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AVIAN HAVEN

2005

Year End Report

“Birds of a feather flock together.” Normally, they nest together too, but these plumeless hatchlings – a robin and a killdeer – found comfort in each other when none of a feather was available. Their stories and more are told below!

Rehabilitation 2005: Overview

We cared for 931 wild birds (almost exactly the same number as last year) from 97 species. Our top ten native birds were American robins (95), mourning doves (47), eastern phoebes (43), herring gulls (34), black-capped chickadees (31), American goldfinches (22), house finches (22), barred owls (22), chimney swifts (19), and gray catbirds (19). Nonnative admissions were about the same as last year (65 rock doves, 40 European starlings, and 21 English sparrows). Our raptor caseload continued to climb, and by a substantially greater amount (30%) than in the past couple of years. Of our 101 total, after barred owls, the most common were bald eagles (16), broad-winged hawks (14), ospreys (11), and American kestrels (9). We also cared for 15 domestic birds (mostly racing pigeons)

Like previous years, a little over half of our admissions were orphaned birds. Among birds for which a cause of injury was reported, as in past years, cat predation was the most common (affecting 73 birds, 32 of which were nestlings), followed by collisions with vehicles (58) and windows (38). The injuries per se involved mostly wings (135) and legs (84). Fourteen fledglings were admitted with malnutrition and associated problems such as poor feather quality after having been raised on inappropriate diets by members of the public. Lead toxicity was confirmed in one bald eagle and one common loon (neither survived).

Of the 931 total, we transferred 38 to other rehabilitators, and we placed 4 non-releasable birds. Of the remainder, as

The robin and the killdeer shown above came from eggs that had been in our incubator for about two weeks when they hatched: the robin on 7/12, and the killdeer 3 days later. Robins are *altricial*– helpless when they hatch, with very little down and closed eyes. Killdeer are *precocial*– hatching with ample down and open eyes, they normally stand and walk within a short time. But this killdeer had hatched with difficulty; by its second day, it was not yet standing, and we were worried. On impulse, we moved the killdeer from its ICU into the robin’s, where they snuggled together. After a couple of hours, the killdeer stood and began acting like a “real” killdeer hatchling. He went back into his own habitat, and on the 18th, was transferred to our colleague Kappy, who had other young killdeer. She released her birds on 8/13, and we released the robin on 8/18.

We had several other egglets in distress this season; among them, our favorite story is that of one of three hatchlings discovered on the ground in the Bangor area on 6/1. The finder’s children killed one accidentally; then a delay developed in the first leg of the transportation relay we had set up for the remaining two. Meanwhile, the unfeathered babies had not been kept warm. When our volunteer finally got the birds from the first driver, they were cold and unmoving, and she was fairly sure one was dead. She had nothing with her to warm them and was still an hour’s drive away. A clever solution to the problem occurred to her quickly. To use her own body as a heat source while leaving both hands free to drive, she tucked them in her bra, and when she arrived one was still – though barely – alive. It was touch and go for several days, but the bird pulled through and grew up to be an eastern phoebe (shown here being syringe-fed) that was released on June 28.



Amy Campbell

On 2/20, Annie and Glen Prewitt from Eddington rescued a female cardinal that had been seized but then dropped by what they initially assumed was a hawk of some kind (their description of the assailant sounded more like a shrike). On intake, we could find no wounds, but the bird's gurgly breathing suggested a respiratory injury. We decided to not give her any opportunity to fly until the breathing cleared, and placed her in a fairly small cage, where she seemed to do well. Then two days later, we received a male cardinal from a friend in Waterville, Terry Arendell. She had seen the bird on the ground the previous evening, but it had been too dark to follow its movement and she could not capture it until the next morning. One wing was droopy; Marc could not palpate a fracture, but we wanted to restrict this bird's movements also, and decide to place him with the female. They immediately seemed to get along. On 3/1, we moved them into a larger indoor cage that permitted some limited flight; they both flew successfully there, so a few days later, during a warm spell, we moved them to one of the outdoor cages. Over the next week, flight that was initially clumsy became stronger in both birds. They also continued their cozy association. The female stayed in one of the artificial Christmas trees most of the time, and although the male would leave the tree for higher perches as soon as anyone entered the cage, most of his time seemed to be spent with her. We faced a dilemma: should we return them to their respective homes, or release them together? The Prewitts had reported that the mate of the female was still in the neighborhood, but Terry had seen only another male near her house, with no sign of the female. With some ambivalence, we decided to return the birds to their original territories. We released the male on 3/14. Terry and Diane watched him high in a tree for nearly a half hour; they did not see another cardinal, but the male's pronounced tail flicks seemed to indicate that he was prepared to reclaim his territory. Although his



