in this issue

♀ bobcat kittens
♀ 2018 photo contest winners
♀ a salute to grace perkins
♀ feather imping
♀ wildlife camp
Dear WildCare Family,

As you read through this installment of the WildCare Magazine and reflect upon all the positive impact that WildCare has on animals and people, I hope you understand how truly grateful we are to have you as part of the WildCare family.

WildCare could not continue our efforts to help our wild neighbors without help from you, our human neighbors.

It’s your compassion that makes it possible to care for and heal animals in our wildlife hospital every single day. Thank you. It’s your compassion that allows us to help callers from across the country deal with emergency wildlife issues. Thank you. It’s your compassion that is key to introducing children to the wonders of nature, and which is vital in shaping the environmental literacy of the next generation. Thank you. And it’s with your compassion that we can advocate for animals on a wide variety of critical issues, giving a voice to the animals who cannot speak for themselves. Thank you.

Your compassion, be it in the form of a financial gift, a mention in your will, your volunteer efforts or bringing in a rescued wild animal are all a vital part of how WildCare is able to make a meaningful impact in the lives of animals, people and the environment.

For that, we are truly grateful.

Many Sincere Thanks,

Vaughn R. Maurice
Executive Director

Wild Wills
a Legacy for California Wildlife

Use our easy form to create your will and leave a lasting legacy for wildlife!

wildwills.org/wildcare
Family Nature Day
Saturday, April 20, 2019
Join us for Family Nature Day honoring Elizabeth Terwilliger. Celebrate Earth Day and learn about our local wildlife Mrs. T-style with our Wildlife Ambassadors, naturalist-led walks, games, arts and crafts and more! discoverwildcare.org/familynatureday

Dining for Wildlife
Tuesday, May 14 and Wednesday, May 15, 2019
Dine out, do good! Join us for WildCare’s 34th annual dining event! Enjoy a great meal and support WildCare. Make sure you’re on the list to receive an invitation for 2019’s Dining for Wildlife at: discoverwildcare.org/dining

WildCare & Wine
June 12, July 18 and August 20, 2019
Have Happy Hour with hawks! These FREE afternoon events in WildCare’s Courtyard give you the opportunity to sip a glass of wine, meet the animals and interact with WildCare staff and volunteers. RSVP at: discoverwildcare.org/wine

Talons
Sunday, July 7, 2019
Meet extraordinary hawks and owls at TALONS: a Festival Celebrating Birds of Prey. This event at Cavallo Point sold out quickly last year. Make sure you’re on the list for ticket announcements at: discoverwildcare.org/talons

WildCare Gala
Saturday, September 21, 2019
WildCare’s Gala is our most elegant event of the year! Join us for a spectacular evening of wildlife and wonder. This fundraiser helps us care for many injured and orphaned animals in the year to come. It also helps us to continue to advocate for wildlife and introduce thousands of people to a love and appreciation of nature. Learn more at: discoverwildcare.org/gala

Photo Contest
September 2019
Share your best California wildlife and nature photos with WildCare’s large audience! Our Best in Show photo wins $500. Deadline for entries is September 27, 2019. Winners will be featured in the 2019 Winter edition of WildCare’s newsletter and on the WildCare website. Learn more and see last year’s winners at: discoverwildcare.org/photo

For more information and additional upcoming WildCare events, please visit discoverwildcare.org/events
wildcare news

wine, wills and wildcare

Does the thought of wills, trusts and other gift-planning tools sound intimidating? It doesn’t have to! Northern Trust Bank Senior Vice President and Senior Fiduciary Officer, Denise Riley was our expert presenter for our Wine, Wills & WildCare events this fall. These are entertaining evenings of wine, conversation, wildlife and, yes, estate planning! Interested in including WildCare in your will? Visit discoverwildcare.org/wills and check our events page for upcoming Wine, Wills & WildCare events discoverwildcare.org/events.

trim trees in fall and winter

Putting off non-emergency tree work until late fall to prevent the disruption of wild families is great for wildlife! November and December are the best months to prune and remove trees and bushes, and trimming in the colder months is better for the trees too. April is the official beginning of wildlife “baby season,” but WildCare has admitted newborn baby squirrels as early as January and February. Even in winter, be sure to check for active nests before having tree work done.

