



A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 41, Fall 2010



### Adventures in China

I flew to Beijing for an additional few days to visit the Beijing Raptor Rescue Center and provide training for their staff and veterinarian...[\[more\]](#)



### Fawn Rehab on Coast

When William "Danny" Nicely isn't helping the staff at The Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter (OWLS) in Newport, NC release a Bald Eagle, he's tending to his 2010 herd of seventeen fawns...[\[more\]](#)

### The Gulf Oil Spill, Part II

Finally, on July 15 the oil stopped flowing. The well was capped with a special cap. This required careful work to lower and then attach the cap to the well...[\[more\]](#)

## Wildlife Rehabilitation at the Coast and extreme eastern Coastal Plain

Elizabeth L. Hanrahan  
WREN Wildlife Rehabilitation of Eastern NC

Most of the material for this article is based on my experiences living on Ocracoke for 5 years. We will be moving back to the island in December, 2010.

**Mammals:** For the most part there are few native, terrestrial, mammals on Ocracoke. There are no native squirrels, opossums, deer or venomous snakes. However, someone will bring in a single squirrel over every few years. Since there is not enough "browse" the squirrels starve, or get caught by feral cats. There are occasional reports of deer sightings. In five years, I rehabilitated one vole and received a DOA hit by car marsh rabbit. Since there are native populations of squirrels, cottontails, opossums and deer from Hatteras Island north, there are mammal rehabilitators in Buxton, Manteo, ast Lake and on the mainland.

Therefore, the focus on Ocracoke, the Outer Banks, and the eastern coastal plain is primarily on birds and turtles.



Shore and sea birds are seen throughout the year. There are always a lot of pelicans, gulls, and terns in wildlife rehabilitation. In the fall, winter, and early spring there are many loons; Common and Red-throated. During the winter one can expect to receive at least one northern gannet per week into wildlife rehabilitation. In the summer Cory's shearwater and other varieties of shearwater are received into rehabilitation. Some years there may be a "fall-out" of juveniles, primarily male shearwaters. Numerous studies by both the University of Wisconsin and the University of Georgia indicate that these young birds overextend themselves by straying from the flock and do not have the

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fishing skills needed for independence. Many of these birds arrive into rehabilitation dehydrated and emaciated. Therefore, the standard rehydration and emaciation protocols are followed. The recommended transition to “whole foods” by the IWRC following rehydration is: ¼ tsp of Pancreatin, a half-cup pureed low-sodium water-packed tuna or steamed fish filets. Incubate the formula to body temperature for 15 minutes before feeding. Pancreatin must be mixed with food. Supplement with water and an appropriate avian vitamin, and 1/8 tsp live culture yogurt. Sea Tabs® (Pacific Research Laboratories, Inc., El Cajon, CA) is the recommended for all fish eating birds, turtles, fish and sharks. In addition all birds that are consuming previously frozen fish should have a dose of Vitamin B Complex daily.

### Creature Feature

Winter often brings an assortment of sea and freshwater ducks, Brant and Snow geese. This combination can present feeding and rehabilitation challenges. Some of the birds are fish eaters, some are granivores, and occasionally a herbivore arrives. At least once each winter, I receive a call that someone has found a “baby penguin” sitting on the beach. That would be a Dovekie; an 8” long black and white pelagic bird. The occasional Razorbill and other sea duck are also received in winter. Few hawks are received into wildlife rehab on Ocracoke. The common raptors in winter are the Falcons and Northern Harriers. Ospreys are year-around residents. “Up the beach,” from Hatteras north, red tails and others are common. Osprey (piscivores), American Kestrels and Merlins (carnivore/insectivore) are admitted several times per year. Shorebirds, plovers, sandpipers, and skimmers are received regularly throughout the year. Most summer precocial nestlings look like “running puff-balls.” Accurate identification is a must. The feet, webbed, palmate, semipalmated or lobed are the easiest field mark for identification. Their diets can vary from fish to insects to sand crabs and sand fleas to aquatic worms. All require a calcium (C)/Phosphorus (P) ratio of 2.5:1 for both adults and precocial nestlings. Most nestling plovers, terns, skimmers, and oystercatchers are put back into the nest if the colony can be identified. Permission from the National Park Service and prominent identification is required to enter most of the shorebird and tern nestling colonies to return nestlings. Historically only two to five of the Herons, Egrets, Bitterns or Rails are received into wildlife rehabilitation per year. The most



