

# Stanislaus Flyer

Winter

Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center

2019

The Mission of SWCC is to promote respect for wildlife and increase the public's awareness of the importance of preserving wildlife through the care of injured and orphaned California native wild animals and community education.

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## SWCC Staff

Director	Donna Burt
Assistant Director	Cindy Manning
Animal Care Manager	Veronica Sandow
Animal Care Coordinators	Duane Dahl CeCe Hurst Samantha Holdaway

## Board of Directors

Donna Burt	Chairperson
Linda Weidman	Vice-Chair
Cindy Manning	Treasurer
Dorothy Tuggle	Secretary
Janice Lookabough	
Dr. Doug Marks	Veterinarian

## Creature Feature

### Coyote

By Nancy Haydock

Song dogs, tricksters, American jackal, prairie wolf, brush wolf, little wolf, are just some names given to *Canis latrans* which literally means barking dog. Coyotes are wild dogs native to North America. In size and body form they slightly resemble a collie, with erect pointed ears, slender muzzle, and bushy tail. California coyotes are brownish gray in color with cream-colored bellies. Most have dark or black guard hairs over their back and tails. In western states, an adult male weighs around twenty-five pounds and females around twenty pounds. In the Eastern U.S., coyotes are larger. Males weigh forty-five pounds and females thirty pounds.



Coyote Pup

Donna Burt

Although we seldom admit adult coyotes, we raise fifteen to thirty babies each year. They are a challenge to raise. Coyote pups open their eyes at two weeks and eat mice a few days after that. As soon as they can eat a mouse, we keep them away from people, just a quick clean and feed then get out of their sight. Once they are in the outside enclosure, we have to approach quietly, or they get so excited they run around in a panic.

We have to be extra careful when we capture them for release, because they are prone to capture myopathy. Which means that they are so susceptible to stress when handled that they can die.

Coyotes spend much of their time hunting rodents. Their teeth are suitable for both killing prey and crunching plants. They eat fruits vegetables, grass, gophers, ground squirrels, rabbits, voles, nuts, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, and mice. They will also eat garbage, small dogs, cats, domestic pet food, and carrion, but these are not their favorite foods.

*Continued on page 4*

# Goopy Meadowlarks

By Veronica Sandow

It is common to receive several individuals of the same species at the same time, though it is usually as a nest of baby birds during spring. One fall afternoon, we received five adult Western meadowlarks, all in critical condition. All were ice cold and in respiratory distress. They reeked of sewage and were coated in the various substances one would expect to find in wastewater.

We are not sure how they got coated, but meadowlarks forage on the ground for seeds and insects. Maybe they were hopping around in the sludge. In spite of their yellow color, meadowlarks are a kind of blackbird and are about the same size as a robin.

Anytime an animal is found in water, even perfectly clean water, inhalation causing pneumonia is possible. Contamination and possible inhalation of sludge complicates things even further. Under more favorable circumstances (less covered in human waste) we would opt to wait until the birds were stable to wash them. Washing a bird is extremely stressful and can send them into shock.

With our feathered friends in such desperate need of proper hygiene, the staff made the decision to wash the birds immediately. The warm water bath helped raise the bird's body temperature, while the chunks of material were washed from their feathers.



Meadowlark

Veronica Sandow



Meadowlark

Veronica Sandow

While one staff member washed the birds, two volunteers were busy drying and monitoring the meadowlarks' condition. Blow drying is really stressful. We had to stop when the birds were still damp or risk further complications from stress. The partly dried and somewhat sweeter smelling birds were moved to incubators where they could stay warm and stress-free while they further warmed up and dried off.

By the time all five of the meadowlarks had been washed and dried, it was late in the afternoon, and the birds needed quiet time away from humans if they were going to make it through the night. Not yet ready to digest food, they were given dextrose and left in an incubator for the night.

The next morning, the birds were on perches and ready to eat. It was hard to believe that they had been so cold and lethargic the day before. We monitored their condition for two days before moving them outside to an aviary.

Contaminated birds, when no other issues are present, usually have a rapid turnaround. The animal will show drastic improvement or decline over the first 24-48 hours. Our meadowlarks were fortunate. They didn't suffer any long-term problems and were released within a week of their arrival. Hopefully, the spring fields will ring with the whistles and gurgling warbles of their song.

