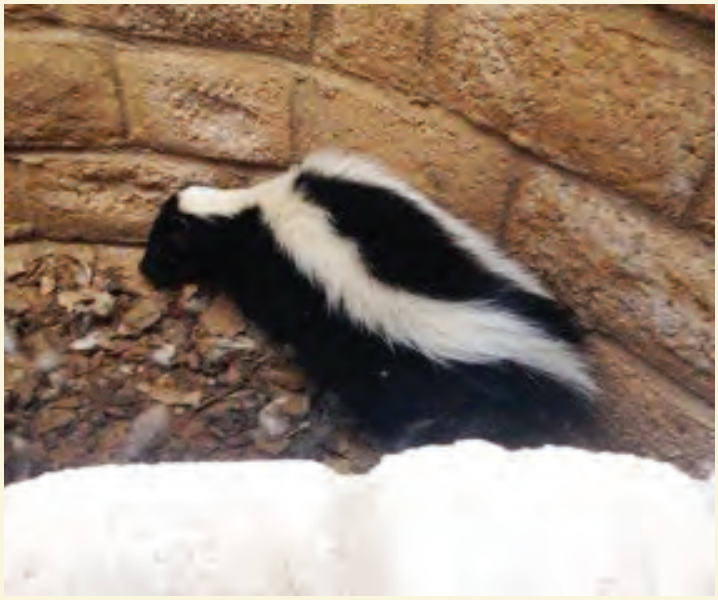
For some reason, adult skunks seem to get into more trouble than other species. The baby skunk influx had stopped but, in October, Debbie was called for two adult skunk rescues in one day! The first was stuck in a five-foot-high window well and couldn't climb out. Luckily, there was a window in the garage just a foot above the floor of the well, and Debbie was able to gather him/her up through the opening, place her in a box and walk a distance away to release her. Good skunk, no spraying!

The second skunk had fallen 15 feet into a well pump housing cavern, and chewed up the wiring, causing a call to a "pump fixer" (sorry, don't know the correct term}. This person was brilliant! Braving the circumstances, he re-wired the pump, and then placed a humane trap at the bottom of the cavern. SWR was called, and discovered the skunk had entered the trap. The pump fixer had tied a rope to the trap, so Debbie just had to bring the trap with the skunk up to the top, observe the skunk for any injuries (none), take the trap to a safe release spot on the rescuer's property, open the door, and BOOM! out he/she came. This one gave a token squirt while still in the trap, as the picture was taken.

We are always thankful for the caring folks who seek help for one of our most misunderstood wild animals.

— Debbie Datilio/ Nan Powers





Debbie to the rescue from the inside window. Skunk in the well.

Our biggest litter yet—nine babies!

The "pump fixer" was brillliant and trapped the skunk in the well pump housing.

Bobcat Kittens' Winter Home Funded

(Above) First 2017 SWR bobcat kitten; (below) SWR bobcat kittens Elsa, Evan and Ember

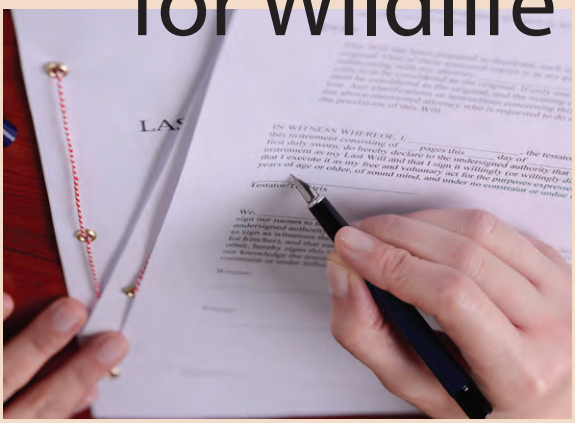
A heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped

Our first bobcat kitten came in on April 24 this year, eventually followed by two more. We named them Elsa, Evan and Ember. Gold Country Wildlife Rescue transferred a fourth single that they had, since it's always best to rehab wild babies with their own species. This is a great example of how wildlife rescue groups work together to make sure we do the best we can for each individual animal Since the bobcats are less than 6 months, they are too young to be released into the wild this fall, so SWR will be overwintering them.

