

Spring 2009

Volume 29, #1

TreeHouse Droppings



Creatures Great and Small

This issue: From the President; Rehab Ramblings; Becky; Shannon; Short Tails; Remembering Roger; TreeHouse 2008 Census and Financial Statement. Cover photos of the immature Bald Eagle, newborn Flying Squirrel and Beaver by Adele Moore

30 years of giving back to the wild

Volunteer Staff

Judy Neiman, Clinic Coordinator
Marti Stone, Mammal Specialist
Dr. Paul Myer, Veterinarian
Melvin McCann, Maintenance Super.
Deana Browne, Fundraising
Adele Moore, Newsletter Editor
Martha Edwards, Web Master

Board of Directors

Lynn Schreiber, President
Pam Lippert, Vice-President
Andrea Crabtree, Secretary
Adele Moore, Treasurer
Judy Neiman
Melvin McCann
Marti Stone
Paul Myer, DVM
Eric Bloemker
Kathy Border
Sherri Medley

TreeHouse Staff *

Pam Lippert, Clinic Supervisor
Andrea Crabtree, Executive Director
Lynn Schreiber, President

*TreeHouse Wildlife Center has
one full-time & two part-time staff
members paid through a grant.
All other staff are volunteers.

Volunteers

Judy & Jack Neiman, Deana Browne,
Lois & Christy DuMey,
Melvin McCann, Kathy Conley,
Bud Grzeskowiak, Penny Moon,
Marti & Don Stone, Phil Challandes,
Stephanie Bland, Brian Willis,
Sandie Konopelski, Penny Sarandis,
Brad Blumenstock, Dillon Dean,
Drs. Craig & Kim Staehle,
Rick & Karle Bohn

If you have a few hours a week to spare,
and you would like to
become a volunteer,
please contact TreeHouse
for more information.
(The only requirement is that you are
at least 16 years of age,
unless accompanied by an adult)

**Inquire about volunteering at our two
biggest fundraisers: Italian Fest,
prepping or selling salads; or Open
House, staffing our raffle/sales tables.**

For more information:
(618) 372-8092

**TreeHouse Wildlife Center, Inc.
1825 Fosterburg Road
Brighton, Illinois 62012**

www.treehousewildlifecenter.com



FROM THE PRESIDENT by Lynn Schreiber

I am someone who lives by the seasons, admiring them for their own characteristics and for the unique transformations that come with each. Upon the arrival of each season I feel enlightened by the sense of completeness that comes as each season passed becomes part of a perpetual cycle that repeats again and again. Each season is significantly marked by changes in the environment and in the habits of animals that adapt to assimilate each change. In turn those changes also affect me, causing me to react within my own environment.

This past winter, as with every one before it, I enjoyed observing the Bald Eagles who claim this area as their winter home. In March I began to feel a little sad knowing that the eagles would be leaving and in their final weeks here I appreciated them even more than usual. At the same time I became excited knowing that with the departure of the eagles would be the arrival of pelicans and hummingbirds among others. Time spent watching eagles soar majestically would be replaced with watching pelicans spiral gracefully, a new season, a new cycle.

Still, this past spring was different in some way. As I observed the eagles in their final days here I felt particularly unsettled and anxious. Watching these beautiful birds in all of their glory I reflected back on several decades that me and others had, in affect, become stewards of these creatures, available at any time should they become disabled, with extensive knowledge, experience and resources to care for them in their time of need. I realized that all of this was in jeopardy and the sense of pride gained from being able to help these animals and others in the past was replaced with uncertainty and helplessness for being able to help them in the future.

Early in 2009 TreeHouse board members met in what can only be described as a somber meeting to discuss what had previously been the unthinkable, closing our doors. After numerous campaigns to raise the funding necessary to relocate we have only a fraction of what we need and our lease has ended. Time is running out.

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Despite our predicament board members decided to continue operating in order to care for this year's spring orphans. With the idea of remaining open through another season came a new surge of motivation encouraging us to move forward, to work until every last effort is exhausted. In a show of support and confidence our lease was extended to give us the time necessary to get through another season which also gives more time for current initiatives to show results.

*Meanwhile, the board decided to meet at the end of summer to reassess our situation. If significant funding **has** been attained by that time we will happily extend our timeframe. If we have not received the funding needed we will make a formal declaration to close the center by the end of December.*

In the meantime we still have cage and room sponsorship opportunities available. We have been invited to submit grant applications to a few foundations and are excited about one initiative in particular that has the potential for positive results. Not to be left out we are also looking into economic stimulus funding options and our green building consultant, Don Dieckmann continues to appeal to vendors for free materials.