common received into wildlife rehabilitation are the Night Herons. The commonality of all these species is that they must be fed and housed appropriately. Most of the birds listed above are piscivores; they eat fish. Some eat big fish (Brown Pelicans and Osprey) some eat medium sized fish (Loons and Herons) some eat tiny fish (Terns and Shearwater). Some birds, such as the sandpipers, eat sand fleas and sand crabs. Since fish can cost more than \$1.00 per pound and a pelican can eat 5 to 8 pounds of fish per day or a tern can eat \$5.00 worth of silversides (a small bait fish) per day, so the wildlife rehabilitator has a choice: buy fish or catch them. It is possible to buy fish wholesale. It can be delivered from Morehead City weekly during the summer and early fall. In the winter one has to take the ferry to the mainland and drive to Morehead. Therefore, it is wise to keep at least 100 lbs of finger mullet on hand at all times. Otherwise, plan on spending a LOT of time at the beach. I fish every day at the change of tides during Mid July, August, and September fishing for finger and corn-cob sized fish. I fish with a cast net and then bag and freeze them. I went in “Half-sees” with a fisherman friend on an expensive net. I paid half the price of a big cast net with little holes. He does the fishing, daily, and gives me a portion of the silversides for free. Then I bag and freeze these expensive fish. Also, during the summer I get sand fleas and sand crabs from the beach. Some of these I feed to the birds in wildlife rehabilitation and some I bag and freeze for the winter. Sometimes I use a fish trap to catch small fish. However, I have had the fish stolen out of the trap and later someone took the entire trap! Carnivores and Omnivores such as Merlin and Falcons are fed mice and large insects. Turkey Vultures are fed both road kill and dead fish or fish parts thrown away on the beach. Only a few, 25 to 30, nestling passerines are received during the summer. They are fed the standard FoNS® diet and the foods appropriate for their tropic feeding category. Since Ocracoke is in an important rest stop of the Atlantic Flyway, the first cold front of July or spring fronts can bring unusual migrants. Strange shorebirds from Canada arrive in mid July and August. Migrating passerines begin in late August through mid-October. A wide variety of warblers not only rest on Ocracoke during migrations, some are so exhausted that they are admitted into wildlife rehabilitation for a little “R & R.” Hummingbirds are year round residents though rarely admitted for care. Small “fall-outs” with casualties happen in the fall. Every few years there will be a huge “fall-out,” when hundreds or thousands of birds will arrive and stay for several weeks. Many are hit by cars on the road. One year I received 67 Cedar waxwings in a week. Another year a fall-out of warblers was so large that I received 23 who flew into windows or cars in one day! Hurricanes can be anticipated and there is time to plan for casualties. Following hurricanes there will be more dead birds on the beach than those that can be rescued. Following one hurricane a juvenile timber rattle snake washed up on the beach. The park service brought it into rehab. Fortunately it was fine and it was released on in a conservation preserve on Hatteras Island 3 days later. “Blows” and “Nor’easters” are often a surprise. “Blows” are dry and “Nor’easters” bring rain and often flood the entire island. They are just big winds that come out of nowhere and last about 24 hours. An unexpected “blow” in June, 2004 brought in 37 assorted shearwaters, 3 storm-petrels and a juvenile brown booby in one day! Though there are few terrestrial mammals, it is not unusual to find marine mammals washed onto shore. Juvenile dolphins are occasionally beached in the summer. Usually a member of the Park Service will transport live dolphins to the Aquarium on Roanoke Island. Each winter one or two Harbor Seals beach themselves on the island. We usually give the seals an hour or so to swim off. Otherwise they are brought to wildlife rehabilitation and transport to the Virginia Aquarium is arranged. The transporter will drive to the Virginia State line, meet a Virginia Transporter and transfer the seal; with much accompanied paperwork. Most seals spend about a day in rehabilitation before transport.