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# Center News

## The One-Thousand Club

By Cindy Manning

The SWCC is a non-profit organization that depends solely upon donations for our operating expenses. We do not receive any government support. For specific purposes, we do apply for grants, but for our general operations, it's all public donations. We really appreciate every cent people are able to donate. We can't do it without all of your help. We want to give special recognition to our larger donors by starting the One Thousand Club.

In 2018, just under twenty people donated \$1000 or more. We want to increase the number to thirty people this year and eventually fifty people if we can. This will allow us to continue to be adequately staffed and to pay for the supplies we use during the spring and summer without dipping into our long-term savings or emergency fund. Our goal is to use unexpected, one-time large donations such as bequests to build an emergency account equaling a year's expenses.

To join the One Thousand Club, we ask that you pledge to donate \$1000 each year. As a thank you, we will host a BBQ dinner party on our back patio and behind the scenes tour. We haven't decided on a date yet, but it will be sometime this summer. Stay tuned for more info!

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Save Mart, O'Brien's, Food Maxx, and many other local retailers honor eScrip. Sign up at [www.eScrip.com](http://www.eScrip.com) and register your card. The store will donate a portion of your purchase to us every time you shop.



Open an Amazon Smile account and designate the SWCC as your charity. It's the same as a regular Amazon account except they donate a percentage of each purchase to us.

**You don't pay anything extra, but we get some, much-needed money.**

## Finder Donations

By Cindy Manning

We want to increase donations from 'finders,' the people who bring injured and orphaned animals to us.

We received 2,120 animals in 2018. But only 13% of our donations were from the people who brought in those animals. The rest came from generous people like you who didn't directly use our services.

We can't charge finders, but we intend to do more to encourage them to donate. We have set up a credit card/debit card reader in the lobby to take credit cards and debit cards. We realize that many people do not carry cash or checks.

We will send a follow up request to those people who brought in animals the previous month but did not contribute. We feel that most people appreciate the service we provide and would like to help pay for the care of the animal that they brought in. We want to make it easier.

The majority of our general income (not including grants and donations for the raptor aviary) eighty-seven percent, came from people who responded to our two request mailers per year, came to our Baby Animal Shower or donated through their employers or clubs. Some of these people are finders from previous years, some are people who love wildlife and want to contribute. We are so thankful to all of you.

The average cost to care for one animal is about \$60. Beside what we spend directly on animal food, and medicine, that includes all those routine expenses such as electricity, wages, food, repairs and so forth, that go into maintaining the center. We don't expect every finder to donate that much, especially, when they bring a nest of six baby birds or nine abandoned ducklings, but every little bit helps.

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### Supplies We Always Need

- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper (for bird nests)
- Kleenex (for bird nests)
- 13 gal plastic garbage bags
- Dishwashing Gloves (S & M)

**Volunteers - Money**

## Coming to a Classroom Near You

By Dorothy Tuggle



Christy and Dorothy

The SWCC brings live animals into classrooms and community centers all over Stanislaus County as part of our outreach program.

Our docents talk about the natural history, feeding habits, behaviors of native California wildlife. The forty-five-minute talks are highly interactive with plenty of time for questions. We give most of our presentations to elementary students. We also do programs for other groups and other ages.

The programs typically star four of our resident animals; an American crow, California kingsnake, great-horned owl, and California ground squirrel. The animals usually jump into their transport cages and enjoy being the center of attention. Other resident animals may be substituted if one of our stars doesn't feel like going to school that day or a specific program has been requested.

To reduce their stress, the animals are brought out one at a time. All are carefully restrained for their safety as well as the student's safety. We cannot let anyone touch the animals, but the ground squirrel often gets to run around the floor inside a transparent ball.

The presentations are available all year except for part of April and all of May.

If you would like more information about this program, go to our website: at <http://stanislauswildlife.org> "Classroom Presentations," or email us at [SWCCenter@StanislausWildlife.org](mailto:SWCCenter@StanislausWildlife.org).

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### Coyotes - Continued from page 1

At twenty-five pounds or less, coyotes have many enemies including cars, wolves, cougars, American black bears, grizzly bears, American alligators, golden eagles, bald eagles, wolverines, and people. They are also susceptible to anticoagulant rodenticides if they eat poisoned mice and gophers. They are also vulnerable to common dog diseases.

Coyote attacks on humans are uncommon and rarely cause serious injuries. Feeding coyotes, or letting them eat food left out for dogs and cats, causes them to lose their fear of humans. Socialized coyotes have chased joggers and bicyclists, and confront people walking their dogs. A few people have been bitten. This behavior is a symptom of socialization, not rabies. In the last six years, California has had one rabid coyote and nine rabid dogs.

