Dear Friends,

This issue of our newsletter focuses on growth. Whether you consider our growing programs to help people live well with wildlife, our growing membership base, or our growing need for a new home, it all points to one thing: we are doing the right thing at the right time, and our members are behind us.

Facilities Expansion  WildCare withdrew its offer on the Santa Venetia property after thorough study and review. While we were initially disappointed, this process has uncovered additional – possibly even better – opportunities for relocation. We are further along in our fundraising efforts, as well as in our research that will result in a plan to guide us through our capital campaign. Many thanks to all of you who have extended your support and good wishes during this all-important endeavor.

Program Growth  Featured in this issue is an article about our growing Family Adventures/Aventuras Familiares program. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our education staff, more and more families are being introduced to the wonders of the natural world around us – and loving it!

We continue to expand our work in wildlife advocacy – “Pandora’s Box” in this newsletter focuses on the devastating and far-reaching effects of poisoning wildlife. I am pleased to report that on a national scale, the EPA recently banned brodifacoum, one of the most widely used and dangerous second-generation rodenticides available to consumers. This is a huge, positive step in reducing (and ultimately eliminating) the use of these toxic substances – and one for which WildCare has advocated. While we continue to raise awareness and promote alternatives to rodentine and pesticide use, we are gathering data that underscores the prevalence of these poisons throughout our environment. We will continue to keep you informed about ongoing efforts on this issue.

Volunteer and Staff Development  Growing programs and accomplishments require the human resources to provide them to a growing number of program participants. WildCare is extremely fortunate to have one of the greatest groups of volunteers and staff on the planet. I am pleased to announce the hiring of four new staff members: Marco Berger, Lucy Burlingham, Kelle Kacmarcik and Kate Lynch. You’ll learn more about them later in this issue.

We are extremely sad to say goodbye to Tom O’Connell, who retires from our board of directors after having served the maximum of two three-year terms, including two years as President. Tom was instrumental in establishing advocacy as one of our core programs while leading and growing this organization through challenging times. His photographs of our Wildlife Ambassadors have captured the personality and charm of these amazing educational animals.

As always, I welcome your ideas and suggestions to continue our growth and effectiveness. Many thanks to those of you who contributed to our survey, and to all of you who contribute your resources that have made – and continue to make – WildCare the vibrant organization it is today.

I wish you a wonderful fall, and hope you can take the time to get outdoors to enjoy the changes that autumn brings to the natural world around us.

Karen J. Wilson
Executive Director
apology
The fantastic cover image of the Mountain Lion in our Spring 2011 issue was erroneously credited. We apologize for our error. The photographer, Trish Carney, has generously provided many other photos you’ll see in WildCare’s publications. To see more of her work, visit her website, trishcarney.com.

terwilliger environmental award
Join WildCare staff, board and volunteers to celebrate 2011 Terwilliger Environmental Award winner, Sharon Barnett, environmental education teacher for three organizations: Marin Country Day School, College of Marin and Marin Nature Adventures, an organization she co-founded. The award will be presented on Friday September 9, 4-6pm in WildCare’s Terwilliger Center Courtyard.

family adventures
Enjoy some quality family time while you discover the natural beauty and rich biodiversity of Marin! All programs are free, and led in both English and Spanish. Programs start at 10am at the locations listed; if you need further directions, please call Juan-Carlos at 415-453-1000, ext. 17.

- September 10 - Giants, Dragons and Slugs
Meet the tallest species of tree in the world and search for inhabitants of a redwood forest, including Steller’s Jays, hawks, ants and spiders. Directions: Meet at the (unsigned) entrance to Roy’s Redwoods on Nicasio Valley Road.

- October 29 - Halloween at Deer Park
We’ll take a short hike in Deer Park, looking for signs of autumn. Have plants gone to seed? Which trees drop their leaves? Why are spiders so conspicuous at this time of year? Bring a snack and we’ll gather under the “Halloween” tree for a story. Meet in Fairfax, at the end of Porteous Drive in the parking area.

Nominations were submitted by individuals, schools, school districts, and other environmental or educational organizations for review by WildCare’s selection committee.

Sharon is an educator who has made a significant impact on Bay Area environmental education, and will be presented with a $2,000 award to continue her work. Learn more about Sharon on our website.

Living with Wildlife Photography Contest
Enter your best Bay Area wildlife photo to win our $500 Best in Show Prize
Entry deadline September 16, 2011
Visit wildcarebayarea.org/photocase or call 415-453-1000 x24 for rules and entry forms

Aggie Animal Dental Service is a veterinary specialty practice in San Francisco and Corte Madera. Dr. Milinda Lommer, a board-certified veterinary dentist, spends most days performing periodontal therapy, oral surgery, root canal treatments and other advanced dental procedures on dogs and cats, and has graciously volunteered her services to WildCare over the past two years.