Blaine Rothouser

flight was strong, he had a slightly asymmetrical flap that distinguished him from the other male. The Prewitts came to get the female the next day; they called later to tell us that the male flew to her side almost as soon as she left the transport box.

Another piece fell into place the following day, when Terry e-mailed Diane to say she had been watching the male released two days earlier with his mate, together at her feeder. The other male remained through the season, but the female accompanied her mate. An even better resolution was reported late in the summer by the Prewitts – their cardinals raised two clutches of two babies each!

of Dec. 31, 508 had been released and 21 were still pending. Our reptile admissions included 12 painted turtles (7 released, 1 placed) and 7 snapping turtles (4 released, 1 placed, 1 pending).

Feathering our Nest

Our major addition for the year was a compound for housing and flight-conditioning small raptors such as American kestrels. Designed and built by Terry Heitz, and with major funding provided by a grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, it features three territories connected by a flight corridor and tunnel in a footprint of 450 square feet. For our indoor infirmary, Terry also built us a new complex of hospital cages for raptors; measuring 5' x 2' x 7', it includes three spacious cages (each of which can be divided), with built-in full-spectrum lighting and ventilation fans.



Volunteers

Our flock of helpers was awesome. The alphas were our Unity College interns, Mary Jewett, Kristin San Miguel, and Briana Duguay; on-site regulars were Bob Brooks, Read Brugger, Amy Campbell, Greg Closter, Amy Dillon, Terry Heitz, Julie Johnson, Kathy Kandziolka, Sydney Thomas, Paula Williamson and Janet Wiseley; others helped out on an as-available basis. All of them brought birds in from time to time; in addition, we are most grateful to our volunteer drivers, who transported birds from surrounding towns when rescuers were unable or unwilling to do so. Those who made the most frequent and longest trips were Jean Adamson, Glen & Dave Bridges, Christy Charters, Colleen Connell, Marge Cottle, Doreen Ferenc, Karen & Kent Golden, Karla Gustafson-Getsadze, Katie McCormac, Ed Hinckley, Carol & Bob Jones, Kim McGregor, Paula & Ed McNiece, Charndra Michaud, Bill Mittman, Raelene Rogers, Linda Roienstad & Bob Morrisette, Susan Smith Hudson, and Kim Spender.

Networks

Our consulting veterinarians are our heroes and heroines; without their support, our work would be incomplete. For consultations in challenging cases, we thank especially Drs. Flo Tseng and Mark Pokras (Wildlife Clinic, Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, MA), and also Drs. Erica Miller and Sallie Welte (Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research, DE) as well as pathologist Dr. Richard Evans (CA). Here in Maine, Dr. Judy Herman (Animal Wellness Center in Augusta) has been an invaluable part of our team, particularly with regard to homeopathic consultations and surgeries to repair fractures (she also has an incredible staff – thanks, Jamie & Gina!).

Our priority is always to ensure the best possible care for birds we admit. When the needs of a particular individual or species can be better met at another facility, we transfer

birds to colleagues in the rehab community. About 4% of our admissions in 2005 were transferred; most of them were shore and sea birds that went to Kappy Sprenger of Bridgeton. About 35% of our admissions were transferred to us by rehabilitator colleagues or other animal professionals such as wildlife biologists, game wardens, and veterinarians.

