Critter Creek Chronicle

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Newsletter of Critter Creek Wildlife Station **Fall 2024** **Volume 29, No. 3**

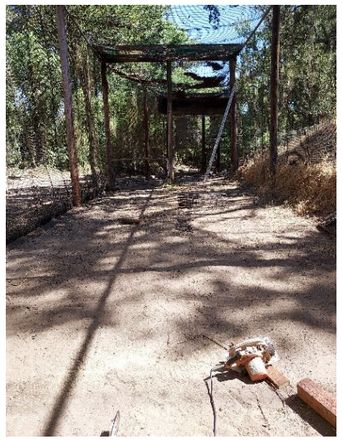
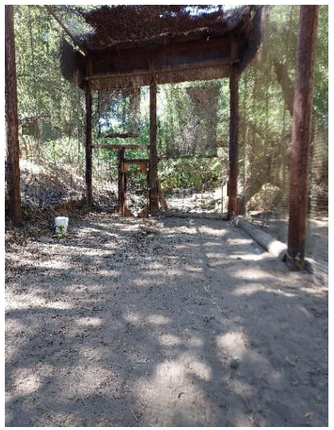


Visitors are able to tour the facility, view the wildlife in their native habitat, and learn about these fascinating animals' habits and personal stories. Critter Creek's dedicated volunteer guides are stationed along the trail to teach visitors about the animals and answer any questions. The open house is self-guided allowing guests to go at their own pace, to enjoy the animals and take photographs. Being able to see our animals is a delight for all ages. Admission is by donation and field parking is free. The last tour leaves at 1:30 pm to give guests time to see all the animals before the event closes. We have a picnic area, so bring a lunch.

Our Gift Shop will be open during open house and has many unique items

Eagles Are Flying

After almost two years since the heavy rains of winter washed out our eagle flight cage, the eagles are back in their enclosure. Despite many setbacks, we were finally able to clear the area and repair the bottom structure so that the wire could be installed. Bill Rudy showed up almost every day along with many others to help with the process. The area had grown back, so we had to clear the bottom of the flight enclosure again.


We moved in the very heavy new lengths of pipe to replace the telephone poles that had been washed away. Then the real work began. The enclosure wire had to be wrapped around the pole and secured. This involved a lot of prying and bending.





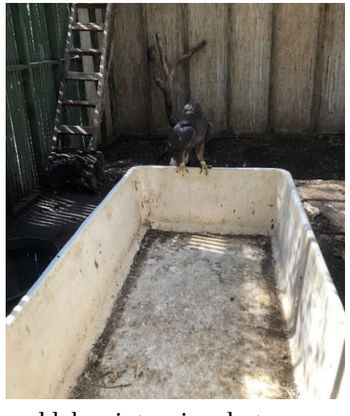
We had to rebuild a double entry on one end and a single door at the other end. Fortunately, we had the materials to cover all the repairs.





Finally, the eagles can go back into their flight enclosure. They were able to stretch out their wings and get some exercise. They appreciate the room to navigate around and eat. They are vocalizing again. We appreciate all the time, money and effort that went into resurrecting this enclosure. We don't anticipate such a wet winter again for a while, but we are ready for it.

Releasing of Birds of Prey



We get a large number of birds of prey during the spring, mostly Red-tailed Hawks (17), Barn Owls (well over 50), and Great Horned Owls (over 25). Before these larger birds of prey are released, we give them a chance to hunt rats or mice since their parents would take them out on hunting expeditions. We have a few enclosures we call "hunting" cages where there is a large bin located in the center. We place four or five birds that are ready to be released in the cage. We set plenty of live mice in the bin, so that each bird has a chance to hunt. Usually by morning, the mice are gone. We try to release youngsters in the same area they came from. This isn't always possible, so our volunteers have places where they know the bird is safe for a few weeks while it gets accustomed to the wild. This process is very time consuming and labor intensive, but ensures better success than just dumping them in the wild unprepared.