volunteer training

Have you thought about volunteering to help care for the wild animals in WildCare’s Wildlife Hospital? Now is your opportunity! We only hold New Volunteer Orientations once a year, and the 2019 orientations are scheduled for the end of February. Learn more and sign up at discoverwildcare.org/volunteer.

look big! wildcare was on KQED forum

When author Rachel Levin wrote her book “Look Big: And other tips for surviving animal encounters of all kinds” she learned a lot about wildlife. But when the Bay Area NPR affiliate, KQED, needed more extensive wildlife expertise, Forum producers called WildCare! Director of Communications Alison Hermance represented WildCare well on this hugely popular talk show, hosted by Michael Krazny. Listen to the show at discoverwildcare.org/forum.

give wildlife a “brake”

Many wild animals are at their most active at dawn and dusk, times which overlap with humans’ busiest commute schedules during the shorter days and longer nights of winter. Until spring “springs” our clocks forward again, keep an eye out for wildlife on the side of the road, watch for eye-shine, drive slowly and give wildlife a “brake” to save lives!

love is in the air... and it smells like skunk?

January and February are skunk mating season! Every year in January, WildCare’s Hotline (415-456-SAVE) lights up with calls from people panicked at the smell of skunk. Don’t worry! The increase in skunk scent is just because the animals are feeling amorous. Males will spray as they fight over a female, and females will spray males they don’t like. Be patient and the smell will fade, but check your home for accessible den sites before pregnant female skunks start looking for places to raise their babies. Call WildCare Solutions to arrange an inspection of your property. discoverwildcare.org/solutions.
In all the decades of WildCare’s history our Wildlife Hospital has only ever admitted three Bobcat kittens, so it was astonishing to staff and volunteers to admit three more of them in 2018 alone!

The first Bobcat kitten had been found by Suzanne and Bruce Degen when Bruce was trimming ivy behind their garage. Recognizing immediately that this wasn’t a domestic kitten, the Degens brought the striped baby to WildCare.

Upon intake in the Wildlife Hospital, the kitten was found to be mildly dehydrated with a normal external parasite load of fleas and ticks. Medical staff worked with the Degens for the next two days in attempts to find the den site to reunite the kitten with her mother. Unfortunately we were unable to locate a den and, even though we attempted a reunite using a secure, heated kennel and recorded kitten distress calls, mom did not return for her baby.

Because Bobcat kittens can imprint on humans very quickly (which would render them not releasable), it was imperative that we find a companion Bobcat with whom this kitten could be raised as soon as possible. Thankfully, our friends at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (WCSV) have a very large, specialized set-up for raising Bobcats, and they had other kittens in care, so they agreed to take ours. One of our volunteer transport drivers drove the kitten to their center immediately.

Imagine our surprise when, a week later, another Bobcat kitten appeared in a tree in a neighbor’s yard!

[Continued...]
Jennifer Brinn-Barbee was working in her home office when she heard the distressed calls coming from her front yard. She remembered the heartbreaking sounds the kitten rescued by her neighbors had made and, when she heard the same sound in her front yard, she knew that there was another baby Bobcat in distress. Jennifer ran outside to find the young male kitten clinging to a tree beside her driveway.

Donning heavy leather work gloves, Jennifer’s husband Todd slowly approached the clinging kitten. He distracted the cat with one hand and grabbed his scruff with the other. The kitten released his hold and Todd and Jennifer were able to place him safely in their cat carrier. They then called Marin Humane for an officer to transport the kitten to WildCare.

This kitten was in worse shape, thinner and more dehydrated than his sister, presumably after surviving a week on his own. Knowing that our reunite attempts had failed with his sister, and given this kitten’s body condition, it was clear that something had happened to these young Bobcats’ mother and/or their den site. Again we called WCSV and they graciously agreed to take this kitten as well.

WildCare’s Bobcats will be in care at WCSV for approximately six months as they learn to climb, hunt and develop the skills necessary for survival in the wild. When wild and ready, we will pick up the siblings and take them to be released near their original home location.

The third Bobcat kitten that we admitted to the hospital in 2018 was not related to these siblings; he was found in another city entirely. Unfortunately this kitten was in critical condition when he arrived at WildCare and, despite Medical Staff’s best efforts, he did not survive.

Why, after decades of not admitting a single baby Bobcat we have received four between this spring and last, we don’t know. Hopefully it’s a positive sign that Marin’s habitat is healthier as people stop using rat poisons!
great horned owl in a soccer net

A grounds-worker was preparing to mow the sports field at a Mill Valley elementary school, when the movement of something tangled in the net of the soccer goal caught his eye.