Meat-eating animals are the most expensive to rehab; the kittens will eat about 4 pounds of meat a day. Including frozen mice, rabbits and other natural prey, which is expensive to purchase. Ongoing enrichment opportunities for the cats as they grow will also continue to support their maturing. In addition to welcome contributions from Gold Country Wildlife, SWR's Go Fund Me campaign on Facebook has raised the $1,000+ that will be required to feed these youngsters until spring They will be released where food sources are abundant when they have demonstrated the capability to survive on their own in the wild.

SWR, Gold Country Wildlife, all the bobcats' rehabbers, and the bobcats (we're sure) want to express their heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the campaign!

Leaving a Legacy for Wildlife



For 25 years, Sierra Wildlife Rescue has been dedicated to the mission of preserving El Dorado County's wildlife through rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing injured and orphaned native birds and mammals back into the wild. By making a gift to Sierra Wildlife Rescue in your will, trust or other financial plan, you can help protect and preserve wildlife in El Dorado County for generations to come. Contact your attorney, tax advisor or financial planner to discuss ways you can help SWR, or consider using this sample bequest language in your will or trust.

Bequest Language: "I give to Sierra Wildlife Rescue, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with its principal offices at 777 Pleasant Valley Rd., Diamond Springs, CA 95619 (Mailing address: P. O. Box 2127, Placerville, CA 95667), the sum of $ _____ (or 100% or _____ %) of my residual estate, to be used for the organization's general purposes of protecting and preserving El Dorado County wildlife."

Black Phoebe

This column features brief "bios" of some of the birds we regularly see in our backyards, at bird-feeders, or throughout El Dorado County. Each year, hundreds of orphaned or injured birds, such as the Black Phoebe, are cared for in Sierra Wildlife Rescue's Baby Bird Nursery.

PHOTO BY JULIE OLSON

Size: 6–7″

Weight: 5–8 oz.

Description: Mostly dark charcoal gray, blacker head with a white belly.

Voice: Song is a repetition of phrase *fee-bee* or *pi-tsee*. Call is a sharp, down-slurred chirp.

Habitat: Shady streams, river banks, walled canyons, farmyards, open chaparral, even cattle tanks; rarely found away from water, which ensures availability of mud for making nests. Will not be seen on backyard bird feeders since they only eat insects, but can be observed eating insects.

Range: All along western California to southwestern United States, most of Mexico, and all the way to Argentina.

Nesting: One to six white eggs, some may have reddish-brown dots. Nest is a mud-shell lined with plant fiber, sometimes feathers or cow hair, and plastered to a vertical wall within inches of a protective ceiling. Female constructs and maintains the nest. Often found under bridges. Eggs hatch in 15–18 days and nestling period is 18–21 days.

Interesting Facts: Black Phoebes are primarily monogamous and stay together up to 5 years. Oldest recorded Black Phoebe was over 8 years old. Birds will often return to same nestling site year after year. Diet is almost entirely insects, but will occasionally eat small fish. The male Black Phoebes conduct a real estate tour, hovering over potential nest sites for 5 to 10 seconds, but the female is the boss and selects the site.

— Michael Damer

Nursery Volunteers Provide Bountiful Food

Special recognition and thanks to a couple of great volunteers, Peggy Cathie and Ginny Yuel, who worked making the food for the baby birds this summer; this was Peggy's second year helping. Ginny was recruited—she noted that she had been wondering what she would do with her summer! She was a food-making miracle and brought a lot of sunshine to our mornings.

SWR uses a formula for the food called FONS, developed by Cornell College of Ornithology. Four separate ingredients are milled up, frozen into ice cubes, bagged, dated and brought to the BBN. The food makers made two to three trips each week bringing food so it would be fresh and available, as the bird population varies from day to day. Peggy donated a small freezer just for the bird food, so the bags could be easily found and used by the correct date. BBN Manager Cherie Sinclair and I kept the ingredients flowing, as some have to be ordered and others are available only at certain feed stores.