She earned her DVM with a Zoological Medicine emphasis from the veterinary school at U.C. Davis, and decided to specialize in dentistry and oral surgery. In residency there, she collaborated with the Zoological Medicine Service and the California Regional Primate Research Center to perform procedures on lions, tigers, leopards and monkeys.

Dr. Lommer entered private practice in the Bay Area in 2000. She chose to specialize in dentistry because of the negative effects of oral disease on an animal’s quality of life. “My favorite part of my job is seeing patients at their postoperative recheck visits, because quite often the clients report that the pet is playing with toys they haven’t touched in years, interacting more with family members, and seems generally happier. It’s so rewarding to know that we’ve made such a positive impact on their quality of life.”

Although she does not receive the same feedback from the patients at Wild Care, she knows that repairing a jaw fracture or restoring a fractured tooth will enable a raccoon, opossum or coyote to live more comfortably after being released back into the wild.
WildCare offers a full range of programs and services that work together to help people and wildlife share a healthy environment. Each of our programs is a part of this whole picture. Some programs educate and help solve problems to prevent environmental and wildlife damage. Some fix problems that have already occurred. Some look at the long-term goal of improving our relationship to nature in generations to come.

When asked which of our programs they valued the most, more than 75% of people responded with the wildlife hospital. The drama of an injured animal or emergency situation is compelling. Interestingly, though, when asked which of our programs they had actually used, nearly the same number indicated they had visited our courtyard. Many rescuers who bring in injured animals for treatment linger and learn more right here.

Even more interesting to us was that many people indicated they didn’t know about some of our newer or more specialized programs, like our Family Adventures Hikes or WildCare Solutions service. Here is a recap of what WildCare offers.

wildlife hotline and hospital

Like Maslo’s hierarchy of needs, the most urgent needs must be met first. Animals that are injured or orphaned and people who are having a conflict with wildlife need immediate attention. Our telephone customer service representatives handle hundreds of calls during the busy spring and summer season getting people the help they need. The calls show concern for injured wildlife, problems with animals and property damage, and straightforward natural history questions. The urgency of hospital care for injured or orphaned animals is undeniable. But we never want to admit healthy animals, of course, so part of our phone service helps to determine whether an animal is truly in need of assistance.

Some orphans are not really orphaned; our work then is to be sure the caller doesn’t create a problem through good intentions – or in the event the damage has been done – we may try to reunite a wild family that has been accidentally separated, or persuade a homeowner that their wildlife problem will resolve itself if the animal is given...
the right encouragement. In some cases our WildCare Solutions service can step in to assist.

**education**

When the Terwilliger Nature Education Center merged with the California Center for Wildlife in the mid 1990s, it seemed as though there were two focuses competing for resources. Thanks to the vision and encouragement of the Marin Community Foundation, those two organizations combined to create WildCare, a whole greater than the sum its parts.

Today, Terwilliger Nature Education continues to offer the original field trips, nature van and nature camps that Elizabeth Terwilliger pioneered, and has gone many steps further to teach the environmental stewards of the next generation. Education is now integrated into all areas of WildCare – our publications, hotline, hospital, advocacy and volunteer programs.

**advocacy**

Advocacy for wildlife overlaps with all other phases of our work. The injury we see in the hospital motivates us to encourage prevention by educating more people about the consequences of our actions. It is advocacy that pulls us into the bigger picture of how we relate to the environment we share with wildlife; that includes animals, plants and the habitat we all depend upon.

**but enough about us**

Our members also told us a little about themselves. Surprise! They’re active and they love the outdoors!

<table>
<thead>
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<th>WildCare’s Members’ Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art/crafts/photography</td>
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<td>Birdwatching</td>
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<td>Ecotravel</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking/Hiking</td>
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WildCare’s Monthly eNewsletter brings wildlife education inside when you can’t be outdoors.

WildCare Solutions helps people manage wildlife property conflicts. Photo by Maggie Sergio

Wildlife advocacy issues are essentially ones of education. Red-shouldered Hawks nested in the trees above WildCare in downtown San Rafael this spring. Is it any wonder we work so hard to get rodenticides out of the environment we share with them? Photo by Melanie Piazza

Our website and monthly eNewsletter bring wildlife education inside when you can’t be outdoors.

Terwilliger Nature Education goes on year-round, with nature camps in the summer and holidays, and school field trips during the school year. Photo by JoLynn Taylor

Terwilliger Nature Education takes many forms. Here WildCare participates in the first Christmas Youth Bird Count. Photo by Fred Silverman

This Golden Eagle is one of 3,500–4,000 injured and orphaned wild animals WildCare’s hospital treats each year. Photo by JoLynn Taylor

Courtyard visitors enjoy a little bit of nature education in central San Rafael. Photo by JoLynn Taylor

Family Adventures hikes offer bilingual nature education in various locations around Marin. Photo by Juan-Carlos Solis

Our website and monthly eNewsletter bring wildlife education inside when you can’t be outdoors.

