

# Piedmont Wildlife Rehab, Inc.

*Helping injured and orphaned wildlife and nurturing an appreciation for our local wildlife and environment*

**Website:** <http://piedmontwildliferehab.org>

Spring Newsletter  
2011, Issue 3

## Our First Baby Squirrels of 2011

This On March 8, 2011 we received two calls concerning orphaned baby squirrels just minutes apart. The first caller found three baby squirrels in the wall of a house in Thomasville, NC. The other caller was from Greensboro who found a baby that had fallen from a nest and discovered the mother had been killed by a car. Afraid that there were more babies

orphaned in the nest, Melissa Coe contacted Robin Sands of Sands Tree Service in Asheboro, NC who also advertises himself as a rescuer of animals stuck in trees. He drove all the way from Asheboro to check the nest for the siblings. However, the nest was empty and they were never found. It is caring people like Robin and other volunteers who come along with

us on rescues that help keep us going. All four babies were about 5 weeks old when we got them and are doing fine in the care of Sue Fields. We now have a total of 15 baby squirrels from this spring.



First Baby Squirrel of 2011



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## A Note from our Rehabbers

Have you ever thought about becoming a state or federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator? If so, we could use your help! Each year it becomes more difficult to continue wildlife rehabilitation due to dwindling donations

and fewer volunteers. More licensed rehabilitators are needed to handle the number of calls we receive for assistance. Working with wildlife can be a rewarding experience if you love animals and have some time to

devote to it. Wildlife Rehab, Inc. in Winston-Salem offers a wonderful 11-week course at Forsyth Technical Community College during the spring and fall semesters. Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina also holds a weekend

symposium in January for veterinarians as well as new and beginning rehabilitators. If you would like more information on becoming a wildlife rehabilitator, training or internship, please contact us.

# I Found an Orphaned or Injured Small Mammal

A small mammal, such as a squirrel, rabbit or opossum, needs your help if it is injured, cold, orphaned, has been in the mouth of a cat, dog or other predator, or it is in a dangerous place or seeking help. If you have found a baby mammal, please look and listen for additional ones in the area. Squirrels usually have three young to a nest but can range from one to seven. Squirrels may make a high-pitched squeal if they are in need of help. Older babies may approach you for help. Opossums can have up to thirteen in a litter. Opossums typically make a “sneezing” type sound when separated from the mother. They may also hiss when approached and scared.

Eastern cottontail rabbits usually produce between three and eight babies. The mother gives birth in a shallow ground nest where the mortality rate is high. The nest is lined with grass and the female’s fur. The top of the nest is camouflaged with grass and leaves. The nests are frequently disturbed and exposed by lawnmowers and other activities. If you find a nest and none of the young have been injured, do not disturb them or the nest. Replace any grass or leaves that may have been removed. The female will return early in the morning and again in the

evening to nurse them. Keep cats and dogs away from the area, and be careful when mowing overgrown lawns.

If you find an injured or orphaned small mammal, place it in a box or other container using thick gloves, especially if it is an injured adult. Adult squirrels will bite! Wrap them in fleece or a t-shirt if available. Provide a heat source as soon as possible. A heating pad set on low underneath half of the container is best. If you do not have a heating pad, put warm water in a double seal plastic bag, soda bottle or tied rubber glove. Cover the heat source and place the infants near but not in direct contact with the heat source. Check to make sure these containers do not leak and are not too hot. Keep them in a dark quiet place and away from children and pets until you can locate a wildlife rehabilitator. A severely injured animal should be taken to a veterinarian for treatment. Cat bites are serious, and the animal will require antibiotics as soon as possible.

**DO NOT FEED** the animal cow’s milk or food. Feeding an animal while cold or dehydrated can cause death. The animal will likely require rehydrating by a licensed rehabilitator or veterinarian.



Eastern Cottontail

When you call a rehabilitator, they may instruct you to give the animal fluids. Older animals will be able to drink on their own. Babies will need to be given fluids. Weakened Pedialyte is often used to rehydrate baby animals and is readily available in most grocery stores and pharmacies. Infants and young mammals can aspirate very easily if not given fluids correctly. Therefore, it is recommended that you contact a professional wildlife rehabilitator first.

**“DO NOT FEED the animal cow’s milk or food. Feeding an animal while cold or dehydrated can cause death”**

Please visit our website for more information on the care of injured and orphaned mammals and birds.