Seals are mean and have big teeth!

Aquatic and semi aquatic turtles are regularly treated, throughout the year, in wildlife rehabilitation on Ocracoke. The most common species are Diamond-Backed terrapin, mud turtles, and sliders. Throughout the year I volunteer with the National Park Service with the sea turtles. Though they are never admitted into wildlife rehabilitation, I have helped relocate turtle nests, spent the night on the beach waiting for the turtles to hatch and assist, if needed to the ocean. In the winter I patrol the Island daily for “cold stunned,” stranded, or dead sea turtles. Cold stunned or injured turtles are transported to the Ocracoke Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and then transport to an Aquarium is arranged. Dead turtles are processed on the beach, occasionally a necropsy is performed, ventral and dorsal photos are taken, paperwork filled out and the turtle is buried on the beach. The first cold snap in December can account for as many as 5 dead



turtles in a day. Species include adult loggerhead sea turtles, little green turtles, and one leatherback turtle.

Though many of the animals admitted into wildlife rehabilitation are accidental, many are the result of human encounters and oil pollution. Turtles and diving birds get caught in fishing nets. Some birds are hit by cars on the beach or roads. Many birds are caught on fish hooks or tangled in fishing line. Some birds swallow fish hooks. Tourists will frequently feed the “beach birds.” Then, when the birds beg from beach goers, they may be fed fish with hooks, hot peppers, aluminum foil or even hit and injured with fishing poles or paddles. Fisher people and boaters will often throw “chum” (chopped up fish for bait) into the water and cause diving birds such as terns and skimmers to be oiled. Other boats will clean their bilge tanks and oil the surface of the water, again oiling diving or floating birds such as loons and pelicans. However, the most common practice is for boaters to throw their empty engine oil bottles into the water. This can de-waterproof the feathers of diving and floating birds. “Blows” and storms “churn up” these oil bottles and cause minor oil spills resulting in 5 or 6 oiled birds to be admitted into wildlife rehabilitation. The wash water from even one oiled bird is treated as “hazardous material.”

Though I have lived on the mainland for the past 4 years, I receive many cases from the Outer Banks. There is always at least 100 lbs of fish in the freezer. And, we will be returning to Ocracoke in December, 2010. After all, one can’t be too rich, too thin, or have too many feeder insects, mice, or fish in the freezer.

## In the Spotlight

**Name:** Lou Browning



#### **How did you get started rehabbing?**

I had been involved with human rescue for over 20 years and was burned out. I worked with too many stupid people on rescue calls. Everywhere you look here on the Outer Banks there are animals in need. I began to realize I could do more good helping animals than people, so here I am....

#### **How long have you been rehabbing?**

I think I started in 2004.

#### **Who was your mentor or someone you admire?**

Elizabeth Hanrahan got me started and is still a great mentor. She inspired me to learn and helped me see how to dig deeper for answers. Probably the most important lesson was to focus, observe and then mentally process what you see.

#### **What animals do you work with?**

I work with all birds and reptiles. I leave the mammals to other rehabbers here on the Island that have the ability to survive with no sleep.

#### **What type of setup do you have?**

I have a small clinic in an outbuilding in the woods behind the house along with various mews, cages and tanks.

#### **What animal do you enjoy working with most?**

That's a tough question. Probably crows or sea turtles. With crows, I'm never sure how much smarter they are than I am, so they keep me on my toes. With sea turtles, knowing that if you save one adult, that is the equivalent of saving between 10,000 and 100,000 hatchlings. It's kind of like leveraging investments.