I have lost track of the number of years I have done this, but find it is different each year. It is always a pleasure to see the birds eat and thrive on the food our volunteers give them.

— Alice Henry

Deb Datilio: Leader, Mentor and Friend

Debbie and Ron Datilio moved, in 2006, from Orange County to Georgetown, where they had previously lived and purchased their retirement home nearly 30 years before.

"I had known about SWR for many years," Deb has said, "and always knew I would become involved when we moved back to Georgetown permanently." Both she and Ron had always loved and cared for animals, and had recently transported their five cats to Georgetown during their move.

They joined SWR in 2007 and also the Squirrel Rehabbing Team, working with orphaned and injured baby and adult squirrels. Deb quickly established herself as extremely compassionate and capable in caring for wild animals, putting her 30-plus-years as a registered nurse to good use. She had also initiated, developed and managed the Virginia Crosson Cancer Center in southern California, providing her with excellent management experience. By 2008, she had joined SWR's Rabbit Rehabbing Team and had also started rehabbing baby skunks.

By this time, many SWR members had found that the Datilios were not only terrific people, but also strong supporters of SWR's mission and goals. Either Deb, Ron, or both were always ready to volunteer on SWR projects, helping organize events, training new rehabbers, facilitating membership outreach efforts and participating in a wide variety of other activities. In 2009, Deb was elected a member at large of the SWR board and, in 2010, became Board President.

2011 saw her chosen as SWR's Director of Animal Care (DAC), a position requiring development of direct animal care protocols. interacting with the public on "nuisance" wildlife and other wildlife situations, suggesting revisions to animal-care procedures issued by government agencies, assisting to resolve rehab team and Baby Bird Nursery management issues, and numerous other duties.

Deb held the DAC position through 2014, and added opossums to the roster of species she rehabbed, also becoming Skunk Team and Opossum Team Leader over the next few years. Ron served as Board President in 2014, while Deb was elected in 2015 and each year thereafter through 2017. To our sorrow, Ron passed away in March, 2015. We still miss him.

Deb has played a leadership role in many of SWR's improvements from 2010 through 2017, supported by Board members and volunteers. One of the most important of these, during this, our 25th anniversary year, was the generous transfer to us by the El Dorado County Humane Society of their spacious property in Diamond Springs as our permanent Wildlife Center. Having rented property to house its activities, including the Baby Bird Nursery, since its inception, SWR is aware that this is an incredible gift that will continue to serve our needs as we grow in the future.

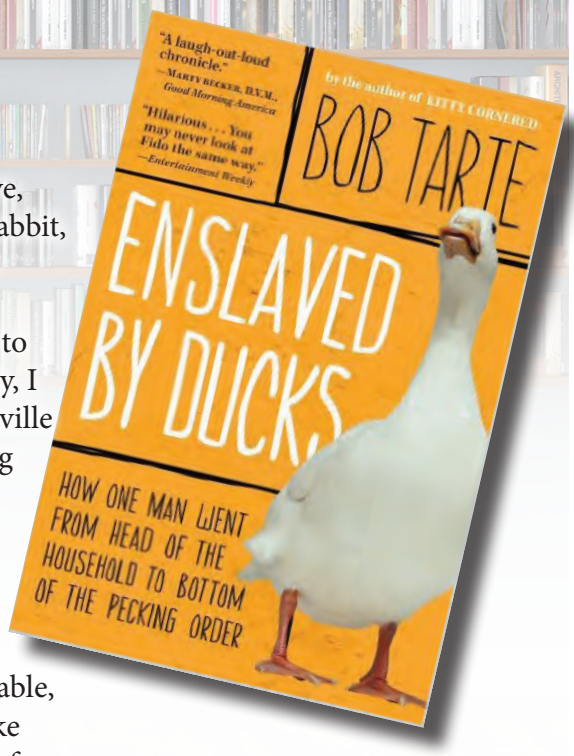
In addition to the high level of accomplishment Deb has supported for SWR as an organization, she has been a friend and mentor to many SWR rehabbers, volunteers, and other members. Her enthusiasm, ability to motivate people and successful efforts should continue to inspire SWR members in our ongoing work to conserve and protect the wildlife we all cherish.