Terwilliger Nature Education goes on year-round, with nature camps in the summer and holidays, and school field trips during the school year. Photo by JoLynn Taylor

Our website and monthly eNewsletter bring wildlife education inside when you can’t be outdoors.
pandora’s box

The reason we repeat stories and fables to our children is that they hold some form of universal truth that transcends time. In Greek mythology, Pandora was the first woman, created from water and earth. The gods endowed her with many talents: Aphrodite gave her beauty, Apollo music, Hermes persuasion. Her name, Pandora, means “all-gifted,” and it is not a coincidence that the name is related to the name scientists gave the original landmass of earth: Pangaea – “all-earth.”

In the fable, Pandora had a box or jar that Zeus instructed her not to open under any circumstances. Impelled by her natural curiosity, Pandora opened the box, and all the evil of the world that was contained in it escaped and spread over the earth. She quickly closed the lid, but the box was empty, except for one thing that still lay at the bottom – Hope.

Pandora is an apt representative of the people of earth; spectacularly gifted and curious. We humans have developed untold numbers of tools and techniques, and like Pandora, have released them into the world without anticipating or understanding the consequences. Hope lets us believe we can somehow overcome the evils, but clearly, as in the fable, we can’t put them back into the box. So how can we manage the evils we have released?

no easy fixes

Time after time we have seen the folly of trying to reverse an evil by introducing something else to a situation as an “easy fix.” This often sets off a chain of events that quickly spins out of control and causes collateral damage we couldn’t predict.

The introduction of the Indian Mongoose to Hawaii in the late nineteenth century is a disastrous example. Imported to control rats on sugar plantations, mongooses thrived in their new environment but not, unfortunately, by eating rats. They found the native species of birds, reptiles and amphibians – and their eggs – to be more appealing prey.

finding a balance

Scientists are tasked with protecting endangered species; the funding they receive is usually limited, and focused only on the endangered species, not on the broader environment. It is important to protect endangered species, but if we don’t keep the bigger picture in mind, it can be disastrous in the long run. Funding constraints encourage wildlife managers to want to take the cheapest, easiest, most direct way to solve a problem, but this isn’t always (or really ever) the right way for the environment.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed a plan to kill off non-native mice in the Farallon Islands to protect the Ashy Storm-petrel, among other reasons. The most direct way to eradicate the mice is to dump tons of pellets of a rodenticide called brodifacoum across the islands. The USFWS claims a high level of success from this method in eradicating Black Rats on other islands. Unfortunately WildCare sees, all too often, the effects of rodenticides on the wildlife that eats the rodents, sometimes species that are also endangered, and we urged the USFWS to consider rodent control alternatives that, although less expeditious, would not require the use of this deadly and persistent poison.
mice, poison and the farallon islands

For our work in wildlife rehabilitation, WildCare relies upon science, but healing and medicine are also arts. These arts employ science when it is available, but when it is not, we must rely on experience, heart, empathy and morality. Our work with animals demonstrates every day that we are all part of the same ecosystem, and that we cannot use a sledgehammer when surgery is required.

We see first-hand the results of the environmentally devastating application of poisons on wildlife. The effects we see are not just on the targeted rodents; but also on the food chain where poisons remain. We are poisoning our entire environment. Whether the poisons are pharmaceuticals flushed into sewer systems (and ultimately our waterways) that affect the hormones of fish and amphibians, herbicides used to control invasive species along riparian waterways, lead and mercury that leach into wetlands from mining, or rodenticides used to control rats and mice doesn’t matter.

There has been a lot of publicity surrounding the mice on the Farallon Islands, but if you google the terms “mice,” “poison” and “Farallon Islands” together, the top offer you will see is “Mice Poison at Amazon - Low Prices...” which says something about our society’s readiness to use poisons to solve problems.

As species plummet out of existence at an unprecedented rate, maintaining biodiversity is a valid goal. But is the wholesale use of a poisonous substance known to be toxic to birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians really justified in this case?

“These are man-made problems,” wrote Maggie Sergio, Director of WildCare Solutions. “Is the aerial dumping of tons of poison over a pristine wilderness area really the answer?”

“The interesting thing,” she continued, “is that Brodifacoum, the rodenticide proposed for use on the Farallon Islands, was just recently banned by the EPA for consumers. The EPA states that they are taking this action because of the toxicity of these products and the threats to children, wildlife and pets. If a lethal poison is banned for the consumer market, why is it then acceptable to be used in the name of conservation?”

better living through chemistry

It is most distressing to see scientists and wildlife managers rely on the use of poisons when WildCare works so hard to educate people about what these poisons do to our environment. They are widely available everywhere, and are used extensively because all of us think “my problem” is more important, and “I’m only using a little bit.”