Big wings, huge yellow eyes and the loud clacking of a beak showed that the trapped animal was a Great Horned Owl.

Once the owl was at WildCare, an exam revealed that he had significant bruising on his legs from the tightly-wound net, and wounds on his wings, probably from flapping against the soccer goal as he tried to escape.

The bird was a young owl, his head still fluffy. He was likely practicing hop-flying when he tumbled out of the nest and into the net. Many young owls do not survive their first year because of such hazards and the difficulties of learning to fly.

After several weeks in care, the bird was released back to his parents’ care at the nest near the Mill Valley schoolyard where he was found, hopefully with a new awareness of the dangers of soccer nets!

a tiny penguin on the beach?

No, not a penguin… a fluffy-headed baby Common Murre!

These seabirds nest off rocky cliffs where mom tends to the nestlings. The young fledge the nest before they can even fly, leaping off the cliff into the ocean where they join a “raft” of other fledglings in the water. At that time, mom’s job is complete, and dad takes over care, teaching the baby to fish on her own.

This past summer WildCare admitted over a dozen young murres. Why were they alone? We don’t know, but changes in ocean currents mean changes in food availability, so the weakened youngsters may have been swept away while dad was forced to forage farther away than usual.

After receiving stabilizing care at WildCare, all of the young murres we admitted were sent to International Bird Rescue to grow up until they can return to the wild.

late-season baby squirrels

The third week of October and what did we admit to the Wildlife Hospital? A baby squirrel so young her eyes were still closed!

Most people know that spring and summer are “baby season” for wildlife, but in recent years, our Squirrel Foster Care Team has been inundated in early fall with tiny, newborn babies.

Fortunately, with Northern California’s moderate climate, being released in November or December isn’t too much of a hardship for a young squirrel. This baby and her late-season siblings should be “home” (back to the wild) in time for the holidays!
Please help save the lives of more wild animals.

Make Your YEAR-END Gift Today!

Visit discoverwildcare.org to make your donation.

Get ready to meet our spring 2019 baby patients!

Follow us on social media for patient updates, videos and tips on how to live well with wildlife!

@wildcare wildcarebayarea
Focus on our local wildlife! WildCare’s 12th annual Living with Wildlife Photography Contest brought us over 200 entries from all over California, offering singular glimpses of the wide diversity of California wildlife and the stunning places they call home.

We extend special thanks to our hard-working judges:
Randall Bryett, Mary D’Agostino, Evan Jane Kriss, Kate Lynch and Kate Van Gytenbeek.

The top photographs in each category are shown here, and online at: discoverwildcare.org/photo

best in show: American Kestrel Pair
photo by Rick Lewis

people’s choice award: Raven with Plant Down
photo by Martha Ture
photo contest

best general nature:
Ant Trail on Log
photo by Robert Phares

best california wild animals (other) in their natural settings:
Squirrel
photo by Mark Decker

best california wild birds in their natural setting:
Least Bittern
photo by Rick Lewis

best living with wildlife:
Raccoon Release
photo by Jessica Schmid
finalists

animals (other)

birds

general nature

living with wildlife
At our 2018 WildCare Gala, we were pleased to honor Grace Perkins of the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation with the 2018 WildCare Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding vision, philanthropic leadership, and commitment to wildlife conservation and to promoting the welfare of animals and children.

Grace has been an integral member and leader of the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation since her Aunt Winnie’s passing in 2001. As a Stanford-trained geologist and mother of four, Grace never expected to take on a second career in philanthropic giving, but she jumped in wholeheartedly. Grace has fostered generations of foundation trustees to continue her Aunt Winnie’s legacy through direct engagement, including volunteering, fundraising, and donating, with nonprofits throughout the country.

We are so fortunate to have Grace as a champion of WildCare. Her commitment to wildlife and to environmental education has led to WildCare securing over $175,000 in operating and capital grant funding. We are among many organizations that she supports, all of which help keep the spirit and passions of her Aunt Winnie alive. Other beneficiaries include the San Francisco SPCA, Pets Unlimited, Slide Ranch and Sunrise Horse Rescue in Napa, just to name a few.

