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Critter Creek Wildlife Station
36710 Sand Creek Road
Squaw Valley, CA 93675

Members receive our quarterly newsletter
Visit CritterCreek.org to see back issues of the Chronicle

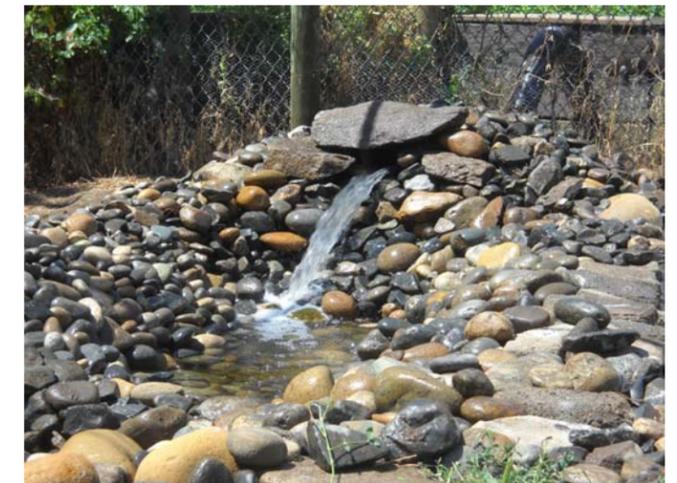


Newsletter of Critter Creek Wildlife Station Summer 2010 Volume 15, No. 2

Renovation of Heron Creek

It has taken some time but we have cleared the old fiberglass ponds from Heron Creek and replaced them with a waterfall and meandering stream lined with waterproof material and covered in rounded river rock—close to 8 tons of it! The previous combination of fiberglass ponds and liner leaked making it unviable with only our well to keep replenishing the water. The system was designed to be a closed system: the water passes through the bio-filter into Heron Creek, pours into the duck pond and is pumped back into the bio-filter. The system works remarkably well considering the number of water fowl the enclosure must accommodate, but it only works if it doesn't leak. We have many of the original plants and fish that we will be returning to the enclosure to help create the wetlands environment. Most of our frogs hung around. During the lull, waiting for the river rock, we managed to rehab two young Black Crowned Night Herons in the enclosure. They are now happily hunting fish in ponds along the San Joaquin River.

I would like to thank all our volunteers who contributed rock or money to purchase rock and those who moved all that rock into the enclosure and placed it along the streambed. It was hot, physically tiring work but the results are amazing.



Critter Creek Chronicle
Animals for Education

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FALL OPEN HOUSE

A CRITTER CREEK FUNDRAISER

SATURDAY September 18TH

11:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.

Gate will close at 1:30 to allow you enough time to tour

Take your time walking around the facility viewing the variety of native
(and some not so native) wildlife

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL Louise or Dan at 338-2415



Bring a lunch and enjoy the picnic facilities. The old oak trees provide ample shade. We hope you set aside that Saturday to join us at Critter Creek.

ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Those of you traveling from the northern part of the valley to Critter Creek will soon see a sign on Highway 180 beginning at Cove Road designating Critter Creek Wildlife Station as having officially adopted that stretch of the highway for litter pickup. A clean environment fits into our efforts to protect wildlife.

PERMANENT RESIDENT

RANGER: Red Fox

This spring we received a young red fox caught in a Fresno neighborhood. Currently red fox are considered non-native this side of the Rocky Mountains, so we are unable to release him. He is residing in a kennel next to Fox Haven while our elder red fox, Amber, becomes accustomed to his smells and appearance. In time we will be able to add him to Fox Haven.



Red fox grow to nearly twice the size of the indigenous gray fox. They are not as agile a climber as the gray fox, though they manage to easily breach most chicken yard defenses. Their most distinguishing characteristic is a white tip on the end of their tail. While non-native, they are found in most region of the Central Valley

Marmot Mayhem

Answering emergency wildlife calls has never been dull. The trips can often be a waste of time--literally a "wild goose chase." Other times they require a tremendous amount of patience. That was the case when we received a call about a marmot in a truck engine compartment. The family had been to Yosemite on a Saturday, returned home, used the truck the rest of the weekend around town, and only discovered the marmot on Tuesday.

It had gnawed on the air conditioning hoses but had done little other damage.

Val Wallert was the first to respond. When she called us, she reported that the marmot was beyond reach and that the owner of the truck was getting frustrated. When we arrived, the marmot was clearly entrenched in the lower end of the engine compartment barely reachable with a pole. We called Clovis Animal Control for tranquilizers. With several attempts we were finally able to slow him down a little. We harassed him out of the engine compartment down the transmission and into the spare tire compartment where Dan was finally able to get a hold of him and place him into a carrier. As quickly as that marmot moved from the engine area to the rear of the truck, I would hardly say he was "trapped." After a couple of hours under a truck, I learned more than I wanted about truck construction.