#### **Do you have a favorite rehab experience?**

The best experience is a good release. When a patient turns, looks back at you and then flies or swims away. Words can't express that feeling.

#### **Besides working with animals, do you have any domestic pets?**

Oh boy..... ducks, geese, pigeons, chickens, peafowl, pheasants, guineas, cats, parrots... who did I leave out?

#### **Any non-animal family members?**

My supportive wife Linda, who has extreme patience and my sister Elizabeth, who is willing to pitch in and do whatever is needed at any time.

### What are your hobbies?

Rehabbing

### Don't you have an interest in art too?

I was a successful metal sculptor for years but haven't had the time since I started rehabbing. Now, my hobbies seem to be more science related. One of my projects is developing equipment for easier detection and reading of shifted PIT tags in sea turtles. Another area of interest is "practical" external fixation of femur fractures in birds.

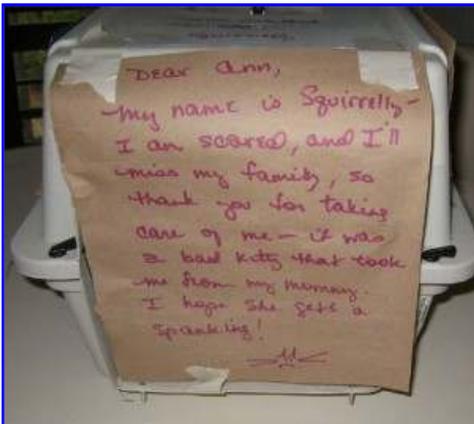
### What do you like about being a part of WRNC?

The ability to network. Knowing that there are others with more experience that I can call and ask questions.

## TALES FROM THE FIELD

# Squirrel Delivered by Cab

by Ann Rogers, Triangle Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic



I got a call from a woman in Hillsborough whose cat had brought her a young squirrel.



She told me that she has back problems and cannot drive so she could not bring it to me. She lives 30 minutes from me, and I was feeding so many birds and squirrels that I did not have an extra hour to go pick it up. (I was also sort of irked that her cat brought it in and wanted her to take some responsibility for it!) I asked if she had a friend or neighbor who could bring the baby to me, or at least meet me somewhere closer. Then she remembered that she had used a cab to get to a hospital appointment recently and said she'd call Tony's Taxi service (a one-man operation) and see if he would deliver the squirrel. She called back and told me that he would bring it and that she would use an old carrier that I wouldn't have to send back to her.



In a few hours, the cab showed up with the carrier and I ran out to meet him and asked if I could take his picture. The 100g, eyed-opened squirrel was in good condition and is now named “Taxi,” although I quit naming my squirrels years ago! I thought his whole episode was funny and mentioned it on the Wildlife Welfare Yahoo group. Someone suggested I should call the TV station, which I ignored. Obviously, someone else decided it was a good idea!

The next day, I was working a shift at the Triangle Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic, and of course, took my baby squirrels with me to feed. I got a call from WRAL and they asked if they could come get a video of my squirrel who arrived in a taxi, so they came to the clinic to make the video. It aired that night and all the next day on two local stations (<http://www.wral.com/news/local/noteworthy/story/8128582/>), and was picked up by other stations across the country. I also heard from several friends in other states who saw the clip!

“Taxi” now weighs almost 200 grams and is in a juvie cage with two other younger squirrels.

## Trophic Feeding Categories of Songbirds

### Introduction

Elizabeth L. Hanrahan

The digestive process in birds is fast because they cannot store heavy food materials for long periods of time. They need a constant supply of nutrients to sustain activity. The bill is used to crush, tear, or simply hold food before swallowing. Most birds have few taste buds; passerines have about 6. Birds are able to make distinctions in foods based on the feel, or texture, of the food to the tongue and palate.