People have opened Pandora’s box of introduced species as evil upon other species. Is our only option really just to add more toxins? Or like Pandora, can we hope for a better solution?

integrated pest management

Just as we are never going to rid ourselves of all diseases, poverty, hatred, war or pestilence, we can never hope to rid ourselves of all introduced species. Perhaps the best we can hope for is to find ways to manage the damage without creating more damage.

WildCare advocates an integrated pest management (IPM) system that controls the damage caused by species that have evolved to take advantage of human development. We can defend ourselves, but poison is not our only option. There are many ways to use nature’s own systems to find a balance. Introduced species are now part of our world. There are more of them than ever before, but there are more people working to find solutions, too.

That’s hope.

For more information about IPM, visit www.wrpmc.ucdavis.edu.

Introduced Species in California

This is a very small part of the entire list of over 700 introduced, invasive species in California. To view the complete list published by the Invasive Species Council of California, visit www.iscc.ca.gov.

Africanized Honeybee
Asiatic Rice Borer
American Bullfrog
Black Rat
Brazilian Pepper Tree
Brown Apple Moth
Brown Rat
Chukar Partridge
Citrus Nematode
Crystalline Ice Plant
Dwarf Eelgrass
Eucalyptus Tree
European Starling
French, Scotch and Spanish Broom
Garden Snail
Gypsy Moth
House Mouse
Mediterranean Fruit Fly
Northern Pike
Pampas Grass
Purple Star Thistle
Quagga Mussel
Rock Pigeon
Scotch Thistle
Trout
Virginia Opossum
Water Hyacinth
Wild Turkey
Zebra Mussels

WildCare will keep you informed about these and other issues. Sign up for our FREE monthly eNewsletter at www.wildcarebayarea.org.
What do WildCare supporters make for dinner? Reservations! (ba-dum-bum) Reservations with WildCare, that is, for one of the many restaurants participating in Dining for Wildlife 2011 on two evenings only in September.

Delicious doesn’t begin to describe the meals available to those who want to support WildCare and eat very well at the same time.

People love to participate in Dining for Wildlife – this is the event’s 26th year. The geographic spread of restaurants has greatly increased in the last few years. The quality of food at those restaurants increases every year.

This event was started by Sammie Dunn, a tireless California Center for Wildlife (now WildCare) volunteer. Every year that we prepare for Dining for Wildlife we remember and thank her for her tireless efforts and tremendous foresight. Over the years WildCare staff and legions of volunteers have helped grow this tasty and exciting event.

New restaurants participate each year; some have been with us since the beginning. We are grateful to all of them for their excellent taste – in being part of Dining for Wildlife and in serving fabulous fare.

Here’s how it works:
1. Choose the restaurant, day and time you would like to dine.
2. Phone Marian at WildCare (415-453-1000, ext. 11) by Wednesday, September 14, 2011 to make your reservations and pay for your choice – $55-$70 per person, depending on the restaurant. We’ll mail you a confirmation and we’ll make your reservation with the restaurant.
3. Show up at the restaurant on the date and time you chose. Enjoy your prepaid dinner that includes an appetizer, entrée, desert, tea or coffee and a glass of wine or beer!
4. Leave a tip for the wait staff. It is not included in your prepaid reservation.

The event’s goal – to support WildCare’s programs in wildlife rehabilitation and environmental education throughout the year – has not changed.

Dine out, do good!
Black-tailed Hare (#0664) was hit by a car in Novato on May 29, and brought to WildCare by Roag Lopez. Radiographs revealed that this jackrabbit had a broken back; they also showed three near-term fetuses. She could not survive her injuries, and Dr. Deborah Scheenstra was able to rush to WildCare to perform an emergency caesarian section. Three babies, called leverets, became WildCare’s patients #0670-0672. Dr. Scheenstra and WildCare’s Mary Pounder took over the care and feeding of the little ones. One of the leverets did not survive, but the two remaining siblings went to foster care with Lyanne Schuster on June 10.

In August, when they are about 8-9 weeks old, we will release them in Novato near where they were found.

Northern Spotted Owl (#0751) fell from his nest in Fairfax, and was found by Lisa Winter on May 10 at 7pm. Lisa called WildCare, who contacted Hungry Owl Project Director Alex Godbe. Alex kept him overnight and brought him to WildCare, where a complete examination, including blood tests and radiographs, showed him to be healthy and able to be returned to his nest. Jim Cairnes of Small World Tree Service (www.smallworldtree.org) climbed up the next day and returned him to his parents and sibling. Lisa has been monitoring the nest and tells us the family is thriving.

Striped Skunk (#0190) Patient #0190 was brought to WildCare from McNear’s beach. She was limp and unresponsive on the exam table, seemingly unable to lift her head, and easily handled. At first the suspicion was that she had eaten snail bait, which is highly toxic and attractive to skunks. She was given vitamins, antibiotics, fluids and a drug that slows nervous system activity to allow the body to relax. She began to take liquid food from a syringe.