An aggressive coyote arches its back and lowers its tail, which may look similar to a playful dog. Coyotes should run and hide from humans. If one doesn't, please shout or make noise to frighten it off for your safety as well as theirs.

Coyotes can trot for several miles without stopping. They may pause to investigate things or snatch up an unwary mouse during their wanderings. They can run up

to 45 miles per hour! Packs often travel single file, stepping in each other's tracks, which makes it difficult to tell how many animals passed by. In dense brush, they may spread out as they move through the landscape.

Because of its wide distribution and abundance throughout North America, Mexico, and Central America, the coyote is listed as a species of least concern by the International Union for Conservation of Nature

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Three Day Old Coyotes

Donna Burt

## Donna Burt

By Cindy Manning

When the center was going through some bad times around 2006, Donna Burt (SWCC founder) came back and joined the board. She righted the ship, so to speak, and after the Executive Director at that time left, Donna became the Executive Director. She has been Executive Director for the last twelve years as well as the Chairman of the Board. She has done this job with no pay. Donna has wanted to step down from the Executive Director job for several years now, but nobody was willing to take it on. In 2017, after discussion with my very supportive husband, Jim, I told the board that I was ready to take the job but not until 2019 when I retire from my current job.

Donna has worked tirelessly over the years to maintain and expand Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center. In the last 10 years, we have added the eagle cage, the coyote enclosure, replaced the old wooden mammal and raptor cages with zoo quality modern metal cages, and now the raptor aviary complex that will be built in the next few months.

She is knowledgeable in all aspects of the center, such as animal care, personnel management, and construction of facilities as well as the bookkeeping. I think some of her favorite things to do are to plan then build something...anything. John Burt, her husband, has also helped and worked on several construction projects over the years.

The time is coming soon, May 1, when Donna will turn over the reins of running the center to me. Donna will continue to be the Chairman of the Board, and she and her husband will also continue to do construction around the center. Donna will also be available to me for advice in the next few years. Finally, she will be able to rest a little and travel more with her husband.

Thank you, Donna, for creating this wonderful place and for saving it when it was in danger. Thank you for your vision and your tenaciousness on getting things done. I hope I can continue with your vision and also contribute to the success of the center.

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## Regional Symposium

By Veronica Sandow

Wildlife rehabilitation workers are required to attend continuing education classes every year to keep up with best practices in the field. Last year, we hosted a two-day symposium for rehabilitation centers in this region. We only had space for thirty people, so it filled up quickly with staff and volunteers from centers near Fresno, Sonora, and even Tahoe. The SWCC employees all attended, as well as a few members of our board and volunteers that had gone above and beyond in the past busy season.

We held a second symposium the following weekend for the remaining SWCC volunteers.

*Transition of Power in Organizational Leadership* sounds like a pretty boring subject for most people, but for the thirty attendees of the SWCC's first regional symposium, it was a big hit. Many of the founders of local centers are looking forward to retirement and must find replacement directors if their centers are to continue.

Wildlife rehab "bird nerds" were thrilled to hear about that and other riveting lectures, including a talk about how the SWCC went from a home-based rehab organization to be a facilities-based center. Many of them are struggling with starting their own shelters.

Our veterinarian, Dr. Marks, gave a talk on triage as it pertains to wildlife, how to determine if an animal is stable or unstable and how to provide those unstable animals the best chance to recover.

The necropsy lab was also a big hit. Necropsy, animal autopsy, may not be what most people would want to see, but our guests were delighted to have Dr. Marks help them learn about bird and mammal anatomy and how different diseases and injuries affect various organs.

The Symposium was also a great networking opportunity. There were multiple roundtable discussions where everyone was able to share tips and tricks they have discovered for different species. Where one organization may have had trouble with one species, another was able to provide useful information on how they had mastered raising and treating that same animal.

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Gray Fox

Veronica Sandow



# Raptor Aviaries

By Donna Burt

A few years ago, a large beam fell from the roof of our large aviary complex. It didn't hurt anyone, but it did make us do a thorough examination of all our aviaries.

The entire raptor complex had been built of wood many years ago and was no longer structurally sound. We demolished everything except a few songbird aviaries.

After much fundraising, we replaced the raptor aviaries with zoo quality songbird aviaries that should last many, many years. There wasn't enough space to build enough large raptor aviaries to meet our need. And we wanted the songbirds to be closer to the hospital.