In addition plans are being made to hold a benefit concert later in the summer featuring violinist, Erin Schreiber, Assistant Concertmaster of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and pianist, Teddy Abrams of the New World Symphony in Miami, Florida.

As always we have no choice but to look ahead. We cannot focus our energy on past efforts that have been lost, but must continue to pursue new possibilities. We greatly appreciate the generous support of our staff, volunteers and members who keep us going.

We look for the passage of the seasons to give us more time. Summer will fade into autumn, and autumn into winter. The season of eagles will return to begin a new cycle and we hope it will begin again for TreeHouse as well, a new season, a new cycle.

REMEMBERING ROGER

Until 2004, the TreeHouse Board of Directors was pretty much a homegrown bunch, made up of veteran volunteers. When we launched the building campaign, advisors told us that in order to be taken seriously by funders, we needed to expand our board to include various professionals from the community.

We put out feelers. I approached a good friend who's a long-time clerk of the Madison County Courthouse and inquired about someone in the legal profession. I asked her to recommend an attorney who might be sympathetic to our cause and easy to work with. The first thing out of her mouth: "Roger Murphy." As it turns out, Roger had been a TreeHouse member in the not-too-distant past.

I sent Roger a carefully worded formal invitation. I didn't know any lawyers, but television had taught me that attorneys are tough to impress. I didn't want to make the slightest misstep and ruin it for us. Within days, however, a phone call from Roger instantly set me at ease. He'd be happy to help us any way he could. I think we all felt that we had really arrived. We had a *lawyer* on our board. I wondered whether we were going to have to behave better.

Roger joined us in April, 2005 and was an instant fit. At our meetings, he offered general comments and suggestions, legal advice when asked, and was always good for a laugh. Imagine our surprise, however, when he jumped in at fundraisers. He staffed booths at Open House, and he and his wife Donna made salads at Italian Fest in Collinsville. We were flattered by such commitment to our cause.

Unfortunately, those times were too few. Roger was diagnosed with cancer shortly after he joined us, and fought valiantly for over three years. He passed away December 30, 2008. We didn't know him long, but in his short time with us he became one of the gang. He offered a good-humored, quiet mentorship, and gave us a sense of legitimacy: He never tried to change who we were.

Shortly before Roger passed away, Donna emailed with news of his worsening condition. She said, "You should know that one of his fondest wishes has been to regain enough strength to be able to offer more of himself in service to TreeHouse. He has great affection and respect for all of you and truly values the work you do and your dedication."

The feeling was mutual.



Roger shares his catch with one of his favorites,
a local Great Blue Heron on St. George Island.

A LOOK BACK AT THE LIFE OF TWO REMARKABLE BIRDS

Since the last newsletter we have lost a couple of our longtime permanent resident raptors. Becky, our Red-Tailed Hawk had been here since January 7, 1986. Barge workers reported that a hawk had been observed sitting on the ground in Hartford for a few days. Upon arrival, I found Becky huddled under a bush, clutching a dried fish head in her talons. The temperature was so cold that day I did not even take time to do a quick examination, and unwilling to give up her "prey", Becky and the fish head were loaded into the crate. Once back at TreeHouse it did not take long to discover Becky's problem. Part of her wing was completely missing due to a gunshot wound.

Becky's tail feathers were already red, which meant she was an adult of at least 3 years of age. The word I would use to describe Becky's demeanor was sweet, and since she obviously could not be returned to the wild, it was decided to add her to our list of permanent residents. She began her new life as an educational ambassador, making the



Photo by Don Johnson



Photo provided by the Carlinville Library

Becky's retirement years were spent with her roommate, Hershey, a dark-phased Red-Tail. It would have been nice to know her true age, but the twenty-seven years we spent together were "sweet". -- Adele

rounds to hundreds of school gymnasiums and meeting rooms over the years. Becky enjoyed her new role -- sitting quietly on the glove and checking out the audience while we told her story to school children and adults.

Becky's second role was that of foster mother to orphaned Red-Tailed Hawks admitted to TreeHouse. Although on average we receive more owls than hawks, when she did have the chance to raise young ones, she performed her role with grace.

