Stanislaus Flyer

Spring

Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center

2022

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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Creature Feature Sierran Tree Frog



Sierrran Tree Frog

By Nancy Haydock

On September 13, 2021, somebody brought us two Sierran tree frogs. They had raised them from tadpoles. While taking tadpoles from the wild isn't a good thing to do. It is impressive that they successfully raised two frogs.

Sierrian tree frogs (*Pseudacris sierra*) are often called Pacific tree frogs, although technically, the Pacific tree frog (*Pseudacris regilla*) is a different species. They live north of California. Several other species of tree frogs live throughout the western US, Canada, and Mexico. They all look very similar.

Tree frogs come in shades of green or brown. They can change their skin colors depending on light or heat. They are little guys, only about an inch and a half from snout to vent. They have a dark stripe through each eye. Unlike many frogs, tree frogs don't spend much time in the water. Although they do live near rivers and lakes, they are often found in trees several hundred feet from water.

Pacific treefrogs breed from February to August. The male's breeding call is a two-note high pitched "kreck-ek or "ribbit" sound. Large choruses of the frogs are common after dark.

They lay masses of eggs attached to sticks or vegetation in the water. After two or three weeks, the little tadpoles hatch. Most tadpoles die as they are eaten by caddisfly larvae, fish, dragonfly larvae, diving beetles, salamander larvae, bullfrogs, snakes, and birds. The tadpoles eat algae when they are little. As they grow and change into frogs, they begin to eat insects.

Peregrine Falcon

By Donna Burt

On November 25, 2021, we admitted a first-year female peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). She had a badly broken leg and a minor fracture of her hand. The hand fracture would heal without needing any intervention. Veronica Sandow, our Animal Care Manager, put a splint on the leg to make her more comfortable. For the next couple of days, she also required fluids. We took her to Monti Vista Small Animal Clinic for X-rays.

Dr. Davis and Dr. Marks examined her and consulted with Dr. Stephany Lewis at the Ojai Raptor Center about a new method of stabilizing fractures.

After we got

the supplies together, we all met in the surgery center at Monte Vista Small Animal Clinic. We took another set of x-rays to be sure nothing had changed. They looked good, so we anesthetized her. Because the device that monitors heart rate doesn't work on birds, Veronica and I took turns keeping track of her heart rate by feeling a vein in her wing.

Drs. Marks and Davis inserted four pins through the bones. Two through the bone above the fracture, and two through the bone below the fracture. Once the leg was aligned, they squeezed a polymer into a thin rubber tube and pushed the pins through it, holding it straight until the plastic hardened. That did a great



X-ray of Peregrine's Broken Leg



job of keeping the fracture stable. But it was a bit awkward for the peregrine, having pins and tubes on both sides of her leg.

For the first few days, she seemed unable to use that foot. We were worried that the surgery may have caused nerve damage. But as the days passed, she started using the foot.

A week or so later, she felt much better and would no longer tolerate being confined. We put her into one of our smaller aviaries.

A few weeks later, she went for more xrays. The leg had healed a little crooked but was strong and stable.

Peregrine falcons are the fastest flying birds in the world. They can reach up to 240 miles per hour in a stoop or dive. They hunt ducks, pigeons, and other birds, which they knock out of the air. To do this, they fly high up and circle around, looking for prey. When they see an unfortunate bird, they power-dive toward it. Descending at a forty-five-degree angle, alternating between powerful wing strokes and holding the wings close to their body for the best aerodynamics. With an as-



The pins and bandage made it awkward for her to stand. She is still in first-year plumage



Waking up after removing the pins.

sist from gravity, their speed increases throughout the dive. They strike with their feet grabbing the bird or knocking it from the air.

There are three other species of falcons that live in California. Prairie falcons are similar in size and appearance to peregrines. American kestrels and merlins are smaller. Peregrines are probably the most famous falcon because of their speed and because they were nearly wiped out back in the 80s by pesticide poisoning. They are also prized by falconers because they tolerate captivity and can be trained to hunt. Today their population is healthy.

We know she is a female because of her size. As is typical for raptors, males are smaller than females.

By the time you read this, she should be in the eagle aviary getting strong enough for release.



Finally, in an outside aviary.

What she will look like after she molts into adult feathers this spring.

Laundry Building Update

The much-awaited laundry building is here. By the time you read this it should be up and running. The building is up, although it still needs a step. The ceramic tile floor is in. Electrical and plumbing only need finishing touches. And the shelves have been ordered.

It has room for two washers and a dryer. We only use the dryer on rainy days. Clotheslines are faster and cheaper. But two washers will be wonderful.

The building also has room for our clean laundry storage and then some.

We thank everyone who donated to the laundry building.



Baby Animal Shower

Baby Animal Shower is back (after a two-year hiatus) April 30, 2022.

We have just started our planning, but will keep everyone updated through our website, Facebook, and Instagram.

Although we still have to keep the lobby closed, all the other activities are planned. There will be BBQ tri-tip, sundaes, animal talks, baby animal feeding, raffle, tee shirts, face painting, owl pellets, and many other activities. Save the day so you can come and see our two new songbird aviaries and the tree squirrel exhibit.

All photos by Donna Burt except barn owls by Veronica Sandow.

Exterior Interior Most of the plumbing will be hidden behind the washers.

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Sierran Tree Frog continued from page 1.

Adult frogs have long elastic-like sticky-ended tongues for catching all manner of bugs and spiders. Although they do hunt in the water, they also spend a lot of time hunting in trees.

The sticky pads on the Pacific tree frog feet enable them to climb plants with agility. They can change color to match their surroundings. They cannot control the color, but it is camouflage, so they will not become someone's meal.

A group of frogs is called an army. It is unlikely they would ever attack anything except a hapless insect that bumbled into their midst.

Worldwide, frogs are in trouble, and many are on the road to extinction. Habitat loss, pollution, pesticides, climate change, diseases, pet trade, and invasive species are all causing problems for frogs.

Unfortunately, we cannot release these frogs. We are not permitted to release reptiles and amphibians that have been in someone's home for an extended time for fear they may carry a disease.

The frogs have a wonderful habitat at the center. If we cannot place them in a zoo or education center, we will let them live out their lives here.



Both tree frogs are very well fed.

Sierran Tree Fog

Supplies We Need

Paper Towels Scrub Brushes Puppy Pads 13 gal plastic garbage bags Dishwashing Gloves (S & M) Visit our Amazon Wish List for other ideas.

Volunteers & Money

amazon smile

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

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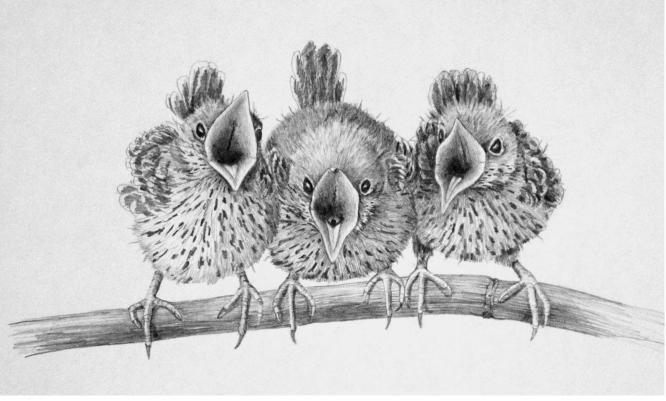
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Baby Mockingbirds

Donna Burt