Steger Johnson, a board member of the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation says of Grace:
“Grace has always lived by the philosophy that the more you are given in your lifetime, the greater your obligation to give back. She is, and has always been, a giver—and a fierce advocate for those who are less fortunate and for those unable to advocate for themselves.”

On behalf of WildCare’s board, staff and volunteers, we thank Grace for her huge heart, her leadership and her support of WildCare.
Badly damaged flight feathers are a death sentence for bird like this Great Horned Owl. If he couldn’t fly or hunt, this owl would starve.

The bird came to our sister center, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue (SCWR), after being found on the ground. Although feisty and aggressive, the bird had an injured wing, and damage to his feathers that, despite staff’s efforts, only got worse during his time in care.

The wonderful staff at SCWR healed the owl’s injuries, but nothing a medical team can do will cause an owl to regrow damaged feathers quickly.

Great Horned Owls molt once a year, usually after their young have fledged and the demands on their physical resources are lower. Flight feathers usually molt one at a time, with healthy feathers regrowing to replace tattered or broken ones. It’s a slow process, however, and keeping this aggressive and active bird in an aviary until the feathers could regrow was simply not an option.

Fortunately, WildCare’s Veterinarian Dr. Juliana Sorem, and our Wildlife Technician Jacqueline Lewis have learned the specialized skill of feather imping, a process that replaces damaged feathers on a live bird with healthy feathers from a deceased one. SCWR transferred the bird to WildCare for the procedure.

“Imping” (short for implantation) is a skill that comes from falconry and dates back hundreds of years. Feathers from a deceased bird are trimmed and attached to the carefully-prepared feather shafts of a living bird with epoxy. In practice, the process is something like getting hair extensions or fake nails, but, unlike with a manicure, the bird’s survival relies on the new feathers functioning as well as the originals. Doing an imping procedure right is a painstaking and time-consuming process.

**how to imp**

First, suitable replacement feathers have to be found. WildCare admits 10 – 20 Great Horned Owl patients every year, and when an adult bird doesn’t survive his or her injuries and dies in care, Medical Staff will often harvest the feathers for just such a situation. (This is true of many raptor species—imping works on hawks too!) We had recently lost a hit-by-car Great Horned Owl patient who had beautiful feathers. That bird became the donor to help this one.

[Continued...]
Most of this owl’s flight feathers were damaged and needed replacement, so the procedure was going to take a couple of hours. As with all of WildCare’s patients, Great Horned Owls are high-stress, and keeping the bird restrained during the procedure wasn’t possible without anesthesia. Dr. Sorem intubated the bird and she and Jacqueline monitored the owl’s breathing and heartbeat throughout the procedure.

The donor feathers are carefully catalogued in their proper order, and, starting on one wing, the team carefully trims the damaged feather away, leaving just the feather shaft which is embedded in the bone of the wing. They then trim the donor feather, and insert a thin piece of light wood into the shaft to serve as a splint between the old feather shaft and the new feather.

After placing wax paper over the other feathers to protect them from any contact with the epoxy, they carefully insert the epoxy-tipped end of the donor feather and shaft into the existing shaft and hold it to allow the epoxy to set. They repeat this process for all the feathers.

Because of the risks of long-term anesthesia, Dr. Sorem and Jacqueline decided to do one wing one day, and then wait for a couple of days to allow the bird to rest and recover before imping the other wing.

The procedure was a great success! After a week under observation at WildCare, we transferred the owl back to SCWR where they have the perfect aviary for an owl to rebuild his strength and try out his new feathers. The owl was successfully released back to the wild after a couple of weeks of strength-building.

And what will happen to the imped feathers? He’ll shed them during his molt, just as he would have done with his natural feathers. This owl should be able to live a full and healthy life in the wild.
WildCare’s 2018 Gala was a WILD success! We want to say a huge thank you to our generous sponsors and to everyone who attended the event on September 22, 2018.

Held at the Marin Country Mart in Larkspur Landing under tents lit with twinkling lights and overlooking the Bay, it truly was a glamorous evening! The wine, donated by Parallel Rows Winery, was excellent, and the views of the sun setting over Mt. Tamalpais made the evening magical.

This year’s entirely plant-based meal, deliciously catered by Farmshop, was generously underwritten by a grant from the Giant Steps Foundation. The Giant Steps Foundation offers grants to non-profits for special events, allowing organizations to offer their guests organic, vegan and more humane menus.