Once she was more stable, we took radiographs, which showed a fractured scapula, broken ribs and front ankles, and trauma in the thoracic spinal area. Pain medications were added.

After five days she began to eat on her own, and gained strength, but continued to show physical neurological symptoms such as curling her front feet inward. These symptoms could also be caused by a viral infection, so blood was drawn for laboratory tests in the event we might be seeing the effects of the mustelid Aleutian virus.

After a month of care the skunk was healing well. Then, 41 days after she had been admitted, four baby skunks appeared in her kennel. One had died, but three tiny new patients, #0401-0403, were healthy and eating well. With mom’s bandages now removed, and her medications discontinued, the family was moved to a quiet outdoor enclosure and given food and privacy. After another month, the family was moved to a slow-release enclosure in Olema.

Chestnut-backed Chickadees (#3784-3786) arrived covered in applesauce after their rescuers attempted to feed them. Applesauce is not a food on which these orphans could survive. The critical nestlings were cleaned and stabilized at WildCare, and then sent to Veronica Bowers of the Songbird Hospital in Sonoma County. Veronica works with several centers in the Bay Area, and specializes in tiny insectivores. Even though the birds were clean and now on a proper diet, their feather condition was very bad. Feathers are made of keratin, like fur and fingernails, and the bad diet during their early development had caused structural damage and weakness.

When Veronica put them into the flight aviary their feathers began to break off, and she had no choice but to sedate them and pluck their feathers to force them to regrow. Most birds molt their feathers only once a year; these birds will remain in care until their new feathers have developed.
The Bay Area is a wonderful place to live. The wildlife we share this place with think so too! Growth in our region means that we are living closer to wildlife, and people are having more and more effect on the environment we share. WildCare’s work has been growing, too.

Our advocacy programs reach an audience beyond the Bay Area. Because of our online presence and our ability to reach out, we hear from people across the nation, and we are becoming a model for how nature education and wildlife rehabilitation can be parts of the same whole. It is advocacy that pulls us into the bigger picture of how we relate to the environment we share with wildlife that includes animals, plants and the habitat we all depend upon. Our members understand and encourage this.

growing pains

WildCare’s charming little park-side courtyard and museum have been on the Albert Park site for well over 50 years, and San Rafael has grown around it. Albert Park is a wonderful place for children to play, for dogs to romp, for adults to enjoy baseball and tennis, but space constraints will not allow expansion on our current site. We have been looking for a new home for the last two years.

staffing growth

Seasonal staff in the hospital – interns and wildlife technicians – are a vital part of our ability to rehabilitate and release the number of animals we do. Our education and advocacy programs have been growing, and while not all of the new staff members are full-time, every one of them brings essential skills to the complete range of programs that help people live well with wildlife.

We are a nonprofit organization, but because we are doing the work that our members and supporters want to see happen, we are also contributing, in our small way, to our country’s economic recovery, providing jobs for work we believe will benefit more than just more consumerism.

WildCare is pleased to welcome a number of new people we would like you to meet. Where do we put them? We had to get creative. We share desks, we use technology to allow us to work remotely. We schedule carefully.

lucy burlingham

Lucy joined WildCare as a volunteer in 1995, and has worked at various times in a number of staff and volunteer positions. Lucy joins staff now as a Development Associate, preparing bank deposits and data entry. She continues to lead the Squirrel Foster Care team, and shares a desk with two other employees.

Marco Berger

Marco is a wonderful asset to the Education Department whom our Education Director, Juan-Carlos Solis, met when he was a guest on the nonprofit radio show, Nuestros Niños (Our Children), a parenting show for Latino families that Marco produces (www.nuestrosninos.com). Juan-Carlos recognized talent when he saw it, and asked Marco to join WildCare as a part-time Bilingual Naturalist. Marco has an impressive resume as an environmental educator for the San Francisco Unified School District and a number of nonprofit organizations. Marco shares a tiny office with four other people and two dogs, but luckily he is out in the field with kids a lot!

Kelle Kacmarcik

Kelle began to volunteer at WildCare in 2003, and became a shift supervisor in 2004. A former Development Manager at PETA, she was hired as the Hospital Programs Coordinator this spring. Kelle shares an office with five other people.

Kate Lynch

Kate came to WildCare as a hospital volunteer while still in high school in 1999. She volunteers nearly every day in the clinic and birdroom and with the Wildlife Ambassadors. When we needed a knowledgeable person to help people solve wildlife problems, Kate was the answer!
November 19 - Wild Fall Friends
Look for clues to the identity of some of the animals that call Tennessee Valley home in the fall. Possibilities are Black-tailed Deer, Coyote, Bobcat, Wild Turkey and Great Horned Owl. Meet in Mill Valley at the Tennessee Valley parking lot.