We work closely with a number of individuals affiliated with groups for which wildlife is a central or important peripheral focus; we thank in particular Charlie Todd and Brad Allen, plus other biologists and many game wardens (Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife); Mark McCollough, Eric Holmes and Dave Dobias (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service); Bill Hanson (Florida Power & Light Energy); Kristin Dilworth (Penobscot Nation) Robin Dyer and Adam Vashon (U.S.D.A.); Rose Borzik (National Audubon's Seabird Restoration Project); Pat Faucher (Waterville-area ACO); Jim Nelson and Dave Knupp (Unity College). We were honored in 2005 to receive a citation from Unity College, which was presented at the spring graduation ceremony. For part of the summer, Meghan Sine (Unity College) and Erica Jarmon (Tufts University), set up shop with us to collect tissue samples for the University of Maine's Avian Health Surveillance Project and Tufts' Seabird Ecological Assessment Network.

Expanding our knowledge and sharing it with the rehab community is part of our mission. We have benefited greatly

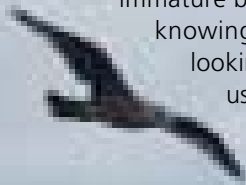
from nutritional consultations with Dr. Mark Finke (AZ); Mark and Diane's article ("Insects and Related Arthropods: A Nutritional Primer for Rehabilitators") was published in 2005 in the *Journal of Wildlife Rehabilitation*. After several years of work by Diane (coordinator/editor) and Marc as well as other rehabilitators, the new study guide and examination for rehab permit applicants was finalized and adopted by MEDIF&W this year.

Donations & Finances

Several of our volunteers, board members and friends helped with fund-raising this year. We appreciate efforts by Dog Days Gourmet, Amy Dillon & sons, Dick Hansen, John Lorenz & Cheryl Olson, Allen Stehle & Beal College, Sydney Thomas, and Wal-Mart. Slightly over half of our total income came from foundations and trusts (or other granting agencies; we thank the American Foundation Corporation, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, and the Winn Foundation Trust), with most of the remainder from private donations. We are grateful to everyone who contributed no matter what the amount, but appreciate particularly the support of Jan Corning, Mary Offutt, Charlie & Nancy Shuman, Don & Marge Sorenson, and other donors who preferred to remain anonymous. Construction accounted for about half of our total cash expenses, followed by corporate costs (insurance, fees, telephone, postage, etc.; neither Marc nor Diane draws a salary) medical and general supplies, and bird food.

...continued on page 6

Remember the hard rains in mid October? On the morning of the third wet day, a woman named Sharon out walking in Rockland saw a gull on the ground, apparently unable to fly. When she told her boyfriend Mark about it, he called his friends Colin and Kathy. Kathy is one of our volunteers; she wasn't around that day, so Colin called us for advice. We said "Sure, go ahead and see if you can catch the bird." Mark and Colin went out, and easily caught two gulls. When they arrived, we had two soaking wet juvenile herring gulls that seemed fine once they dried off. As best we could figure, these immature birds might not have known how to stay dry in heavy rain. We went about our day, not knowing that meanwhile, Sharon had gone out for another walk and spotted more "dopey-looking" gulls in the same area. Mark called Kathy and Colin again, and after a heads-up to us, the three went back to the area, where they found a number of birds that were wet but alive, as well as several that were dead. They spent about an hour rounding up birds and Kathy lost a shoe in the process. In all the commotion, they lost count, but they guessed 17 maximum, and that was the number we got ready for after talking to Kathy en route.



We set up emergency cages all over the infirmary – mostly large dog crates that we keep in the shed for overflows. Boxes of birds were carried in, and then the five of us began an assembly line: one by one, the birds were unpacked, examined, given fluids, and put in cages warmed by heating pads or microwavable heating discs. By a more accurate count, there were 14 birds, 12 of which were soaked-to-the-skin juvenile herring gulls that seemed in good shape otherwise. The 13th was badly injured; it had a large necrotic wound in the chest and died that night. The last of the group was an adult great black-backed gull. The rescuers also brought 4 dead birds; when we examined them later, our best guess as to the cause of death was hypothermia due to their wet feathers having lost their capacity to insulate. By morning, all the birds were dry and it had stopped raining. After everyone had breakfast, we moved them out to a large, well-sheltered flight cage. Kathy took 8 (one of which is shown here) for release on the 17th and the rest were released in smaller batches over the course of the next 10 days.