The esophagus is a simple muscular structure connecting the mouth with the proventriculus or glandular stomach. In some species the proventriculus has been widened for temporary food storage and is called the “crop.” The “crop” allows birds to load up on food quickly and then fly off to digest in safe cover. Most granivores have an enlarged crop; think doves and pigeons. Some birds have evolved a complex stomach (proventriculus and ventriculus) below the “crop.” The proventriculus is a glandular area of the stomach that produces the mucus, pepsin and hydrochloric acid needed for digestion. The tough muscular section of the stomach, the gizzard, acts as teeth, grinding food into a soft pulp and blocks the passage of bones or other objects that may injure intestinal tissues. Granivores, birds that eat grains or small seeds, have a well developed proventriculus and gizzard. Evening Grosbeaks, which feed on heavy nuts and seeds, need a substantial gizzard to crush food into particles small enough to digest. Frugivores, such as Waxwings and Bluebirds, and birds that specialize in fruits and berries have a reduced gizzard. Fruits and berries are rich in simple sugars and require little digestion and pass rapidly through the bird.

Birds in rehabilitation are in our care because they are sick, injured, or young. Healthy adult, unstressed, birds may tolerate brief periods of inappropriate diets. Young or compromised birds have little margin for error. Nutritional intake can dictate whether the bird thrives, survives illness, heals from injury or is released and lives long enough to reproduce in the wild. Wild birds have evolved to require very particular biochemical nutrients found only in a natural diet. Wild bird’s requirements for water, protein, energy, vitamins and minerals must all be met. These requirements vary between species and individuals depending on: Age, Activity Levels, Reproductive and Health status.

All birds that are fed by parents and many precocial birds ingest foods that are unlike foods they will consume as adults. Newly hatched altricial birds require extra water, microbes, and foods specific to them. All hatchling birds, until day 4, need digestive enzymes added to their diet.

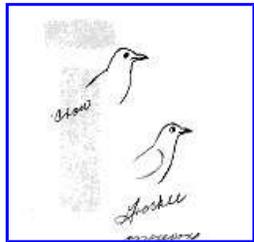
Pancrezyme® or Viokase-V®, available from your veterinarian, can be given. Many wildlife rehabilitators substitute, plain, active culture yogurt at ½ tsp. per half-cup of formula. At this time WRNC recommends the FoNS Diet or Mac Diet for nestling and juvenile passerines.

As the bird gets older, gradually offer a larger variety of natural, species specific foods.



### The Bill

The avian bill has been adapted to the niche and food requirements of the bird. Birds depend on their bills to obtain food, preen their feathers, build their nests, perform courtship displays, and defend themselves from predators or rivals. Bill shape is also a key to identifying the typical feeding category of birds.



#### Bill shape determines how bird forages and eats

Identifies typical diet of the species  
Size & shape relates to eating habits  
Some adapted to courtship displays & defense against predators



#### Usual shapes include:

Short-swallows & nightjars – Insectivore  
Long-woodpeckers-Exudativores  
Oriole – Frugivores  
Conical-cardinal, grosbeak – granivores  
Hooked-raptors-carnivores  
-White eyed vireo – insectivore



### BEGINNER BASICS

## Keep Records!

By Jean Chamberlain



Many beginning rehabilitators recognize the need to record information provided by the finder (see June 09 issue “I Wish I had Asked”). This is necessary to help diagnose injuries, contact the finder when further information is needed and determine where to release the animal. Also, you should record information about the animal and its condition during the physical exam. Record your observations, not just serious problems and physical characteristics, but also the emotional status of the animal. Record any treatment done too. Don't forget to record the weight. Record trips to the vet, diagnoses reached and medications prescribed and administered.



The record keeping only begins with the intake history and observations made during the physical exam. Each day keep track of the amount and type of food eaten, presence and color of feces produced and any observed physical and behavior changes in the animal. Continue to keep a record of the animal's weight. You will often refer back to these records to check the animal's progress toward recovery.

