

SWCC

Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center Winter 2025

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Creature Feature **Cedar Waxwings**



Cedar Waxwing

We often have two or more non-releasable cedar waxwings in the aviary in front of the center.

They are small yellowish-brown birds with a yellow stripe at the end of their tail, a back mask around their eyes, and a small crest on their heads. Sometimes, they have little, bright red beads on the ends of feathers that overlap their wings when perched.

No one knows why waxwings grow these red jewels, but they tend to break off as time passes. They will be replaced when the bird molts.

This winter, one of our long-time resident waxwings died of old age.

This winter, we had several waxwings come in. We recently released three. Another is being evaluated to see if it can be put into the gazebo aviary in the front as a companion to the remaining waxwing.

Waxwings are one of the few North American birds that mostly eat fruit such as dogwood, serviceberry, cedar, juniper, strawberry, hawthorn, winterberry, mistletoe, and honeysuckle. Which is why they produce so much sticky feces. But they can't live on fruit alone. They also eat many kinds of insects.

If they eat enough honeysuckle and a few other introduced plants, the yellow tail band will turn orange.

This high-fruit diet also puts them at risk of getting drunk. Occasionally we receive a waxwing that just needs to sober up. Overly ripe berries can start to ferment. If the waxwings eat these berries the

alcohol will reduce their ability to fly. Whether they eat the fermenting berries because they are hungry or because they want a "drink" is not known.

Waxwings are seldom seen alone. They congregate in large flocks and move about throughout much of the year. During nesting season, the flocks are smaller, with pairs of birds nesting near each other.

When releasing a waxwing, it is important to release it into a flock of waxwings.

That is what we did with the three releasable wax wings. Dan, one of our employees, searched for a flock, found one, and took out waxwings for release before the flock could move to a new location.

The birds knew exactly what to do. Once free, they flew straight to the flock and disappeared into the crowd.



Waxwings in our aviary



Large flock of waxwings in a tree,

Bald Eagle Update



Bald Eagle in our Eagle Cage



The blue arrows point out some of the damaged feathers that were not molted.

The bald eagle we received on July 28, 2024, has been transferred to Dr. Vicky Joseph, an eagle expert.

When we first got the eagle, his feathers were in terrible condition. He also had a bacterial respiratory infection and West Nile. He did molt most of his feathers this fall but not all of them. Bad feathers and incomplete molts are common when suffering from West Nile. He needs to molt again before he can be released.

Eagles only molt once a year, usually in the late summer. That is a problem for us. We need to use his aviary for the thirty or more baby great-horned owls we will receive this spring.

Dr. Joseph has an even larger aviary, with a couple of eagles already in it. Our eagle will have companions as he waits for better feathers to emerge.



The eagle will spend his first night in this nicely painted smaller aviary so he can have a thorough check up tomorrow.



Her cheek pouches are full. She'll take those seeds and hide them somewhere for later consumption.

As she aged, her sight failed, and it became more difficult to walk. Still, she enjoyed sleeping in the sun and having her tummy rubbed.

She died about three months short of her tenth birthday.

See last page for another picture of Scrunchie.

RIP Scrunchie

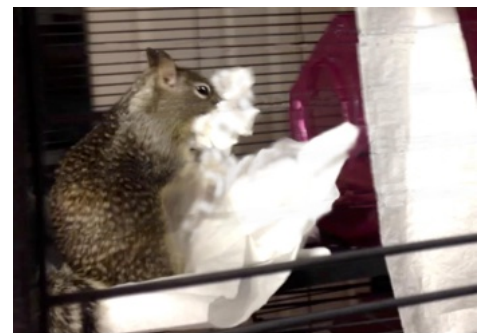
Scrunchie was a California ground squirrel admitted in April 2015. She had nerve damage to her right hind leg from a fall. Since ground squirrels need to have perfect legs for digging and running, we kept her.

For many years she lived in the lobby and went to school talks. But at around six-years old, she could no longer keep up with the younger squirrels in the lobby, so we moved her into retirement. When she developed cataracts and a pronounced limp, we moved her into hospice care at my house.

Ground squirrels seldom live more than four or five years in the wild. Ten is the upper limit for ground squirrels in captivity.

I have raised several ground squirrels to take to schools. They are so sweet and friendly as babies, but impossible to handle after about a year. Touch one, and you will get bit. However, at about six, they calm down and are easier to handle. Of course, they also have many age-related health issues by then.

Scrunchie was famous for being the terror of the lobby squirrels, growling and biting. But as soon as she saw the travel cage, she jumped right in. At the school, she hopped into her ball and rolled on the floor for the kids. Then she went back into the travel cage without a problem.



Gathering toilet paper to make a nest.

2024 Animal Statistics

	S	A	R	P	T	D	E	DFD
Birds	56.14%	1645	574	20	7	336	115	590
Mammals	68.32%	409	201	7	6	82	14	99
Reptiles	91.67%	84	60	2	6	5	1	10
Total	60.57%	2138	835	29	19	423	130	699

A = Admitted

R = Released

T = Transferred to other facilities or domestics who were adopted.

D = Died despite treatment.

E = Euthanized because treatment was unsuccessful.