This wet-gulls story has an interesting footnote regarding the bird with the chest injury: our necropsy revealed an air-rifle pellet in the neck. It appeared to have been there for some time and was neither the cause of death nor related to the chest injury (which remained of unknown origin). However, had the bird died out in the storm rather than at Avian Haven, it might have been scavenged by a predator such as an eagle, which would have acquired lead poisoning if the pellet had been ingested.



On 9/13/04 we admitted a 4th year bald eagle that had gone through the windshield of a truck near the town of Benedicta. She had no use of her legs. A physician who happened to bring in an injured heron when we were taking a radiograph offered to take the picture to her radiologist; he thought he saw a "step" in the spine, though the spinal cord appeared to be intact. The wildlife veterinarians at Tufts, Flo Tseng and Mark Pokras, concurred when they saw it. Within a few days, the bird moved her toes, and by early October, her feet and her legs. The prognosis for complete recovery seemed guarded at best, but everyone we consulted agreed on one thing: spinal injuries require a year or more to heal. We decided to give her that year, assuming that she continued to make progress. We turned one of our songbird cages into a hospital cage for a large bird and made a bed of quilt-covered pillows, where the eagle spent most of her time. The Tufts folks felt that conventional medicine had little if anything to offer, so we decided to explore some alternatives. On 10/5, our friend and colleague, Dr. Susan Giglia, gave the eagle the first in what would be a long series of chiropractic adjustments. Within a day, the bird stood up for the first time, and after the second treatment a week later, even took a few hesitant "baby steps" before collapsing. By the end of the month, we had moved her and her bed to a larger raptor cage, where she could walk 20-30 feet while flapping her wings for balance, and where the company of two juveniles seemed mutually beneficial. Caren Plank captured this haunting image of her one sunny November day, as late-afternoon light through the slats of the cage walls illuminated her face and shoulders. Several treatments later, we continued to observe the bird standing, walking, and even occasionally perching, though always with a wing-flap assist, and never for more than a few minutes at a time. But despite gaining strength, the eagle remained reluctant to eat; ever since intake, hand-feeding had been necessary. And as December came to a close and the weather turned cold, we felt that she had reached a plateau. With some reluctance, Marc phoned Charlie Todd (MEDIF&W) and Mark McCollough (USF&WS) to talk about the possibility of euthanasia.

But about this same time, one of our volunteers gave us a book on Tellington Touch (a therapy similar to massage that targets the nervous system). We knew a TTouch practitioner in Charleston, and on New Year's Day of 2005, Diane called Cheryl Lord to tell her the bird's story. During her years of work at exhibition facilities in other states, Cheryl had worked with many raptors, including eagles, so was familiar with their behavior and anatomy. She came down the next day for an evaluation, and did a joint session with Susan a week later. We saw improvement almost immediately, so Cheryl and Susan decided to alternate weekly treatments thereafter. After Susan finished her next adjustment, the eagle interrupted Marc's hand-feeding to take food from the bowl. Tears came to everyone's eyes as we watched the



Caren Plank

bird eat on her own for the first time, four months after intake; it felt like a sign that we should continue. By then, we were calling her "Benedicta" rather than "the eagle from Benedicta."

When the weather turned very cold a couple weeks later, we cleaned out a room off the main infirmary, and made winter quarters for her there. During the treatments, the bird would melt in Marc's arms as Susan or Cheryl worked her magic. Almost with each one, there seemed to be an improvement. Cheryl focused particularly on legs and feet, with the goal of helping her to perch, and by February, she was perching more often than she was lying down. After one of Cheryl's sessions, Benedicta turned around on her perch; after another, she perched on one foot while repeatedly flexing and extending the other leg. She also began to fan and flip her tail. With these signs of healing, we sought and received permission to keep her in rehab beyond the normal 180-day limit. By March, she was beginning to flap her wings as if restless, and when the weather turned warm in April, we moved her back outside. By June, she had two different eagles for company – a nestling from Brunswick (that went to Vermont for reintroduction on 7/9) and an adult from Lewiston (more on her later). At that point, there seemed little hope of release, but we were optimistic about enough recovery for a high-quality life in captivity.