For infants, record the amount of formula given, frequency fed and the animal's weight each day. Keep close tabs on the developmental progression, noting milestones for the species (eyes open, fur appears, begins lapping etc.). Compare your data to that of the norm for the species. You want to know if the animal progresses as expected or if you need to adjust your protocol. When the animal is released indicate the date and location. Taking photos is a great way to monitor your patient and learn the developmental stages. Be sure to note the age and weight of the animal on each photo. Your records are not only helpful in monitoring the individual but also for comparison with animals that come in to your care in the future.

Start keeping records with the very first animal you rehab. You will soon see how vital records are to providing good care.

## Chimney Swifts Depend On Us, and We On Them!



With the help of WRNC's Chimney Swift Tower Grant Program, construction of alternative habitat for our feathered environmental partner, the Chimney Swift, continues to spread across our state. 2010 WRNC grant award towers were erected in Cary and Hubert, NC much to the chagrin of insect pests far and wide.

If you have noticed the loss of Chimney Swift habitat (possibly due to the capping of chimneys) or a decrease in numbers of Chimney Swift



presence, you may also want to construct and maintain a Chimney Swift tower in your area to encourage Chimney Swifts, acrobatic insectivores who vacuum the sky at dawn and dusk, to return to your community each year.

WRNC offers a \$300.00 grant to assist you or your group in the undertaking of this valuable conservation project. Please refer to WRNC's website <http://ncwildliferehab.org> for details of eligibility and application requirements. This program is open to North Carolina residents only, at this time. For further questions feel free to contact the WRNC Chimney Swift Tower Grant Program Coordinator, Linda Bergman, at 910-346-8345 or [lbergman@ec.rr.com](mailto:lbergman@ec.rr.com). Deadline for submission is January 5th, annually, and as fast as the Chimney Swift flies, so does time!

## An Injured Purple Martin Rejoins His Flock at Manns Harbor in Time to Prepare for the Flight to Brazil



Purple martins are still being injured and killed on the old Manns Harbor bridge, but one victim recently was nursed back to health and rejoined his flying community in time for their journey to Brazil later this summer.

In spite of flashing yellow lights and a 20 mph "go-slow" zone on the western end of the William B. Umstead Bridge between Manns Harbor and Roanoke Island, some 8 to 12 of the purple martins who roost there are killed each day, most likely by passing motorists, according to informal counts taken daily by the Coastal Carolina Purple Martin Society (CCPMS).



The death toll is far less than the number of birds killed before the dawn and dusk speed reduction zone was introduced in 2007. Before then, CCPMS surveys counted as many as 50 birds killed per day. One year the tally was about 3,600 for the summer season (July to September) when, for at least 30 years, more than 100,000 martins from throughout northeastern North Carolina gather to roost under the bridge, fattening up before their 2,600-mile migration to Brazil.

Since the CCPMS was formed in 2006, awareness of this amazing natural phenomenon has risen among local residents, who help spread the word among the summer tourists who frequent the Outer Banks. Among other programs, the Society invites people to join Thursday evening “Purple Martin Madness” sessions at the west end of the bridge, not only to witness the spectacle of 100,000 martins coming in to roost after a day’s foraging the local wetlands and farmlands, but also to learn about the history, behavior and human interrelations of the purple martins, known as “America’s Most Wanted Bird.”

After the July 29 evening educational sessions at the bridge, conducted at the brand new BeBop Pier and Observation Platform dedicated by Dare County Commissioners this spring, CCPMS chair Alisa Esposito made her routine check on the bridge to count martins that may have been hit by vehicles. She found six birds killed and one injured.