DFD = Died First Day - animals who either arrived dead, were euthanized on arrival, or died shortly after arrival.

S = Success rate. This is the number of animals released and transferred divided by the number of animals admitted minus those still pending and those who died the first day. We don't count animals who were hopeless when they arrived in our success rate.

Note: We do not accept domestic animals. But occasionally receive escaped pets such as Coturnix quail and Muscovy ducks that are mistaken for wild animals.

Although a success rate of 60% may not seem impressive, every animal we receive would have died had it not been brought in. All are injured, starved, or ill upon admission. Not all can be saved.

We had some unusual animals this year. An extremely fat but otherwise healthy garter snake was brought in because it wasn't moving around very quickly, which is unusual.

We couldn't find anything wrong with it, so we put it into a snake cage to reexamine the next morning.

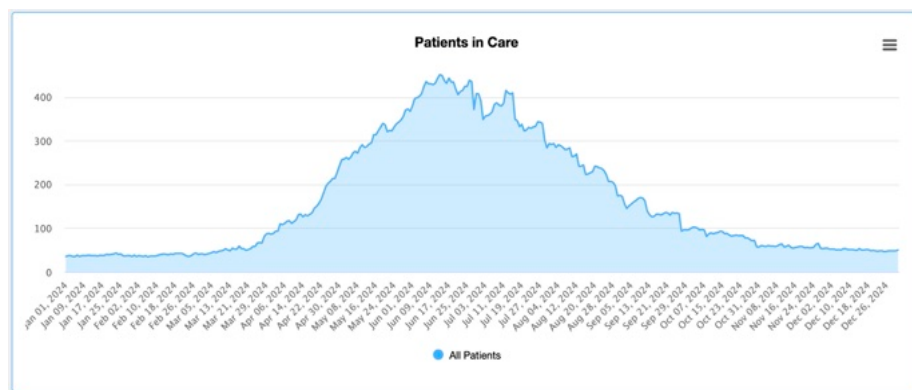
Instead of one fat snake, there was a normal-sized garter snake and a pile of babies.

That was amazing. We put the babies in a separate cage where they looked like a strange wriggling mass.

Since snakes do not provide any parental care, so we released the babies the next day. We kept the mother for another day until she ate. Then we released her.

Most Common Species Admitted

Virginia Opossum.....	199
Mourning Dove	163
California Scrub Jay.....	159
Mallard.....	128
Eurasian Collared-Dove..	118
European Starling.....	110
House Finch.....	93
House Sparrow	81
Red-tailed Hawk	57
Barn Owl.....	54



Average number of patients in care throughout the year.



Very Pregnant Garter Snake



Baby Garter Snakes



Poorwill

2024 Donor List

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Sophidion Foundation, Inc
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Plummer, Beverly	Siggins, Howard & Effie	Tocchini, Wendy	

Note: donations made during the last two weeks of 2024 may not have been processed in time to be on this list.

2024 Financial Statement

Income

Interest.....	\$461
Taxable Sales.....	\$2,035
Direct Public Support.....	\$168,002
Direct Mail Solicitation	\$31,662
Indirect Public Support.....	\$5,548
Program Income	\$1,100
Special Events Income.....	\$30,979
Restricted Funds.....	\$29,000
Total Income.....	\$268,787

Expenses

Structures.....	\$38,634
Occupancy Rent Utilities	
Maintenance	\$10,272
Animal Program Expenses .	\$25,647
Business Expenses	\$3,321
Other Expenses.....	\$21,059
Printing Publications	
Postage	\$2,593
Fundraising Expenses.....	\$6,538
Labor Expenses.....	\$163,937
Total Expenditures	\$272,002

Profit/Loss **-\$3,215**



The 2025 Baby Animal Shower
Saturday, April 19, 2025.

More information will be on the website starting in mid-February. Check in for the latest updates and raffle prizes.

We will have a BBQ, Sundaes, kids activities, face painting, raffle, and lots of animals.

Last year, we had a camera in the baby bird room, so you could see the babies being fed. And some babies were fed in one of the display cages for closer viewing. We hope to have both of those this year.

Set the date aside. We want to see all of you for this fun activity.

SWCC Staff

Executive Director
Donna Burt

Facility Manager
Nancy Klein

Senior Animal Care Coordinator
Michelle Mason

Animal Care Coordinators
Duane Dahl
Eduardo Escobedo
Daniel Pankey

Board of Directors

Donna Burt	Chairperson
Linda Weidman	Vice-Chair
Cindy Manning	Treasurer
Phil McKay	Member
Dr. Doug Marks	Veterinarian

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



Website



Cedar Waxwing

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 _____

_____ No Receipt _____ Email Receipt _____ Mailed Receipt

_____ New Membership _____ Membership Renewal _____ General Donation _____ Restricted Donation

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

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!

The SWCC is incorporated as a 501(c)3 corporation EIN 77-0049517



Wish List



Donations

Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center
P.O. Box 298
Hughson, CA
95326 209-883-9414
SWCCenter@stanislauswildlife.org
www.stanislauswildlife.org

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A very elderly Scrunchie sleeping in the sun. She has a heated nest box with soft blankets but nothing is better than summer sun shining through a window,