Through the summer, we saw some signs of ongoing improvement, but there were contrary signs as well; she was spending more time than previously on her pillow bed. Early in July, Diane saw her eating a fish she was grasping in her talons, but flapping for balance that she was unable to maintain. By August, despite the continuing chiropractic and TTouch treatments (including one by nationally-known California practitioner Barbara Janelle, who was visiting relatives in ME), she was lying down most of the time. She had also broken all of her new flight feathers from using her wings for



Allan Lord

balance and support, and we noticed the first signs of abrasions on her wrists. As summer drew to a close, Susan and Cheryl both felt that Benedicta was failing, and by mid-September, quality of life was on everyone's mind. Once again, Marc made the necessary phone calls. Late on a rainy afternoon a few days later, we went down to the compound to see Benedicta and discovered new sores on both elbows. Tears came to our eyes, but no words were necessary. For the last time, Marc gathered her in his arms and carried her to the infirmary. There, almost a year to the day of her injury, we released her bright spirit from its crippled shell. That evening, Susan shared with us a feeling that had come to her on the day of Barbara's visit: that when the effort of holding onto the plateau of function became more than Benedicta could sustain, she would let it go, and trust us to recognize that it was time to let *her* go.

We were somewhat distracted over the next few days, and did not pay close attention to the eagle from Lewiston that had been Benedicta's companion since June. This bird had been spotted on the grounds of a golf course, then chased down and captured by Warden John MacDonald and taken to the Animal Emergency Clinic of Mid-Maine. When we got her the next day, we could find no injuries or fractures, either by palpation or radiograph. She did have some old, partially-healed wounds on her feet, and was somewhat underweight. But as the weeks went by, she did not fly more than short distances a few feet off the ground, and repeated radiographs revealed nothing, either to our eyes or to those of our mentors at Tufts. In August, while Susan was here to treat Benedicta, she did two chiropractic adjustments on this bird; afterwards, she flew somewhat better, but never to the high perches, and still only for short distances. By fall, we had started to wonder if she would ever recover fully. But then, shortly after Benedicta's death, Marc thought he heard a bird flying high in the raptor compound. One day in October, he entered the flyway and saw her on a high perch; the next day, she astonished him by flying well over his head. During the month of November, there was dramatic improvement; we saw her fly from the ground to a high perch several times, and she often flew 2-3 laps at a time around the 160' circumference of the flyway. What took her so long to fly remained a mystery; perhaps there was a soft-tissue or nerve injury that simply took a very long time to heal. But the coincidence of her flying so soon after Benedicta's death intrigued us. Had she wanted to remain on the ground with Benedicta? Or was something more mystical involved? In any case, this bird was now more than ready for release. As we discussed the situation with Charlie Todd, Mark McCollough, and Bill Hanson (a tree-climbing, eagle-banding biologist with Florida Power & Light Energy in Lewiston), an idea emerged.



For some time, the biologists monitoring eagles in Maine had wanted to attach a satellite transmitter to an adult to gather information about their movements, particularly in winter. Bill had worked with the folks at Gorham-based BioDiversity Research Institute on transmitters for loons, so this group was brought into the discussion. Our bird seemed a good candidate for two reasons: first, she was the presumed resident female at a nest built atop a FP&L pole in Lewiston (that made her dear to Bill's heart!); second, she was in captivity, so the transmitter's harness could be fitted and evaluated prior to release. The pieces fell into place quickly. A custom-made transmitter was ordered and delivered to Bill the day after Thanksgiving. On 11/28, Bill, Mark and Charlie assembled to fit the harness, which she tolerated just fine. This photo, taken on release day, 12/1, shows Bill about to toss her aloft at a site near Lake Auburn. For the first couple of weeks, she stayed in the Lewiston area, but then started moving south. At BioDiversity, the project team members (Wing Goodale, Dave Evers, Dave Yates, and Chris DeSorbo) monitor the satellite data. As of the end of February, the bird Bill dubbed "Gulf Island Girl" was in southern NH, with everyone wondering if and when she would turn back toward her presumed home territory for mating season. To track her movements, go to BioDiversity's website (www.briloon.org) and follow the links to research.