The injured adult male suffered a deeply bruised wing, but it was not a broken wing. Alisa took the bird to the WREN wildlife rehabilitation center in Edenton for cage rest. There, she said, he was maintained on a diet of wax and meal worms fed to him every hour by clinician Elizabeth Hanrahan, who eventually offered him the opportunity to demonstrate his fitness in a flight cage. After two weeks at WREN, the martin was deemed fit for release.

On August 5, during another Purple Martin Madness session at the new pier, Alisa met two young birders from Mansfield, Ohio. Eight-year-old Zoe Saldana and her sister Ava, 5, were watching the birds with their parents and grandparents, who live in Kill Devil Hills. Alisa asked the girls to help her release the rehabilitated bird to the roost.

Zoe and Ava were thrilled to hear the story of the purple martins,” Alisa said. “Their eyes lit up as they watched him fly up and away into the sunset over Croatan Sound toward his familiar roost.”

Esposito noted that about 75 percent of Manns Harbor martins are hit by vehicles traveling during the hour surrounding sunrise. “If motorists must be aboard this bridge when the birds are present,” she said, “please slow down to 20 miles per hour to keep these birds safe.”

The go-slow zone will be in effect at dawn and dusk hours until the martins are gone, which can be anytime between the third week of August until the second week of

September. Their migration is timed according to seasonal rainfall and insect population, as well as when the winds are in their favor.

Dead and injured purple martins have a profound effect on people. Because they rely solely on nest houses and gourds maintained by humans, all martins at the Manns Harbor bridge come from the yard of someone who enjoyed seeing them there all spring.

For more information, visit the CCPMS at [www.purplemartinroost.com](http://www.purplemartinroost.com)

## News Briefs

### American robins take up residence in the Arctic

This National Geographic story reports that robins are moving northward, probably because of climate change:

<http://blogs.nationalgeographic.com/blogs/news/chiefeditor/2010/07/american-robins-move-into-arctic>

### UV-Patterned Window Prevents Bird

Collisions Germany-based Glaswerke Arnold has glass patterned with a special ultraviolet reflecting material that the bird can see and which humans cannot. <http://news.discovery.com/tech/uv-patterned-window-prevents-bird-collisions.html>

Proposed rules on the use of migratory species for education are now out for public comment in the Federal Register:

<http://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/12411892/13033452/name/Education%20Proposed%20Rule%2021%20September%202010.pdf>

The comment period ends on December 20.

## ETHICS CASE STUDIES

### *Deciding Right from Wrong*

#### Case Study # 15

The wildlife rehabilitator has been licensed to work with mammals for over 7 years. She has an excellent reputation and loves working with all animals; especially bunnies. *She refuses to do any euthanasia.* Because of this, some other wildlife rehabilitators in the area frequently transfer difficult cases to her. They don't like to do euthanasia either. And, it is "just too expensive to have the vet do it." Money is getting tight because she has 17 non-releasable squirrels, opossums, and rabbits to take care of in addition to the ones that come in and are released.

- What can she do?
- How does this relate to the Wildlife Rehabilitator's Code of Ethics?
- Which Code (s) might apply?
- How can this be resolved?
- Other questions/ issues

#### Answers to previous ethics case

#### Case Study # 14

The wildlife rehabilitator loves working with birds; she worked so hard to get a Federal Permit. So far she has 2 robins, a cardinal, 3 mocking birds and a yellow bird in rehabilitation. She takes a photo, for her records, of each bird at admission and just before release. There is not much information on the yellow bird. It was found in the county off Hwy 64. It could be a goldfinch, a flycatcher, an oriole or some kind of warbler. She takes the bird to a golf course for release hoping it is a goldfinch. Later she shows the release picture to a friend who IDs it as a prothonotary warbler. "Did you release it by the river or at the Mill Pond? They are special and live in a riparian habitat." her friend asks.