And now the sad news. Deb will be leaving California sometime this spring to return to live near her family in Connecticut. We will all miss her a great deal, both as a colleague and a friend.

Winter Wildlife Reading

Enslaved by Ducks, Bob Tarte

©2003 Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill
308 pages



As an animal lover, I always enjoy a good book about real-life creatures and their human caretakers, but I can't recall one that gave me as many outward smiles and audible laughs as *Enslaved by Ducks*.

City-bred writer Bob Tarte, with a pre-existing indifference toward animals—even his childhood beagle—had relocated to a century-old farmhouse in rural Michigan solely to escape crime and other urban woes. When he marries country girl Linda, however, in no time she cajoles him into acquiring a pet rabbit. Unfortunately, Binky the bunny doesn't quite live up to expectations.

"His favorite out-of-cage pastime," Tarte writes, "was giving electrical wires the licorice-whip treatment and hiding in impossible-to-reach places."

Despite these drawbacks, more animals soon follow: a cat, a canary, a loud-squawking "pocket parrot" with a penchant for biting, and an African grey parrot who barely talks but makes all-too-authentic sobbing sounds.

Tarte is a gifted humor writer who regularly pokes fun at himself, his wife, and just about every other person he encounters. With his characteristic wry wit, he recounts the misbehaviors and the maintenance that each new animal brings. As the household expands to accommodate a ring-necked dove, three parakeets, and another rabbit, he ponders how it had all happened.

"As my lifelong immunity to animals shifted to susceptibility, I came to suspect that an Amityville Horror–like entity was drawing beasts to our house . . ."

The first duck arrives in the form of a rescued female Muscovy. When Linda insists that a lone duck needs a couple of friends, Bob is agreeable, figuring ducks pretty much take care of themselves. But even before three ducks become six, plus two African geese, Bob discovers that these web-footed creatures require, as he puts it, "more maintenance than the space shuttle." Yet there are moments when he finds himself "watching [a duck] splash around the plastic swimming pool, probe the mud . . . with enthusiastic stabs of her beak, or race across the yard flapping her wings in mindless joy" that make all of his labors worthwhile.

Other than a hilarious chapter in which the harried couple raise a nestful of baby starlings, most of the species in the Tartes' menagerie are, of course, domesticated. Even so, wildlife rehabbers will find kindred spirits in Bob and Linda whenever one of their animals is sick or injured. With tireless devotion, they clean wounds, apply ointments, prepare special food, and plunge medicine-filled syringes down unwilling throats.

"I can think of no other circumstances," reflects Tarte, "where we develop such closeness with our animals as when we see them through serious illness." There are, of course, instances when a bird or bunny can't be saved, and at such times he writes with a poignancy that can only come from firsthand experience.

Enslaved by Ducks is a lively, entertaining read; but the book also reveals that it's not only dogs and cats who respond to human affection and, in sometimes subtle ways, even return it. And, as Bob Tarte learns, it's difficult to take in and take care of any animal without it also taking hold of your heart.

— *Julie Olson*

Holiday Goodies

For Your Birds!

A little late shopping for presents for your feathered friends? Bird seed hang-ups are one great way to help the birds in your area (year-round), and are really fun to watch as birds come to take advantage of this food source. Here is the recipe for you to create your own hang-ups. When completed, add string or another hanger and hang next to a branch or other perch.

You will need:

3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup water
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
3 T. corn syrup
4 cups birdseed

(You could also add dried fruit and nuts to your mixture.)