Amy Campbell

We still cannot tell Benedicta's story with dry eyes; but we feel that she is connected somehow with her companion whose flight recovered so miraculously, and we know that she will always be a part of Avian Haven. She inspired our dream of a habitat designed for orphaned eaglets and injured adults; it is one of our building projects for next year, and it will be dedicated to her. And in the days of the future, each time someone reading the plaque asks, "Who's Benedicta?" we will tell her story again.



We admitted this lovely lady on Jan. 23, 2004 – but she wasn't so lovely back then. She had been found a week earlier, lying on her back and seemingly

more dead than alive, at a dump near the town of Penobscot. Emaciated and listless, she stood for only an hour before collapsing onto a pillow. It was a month before she stood, and another before she ate on her own. Though her wings were not broken, the joints were stiff, and even with physical therapy, she could not get full extensions. We moved her outside that spring, and although she became more active in the company of two juvenile ravens we admitted in May, her flight was extremely limited. We knew we could not release her before winter, and received permission to keep her in rehab until spring and try regular physical therapy. Over that time, though her wings' range of motion improved, she still could not fly more than short distances, and by spring we were certain that the bird was non-releasable. But we had never forgotten how the two juveniles of the previous season had seemed eager to be near her. We applied for a permit to keep her as a surrogate for orphaned ravens, and received that permit on 4/12 of this year. This fall, after calling her "the Penobscot raven" for so long, it was past time to find a more suitable name. When Penobscot Nation friends told us the word for raven in their language – Kči kα kα ko – it seemed a perfect choice. We call her Kči ("Ka-chi") for short. One of our building projects for the coming season is a home designed especially for her and her guests.

Kči's parenting skills were needed this season for two raven nestlings. The one that came in on 6/9 was emaciated but uninjured, and recovered good weight and health with little difficulty. But when it was time to return the bird to his family group, the rehabilitator



colleague from whom we received the bird had lost the name of the finder. He remembered that police had made the referral, so via the police log, we were able to locate her. Marc took the bird home for release on 8/3; when the juvenile called, other ravens replied, and Marc last saw the juvenile flying in the direction of the answering birds.

The other nestling had a more dramatic story. Around the middle of May, John Benedict of Falmouth was camping on Bottle Island on Junior Lake. When he heard a commotion in the trees, he looked up and saw a nestling fall from about 75' up. He believed correctly that the bird had broken a leg in the fall. Knowing it needed help, he got it off the island and brought it home; the next day, he talked to us and we had the bird by nightfall. The femur fracture healed fairly quickly, but the bird's foot was curled, and a snowshoe splint did not resolve the problem. On 5/29, Marc made a thermoplastic cast for the foot, and when he removed it on 6/3, the toes held their normal position. The bird began to fly about a week later, and after two more weeks, we thought he was ready to go. John had already planned to go back to Bottle Island, and picked the bird up early on the 25th. He arrived at the island about 2:30, let the bird out of the carrier and placed a pile of meat nearby. The bird flew into a tree, and was later seen in a tree near John's campsite. That afternoon, the juvenile called and called, but no ravens answered. Then near evening, a freak storm came up; it "poured buckets," and John had to take the engine off his boat and haul it onto land. By then it was dark, and he went to bed not knowing what had happened to the raven. But the next morning, he saw a raven on the mainland, calling and calling. After a while, other ravens answered, and soon he saw three birds – two

adults and a juvenile – flying together. Although he had no way of knowing for sure that the juvenile was the one he'd released, the three birds were soon at the meat pile by the release site, suggesting to John that the juvenile he'd released had led the adults (presumably his parents) there.