December 10 - Explore Devil’s Gulch
Walk along a creek, step inside an old growth redwood tree, discover ancient Trapdoor Spiders, hike to a waterfall, and perhaps even spy a bobcat. Meet at the trailhead in Samuel P. Taylor Park on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, one mile west of the picnic area.

sequoia donating to science
Our Northern Spotted Owl Ambassador Sequoia has generously donated a bit of her blood for testing as a contribution to the Spotted Owl Genome Project being undertaken by the California Academy of Sciences and the University of California, San Francisco.

Marin County is the southernmost territory of the Northern Spotted Owl, and the last one that Barred Owls, a related species, had not occupied until this year. Northern Spotted Owls from Marin are the least likely to be genetically mixed with Barred Owl genes. Having Sequoia’s DNA sequenced will help researchers all over the country who are now monitoring how Barred Owls affect Spotted Owls and how they interbreed.

Jack Dumbacher, our contact at the California Academy of Sciences added, “Barred Owls were first recorded in Marin Co. (around Point Reyes I think) in 2004. So it is even more important to have Sequoia (who came into captivity in 2005 as a purebred youngster) who can represent a full-blooded Northern Spotted Owl.”

environmental forum
39th educational series
Environmental Forum of Marin, which has provided environmental educational programs for the past 40 years, begins its 39th Master Class in late August. This popular 18-week series of classes meets on Tuesdays (8:30 – 3:00) and connects students with community leaders, decision-makers, scientists and public agencies to investigate topics of sustainability, climate change and the environment.

The Master Class focuses on Marin County: its land use challenges, the impact of sea level rise on local coastal development, native plant communities, wildlife, environment forum 39th educational series

The daughter of a veterinarian, Deb Babe (above, center) has been helping animals for most of her life. As a retired RN and Education Director, Deb is experienced in working with large diverse groups of people and providing education to both her colleagues and the public. She is exemplary in providing quality care to our public and our very important patients.

Following the footsteps of her daughter, who currently works at Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue, Deb made WildCare her home away from home in January 2007. She began her experience as a Hospital Volunteer and is currently one of our treasured volunteer supervisors. Additionally, Deb works as a WildCare Nature Guide, teaching children about the richness of California’s ecosystems. She loves being outdoors and connecting with nature, in Muir Woods in particular. Deb is also a WildCare Foster Team-member, nurturing our orphaned baby opossums to release age.

Preventing needless suffering is most important to Deb. She also loves the educational component in connecting humans and wildlife to find ways to coexist. Often, when there is a wildlife issue facing the community, such as the pesticide/Farallones issue, Deb makes a point of educating her extended community, and in turn, expands WildCare’s mission. We are very proud and honored to call Deb Babe a valued member of our WildCare Team.
mini-migrations by land, sea and air
by Marge Gibbs and Anya Pamplona

When people think of migrations they think of a grand affair, covering hundreds to thousands of miles, moving animals from their summer breeding grounds to their winter feeding grounds. However, many mini-migrations happen every day by land, sea and air.

under a log

Many salamanders breathe through their skins. This limits them to damp environments. To stay moist during dry summer months, they make their homes under logs or rocks or in crevices in the ground. Ensatina Salamanders can live under the same log for up to fifteen years, migrating vertically as the moisture increases in the rainy season.

Pacific Treefrogs (aka Chorus Frogs) are mainly diurnal during the winter and nocturnal during the summer. In spring, as local seasonal ponds dry up, the frogs migrate to shady areas with moist shelters such as dense vegetation, debris piles or crevices. Once the rains returns, the frogs migrate back to freshly re-filled ponds to lay their eggs.

in the ocean

Many animals in the ocean undertake small migrations every day, often from the deep, dark waters to the warm surface waters. There are several hypotheses as to why these animals migrate vertically:

Predator avoidance – Animals come up to shallow waters at night to feed while it’s dark out because their predators cannot see them as well. Copepods, an abundant type of zooplankton, provide a good example of this type of migration.

Feeding strategy – There is an abundance of food in the warm surface waters. Many species like the Humboldt Squid migrate to the surface at night to take advantage of the prey that migrate to the warmer surface.

Energy management – Cold-blooded animals feeding on the bottom in cold water during the day may migrate to surface waters at night in order to digest their meal at warmer temperatures. Other animals, like Dogfish Sharks, have adopted a “hunt warm – rest cool” strategy which experiments show can lower their daily energy consumption by about 4%.

in the air

Bird species that migrate short distances may not respond to changing day-length as many long-distance migrants do, but instead, may respond to local weather patterns or lack of food. Altitudinal migration is common on mountains worldwide. Some populations of long-range migrants, such as the Merlin, will move further toward the coast or to the south. In some regions of the world birds migrate in response to wet and dry seasons.