Then we set out to get enough money to build zoo quality raptor aviaries - \$100,000.

We succeeded!

As I write this, we have sent our plans to the cage manufacturer and are deciding which general contractor to hire. With any luck, the new aviaries will have hawks and owls in them by late spring or early summer.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this project.

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## Major Donors

James & Karen Clark  
 T. S. & K. D. Glide Foundation Trust  
 Christine and Marvin Johnson  
 Leslie Alexander Foundation  
 Chouinardfamily.ap@patagonia.com  
 DJ&T Foundation  
 Kathy Zumbrunn  
 Carol & Kent Landsberg Foundation  
 Linda & Alan Crogan  
 Jennifer Murer

## Thank You

## 2018 Financial Statement

By Donna Burt

Because of the generous donations for the raptor aviaries, it looks as if the SWCC had a \$60,715 profit in 2018. But after subtracting the \$87,500, this year's donations for the raptor aviaries, and an insurance payment of \$16,314 to replace cages damaged when a car drive through our fence, the general fund ended the year with a loss of \$40,005.

We will have to do a lot of fundraising in 2019 to rebuild our general fund.

Part of the loss may be attributed to people giving money for the aviaries rather than general donations. But part is the increase in expenses from expanding employee hours and using insects rather than commercial diets for the baby songbirds. Those changes increased songbird survival and improved our ability to care for all of the animals, but they cost a lot of money

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Newly Hatched Killdeer

Donna Burt

### Income

Taxable Sales.	\$2,056
Direct Public Support.	\$54,616
Direct Mail Solicitation	\$40,330
Indirect Public Support	\$8,452
Outreach Program	\$2,267
Events Income	\$7,059
Misc. Income	\$6,938
Raptor Aviary Donations	\$87,500
Insurance Payment for Damaged Cages	\$16,314
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$209,218</b>

### Expenses

Cost of Goods Sold	\$910
Repairs, Utilities, Maintenance	\$17,189
General Supplies & Equipment	\$15,598
Animal Program Direct Expenses	\$18,913
Fundraising Expenses	\$5,648
Printing & Postage	\$4,679
Misc. Expenses (Telephone, General Business, Insurance, Etc.)	\$7,204
Labor	\$75,268
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$145,410</b>

**Profit/Loss** **\$63,809**

Profit/Loss not including raptor aviary donations and insurance payment. **-\$40,005.40**

# Book Review

## Birding Without Borders by Noah Strycker

Review by Cindy Manning

Because I like to birdwatch, I received Birding without Borders by Noah Strycker for Christmas.

This book is about Noah Strycker's Big Year. In 2015, he traveled all over the world to see as many bird species as he could in one year. Of course, he mentions the birds he sees, but most of the book chronicles his adventures in the many countries he visited.

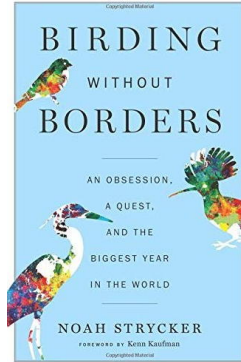
He began in Antarctica, traveled through South America, Central America, and the west coast of the United States. He then went to Africa, South-east Asia, and Australia. He planned this adventure for many months and bought many birding guides so he could get familiar with all of the birds of the world.

I really enjoyed the stories about the people he contacted to act as bird guides. Sometimes they were famous birders, but most of the time, they were just regular

people who loved their country's birds. It was also amazing that so many young people were involved. Being a birder myself, I don't see many young people birding, so that is a joy to read about.

Noah ended up breaking the record for seeing the most bird species at 6,042 species. If you like birds, this is a great book.

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Noah Strycker and his field guides

### Moving??

If your address changes, please let us know. Send in the membership form or email:  
SWCCenter@StanislausWildlife.org

## Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(    ) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership     Membership Renewal     General Donation     Restricted Donation

\$20 Individual     \$30 Family     \$50 Grantor     \$100 Sustaining     \$500 Contributor     \$1000 Donor    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not need a receipt, please check here . You'll save the SWCC the price of a stamp. Thank you!

All donations are tax deductible and gratefully accepted. Please consult your tax advisor.

Make checks payable to: SWCC, P.O. Box 298, Hughson, CA 95326 - THANK YOU!

Please email SWCCenter@StanislausWildlife.org if you would like to volunteer.

The SWCC does not sell or give addresses to anyone!

Fall 2018

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