...continued from page 3

We are extremely grateful for donations of food for birds; for helping to keep our freezers full, we thank the Belfast Cooperative, Read & Jonah Brugger, Bill Hanson, Derek Lucas, the Maine Wildlife Park, Mary Offutt, Jim Parker, the Penobscot Nation, The Raptor Trust, Roberts Farm, Raelene Rogers, Sand Hill Strawberry Farm, Tufts University Wildlife Clinic, and Doug Van Horn. We also appreciate the support of MEDIF&W Fish Health Lab and Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery. Last but not least, we thank Dog Days Gourmet (China) for feeding us during the "bird days" of summer.

For donations of or discounts on items of many useful kinds, we thank in particular Chase's Home Furnishings

Caren Plank

(Unity), Dutton's Nursery & Greenhouse (Morrill), Ellsworth Building Supply (Belfast), Florida Power & Light Energy (Lewiston), Lightnin' Lumber (Knox), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Old Town); also Dave Bailey, Louis Cisle, Phyllis Gallucci, Jane Keating, Allan Lord, Derek Lucas, Raelene Rogers, and Allen Stehle.

Our very talented webmaster, James Skowbo, continued to weave electronic wonders; we hear many compliments from visitors. In the physical world, Kathy Kandziolka was our garden and grounds genie. Finally, we thank board members Dick Hansen, Judy Herman & Allen Stehle for their support and counsel.

The birds we admit have gotten into trouble in a variety of ways. One of our most unusual cases this year was a nest discovered on 8/12 by a Sidney couple inside a van they had purchased that day over on the coast. What was even odder about this nest was its contents; it is rare that we can not identify even very young songbird nestlings, but we had never seen babies like these before. It wasn't until they were feathered out that we recognized dark-eyed juncos – familiar winter birds that usually breed farther north (we released all 4 on 9/1). A case with an unhappy ending involved a first-year bald eagle whose foot was caught in a trap set for otter. Due to a combination of trap injury and frostbite, circulation to the foot was compromised; with the loss of the foot imminent, this bird had to be euthanized. Another bizarre accident befell a barred owl that got a wing tangled in a kite string extended about 8' off the ground across a back yard in Belfast. Four of the bird's flight feathers were ragged and torn; we repaired them by imping (splinting intact donor feathers onto the shafts of damaged ones), and the bird was released on home territory (minus the kite string!) on 11/4, 10 days after admission.

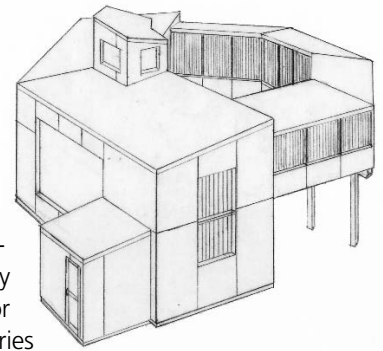


As already mentioned, cat predation is a major cause of injury; for information about the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors campaign, visit www.abcbirds.org. Window strikes can be discouraged by hanging plants, window decals, or designs applied with craft paint. It is often difficult to avoid birds in the path of your car, but not throwing food litter from cars discourages the proximity of birds to roads. Litter also attracts mice; then owls hunting mice at night may be hit by cars – especially in winter, when roads are clear of snow cover. In November, December, and January (of '06), we admitted 21 owls, almost all of them car-hit.

Photography by Marc Payne unless otherwise noted.

Looking Ahead

Two major building projects are planned for next year: a habitat for ravens, and another for temporarily unflighted eagles (nestlings or adults recovering from injuries). Designed by Terry Heitz, the recovery cage for eagles features two main territories at an angle to one another, with an elevated aerie for nestlings. The main part of the raven enclosure is similar in design though smaller, and the territories are connected by an elevated flight tunnel. Terry's perspective drawing of the raven habitat is shown here; the eagle cage design is on the back page. We were able to get the site work for both enclosures done before winter, so we can start construction as soon as weather and funding permit.