In California, the Hairy Woodpecker, primarily a permanent resident, may move to the edges of its range in response to short-term weather patterns. Recently fledged Hairy Woodpeckers will migrate short distances to establish their own territories. Altitudinal migration is common during the non-breeding season, as is migration from inland to coastal locations.

The American Robin sometimes migrates because of seasonal availability of food, such as insects in the spring and fruit in the fall. In California, many American Robins find their winter resources on forested slopes and in valleys near their spring breeding sites.

American Robins begin to show their migratory tendencies at just 13-14 days old, when they are fledglings. A general restlessness develops, and by the time they are juveniles, they begin to exhibit flocking behavior, which lends itself to migration. The orphaned baby American Robins that grow up at WildCare show the same signs as their wild counterparts.
insect safari

An Insect Safari in Fairfax’s Deer Park last month was only different from other Family Adventures in that we got some great photos to share! Six families joined WildCare naturalists Marge Gibbs and Juan-Carlos Solis to see what had hatched in June, and to learn more about this interesting class of animals.

the families

One of the families on this safari is Yomara Rodas and her kids Casey and Dilan. They have attended a few programs every year since 2009. Despite her work schedule, Yomara really makes an effort to make sure that her kids are engaged in healthy and enriching activities. The day of the program she had worked very late, slept a couple of hours, and then met us in front of the Canal Alliance’s offices at 9am.

Yomara said her kids are very active and need these activities to stay both mentally and physically healthy. ‘If I didn’t do this, the alternative for them will be to be at home watching too much TV. I know that wouldn’t be good for them.”

The families got instructions on how to use an insect net, and were challenged to try to catch a dragonfly. One of the dads successfully caught a beautiful Blue-eyed Darner. We gently retrieved it from the net and everyone got a close-up look. They caught, examined and released grasshoppers, crickets, froghoppers, beetles, ants, bees and even termites.

the insects

To put the class Insecta in perspective, 50% of all living things (including plants) are insects. 75% of all animals are insects. There are 35 million beetles in two acres of soil; there are 35 million people living in California. Insects do a lot of different jobs and occupy many niches. They are leaf miners, needle miners, leaf eaters, pollinators, nectar thieves, bark borers, dung rollers, fungus eaters, predators, honey makers, fly catchers, gall makers, plant suckers, farmers (ants farm fungi), herders (ants herd aphids), leaf rollers, kelp eaters, dung eaters, blood suckers, root feeders, fruit feeders, nut feeders and many more.

The Blue-eyed Darner dragonfly we caught is one of the largest dragonflies in the Bay Area. Darners can be difficult to tell apart. A clue to the identity of the Blue-eyed Darner is that the face is pale blue with bright blue eyes.

You may have seen plants coated with blobs of frothy liquid in the spring. These are produced by the nymphs of a froghopper, commonly referred to as spittlebugs. Using their piercing, sucking mouthparts, the nymphs tap into the xylem of the host plants and extract the nutrients. The excess liquid is mixed with some of the bug’s own fluids and expelled as a frothy white foam.

We found Soldier Beetles, nicknamed “leather-wings” because of their soft, cloth-like wing covers, which, when brightly colored, are reminiscent of uniforms. Adults resemble fireflies in looks and size, but don’t glow. The adults are also predators, eating caterpillars, eggs, aphids and other soft-bodied insects. Soldier Beetles will alternatively eat nectar and pollen if no insects are around. They don’t damage plant foliage.

Visit our website for a list of ongoing Family Adventures walks. With naturalists who speak both English and Spanish, you can come practice your second language -- no matter which one it is!
There are many ways to describe social investing; that is, investing in the social concepts that most closely align with your personal values and concerns – as Keith Smith and Kay Cash-Smith put it, to “give where it feeds you.” WildCare is fortunate that thoughtful, foresighted, sensitive and caring people like Kay and Keith have decided to include WildCare in their estate plans. They are pleased to have been able to make this, their social investment, through the good offices of the Marin Community Foundation.

Why WildCare? When asked, they said because WildCare is a local organization – of prime importance to them because they live here in Marin County. Their family is elsewhere; they have no children. They both worked for many years in responsible positions – Kay as a marketing consultant and Keith as an airline pilot – to be able to share some leisure time now, to enjoy each other, participate in absorbing activities, and for Keith, to be able to volunteer at WildCare.

The most important reason both Kay and Keith chose to direct their eventual and final gift to WildCare is, as they said, so that they could give where it feeds them. We are all in this together, and unfortunately because it is an ongoing process, we can’t see the proverbial “forest for the trees.” New information is being discovered daily, and often there is not just one answer to be offered. WildCare’s website is a rich resource for those who want to learn more about living well with wildlife.