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**Shannon the Harris's Hawk**

Photo by Wade Dowdy

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Recently we also lost Shannon, our Harris's Hawk. Shannon had been a TreeHouse resident since 1994. Harris's Hawks are native to the southwest (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and southern California). Because they have a highly developed social order they frequently hunt in groups, and will "stack" several birds perched one on top of the other to search for prey. They are a popular bird with falconers and that is how she came to us. She was injured by a dog while hunting and had to have part of her wing amputated. Many of you remember her from our education programs and certainly at open house. She could usually be found on the fist of long-time volunteer Deana Browne. – Pam

REHAB RAMBLINGS by Pam Lippert

Since the last newsletter some of the more notable animals we have admitted:

A Peregrine Falcon found in a parking lot in South Roxana. It had a laceration to the patagium (wing web of tissue between the wrist and shoulder joints of a bird), and its outcome is pending.



Photo by Adele Moore



Photo by Adele Moore

Bonaparte's Gull, a first for TreeHouse, was admitted with a broken wing.

REHAB RAMBLINGS *continued*

Spring baby season has been fairly busy this year.

We have so far admitted a large number of orphaned owls: 7 Great Horned Owlets, 4 Barred Owlets, and 3 Screech Owlets.

Gray Fox pup defending his "territory"



Photo by Adele Moore

As far as mammals, we have the usual young squirrels and possums, plus two Red Foxes.

Feeding a newborn orphaned Flying Squirrel
photo by Adele Moore



Photo by Adele Moore

Nothing cuter than a Barred Owlet or a baby Beaver for that matter.



Photo by Lynn Schreiber

Some of the more unusual admitted were two Gray Fox pups from the Great River Road, three young Beavers, and a Flying Squirrel.

REHAB RAMBLINGS *continued*

An immature Bald Eagle from Anderson Lake State Conservation Area in Fulton County was admitted with a fractured humerus (bone running from elbow to shoulder).



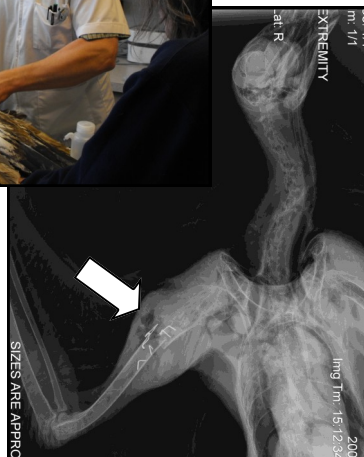
Hawthorne Animal Hospital veterinary technician and TreeHouse board member Sherri Medley carries the eagle to surgery.



Pam secures the “business end” of the bird while Dr. Myer and vet. tech. Lisa Koontz concentrate on the surgery.



The wing was pinned by Dr. Myer and we await the final outcome.



Photos by Adele Moore

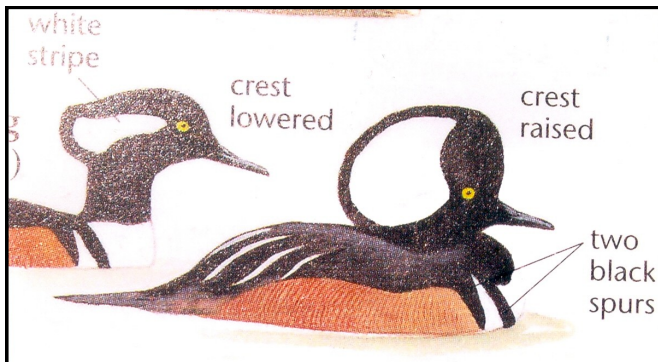
SHORT TAILS by Judy Neiman

New Kids on the Block

Typically we get 50-60 Mallard and 30-40 Wood Ducklings every spring. This year, however, we got a surprise – two Hooded Merganser ducklings — rare breeders for this area. They were found wandering alone far from the river by children who were on their way to school in East St. Louis. The students properly enlisted the help of teachers who then called us.

Hooded Mergansers are a cavity nesting, diving duck, 16-19" long and weigh about 19 ounces. They feed in ponds and quiet waters eating small fish, crayfish, small frogs, tadpoles and roots and seeds of aquatic plants. Males are beautiful with a large white hood, two black breast bands and chestnut sides. They have a thin, saw-tooth bill for catching fish.

Both ducklings are doing well and are now three weeks old. They are eating well and I will soon add minnows for a treat and for training. They will be released at nine weeks of age when they can fly and evade predators.



Drawing of an adult Hooded Merganser's crest lowered, and crest raised.



Photos by Judy Neiman

Top left photo: Two orphaned Hooded Mergansers (back) swimming with a Mallard Duckling (front).

Top right photo: Close-up of a Hooded Merganser chick.