Other:

Molds (muffin tin, cookie cutters, paper cups, etc.);
Nonstick spray
Drinking straw or small dowel
Waxed paper (needed with cookie cutters
Ribbon, twine, string or raffia (to hang)

Bird Seed Hang-ups

Mix flour, water, corn syrup and gelatin in a large bowl. Add bird seed and mix until it is a thick dough.

If using cookie cutters:
Scoop the mixture onto wax paper, coated with nonstick spray, until it is about the same thickness as your cookie cutters. Spray nonstick spray on the inside of cookie cutters and cut out the various shapes. Left-over dough can be reformed and cut. Push a dowel or straw through to provide a place to tie the string. Allow the hang-ups to dry about 16 hours, turning over halfway through.

If using muffin tins:
Spray muffin tins with nonstick spray. Fill with mixture to create the size hang-ups you want. Push a dowel or straw through to provide a place to tie the string. Allow to dry about 16 hours. Hang.

If using paper cups:
Punch a small hole in bottom of cup. Thread string through and tie a knot on outside of cup. Fill with mixture making sure the string stays in the center. Allow to dry about 16 hours. Peel off paper.

There are lots of other things you can do to help wildlife. Visit our website, www.sierrawildliferescue.org, to find out more.

— Linda Mueller

2018 Sierra Wildlife Rescue Class Calendar*

JANUARY

SWR New Volunteer Orientation
Sunday, January 28th, 1pm – 3pm
(no fee or registration required)
Meet current volunteers and discover volunteer opportunities in direct animal care as well as support services such as community education and outreach, grant writing, enclosure building, wood-working, and social media development.

RACCOONS
Individual instruction by appointment (any month)
Instructor: Marty Owen (530) 626-6518

WATERBIRDS, WATERFOWL & GAMEBIRDS
On-site training; to be announced
Instructor: Stefanie Stewart

FEBRUARY

OPOSSUMS
Saturday, February 3rd, 10pm – 12noon
Instructor: Debbie Datilio

SKUNKS
Saturday, February 3rd 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Debbie Datilio

RAPTORS OF EL DORADO COUNTY
Saturday, February 10th 1pm – 3pm
Instructors: Judy Monestier & Vivian Gaddie

RABBITS
Sunday, February 11th 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Lisa Stewart

EDUCATION OUTREACH RECRUITMENT
Saturday, February 17th 10am – 12noon
Instructor: Education team

WHO'S IN YOUR BACKYARD
Saturday, February 17th, 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Judy Monestier

SQUIRRELS
Saturday, February 24th, 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Linda Mueller

MARCH

BACKYARD HABITAT
Saturday, March 3rd, 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Judy Thompson

RAPTORS
Thursday, March 22nd, 6pm – 8pm
Instructor: Marty Owen

AVIAN TRIAGE
Saturday, March 31st 10am – 12noon
Instructor: Education team

FOXES, COYOTES, & BOBCATS
Saturday, March 31st 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Judy Monestier

APRIL

FAWNS
Thursday, April 5th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Instructor: Marty Owen

DOVES & PIGEONS
Saturday, April 7th 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Judy Monestier

INTRODUCTION TO SIERRA WILDLIFE
Saturday, April 14th, 1pm – 3pm
Instructor: Judy Monestier

INTRODUCTION TO THE BABY BIRD NURSERY
Saturday, April 7th, 10am – noon
Tuesday, April 10th, 7pm – 9pm
Saturday, April 21st, 10am – noon
Tuesday, April 24th, 7pm – 9pm
Instructor: Cherie Sinclair

MAY

OWL PELLETS
Saturday, May 12th 10am – 12noon
Instructor: Education team

JUNE

THE FOOD CHAIN
Saturday, June 9th 10am – 12noon
Instructor: Education team

JULY

TRACKS AND SCATS
Saturday, July 14th 10am – 12noon
Instructor: Education team

BABY BIRD NURSERY – HANDS-ON TRAINING
Wednesdays, May–July, 5pm.
Please contact Barbara at (530) 621-2650 for more information