<http://piedmontwildliferehab.org>

**Please note:** It is illegal in North Carolina to keep a native mammal in captivity without a permit.

# I Found an Orphaned or Injured Song Bird

A bird needs your help if it is injured, cold, orphaned, has been in the mouth of a cat, dog or other predator, or it is in a dangerous place. In addition, a bird will also need help if it is a nestling on the ground or if the nest has fallen. Some species are ground nesting birds or live in open fields with no trees. If the nest has fallen from a tree or other structure with nestlings or hatchlings in it, place the nest in a hanging basket with drain holes and hang it near where you found it, but out of the elements. Watch from a distance to make sure the parents return. If the spot you placed it in seems unsafe you can move it further away, but again making sure the parents find it.

A nestling is recently hatched bird that has not yet grown any flight feathers and is unable to fly. They can be found on the ground due to wind or rain damaging the nest or the mother has died and they fall out of the nest searching for food. If you find a nestling look and listen for more in the area. If the nestling is uninjured, you can return it to the nest provided you can find and reach it, and the mother is alive. It is a myth that the mother will reject a baby bird if touched by human hands. If you cannot reach the nest, you can

make one with grasses in a hanging basket with drain holes and hang it in a tree closest to where the nest is or where you found the nestling. Watch for the parents to return. If it has been on the ground for an undetermined period of time, it should be warmed and rehydrated before returning it to the nest. **DO NOT** give them cow's milk. Please contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for instructions on how to rehydrate. You can harm it if not done properly.



**Bluebird Nestlings**

**"DO NOT** give them cow's milk. Please contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for instructions on how to rehydrate.

A fledgling is a young bird that has recently acquired its flight feathers. Fledglings are often mistaken for birds that are injured or unable to fly, and they are often "kidnapped" for this reason. The fact is they are learning how to fly. A fledgling will leave the nest to perch on nearby branches and hop on the ground where the parents teach them how to feed and fly. If you find a

fledgling in an unsafe area, move it into the cover of some nearby shrubs or camouflage it with twigs. Otherwise, leave the bird where you found it. Watch from a distance to make sure the parents can find it.

If you find an injured or orphaned bird, place it in a box or other container. Use thick gloves if it is an injured adult cardinal. Adult cardinals may bite. Line the container with fleece or a t-shirt if available. Nestlings and hatchlings can be placed in a bowl lined with toilet paper or facial tissues to create a nest. Provide a heat source as soon as possible. A heating pad set on low underneath half of the container is best. If you do not have a heating pad, put warm water in a double seal plastic bag, soda bottle or tied rubber glove. Cover the heat source and place the bird near but not in direct contact with the heat source. Check to make sure these containers do not leak and are not too hot. Keep them in a dark quiet place and away from children and pets until you can locate a wildlife rehabilitator. A severely injured bird should be taken to a veterinarian for treatment. Cat bites are serious, and the animal will require antibiotics as soon as possible.

## What Are Birds Worth?

Although the economic value of birds to humans has yet to be quantified, birds play many important roles as members of ecosystems. In the tropics and the southern temperate zones, birds are as important as pollinators as insects are. There are about 2,000 bird species worldwide that feed on nectar, pollen, and the insects and spiders associated with nectar bearing flowers. In the continental United States, hummingbirds are key in wildflower pollination, and in Hawaii, honeycreepers are important pollinators.



**Ruby-throated  
Hummingbird**

Insectivorous birds can provide the valuable service of pest control. More than 50% of bird species are predominantly insectivorous and about 75% eat insects occasionally. Studies have shown that birds not only reduce insect populations, but also that plants respond to higher growth rates or crop yields. A case study in China showed the extermination of the Eurasian tree sparrow contributed to insect pest outbreaks rather than rice

yield increases. The sparrows' control of the insects actually benefitted the crop. Pest control also applies to raptors (hawks and owls) which are of great benefit to our natural communities and play a vital role in the natural food chain. Raptors control rodent populations more successfully than poisons or traps.



**Eurasian Tree Sparrow**

It is difficult to estimate the number of plant species dispersed by birds, however, almost 33% of bird species disperse seeds, primarily through the consumption of fruit. Birds disperse the seeds of many woody plant species that provide direct value to humans for timber, medicine and food.



**Northern Flicker**

Scavengers, such as vultures, contribute to waste removal, disease regulation, and nutrient cycling. Many other birds also scavenge animal carcasses at least occasionally, including raptors, seabirds, gulls, herons, rails, shorebirds, and woodpeckers.



**Turkey Vulture**

Birds provide many important ecosystem services. Further studies on the economic value of birds will enable better policy and restoration practices, and will help promote and justify bird conservation efforts.