SHORT TAILS *continued***Courtyard Queen**

We got a call from a school in Granite City about a Mallard hen who had nested in their courtyard. Apparently she didn't think very far ahead about how she was eventually going to get her ducklings out of the courtyard and to water. Catching the ducklings is fairly easy, but catching mom — who can fly — is a big problem. We do not like to separate the babies from their mother. Our only two hopes were to catch her still on the nest, or catch the babies and lure her to them where we can snare her or net her.

It was our lucky day as she was still sitting tight on the nest, keeping her young warm. Jack was able to sneak up and net her. The babies then scattered in fright but were quickly rounded up.

We took them to a nearby lake. We opened the crate for the babies first, so mom could hear and see them. We then opened her crate. She headed directly for the lake, calling softly to her young. One by one all ten of them left the crate and followed her to the water where she swam happily away with her crew in tow.

A Day Late Story

This story is a little late since Easter is long over, but maybe it will help in the future. Now is the time we have to take in domestic ducklings bought at Easter. When they are days old they are as cute as a bug's ear, soft and fuzzy. However, these are not toys to be discarded when they are no longer cute and they have become very large and very dirty. Most people do not have the facilities to take care of these ducks until they are old enough to be released. Once they have become too big for one's cage or pen one of the following happens:

They grow up imprinted and tame and don't know they are ducks. They are then deserted on some lake where they do not know how to relate to other ducks. Out of loneliness they often start following people out of the park only to run into all kinds of hazards.

They are dumped on a lake way too young to be able to take care of themselves.

They are abandoned. One was even left in a 3 x 3' plywood pen to starve to death when the owners moved and no longer wanted him.

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SHORT TAILS — a Day Late Story *continued from page 9*

These ducks are brought to us and leaves us with the problem of where to release them. These ducks are hard to place and most cannot fly well or at all. They need a home with someone who will feed them and a lake with an aerator so they can avoid predators when the lakes freeze over in the winter.

Please discourage anyone you know from buying their children a cute little duckling (or chick or bunny). Advise them of the challenges. Let them know how dirty they become and their needs for special care and protection and how hard it is to find a safe release site. Stuffed animals stay cute and need no special care.



Photo by Adele Moore



Photo by Lynn Schreiber

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Director, Andrea Crabtree, a volunteer/staff person since 1998, and Phil Challandes (our own “Dr. Phil”), volunteer since 1997, recently accepted their 10+ Year Awards.

The Great Egret photo was donated by Sandra Samojeden. Resident Great-Horned Owl “Stevie” photo donated by Eric Bloemker

ADOPTIONS

T.R.E.A.T at South Roxana Elementary School adopted Bobcat Tigger.

Michelle Parker adopted Bald Eagles Kohoutek and Spuds for her husband Terry's birthday.

Paula Martel adopted an orphaned Barred Owl.

Check out
**HAPPY TAILS THRIFT
SHOP IN EDWARDSVILLE**

IN HONOR OF

Cheryl Pride
Mike and Carol McGinnis

IN MEMORY OF

Missy
David Jack
Aaron Hiller
Mary Cairns
Roger Murphy
Birdella McCann
Harold Broadbook
A fine cat, Shamus

THANK YOU

JustGive.org
Network for Good
Holiday Shores Garden Club
Christmas Wonderland in Alton
Sierra Club Great Rivers Chapter
AB-PAC Matching Grant Program
Boeing Employees Community Fund
Bank of America Matching Gift Program
Woodland School (Edwardsville) Fundraiser Friday
Elsevier Foundation Employee Matching Gift Program
Hawthorne Animal Hospital donating proceeds from the
Annual Easter Egg Hunt
Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis donating proceeds
from their Feast of St. Francis: Blessing of the Animals

2008 PATIENT CENSUS — 437
(426 in 2007)

94 Gray Squirrels
11 Opossums
32 Fawns
2 Red Foxes
1 Woodchucks
10 Fox Squirrels
1 Muskrat

151 Mammals

9 Turtles

Waterfowl

51 Mallards
45 Wood Ducks
5 Canada Geese
1 White-Winged Scoter
1 Green-Winged Teal
1 Northern Shoveler
1 Pied-Billed Grebe
1 Double-Crested Cormorant
1 American White Pelican
3 Ringed-Billed Gulls
1 Mute Swan
1 Trumpeter Swan
1 Snow Goose
1 American Coot