Here are some of the recent topics. Read about these and more at www.wildcarebayarea.org/wildlifenews

- July 11: Genetically-modified corn and soybeans are being developed to be resistant to herbicides, allowing farmers to use higher concentrations of Roundup on “weeds” that insects like Monarch Butterflies need to survive.
- June 30: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published the Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl.
- June 6: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has banned the sale to residential consumers of the most toxic rat and mouse poisons.
- May 17: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service unveiled a national management plan to address the threat posed by white-nose syndrome, a disease that is devastating bat populations on the East coast.
- May 13: Scientists have found numerous examples of a new phenomenon – bees sealing up hive cells full of contaminated pollen to protect the rest of the hive against pesticides.

Don’t miss a thing!
Sign up for WildCare’s FREE monthly eNewsletter at wildcarebayarea.org

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Visit our Living with Wildlife blog at marinij.com
creeks and ponds

WildCare’s Nature Van travels to schools. The Van Naturalist takes taxidermy specimens for children to examine and touch, tells stories and provides games and activities that help bring nature and ecology to the classroom. This is just one of the kinds of puzzles used to help get things started.

Use the Decoding Chart to help you answer the following questions.

1. I have five sets of legs – two of my legs are powerful pincers! I wear my skeleton on the outside and have to shed it before I can grow bigger. I’m nocturnal and eat mostly plants. Who am I?

2. I lived five years under water as a nymph. Now that I’m an adult, I have four wings, catch mosquitoes and can hover like a helicopter! Who am I?

3. I hatched from an egg in water, then grew a tail and gills and swam around. After a while I grew legs and absorbed my tail. Now I breathe air and hop around looking for bugs to eat. Who am I?

4. I have long legs, a long neck and a long sharp bill. I wade around in the water looking for fish. I keep my feathers clean with a comb on one of my toes. Who am I?

Use the Word List to find the words hidden in the letters below.

Word List

POND FROG TADPOLE GARTERSNAKE POND TURTLE NYMPH DRAGONFLY MOSQUITO EGRET FOODCHAIN CRAWFISH CREEK AMPHIBIAN ALGAE CAMOUFLAGE WOODEDUCK RACCOON BEAVER OMNIVORE RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD
Museum and Courtyard Programs

**wildlife ambassadors** FREE
Ambassadors in WildCare’s Courtyard
Pool bird feeding
daily at 12:30 & 4:30pm
Meet the Rabbit
Mondays and Thursdays, 2pm
Meet the Tortoise
Tuesdays, 11am
Meet the Woodpecker
Wednesdays, 11am
Meet the Trainer
Fridays, 11am; Thursdays, 2pm
Meet the Raptor
Saturdays, 3pm
Meet the Vulture
Sundays, 11:30am

Terwilliger Nature Education Programs

**Family Adventure Walks**
September 10, 10am - noon
Giants, Dragons and Slugs
October 29, 10am - noon
Halloween at Deer Park
November 19, 10am - noon
Wild Fall Friends
December 10, 10am - noon
Explore Devil’s Gulch

**Nature Guide Volunteer Orientation**
August 6, 11am-12:30pm

**Nature Guide Training**
Ten half-day sessions,
beginning August 13

Wildlife Conferences

**OWCN Annual Rehabilitation Conference – Oilapalooza**
Oiled Wildlife Care Network Members
Queen Mary Hotel, Long Beach, CA
October 8-9, 2011
www.owcn.org

**The Wildlife Society**
Hilton Waikoloa Village, Waikoloa, HI
November 5-10, 2011
301-897-9770 www.wildlifesociety.org

**IWRC Symposium**
Coral Springs Marriott, Fort Lauderdale, FL
November 8-12, 2011
408-271-2685 www.iwrc-online.org

**California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators Symposium**
Resort at Squaw Creek, Squaw Valley, CA
November 10-13, 2011
415-541-5090 www.ccwr.org

Events

**Terwilliger Environmental Award Presentation and Reception**
September 9, 4-6pm

**Photo Contest Deadline**
September 16

**Dining for Wildlife**
September 20 - 21
Reserve by September 14

**Volunteer Appreciation Party**
September 17, 11am-3pm

**An Evening with Owls**
November 18, 6-9:30pm
Mill Valley Community Center

Wildlife Rehabilitation Programs

**New Volunteer Orientations**
Orientation for Adult Volunteers
January 28 or 29, 2012, 1-5pm

**Classes for Volunteers**
2075--Captive Care for Snakes
September 11, 1:30-3:30pm
2121--Aseptic Technique
October 2, 1:30-3:30pm
5030--Raptor ID/Field Trip
October 15, 9-11am/11:30am-2pm
2100--Fluid Therapy
October 22, 1:30-3:30pm
2110--Necropsy
September 3, 10am-noon
2130--Veterinary Drugs & Dosages
September 20, 6:30-8:30pm

*Pre-registration is required for all programs and events EXCEPT those noted with an asterisk; call 415-453-1000.*