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Spring Open House

Saturday, April 5th - 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Last Sign-In 1:30 p.m.



The Open House will be unguided, so the pace is leisurely offering more opportunities to take pictures and spend time with your favorite animal. Come see the foothills blossoming into spring. Admission is by donation. Call (559) 338-2415 for information or look online at www.crittercreek.org

PROBLEMS FOR WILDLIFE DURING THE DROUGHT

Rescue groups up and down California are bracing for increased problems with wildlife due to the drought. More wildlife is expected to come closer to residential areas in search of water and food. We are expected to see more emaciated and dehydrated animals coming in. We have already seen more injured animals as territorial disputes get more serious over dwindling resources. As traditional sources of water dry up, wildlife will seek water at outdoor pet dishes, bird baths, etc. More will be injured by cars, pet dogs, and unsympathetic people. Providing for offspring will be difficult for wildlife, making our baby season potentially busy and long.

As harsh as it sounds, biologists are discouraging people from putting out food or water. By encouraging wildlife to come into your yard, you are increasing their risks. Interactions with humans often lead to a death sentence for the animal. Under drought conditions, most wildlife populations need to be checked; otherwise, overpopulation at a time when the environment cannot support it will lead to more suffering. Mostly we are hoping people will be more patient during this drought and tolerate more wildlife in closer proximity in an effort to share what few resources there are.

Hollow Vertical Pipes Threaten Wildlife

We were recently called to rescue an owl from an irrigation standpipe. Fortunately it was still alive and recovered. In an article by Audubon California, we discovered that uncapped pipes commonly become “death pipes” for birds, reptiles, and small mammals. Animals trapped in these pipes die a slow death completely unnoticed. All sizes of pipe represent a threat; even pipes simply leaned against a building for a few days can be a problem. PVC pipe is smooth making it difficult for an animal to climb out. Virtually every building or house has multiple vent pipes protruding from the roof. Any vertical pipe regardless of its length can become a death trap. The solution is simple and inexpensive. Remove upright pipes. If that’s not possible, cap them or fill them. For pipes that need to remain open to allow plumbing or heating systems to vent properly, there are commercial vent caps available that are easy to install. For large irrigation vents often 6” in diameter and 10’-20’ tall, it is best to cover them with ½’ galvanized hardware cloth held in place by stainless steel pipe clamps. Such a cover is not ideal but it will prevent the deaths of hundreds of birds. This same problem occurs with uncapped chimneys. Take time to make vertical pipes on your property safe for wildlife.



Volunteer rescuing bird out of standpipe.

Alligators

We continue to make slow but steady progress on the outdoor alligator enclosure. We are setting up the new bio-filter for their huge pool. The outer perimeter of the enclosure is complete. The plumbing and pump house still remain. In the meantime both Albert and Tick Tock have wasted no time getting to know each other. We provided them with two indoor pools but they immediately preferred sharing. They also enjoy basking together under their heat lamp. However, they are not such good sports when it comes to feeding time



Critter Creek Expands

Critter Creek Wildlife Station is now 2 ½ acres larger. The non-profit was able to purchase land directly behind the infirmary with frontage off of Mistletoe providing better access to the back side of the main ten acres. It will take time to do the necessary grading to make the property accessible from off of the road.



Lots #20,19,18,17 are the acres that make up Critter Creek Wildlife Station which now includes lot #12 off of Mistletoe (see cross-hatching).

SPRING IS HERE

- Reminder please put off trimming trees.
- Remember that with the exception of the turkey vulture most birds have little sense of smell, so if you find a baby bird that has fallen from its nest, you can place it back into its nest without causing problems.
- Never relocate an animal during the spring, because you will doom its young to starvation.
- If you own a swimming pool, frequently check your yard for wild, nesting ducks. Baby ducks just don't appear in your pool.