As only happens at a WildCare Gala, guests mingled with Sequoia, the Northern Spotted Owl, Mohave the Desert Tortoise and Kele the American Kestrel, among other Wildlife Ambassadors. Our wonderful staff and volunteers answered questions and shared information about WildCare as guests enjoyed face-to-face encounters with our educational animals.

The evening, of course, was a fundraiser for WildCare, and we are thrilled that our Gala raised over $300,000! These funds will help us care for many injured and orphaned wild animals in the year to come, and will also help us continue to advocate for wildlife and introduce thousands of adults and children to a love and appreciation of nature. We are grateful for the support of WildCare’s Board of Directors for all they did to make the event a success.

To see photos and other details from the event, visit discoverwildcare.org/gala.
**bluebird boxes**

**little (bluebird) boxes on the hill**

Flashing blue, a small pair of devoted parents swoops industriously in and out through the tiny hole in a redwood box, ferrying bugs to the peeping babies within. These are Western Bluebirds, and they’re busily hunting insects to feed their young.

Bluebird nest boxes provide much-needed homes for Western Bluebirds, and bluebirds provide excellent control of flying insects. Bluebird boxes also foster a deep connection between the area’s human residents and the petite blue birds. And here’s the good news – you can be a part of the Bluebird Box Revolution!

**it’s a seller’s market**

House-hunting Bay Area humans face an unstable market these days, and the local cavity-dwelling bird population fares no better. In nesting season, bluebirds must stake out territories in open green spaces with dead trees or fence posts containing nest-appropriate holes; not an easy task. And even if a promising site is found, there’s no guarantee that another bird couple hasn’t gotten there first! Competition for a shrinking number of cozy tree holes is a formidable problem that has caused a severe decline in the bluebird population over the past century.

However, according to conservation authorities, the single most effective way individuals can help bring back the bluebird is to provide more nesting sites by hanging nesting boxes.

**if you hang it, they will come**

Western Bluebirds choose nesting cavities at the edges of woodlands and fields and lawns, in orchards, golf courses or vineyards, or in any open, rural countryside with scattered trees and low ground cover. Setting up a nest box, or even a “trail” of multiple boxes, is simple and rewarding: all you need is a bit of open space (where no pesticides or herbicides are being used, of course!), and a post or pole.

WildCare’s Hungry Owl Project Bluebird Box Program offers pre-assembled boxes for only $35.00 (plus tax). Learn more at hungryowl.org/bluebird.
Does your inquisitive child love animals? Wildlife Camp at WildCare is a fun way to stimulate learning about wild animals and instill a life-long respect for nature. Weekly camp programs are designed to captivate, engage and challenge young people, building environmental knowledge and values.

Watch a pelican training session, experience animal visits from our live non-releasable animal ambassadors, prepare a meal for our Desert Tortoise, search for wild animal tracks out on the trail, play wildlife-themed games and create nature crafts—it’s a camp experience that is sure to leave a lasting impression.

Here are some of our favorite comments from Summer Camp 2018:

“My son had so much fun and learned so many new things about animals!”
“My daughter loved it and the teachers were really lovely.”
“My daughter especially liked learning about and seeing live animals up close.”
“The staff were really kind with the children and made it fun and inclusive. My daughter didn’t know the other children but she still felt included and happy there.”
“Wildlife Camp is educational and priced well. My kid had a great time.”
“My daughter was happy and excited to come to camp each day.”
“My son loves it and was sad when it was over.”

Scholarships are available! Applications are accepted after registration opens.
WildCare’s success is only possible because of over 500 incredibly dedicated people who give generously of their time—our volunteers! Our Wildlife Hospital is 95% volunteer-driven, and the nearly 4,000 wildlife patients we treat every year depend on the volunteers for their care. Have you always wanted to see what happens in WildCare’s Wildlife Hospital? Would you like to help save the lives of wild animals? This is your chance!

**10 ml LRS SQ bid**

If that heading looks incomprehensible to you, you’re not alone. Volunteers in WildCare’s Wildlife Hospital see notations like this on patients’ medical charts every day, and with nearly 200 different species of wild animals in our care, learning medical terminology like this and myriad other details of the care, feeding and treatment for our patients can be a real challenge!

