

Grilled Squirrel, Anyone?

by Reva Lux
Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator

This has to be one for the record books! On December 28, I received a call from an employee at the local Target Store. Someone in the parking lot noticed a squirrel stuck in the front grill of a parked car. Obviously, the car owner had no idea, and the store had no luck paging the owner, so I was called in.

I hurried over and found a gorgeous Western Gray Squirrel clinging to the grill. **Her head and forearms were loose but her hips were firmly wedged into the grill.** I grabbed her with my Kevlar gloves and—after we found the car owner and got her permission—a nice man broke the grill just above her hips. I pulled her out and popped her into a carrier. Before leaving the Target parking lot, the car owner told us the story. While driving down the street, she spotted the squirrel in the road and had to make a decision whether to hit the squirrel or swerve into the path of an oncoming semi. She believed she had killed the squirrel; unknown to her, it had bounced up into the car's grill.

I loaded the carrier into my car and headed home. The squirrel was no worse for wear but very hungry and ticked off about her unexpected ride! An exam found no broken bones or soft tissue injuries. **I was very pleased because Western Gray Squirrels are absolutely beautiful animals and rare these days, due to the invasion of the Eastern Gray Squirrel.**



The next day, I relocated the squirrel to a property west of Dallas where the family is trying to reestablish a population of our native Western Gray Squirrels. The family had a single male on

their land but no females. They had a nest box ready. I put the female into the box and covered the opening. Then I climbed a ladder and nailed the box onto the trunk of a huge oak tree. The box was filled with clean Timothy hay, oak leaves, lots of peanuts, and half of an apple.

The landowners are creating a nature preserve and have planted lots of native White Oak trees. Happily, their ten acres already supports many mature oaks. *This was truly a happy ending for everyone concerned!*

Defining What We Do...

by Tari Edmonds
Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator

Wildlife rehabilitation involves caring for injured, ill, and orphaned wildlife with the goal of releasing each into its natural habitat. Each animal is examined, diagnosed, and treated through an individually tailored program of veterinary care, hospital care, feeding, medicating, physical therapy, exercise, and pre-release conditioning. Releases are planned for appropriate weather, season, habitat, and location. Some animals, of course, are beyond help when found and are humanely euthanized. Unreleasable animals occasionally are suitable as educational aids.



Critics of wildlife rehabilitation advocate “letting nature take its course” – indicating that distressed wild animals should be allowed to remain free to meet their natural fate. However, rehabilitation records indicate that **the majority of injured, ill, and orphaned wildlife are suffering NOT because of natural occurrences but because of human intervention**— some accidental, some intentional, and many preventable: autos, trains, mowers, power lines, firearms, traps, kids throwing stones, woodcutters, picture windows, poisons, oil spills, pets, etc. Rehabilitators ease the suffering of these animals, either by caring for them until they can be released or humanely euthanizing them.

Trained, licensed wildlife rehabilitators are a valuable link in the network of people and organizations helping wildlife. In addition to returning animals to the wild, rehabilitators work to reduce negative human impact on wildlife and habitat. Some are involved in research, captive propagation, and reintroduction projects. Many are involved in public education, exposing both children and adults to biological facts, ecological concepts, and **a responsible attitude toward all living things.** Information from trained, conscientious rehabilitators can and should be used more often to assist in research, writing legislation, law enforcement, population management, habitat preservation, public education programs, and species introduction.

“Ever occur to you why some of us can be this concerned with animals? Because government is not. Why not? Animals don’t vote.” –Paul Harvey

A Tale of Three Waxwings

In July, a very special lady called songbird rehabilitator **Tari Edmonds**. Through her tears, the caller reported that a flock of Cedar Waxwings were bathing in a puddle on State Street when a large truck rumbled past. The flock rose in alarm and found themselves in the path of a large-wheeled truck. Eight waxwings were killed outright. The lady brought the remaining three birds to Tari. Of the three, two had wing injuries and one had a seriously broken leg.

Within an hour-taped and splinted-the smallest waxwing was hobbling around looking for food. All three birds were kept in an aquarium and fed a diet of mealworms, blackberries, and moths. After two weeks, two birds were ready to go, but the third was still not able to use his leg, so all were moved to screened cages to help them get stronger through exercise. A month later, the splint was removed from the small waxwing's leg. In a few days, he was getting around quite well, though his leg was fairly stiff. He found ways to climb and was able to fly, so it was time for the great escape! The three birds were fat and fluffy, and all that remained for Tari to do was locate a nearby flock.



A flock was located at Minto Brown, and Tari transported the three survivors to the park. The cage was opened, and the two larger waxwings flew up and joined the group. The little guy just sat there and wouldn't try to fly. At this point, Tari figured she would have to return him to rehab for a few more days. As she got down on her knees to pick the

little waxwing up, the other two swooped down and landed by him. Tari says, "I, as a lowly human, was not privy to the conversation, so I sat back and watched them encourage him to go. After about ten minutes, they got him flying and all circled up to the sky to join the others. I stayed for about an hour and watched, but they were lost to the swirl, and I decided it was time to go. As I drove away, I again marveled at the ability of migrating birds to accept their own kind, even when they are strangers to the flock. Too bad people aren't so accepting."

Did you know? "The flocking behavior of waxwings has probably evolved at least in part in response to the nature of their diet. Both the fruit and insects they eat are very patchy in distribution, and flocking is a more effective means of searching for clumped food resources than individual foraging."

-David Sibley

An Eagle In The House

by Reva Lux

The man at my front door said, "Are you the lady that takes the birds?" I agreed to this and walked out to his car. I opened the trunk until I could see the bird's head and quickly shut it again. It *was* a Bald Eagle! How was I going to get it out of the trunk? The bird answered that question for me. He hopped onto the fender of the car and I grabbed him in such a way as to avoid his powerful beak and talons. The man put a towel over the eagle's head, and I carried him into the house.



The story began when **Wilson Jimna** went for a walk by the Willamette River and saw the eagle on the rocks. The bird walked into the river and couldn't get out, so Wilson went in after it. Amazingly, Wilson was not scratched in the process.

I called raptor rehabilitator, **Karen Costa**, and also called the *Statesman Journal*, because it's not everyday one has a Bald Eagle as a house guest! When the reporter arrived, I wished I had cleaned house better, but it never works that way... never!

X-rays revealed a soft tissue injury on the wing. The bird was transferred to **Chintimini Wildlife Rehabilitation Center** in Corvallis for long-term care until its feathers grow in. **We commend Wilson Jimna for his bravery!**

Many Hands Make Light Work

We're always delighted when opportunity knocks! Corban College has placed SWRA on their list of community service opportunities for students. Corban student **Alana Adair** wants to work with us as part of her volunteer project. She will be setting up a student group dedicated to working with wildlife. **Reva Lux** will train the students to staff the HELPLINE and assist with rescues. This is wonderful news, because finding reliable HELPLINE volunteers is about as easy as hiring a competent person for a 911 dispatch job. Not everyone has the even temperament required to handle crisis calls- human or animal. Alana speaks Spanish and has offered to do translating for us. **Kudos to this enthusiastic young woman for stepping up to fill a need!**

