

On the Horizon



Horizon Wings Newsletter – Spring 2011

www.horizonwings.org

Welcome to Horizon Wings' newsletter – *On the Horizon*. We would like to keep you informed of happenings, events, and news going on at Horizon Wings.

Our mission at Horizon Wings is to rehabilitate birds of prey for release into the wild, in order to maintain their population and to educate the community to enhance awareness of the environment. It is our hope by doing this that we reach people of all ages and create the desire in them to help preserve our natural world.

Earth Day Fair 2011



Horizon Wings is happy to announce our 2nd annual Earth Day Fair to be held on Saturday, April 30th, from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children, and free to children under 5 years old.

Earth Day Fair 2011 will feature tours of our aviaries, live birds of prey programs at 11:30am and 2:00pm, and a special story-telling starring Oscar, our Great Horned owl, at 1:00pm. Other activities include owl pellet labs, nature-related crafts, and face painting.

Last year's event was a great success, despite inclement weather. Your enthusiasm and generosity helped raise over \$500 towards the care and feeding of our educational birds, and towards the expenses of our extensive rehabilitation and release efforts.

Please join with us again this year in celebrating the earth and its magnificent creatures. We look forward to seeing our friends, as well as welcoming those new to our organization.



After experiencing one of the harshest winters on record, we in the Northeast are all looking forward to the promise of Spring. Our raptor friends are also anticipating the warmth of Spring, the melting away of snow and ice -- and the re-emergence of rodents!

While this winter has been difficult on us (who ever would have thought we'd be raking our roofs), it has made things even more difficult for birds of prey, already familiar with the rigors of day to day survival. Many species of raptors rely on small mammals, such as mice, for food. But deep snow cover offers insulation and protection for the mice and makes it more challenging for raptors to locate their prey. An increased number of predator birds are being hit by cars, in part because the unusually bitter winter is forcing them to hunt closer to the roads and to resort to eating more road kill. Barred owls, particularly, are showing signs of distress. It seems that more are being spotted in suburban backyards.

All this is reflected in our rehabilitation statistics. We are less than 3 months into 2011 and have already received 15 birds of prey for rehabilitation. This is nearly three times the number seen in the same period last year. This includes 8 hawks (4 Red-tailed hawks, 3 Red-shouldered Hawks, 1 Cooper's Hawk) and 7 owls (6 Barred Owls and 1 Great Horned Owl). Over half the birds had been hit by cars, including all 7 owls. Injuries sustained include head trauma, fractured wings, and foot injuries.

Of these, 4 birds have been released (2 Red-tailed hawks and 2 Barred Owls) and the remaining 4 (1 Red-tailed Hawk and 3 Barred Owls) are still recovering.

But cars are not the only danger. Recently an adult Red-Tailed Hawk came to us as the result of a serious leg trap injury. Her foot had been caught in an outdated illegal leg hold trap. Fortunately for this Red-Tailed Hawk, snowmobilers out riding in Woodstock, CT noticed her sitting in a tree with the rusty trap dangling from her partially severed middle toe. They immediately contacted the Department of Environmental Protection and a conservation officer brought the bird to Horizon Wings. The hawk was underweight, severely dehydrated, and obviously in a great deal of pain. The first 48 hours of intensive care were crucial. Mary-Beth cleaned the wound and administered fluids and pain medication. Only after stabilization could plans be made to amputate the affected toe. Following surgery, this Red-Tailed Hawk exhibited remarkable improvement in attitude and appetite. Because she is an experienced hunter and her outside two digits as well as her hallux are intact, her prognosis is bright. We are looking forward to an early Spring release!



Written by Patricia Cebrelli



This red-tailed hawk was released in February after a full recovery from her injuries. Rehabilitating sick and injured raptors and then releasing them, strong and healthy once more, is our ultimate goal at Horizon Wings.

Wishlist

- Lumber
- Cordless power tools
- Vinyl coated wire
- Zip-Loc freezer bags
- Postage stamps
- Paper towels
- Astro-turf
- Pea-stone
- Soft-sided pet carriers (large)

Please contact us at horizonwings@ymail.com if you can donate any of these items. Monetary donations may be applied to any of the above.



Patricia Cebrelli holds a red-tailed hawk with a severe toe injury so that the bandage on its foot may be replaced.

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