**training**

WildCare provides training for all hospital volunteers. Incoming volunteers learn species identification, proper handling, hygiene and safety precautions, physical therapy regimens and hand-feeding techniques. Using radiographs (x-rays), blood work and more, hospital staff and volunteers work together to accommodate each patient’s feeding, cleaning and medication requirements. And “10 ml LRS SQ BID?” After attending the training you’ll know that means the animal you’re caring for is getting “10 milliliters of subcutaneous fluids, twice a day.” Imagine all the new things to learn!

**commitment**

After completing their training, volunteers in WildCare’s Wildlife Hospital commit to one regularly-scheduled four-hour shift per week from April through November. We ask volunteers to commit to attending their scheduled shift every week, as missing a scheduled shift impacts our patients’ lives and our ability to provide the best care for them.

**Space is limited!**

Come to one of our once-a-year New Volunteer Orientations on February 23 or 24, 2019, 12:45pm – 5:00pm to determine if volunteering in WildCare’s Wildlife Hospital is for you!

To sign up and to find out more, visit discoverwildcare.org/volunteer or contact volunteer@discoverwildcare.org or 415-453-1000 x21 for more information.
Holly Wallace started volunteering at WildCare in 2013. She discovered us when she brought an injured bird to the Wildlife Hospital.

Holly had recently retired from her work as a glassblower and a landscape designer, and she was looking to do something to make a difference and support her love for animals. Holly’s dad was a veterinarian, so animals had always been part of her life. WildCare was the perfect choice!

Holly is the Team Lead for her regular volunteer shift on Thursday afternoons in the Wildlife Hospital clinic. She’s very proud of both the student volunteers and the adults on her team. Holly is a very generous supporter of WildCare and she attends most WildCare events too.

Holly says she is a “radical recycler,” and she strives to share the importance of recycling with everyone. Certain items like hard plastics and Styrofoam aren’t recyclable in WildCare’s county of Marin, so Holly transports those items from WildCare to her local recycler, one of the few places where such things can successfully be recycled.

As part of WildCare’s Green Team, Holly makes many contributions, including working hard to make sure that as many items as possible are being recycled.

In her spare time, Holly enjoys photography and planting low maintenance, low water, pollinator gardens.

Holly says, “I love WildCare. I love the thorough, thoughtful, compassionate, detail-oriented care given to each animal. It doesn’t matter if it’s a lowly gopher or a beautiful Bobcat, every animal gets the same care and attention.”

It’s not easy being “green,” but the effort to do right by the planet gets much easier when we all work together!

WildCare’s Green Team, a committee of staff members and volunteers, looks at ways to lessen the organization’s environmental impact from many different angles.

For instance, instead of trucking in bottled water, the team has installed a water filtration unit for staff and volunteers.

Also in the past few months, the Green Team has instituted composting protocols to redirect both animal and human food waste into the green bin (this is made easier by the fact that our local sanitation company, Marin Sanitary, has a very robust curbside composting program!)

Perhaps most significantly of all, WildCare’s Green Team is working with the Community Energy Services Corporation (CESC) and taking advantage of PG&E rebates to reduce WildCare’s carbon footprint.

With a generous donation from Wildlife Hospital Volunteer and Green Team member Holly Wallace, we have been able to install LED lighting throughout WildCare. Phase one of this project was to replace all the "screw-in" bulbs in the building with low-energy LEDs. That phase was completed this summer. Phase two is the replacement of florescent lighting with LED bulbs, which will happen in the slower winter months in the Wildlife Hospital.

These upgrades will save WildCare $1,106 per year, reduce our lighting energy usage by 30%, and will reduce the organization’s carbon pawprint by 4,806 pounds per year. Now that’s saving some "green!"
honoring Elizabeth Terwilliger

Paulette Smith-Ruiz was WildCare’s Assistant Director of Animal Care until her retirement this year, and she held the distinct honor of being WildCare’s longest-term employee!

In 1990 Paulette had a computer programming job, stuck in a cubical in San Francisco, when she saw a flyer for a WildCare Hospital Volunteer Orientation with a photo of someone bottle feeding a baby fox. She immediately called WildCare and asked if she would truly be allowed to handle wild animals! The answer was yes, with the provided training, she too could help care for injured and orphaned wild animals to help give them a second chance at life. She immediately signed up for a volunteer orientation.

Paulette volunteered on regular weekly Saturday hospital shifts for the next five years and then, in 1995, she applied for and was accepted as a hospital intern. The following year she made the career change from computer programmer to Junior Wildlife Technician! In 1999 she was promoted to Assistant Director of Animal Care, a position she held until her retirement this year.