ALL CLASSES WILL BE HELD AT THE SWR WILDLIFE CENTER
(unless otherwise indicated)
777 Pleasant Valley Road
Diamond Springs

**See page 14 for more detailed class descriptions*

CALL (530) 621-2650
for class information/location and to sign up for classes

2018 SPRING CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

See page 13 for class dates and times

Introduction To Sierra Wildlife: This class will introduce you to many of the avian and mammal species of wildlife you are likely to see living in El Dorado County. There will be pictures, stories and anecdotes, with plenty of time for answering questions (or trying to) you might have about Sierra Wildlife. Come and join us as we talk about the reasons many of us moved to this area.

Rehabbing Raccoons: The class on Rehabbing Raccoons will be provided through individual instruction, and will include intake information, the basics of rehabbing raccoons, and information on release procedures. Contact Marty Owen at 530-626-6518 to arrange for a convenient date and time.

Rehabbing Water birds, Waterfowl, and Gamebirds: On-site training on rehabbing these birds will be available. Contact Stephanie Stewart at pouletchalet@yahoo.com for further information.

Rehabbing Opossums: A review of the natural history, rescue and rehabilitation processes, including urgent care, feeding, housing and special considerations.

Rehabbing Skunks: A review of the natural history, rescue and rehabilitation processes, including urgent care, feeding, housing and special considerations.

Raptors of El Dorado County: El Dorado County is fortunate to have a wide variety of hawks and owls residing here. This class will describe the natural history of many of these birds, including photos, where they can be found and the unique characteristics of each to help you identify and understand them.

Rehabbing Rabbits: The class on rabbits will provide a brief overview of the three species in El Dorado County [including jackrabbits (lagomorphs)], explanations of how we receive and release orphaned and injured rabbits, and basic training in rehabbing protocols and procedures, as well as insights into rehabbing situations.

Who's in Your Backyard? Want to have a better idea of which wild animals are around your home and neighborhood, and to learn techniques to identify them? Each day and night our yards, homes and neighborhoods are visited by wild critters, many of whom you would not expect to find, or may not see. This class will give you tools to learn more about your visitors--- through sounds, observation, or maybe even scents!

Rehabbing Squirrels: The class on rehabbing squirrels will provide an overview of the six-species found in El Dorado County, and the circumstances that bring them into our care. We will discuss the various levels of care and support required, with the goal of release back into the wild. This includes the different tasks/jobs that are involved and degrees of commitment that would be necessary.

Backyard Wildlife Habitat: Give wildlife a helping hand by learning how to provide important natural foods (e.g. growing certain plants), water, shelter and places to raise young on your property for it to become certified as a National Wildlife Federation Backyard Wildlife Habitat. This class will give you numerous ideas to help you meet the criteria set by NWF to become certified.

Rehabbing Raptors: This class will provide basic information on rehabbing orphaned or injured raptors (hawks and owls) brought into SWR, and include training in procedures, housing, feeding, health care, and special handling and safety requirements, resulting in successful release back to their natural habitat.

Rehabbing Foxes, Coyotes and Bobcats: SWR rehabs three of our largest and most fascinating predators, who are sometimes seen but rarely understood. While primarily designed for prospective rehabbers, the class will also teach you about the natural history of each of these species, and why they are so important to maintaining the balance of our ecosystem. Additional information and numerous photos will help you to learn more.

Rehabbing Fawns: SWR rescues and rehabs fawns each year through a special rehab license not granted to all rehabbing organizations in the state. This class will cover the basics of fawn rescue, housing, feeding, rehabbing and release, and special considerations due to mule deer behavior.

Rehabbing Doves and Pigeons: While this class is designed for people interested in rehabilitating doves and pigeons, we will go into the natural history of the species, as well as rehabbing techniques. These are wonderful birds and easy to rehab. Learn more about our county's most common birds, and decide if you want to give rehabbing them a try.

