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Critter Creek Wildlife Station  
36710 Sand Creek Road  
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Visit [CritterCreek.org](http://CritterCreek.org) to see back issues of the Chronicle



# Critter Creek Chronicle

Newsletter of Critter Creek Wildlife Station

Spring 2010

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## WINTER FESTIVAL A BIG SUCCESS

Our open house on December 26<sup>th</sup> was a great success. We were able to track each of the activities--the pizza booth, the tie-dye and jewelry-making activities, the bake sale, the beanbag game, the plant sale, the silent auction and the animal tours all brought in funding. We want to thank everyone who contributed auction items, time and money to make the event such a success.



Tie-Dye Activity



Pizza Wagon



Jewelry Making



Plant Sale



Silent Auction



Animal Tour



Aubrey, the Cashier



Parking Attendants



Bake Sale

**Critter Creek Chronicle**  
 Animals for Education

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# SPRING OPEN HOUSE

A CRITTER CREEK FUNDRAISER

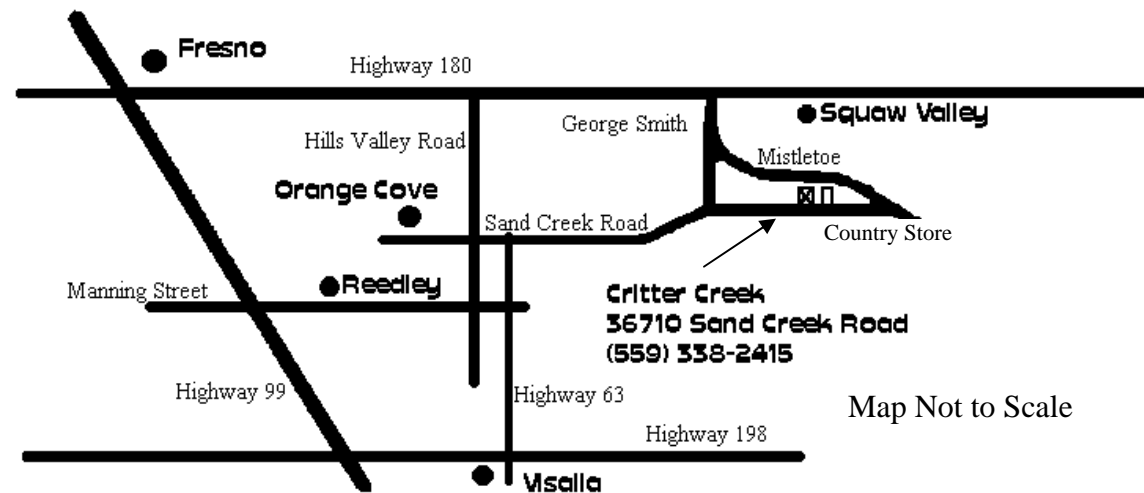
**SATURDAY MARCH 20TH**  
**10:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.**

**ANIMAL TOURS 10:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.**  
**ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE DAY**

**COME JOIN US FOR A FUN-FILLED DAY OF GAMES, CRAFTS,**  
**FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

**ALL WHILE HELPING CRITTER CREEK**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL Louise or Dan at 338-2415



We will have a few items up for auction, beverages and snacks for sale, games and art activities for all, and animal tours from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (the last tour leaving around 12:30).

The hills are especially pretty during March so we hope you set aside that Saturday to join us at Critter Creek.

We are unable to hold another Open House until the fall due to the number of orphan wildlife we take in and release from March through September.

## THE JOYS OF SPRING

Spring is here and we are ready for the rush—we hope! To make spring truly a season of renewal, there are ways you can help. Remember this is the breeding season for most wildlife, so if an animal is annoying you and you kill it or relocate it, you are probably sentencing its young to death by slow starvation. This is not the time of year to prune trees especially palm trees. If you plan to disc or mow, try a cursory walk over the area first to check for dens or nests of ground-nesting birds. If you find young, they may not be abandoned. The best advice is to leave them alone, be vigilant, and watch for the parents to return when the area is quiet again. This is often the case for a fawn whose mother might leave it for 8-12 hours unattended.

Baby birds do fall out of nests, but parent birds will accept the young when placed back in the nest or as near to the nest as possible. Parent song birds spend all day bringing food to their nestlings sometimes every few minutes. This is impossible to duplicate under foster care conditions, so we urge people to always put baby birds back into their nests unless they are injured.

Our service area is ever widening, so we would appreciate any help we can get transporting wildlife to our facility or to our vet. In addition, we are working with area animal control agencies and local law enforcement agencies. These facilities are set up to hold and in some cases transport the animals to the vet or to Critter Creek.

The laws in California regarding rearing of wildlife are some of the strictest in the United States. Put simply, you cannot raise wildlife without proper permits. However aside from the legality, it is important to understand the skills, knowledge, equipment, housing, etc. necessary to successfully raise wildlife. The special dietary needs of all the different mammals and birds must be met. Remember they are becoming an adult in 3-6 months—a growth period that takes a human close to 18 years! In addition, much wildlife is vulnerable to imprinting, a sort of identity crisis for the animal. If wild young lose their fear of humans, they have lost their chief advantage for survival.

I admit there is nothing cuter than a baby raccoon or owl, but there is also nothing sadder than a perfectly healthy animal forced to remain in captivity forever or, worse, forced to be euthanized because it has no fear of people and so “represents a threat to the public.”

Even feeding wildlife around your home may seem like a kindness, but this also can turn ugly rapidly. When you leave pet food outside all night, you are inviting local wildlife in for a free handout. The food becomes “easy pickings” for the wild animals and soon they are a nuisance. Improper disposal of garbage presents another problem. Wild animals need to remain on their “wild food” diet. This is especially true in the case of mammals. Probably the best example of such problems is with bears. Every year a certain number of “problem” bears are euthanized. What is so sad is that human carelessness or direct intention enticed the bears to approach houses and camps. There are plenty of bear-proof products available for campers to store their food and to dispose of trash. These products are also available to homeowners. If everyone would take the time to be careful with pet food and their own garbage, these “problems” could be stopped before they occur.

As housing developments reach out further into the countryside, more sightings of coyotes, fox, raccoon, opossum, etc. are reported. Our advice is to learn to share your environment with the native dwellers. Remember they were there first.

Water Tank Project has been delayed due to rain.