Paulette ran the Hospital Intern Program for years, mentoring dozens of budding wildlife rehabilitators and veterinary school hopefuls whom she refers to as her “ducklings.” She is known for her parasitology skills, her amazing gull-whispering skills (gulls can be challenging to handle, but Paulette never seemed to have any difficulties!) and teased for her fear of handling adult squirrels, even after all these years. Paulette’s legacy will live on, not only in the thousands of wild animals (including actual ducklings!) she has helped save, but also in the careers of her ‘intern ducklings’ who have gone on to become volunteers and professionals in the wildlife care field!

Paulette Smith-Ruiz has been an institution at WildCare for 28 years and is simply irreplaceable. We thank her for her years of dedication and wish her the best of luck in this new chapter of her life!

Celebrate Earth Day by joining WildCare to learn about our local wildlife. Go for a hike, catch and release aquatic insects, have exciting encounters with WildCare’s Wildlife Ambassadors (non-releasable wild animals you can meet up close!), learn about Mrs. Elizabeth Terwilliger’s nature education legacy and bring a picnic to enjoy on the lake shore.
our patients need your ride!

Your old car could give them a second chance at life in the wild.

Donate a vehicle to WildCare and help injured and orphaned wild animals in need like these baby chipmunks and baby raccoon.

YOUR old car can help wildlife like them. It’s fast, easy and FREE!

Tax-deductible
Free towing
Any vehicle, any condition

Call 855-500-RIDE (855-500-7433) or visit discoverwildcare.org/auto to donate a car (or truck, motorcycle or boat) today!

WildCare Speaks Out!

WildCare is very grateful for the opportunity to share our message throughout the community.

In 2018 we did a number of presentations to community groups, including Rotary groups. We were especially pleased to have the opportunity to share WildCare’s mission with the Each Foundation at a very special event at the Presidio Social Club in San Francisco. The foundation has generously supported WildCare’s work and we are grateful for its members’ support!

Are you part of a professional or social group that would be interested in a presentation about WildCare, our work and the animals we treat? Email alison@discoverwildcare.org or call 415-453-1000 x24 to schedule!
For sophomore year at my school, Bishop O’Dowd, everyone has to do a research project called the Animal Project. As I did research for my project, I found owls to be very interesting, and I decided that I wanted my Eagle Scout project to help owls in some way. I was offered the opportunity to build owl boxes for the Hungry Owl Project.

Building the boxes took three work days. On the first day, a large number of scouts came. I took advantage of this by having them sand all of the pieces within an hour. On the second and third days, I had smaller teams, and split them into two groups to work on each box as I demonstrated how the pieces fit together. After the third workday, my dad and sister painted the boxes and applied the final touches.

The project, including initial planning, took about eight months. I wrote a plan for it, including costs, logistics, and more. Then, I met with Alex Godbe of the Hungry Owl Project to receive her approval. However, I still needed money to buy the materials, so I created a fundraising plan to ask for donations of materials from hardware stores.

I called multiple hardware stores and explained my project to their managers before requesting donations. Thanks to their amicability, I was able to get almost all of the materials I needed.

The owl boxes benefit the environment in many ways. Because owls eat rodents, there will be fewer rodents in the area, meaning less rodenticide has to be used to keep rat populations low. Less rodenticide use helps prevent a process known as biomagnification, where the entire food chain can accumulate rodenticide. Also, it will be harder for rodents to adapt to poisons.

I have learned a lot about leadership from this project. I learned how to better instruct and inform a group, along with how to manage a team where one person is very skilled. This project has also helped me realize how dangerous procrastination can be. My advice for other people doing projects like this is to persevere through challenging times and keep going, despite the hardships.
Help this baby Bobcat return to the wild!

Guide our baby Bobcat through the maze to her second chance at life in the wild!

Color in this page!

START

marin humane
LIVES MADE HAPPY

wildcare

END

Did you know...

- Bobcats are nocturnal and can hunt prey larger than themselves!
- Bobcats are fairly solitary and babies spend up to a year with mom learning to hunt and survive on their own.
- Bobcats are the most abundant wildcat in the United States.
Love Your Neighbor

HELP US HELP WILDLIFE

Text WILD to 415-338-9453
DiscoverWildCare.org