In Closing . . .

"If you enjoy watching birds, you doubtless are often reminded that you are a member of a species that poses a colossal threat to the global avifauna" (Erich, Dobkin & Wheye, *Birds in Jeopardy*). Factors such as habitat loss and pesticide misuse are major global concerns associated with population declines. As described in this report, individual birds are also affected by local difficulties. Wildlife rehabilitation is all about saving these individuals. If the stories here have touched your heart, your donation can help to ensure more like them in the future.

Until next year –

Diane & Marc

Diane Winn & Marc Payne
 Avian Haven Wild Bird Rehabilitation Center
 207-382-6761 avianhaven@pivot.net
www.avianhaven.org

AVIAN HAVEN:

A nonprofit wild bird rehabilitation center dedicated to the return of injured and orphaned wild birds of all species to their natural roles in the wild.

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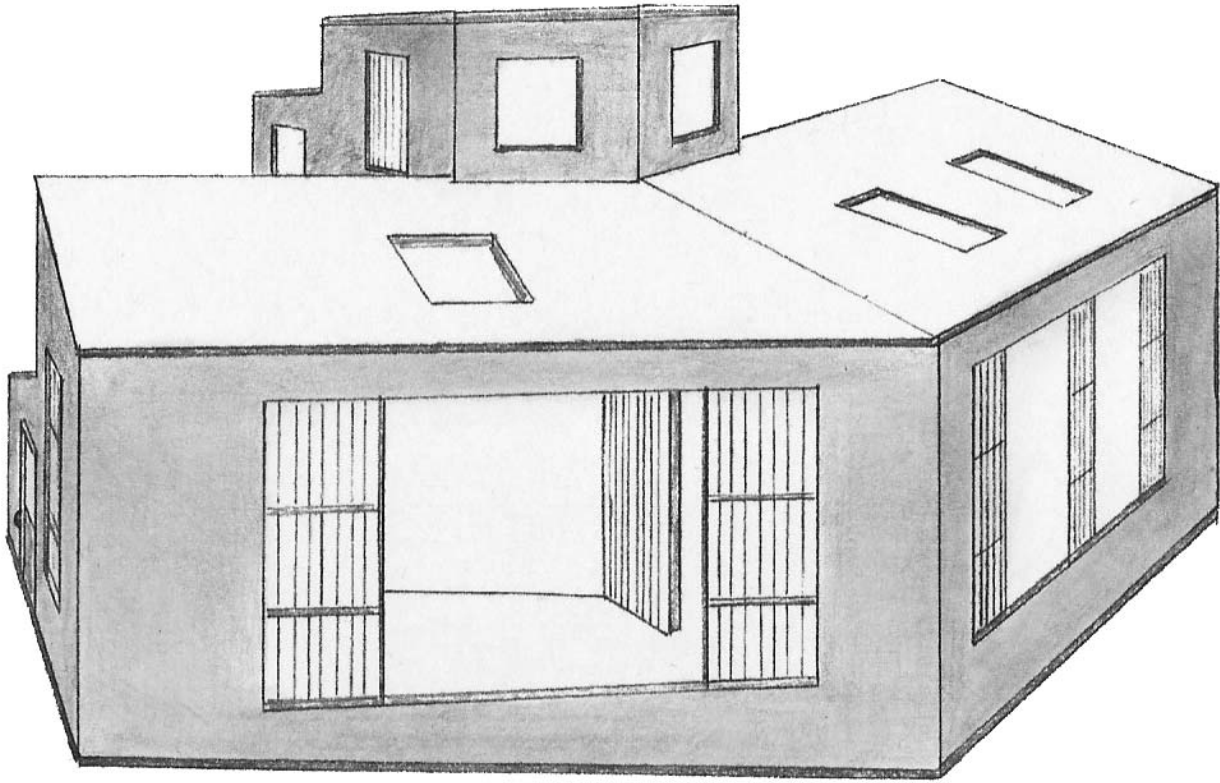
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