Raptors

17 Red-Tailed Hawks
23 Great Horned Owls
21 Barred Owls
11 Cooper's Hawks
25 Kestrels
10 Screech Owls
1 Red-shouldered Hawk
1 Barn Owl
1 Merlin
1 Sharp-Shinned Hawk
2 Bald Eagles
1 Turkey Vulture

Songbirds

1 Mourning Dove
6 Pigeons
3 Cardinals
1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird
2 House Finches
2 Dark-eyed Juncos
2 Goldfinches
1 Cedar Waxwing
1 Killdeer
2 Nighthawks
1 Purple Martin
1 Indigo Bunting
1 Robin
1 Brown Creeper
1 Fox Sparrow
1 Horned Lark
1 Prothonotary Warbler

Miscellaneous Birds

4 Great Blue Herons
1 Green Heron
1 Black-Crowned Night Heron
1 Turkey
1 Great Egret
1 Cattle Egret
1 American Crow
1 American Woodcock
1 American Golden Plover

268 Birds (265)

Avian species represented 52 (42)

TreeHouse Wildlife Center Financial Statement for 2008

2007 Balance Forwarded Checking			\$ 30,560.00
INCOME			
Earned Revenue			
Memberships	\$ 4,095.00		
Program Fees	\$ 1,455.00		
Donations <\$250	\$ 14,197.00		
Sales	\$ 2,153.00		
Bequests	\$ 505.00		
Fundraisers			
Summer Solstice	\$ 289.00		
Trivia Night	\$ 1,435.00		
Italianfest	\$ 4,607.00		
Open House	<u>\$ 3,078.00</u>		
	\$ 9,409.00	<u>\$ 9,409.00</u>	
Earned Revenue Total		\$ 31,814.00	\$ 31,814.00
Contributed Revenue			
Foundation Grants	\$ 48,355.00		
Government Grants (IDNR)	\$ 900.00		
Corporate Contribution	\$ 6,042.00		
Individual Gifts > \$250	\$ 6,450.00		
Events/Booths	\$ 1,485.00		
School Fundraisers	<u>\$ 365.00</u>		
Subtotal	\$ 63,597.00	<u>\$ 63,597.00</u>	
Earned & Contributed Total		\$ 95,411.00	\$ 95,411.00
Restricted Revenue			
Building Fund		\$ 16,235.00	<u>\$ 16,235.00</u>
Total Funds Available for Use		\$ 142,206.00	\$ 142,206.00
EXPENSES			
Payroll (Salaries, Benefits, Taxes)	\$ 34,965.00		
Feed and Rehab Splys	\$ 13,651.00		
Utilities	\$ 10,424.00		
Fundraising	\$ 6,522.00		
Other	\$ 6,763.00		
Insurance	\$ 2,232.00		
Professional Services	\$ 1,951.00		
Member Services	<u>\$ 1,802.00</u>		
(Newsletter)			
Total Operational Expenses			
	<u>\$ 78,310.00</u>		<u>\$ 78,310.00</u>
DECEMBER 31, 2007 Balance (Checking)			\$ 63,896.00
Building Investment Account (Money Market)			\$ 1,322.00
Building Investment Account (CD's)			<u>\$ 6,397.00</u>
			\$ 71,615.00

TREEHOUSE WILDLIFE CENTER MEMBERSHIP

TreeHouse receives **NO** state, federal or county funding.
Our only funding comes through you, the concerned public.

One way of helping TreeHouse operate is through purchasing a membership.
You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped us
give something back to the wild.

TreeHouse Membership fee consists of a minimum donation of **\$15.00** annually.
Lifetime TreeHouse Membership fee consists of a **one-time** minimum donation of **\$1,000.00**.

TreeHouse is registered as a non-profit corporation 501 C (3).
All contributions are tax deductible.
Please make checks payable to **TreeHouse Wildlife Center**.

**(Any Boeing employee who contributes to the Employee Charity Fund
can now designate TreeHouse as the specific recipient of donations.)**

- ☐ I would like to **renew** my membership to Treehouse Wildlife Inc.
(A renewal sticker will appear when your membership fee is due.)
- ☐ I would like to **become** a member of TreeHouse.
- ☐ I would like to make an **additional contribution** to TreeHouse.
- ☐ I would like to make a **donation** to the **TreeHouse Building Fund**.

Please check the appropriate box and mail this form with your donation.

☐ \$15.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$ _____ Other

- ☐ I would like information on becoming a **volunteer**.
- ☐ I would like information on **volunteering to staff a TreeHouse booth at fundraisers**

Send to:

**TreeHouse Wildlife Center
1825 Fosterburg Road
Brighton, Il. 62012**