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**Critter Creek Chronicle**  
Animals for Education



Newsletter of Critter Creek Wildlife Station Summer 2014 Volume 19, No. 2

# Fall Open House

Saturday, September 20, 2014  
11:00 am until 2:00 pm  
Mark Your Calendars Now!

## Craft Event--a Success

We wish to thank Mikki Terzian for all her hard work in putting on the Wahtoke Spring Craft Event. She had a live auction and silent auction that raised close to a thousand dollars for Critter Creek.

## Mammal Rehab Project Underway

We have finally started the mammal rehab structure. We currently house baby coyotes, fox, bobcats and raccoons in a variety of cages spread throughout our grounds. Using an old cage from the Chaffee Zoo, we designed a series of chain-link cages that will allow us to house all of the orphaned mammals far away from the traffic of visitors. A little over a month ago we were able to pour the cement slab. Now we have begun to weld together the original pipe structure that will hold the chain link. The cage won't be done in time for this year's youngsters, but should be completed in its entirety by next spring.



## Heron Creek Repairs Completed



The pond liner in Heron Creek began leaking. In order to repair it, all of the river rock lining the creek had to be removed along with all the plants and other inhabitants of the creek. The only way to do it was rock by rock while on your knees. With the help of some of our hearty volunteers (James, Sarah, and Jeremy), the liner was cleared, removed,



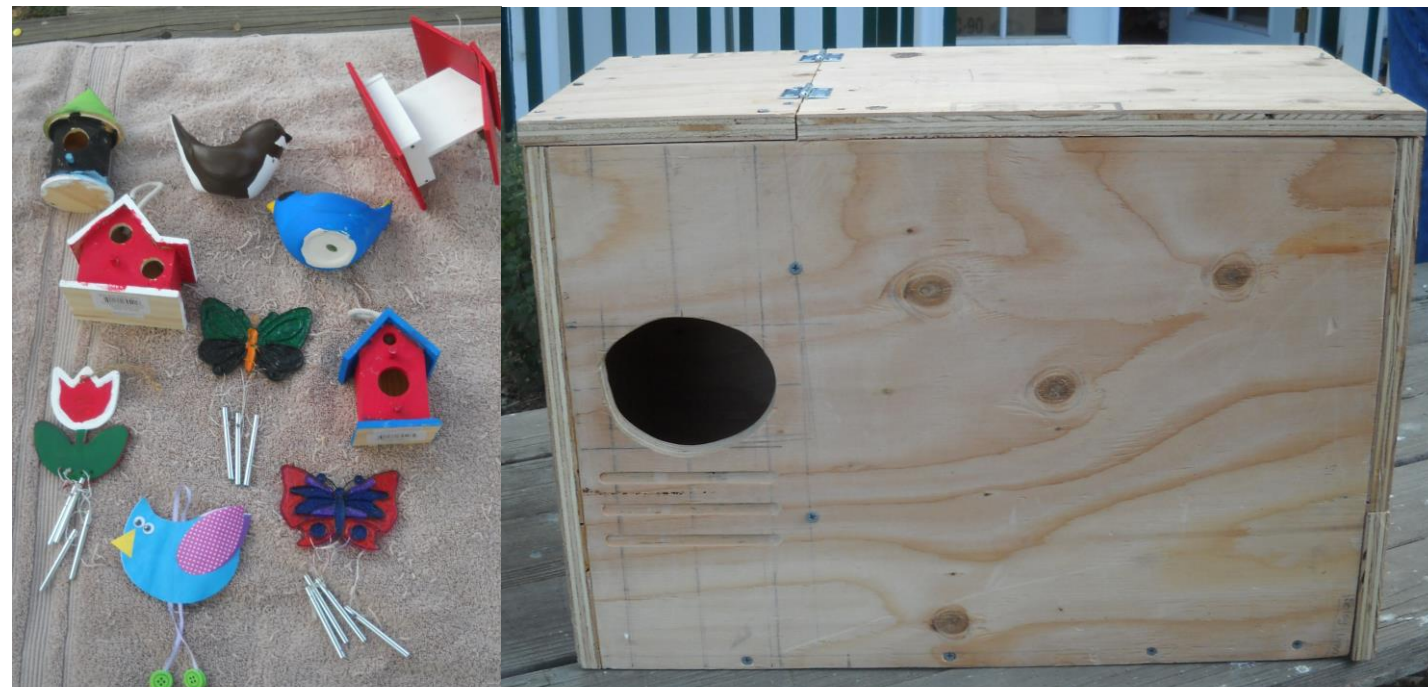
replaced with new liner, and then rocks, plants and creek inhabitants were moved in again.

# Lots of Visitors

May was a busy month for the educational branch of Critter Creek. We had a number of field trips often with 70-80 school children visiting the facility. We also provided bird of prey programs for many classrooms throughout the valley.



Kepler Neighborhood School adopted Critter Creek as its service project for the 2013-2014 school year. Each grade level focused on a different need. Some collected cardboard and linen for the infirmary. Others provided art work to sell in the gift shop. One grade sold snacks with the proceeds going to Critter Creek. The higher grades built barn owl boxes following the specs on our web page. These are available for purchase at \$ 60



On the left are samples of wind chimes, bird houses, bird feeders, and painted ceramic birds made by students at Kepler Neighborhood School. On the right is a barn owl box made by the older students. All items were donated and are for sale in our Gift Shop.

The students had a chance to visit Critter Creek and volunteer to help with various projects. Some helped us move rock or rake up grass. Others helped us scrape paint off an old cage preparing it for a new coat of paint. They were real troopers considering how hot those days were. All of the work these students provided was a great help.



## Permanent Resident: Lenore—American Kestrel

Kestrels, sometimes called sparrow hawks, are actually a kind of falcon. They are one of the smallest and most common falcons found in the Central Valley. They are close to 11 inches tall with a wingspan of 1 ½ to 2 feet. Their body coloration varies with gender. The males have blue-gray wings, reddish brown backs and tails, and light-colored chests and abdomens. The females are duller in color, lacking the bluish wings, but are speckled and barred creating a camouflaged effect. Both have striking black markings on each side of their faces. Their prey ranges from rodents to small birds. As with most falcons, they can fly very quickly in pursuit of birds. They also can hover over prey like a kite. Their vocalization is an easily distinguishable feature—a chattering, scolding call.



This American Kestrel was found as a baby by a well-intentioned couple who carefully fed it for several weeks. Unfortunately they were constantly handling it when feeding it. The little female became habituated and is attracted to people making her non-releasable. Under our exhibitor's permit, we are able to give her a home. She is getting used to her anklets and jesses so she can accompany Friendly, our male kestrel, to educational programs. Since male and female kestrels have very different markings, they will provide a valuable lesson in gender identification. We have named her Lenore after our volunteer who picked her up from the couple and cared for her before she came to Critter Creek.