- Which Code (s) might apply?  
Code # 5-enlist the assistance of other trained professional when appropriate  
Code #10- Work on the basis of sound ecological principles

## The Search is On

### for New Board Members!

WRNC Symposium 2011 is just around the “holiday corner” and will be here before we know it! Each year WRNC appeals to our general membership for interested persons who would enjoy serving our organization as a WRNC Board Member. Voting for new board members occurs during our General Membership Meeting which is after our fabulous dinner on Saturday night. So, we’d like to start now to look for new energy, ideas and commitment from individuals who are action oriented and would like to share their wildlife rehabilitation vision in efforts to continually support the needs of wildlife rehabilitators throughout North Carolina and rehabbers from surrounding states who have joined our ranks as WRNC members. Board members participate in quarterly meetings by telephone conference and serve on a couple active committees of their choosing, such as symposium, cage grant and education, to name a few. If you are interested, please contact Toni O’Neil, Nomination Committee Chair, by email at [oneil9734@yahoo.com](mailto:oneil9734@yahoo.com) or call her at 910-326-6432 to get your application submission in the works. We’d love to hear from you and hopefully, get you on board!

## Cleveland County

### Beginner Wildlife Rehabilitation Class

A training class was offered by Wildlife Rehabilitators of NC on Saturday & Sunday, September 25-26, 2010 in Casar, NC



**Board of Directors Meeting minutes** The minutes of the August 8th meeting of the Board of Directors are found at <http://www.ncwildliferehab.org/admin/board-meeting-minutes/BOD-meeting-8Aug2010.pdf>

### CREATURE FEATURE

## Northern Flicker – *Colaptes auratus*



**Description:** Flickers are large (12.5 “), distinctive woodpeckers often seen on the ground in open areas, open woodlands, and suburban areas. They have a brown crown and gray face, barred back; spotted underparts, and a black, crescent bib. Males have a black moustache stripe and a red nape crescent. Their white rump patch is conspicuous in flight. They are monogamous and will perch like a woodpecker or can perch like a passerine.

**Weight Range:** 92 to 130 grams

**Range:** Common throughout the U.S.

**Natural History:** Northern Flickers nest in cavities as well as posts, poles, and boxes that are excavated by both the male and female. Cavity nests are built in “snags” (standing dead trees), from 6’ to 15’ and occasionally up to 100’. The cavities are situated below the surrounding tree line near open ground for optimal feeding. Flickers are the most terrestrial of North American woodpeckers

**Adult Diet:** *Insectivore* (Insects) eats more ants, more than 3,000 per day, than any other N.A. bird. Also eats seeds, acorns & nuts. Gleans bark and ground for insects. May be fed mealworms, waxworms, and suet cakes while in wildlife rehabilitation.

**Nestlings:** Altricial and naked. Skin is warm brownish-orange becoming reddish then blackish before feather quills appear. Inside of mouth is pink. Swollen, whitish, gape flanges. Quills appear at 7 days, eyes open at 10 days. Young brooded by male for first 3 weeks. Fledge at 25-28 days. Young are fed regurgitant by both parents.

**Fledglings:** Become aggressive toward siblings. Will make a “Kerrr” sound with head bobbing when feeding. May injure siblings. Do not house with other species.



**Juveniles:** Juvenile flickers admitted to rehabilitation can present difficult behavior problems.



They are not independently self-feeding and will not gape for food. The mouth is easy to open for force-feeding. Introduce natural foods as soon as possible to speed independence.

**Rehabilitation Notes:** Activity Aviary requirement=8' x 16' x 8'. Provide upright logs and large limbs for climbing. Provide additional branches for perching. Flickers enjoy a "cavity" for occasional shelter.

**Common Problems:** Frequently nest or glean decayed trees that can fall during windstorms; nestlings can be orphaned or injured as a result. Nestlings frequently infested with ectoparasites or mites. Because they are frequently on the ground, they may be struck by cars when foraging for ants on the shoulder of a road. Because they forage in suburban lawns they are prone to pesticide or fertilizer poisoning.

By Elizabeth Hanrahan

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