Introduction to the Baby Bird Nursery: These classes are designed to introduce new volunteers planning to work at the Baby Bird Nursery this summer (approximately May 1- July 31) to procedures for feeding and caring for the hundreds of orphaned or injured songbirds that are brought to our nursery each year. Volunteers may choose their own shifts of from 2 – 4 hours daily, weekly or on another schedule, and times are flexible. Only one class is required to sign up to work at the nursery.

President's Report
continued from first page

our care, but also each other.

Fast forward to 2017. On the rehabilitation front, over 1100 animals were rescued by the public and brought into care. Our Baby Bird Nursery cared for over 450 songbirds, while the remainder of our intakes were cared for at our satellite facilities, spread throughout El Dorado County on rehabbers' personal properties. It takes an army of volunteers, from the rescuers, to the rehabbers, to the public's support through memberships and donations, to realize our goal of giving these animals a second chance at leading their wild lives.

Our second goal, educating the public on coexisting peacefully with wildlife and respecting its habitat, is accomplished through our education and outreach programs. In 2017, SWR volunteers gave a number of classes, open to the public and potential rehabbers, on all the species we work with, as well as general interest topics, always well attended. Our Education/Community Outreach Team, continues to answer the call to participate in community events, often with our Education Birds in attendance. Their outreach to children is especially rewarding, nurturing their natural interest in wildlife, and helping to set the stage for their future as stewards in caring for our wildlife and environment.

As SWR entered our 25th Anniversary year, we could not have imagined the circumstance that would make a dream come true. The El Dorado County Humane Society (EDCHS) gifted SWR its property in Diamond Springs, which is now our permanent Wildlife Center, home to our seasonal Baby Bird Nursery, and our administrative and educational activities. The EDCHS' generosity is the epitome of nurturing, and we will continue to grow and develop in our new home. Thank you, EDCHS.

As SWR journeys into its second quarter-century, we are mindful that we are surrounded by organizations in El Dorado County that strive to nurture the most vulnerable people and animals that live here. We are proud to be a part of that, and will always work to maintain your demonstrated faith in us.

— Debbie Datilio, President

SWR Board of Directors 2017

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Pamela Watson

Toast to Wildlife
continued from first page

auction, special "surprise" auctions and door prizes. Meet our live "Educational Ambassador" raptors, enjoy videos of our adorable wild critters in rehab, and have fun with other activities. A representative from Sierra Pacific Industries will be our featured speaker.

Look for more information on the event in coming months in your local print and social media, including on our website (www.sierrawildliferescue.org) and Facebook (Sierra Wildlife Rescue).

Come join us for a terrific experience and support the care of your wildlife neighbors!

THE PAW PRINT, FALL/WINTER 2017/18

Editor:	Nan Powers
Article Writers/ Assistants:	Dave Cook, Michael Damer, Debbie Datilio, Vivian Gaddie, Alice Henry, Linda Mueller, Julie Olson, Betty Shannon, Lisa Stewart
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Please submit wildlife photos and editorial queries to **npowers2@ earthlink.net** or call 530-647-1089. Learn more about SWR and look for the *Paw Print* in beautiful color on our website at **www.sierrawildliferescue.org**.

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Those who wish to pet and baby wildlife love them, but those who respect their natures and wish to let them live their natural lives love them more."
— Edwin Way Teale

Come join us!

Come enjoy the wonderful fellowship among people who share your concerns about wildlife and the environment! Sierra Wildlife Rescue always needs new home rehabbers for all species. If you would like to learn more about home rehabbing, would like to feed baby birds at our Wildlife Center in the summer, or would be available for transporting animals from rescuers to rehabbers, please call us at **530-621-2650**, or check out our website, **www.sierrawildliferescue.org**. SWR provides training, licensing, and most supplies. As a home rehabber, you will attend training classes, join a team and work with an experienced mentor for awhile; someone will always be available to advise and assist you. No prior experience is necessary—all you need is a concern for wild animals and the willingness to learn. Rehabbing and returning wild creatures to their natural environment is more exciting and fulfilling than you can imagine!