Daniel G. Wenny, Travis L. DeVault, Matthew D. Johnson, Dave Kelly, Cagan H. Sekercioglu, Diana F. Tomback, Christopher J. Whelan. 2011. The Need to Quantify Ecosystem Services Provided by Birds. *The Auk* 128:1-14

**Donations Needed**  
*(these are tax-deductible!!)*

**Food:**

- Walnuts, pecans, acorns, seed
- Cat food, preferably Whiskas or Purina One dry kitten, and Evo dry cat and kitten

**Bedding:**

- Flannel, fleece, cotton, or any soft materials

**Other:**

- Large cages, building materials
- Heavy feeding dishes
- Toilet paper, paper towels
- Plastic peanut butter or other jar lids
- Commercial building
- Incubator
- Shop Vac
- Vehicle to transport wildlife



**Rose with eleven babies**

**Volunteer:**

- Pre-mix formulas
- Help transport animals to rehabbers and/or to veterinarians
- Clean cages
- Yard work
- Build or repair cages and nest boxes (great service or Scout project)
- Fundraising
- Grant writers
- Intern to achieve permit

**Money:** Your contributions are also greatly appreciated and can be made in Memory or Honor of a person or pet and listed on our web site. Mail to:

**Piedmont Wildlife Rehab, Inc.**  
 2912 Liberty Rd.  
 Greensboro, NC 27406

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail\_\_\_\_\_

In Memory/Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Website:** <http://piedmontwildliferehab.org>

## Fund Raising Events

### The Human Race Charity 5K Walk/Run

Thousands of people came out to support their favorite nonprofit organization on Saturday, March 26, 2011. PWR was supported by two Walking Teams and two runners. Our top fundraisers were the USDA/ERSL Employees Association lead by Katie Rose, the Sierra Student Coalition of NW High School lead by Happy Mackenzie and her son Zack, and Helen Tucker of PWR. Our runners were Nathan Rose and Johnny Tejada. It was a great day for all of us. Thank you to all of our supporters.



### Belk Charity Sale

The Belk Charity Sale was held on Saturday, April 16, 2011 between the hours of 6am and 10am. Nonprofit groups, such as PWR, sold \$5 coupons at Belk prior to the sale to support our organizations. The coupons were redeemed the day of the sale towards any purchase in addition to the already 20% - 70% savings. The first 100 people in the door on the day of the sale received a gift card up to a \$1,000 value. PWR was at Belk from April 8 thru April 16 answering questions about wildlife and selling coupons. Thank you to Belk for their support.



**Helen and Carmen with Hansel at Belk**

**Contacts:**

**Melissa Coe**  
336-273-6832 Home  
336-580-6600 Cell

**Sue Fields**  
336-886-7765 Cell

**Kim Santos**  
336-638-2432 Home



We're on the Web!

<http://piedmontwildliferehab.org>

*Piedmont Wildlife Rehab, Inc., a non-profit 501 (C) (3) formed in 2007 by licensed in-home rehabilitators. We receive no governmental or state funding and rely solely on private donations. Our goals are to relieve suffering in injured wildlife through rehabilitation and assist orphaned babies in a professional manner that prepares them for release back into a natural habitat, capable of reproducing another healthy generation for the environment and our enjoyment. We are committed to sharing the importance of environmental stewardship and encouraging a better understanding of our local wildlife.*

*Our rehabilitators continue to learn through additional years of experience as well as yearly refresher courses. Combined, our volunteers have state permits for small mammals and Federal permits for song and migratory birds. We care for approximately 300 animals a year and average answering 10 phone calls per day. Wildlife Rehabilitation is a difficult and expensive volunteer job. We love what we do but can only be one link in the chain needed to give injured and orphaned wildlife a second chance at a natural life. Please help us to help them.*

## 2011 Year of the Turtle

Turtle conservation groups in partnership with Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) are designating 2011 as the Year of the Turtle. About 40% of turtle species are threatened with extinction worldwide and are disappearing faster than any other group of animal.

Box turtles are North Carolina's state reptile. Their numbers are dwindling, in part because many people pick them up to take home as pets. It may be just one here and one there, but the result is thousands of box turtles disappearing from our forests

and fields, forever.

As far as nature is concerned, a turtle taken from the wild is "dead". It can no longer help maintain the population. "Saving" a turtle by bringing it home in fact hurts fragile turtle populations. Taken from the wild, box turtles often sicken and die. When captive turtles are released into unfamiliar surroundings, they are often killed by predators or crushed by cars as they attempt to return to their original wild home.

If you see a turtle crossing the road, move it to the side that it is headed. Resist the urge to drive it to a "safer" place. Remember,



**Eastern Box Turtle**

that individual may have been living in the area for decades, already knows where to find food and mates, and has a special place to hibernate or lay eggs. Be careful so that you don't get hit by a car. Don't take risks with your own life!

You and your children can help wild box turtles. Report your box turtle observations, plus any other reptiles and amphibians, to the Carolina Herp Atlas:

[www.carolinaherpatlas.org](http://www.carolinaherpatlas.org)