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Critter Creek Chronicle

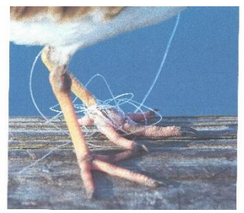
Newsletter of Critter Creek Wildlife Station **Winter 2024** **Volume 29, No. 4**

Make Your Holiday Decorations Wildlife Safe

Ensure outdoor holiday decorations don't harm wildlife:

- Outdoor illuminations confuse wildlife. Many people love to go big when it comes to decorating their homes for Christmas, and often aim to create enough Christmas lighting to make their home visible from space!
- Reflective surfaces can be a danger to birds
- Tangled wires and netting can be a hazard
- Avoid any plastic decorations
- Choose wildlife friendly decorations

If you do have outdoor lighting of any kind, it is best to make sure that you keep it to a minimum. A strand or two of solar-powered LED lights won't do much harm. Going overboard with Christmas lighting, especially when those lights remain lit throughout the night, can confuse wildlife and potentially do harm within the natural ecosystem. So wherever possible, light it during the evening when you wish to enjoy it, and then keep things as dark as possible during the rest of the night for nocturnal creatures, and to make sure other creatures are not confused into staying up when then should be asleep.



Some Christmas decorations involve fine webbing or netting in which birds and other wildlife might become entangled. You should avoid the use of things like strings of tinsel, fake snow, and synthetic felt coverings used to simulate snowfall on roofs. Examine any outdoor decorations to make sure there is no risk of wildlife becoming trapped or ensnared. It is good advice to check your outdoor decorations consistently.

Outdoor decorations like synthetic garlands, wreaths, and ornaments meant to mimic the beauty of the natural world may look picture-perfect to humans. However, the birds may like it as well. If you would still like to do something more to make your yard look extra special at this time of the year, consider options like natural bird feeder wreaths and garlands. These look lovely and festive and will actually help rather than harm the wildlife that shares your space.

Time to Renew Your Membership

If you haven't already, now is the time to renew your membership to our circle of supporters. Because of limited resources, we will be removing those we have not heard from for over two years from our mailing list. Don't' miss out on our quarterly newsletter! Renew now.

Seeing a Dream Become a Reality



Beth Pratt is one of our avid Circle of Supporters. She works for the National Wildlife Foundation. She lives in Mariposa and while driving down from the foothills, she saw a bobcat in the road having been hit by a car. From her pictures, it truly looked dead, but she stopped to check. Unbelievably, it was still alive. Thus began our friendship with Beth. She transported the bobcat to our veterinarian and that's how we got Billy, our three-legged bobcat.

This care and compassion for wildlife has manifested itself in an ambitious project—the world's longest wildlife crossing in the world. The crossing spans eight lanes of Highway 101 in Southern California. The National Wildlife Foundation and Caltrans proposed a massive corridor to provide wildlife a safe place to cross into other habitats. For the project to become a reality, funds needed to be raised. Thanks to the Annenberg Foundation and 3,000 private, philanthropic, and corporate institutions around the world, National Wildlife Foundation raised the money.

When completed, the crossing will provide safe passage for mountain lions, bobcats, deer, lizards, coyotes, other small mammals and snakes as they move between the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills of the Santa Susana mountain range. It has taken a decade to complete the structure, and it will take an additional year or more to landscape the crossing with native soil and plants. Once completed the space will be off-limits to humans, with locked gates to keep people out and discreet fencing to guide wildlife away from nearby homes into the wild hills beyond.





In the end, the crossing is expected to benefit many animals. Wildlife experts are especially hopeful it will improve the lives of mountain lions. In the wild, they typically roam territories that span more than 100 square miles. But because of the freeways in and around Los Angeles, they've struggled to move around freely. As a result, some of the region's mountain lions are now inbreeding, which makes them more susceptible to numerous health issues.

Congratulations to Beth

CRITTER CREEK WILDLIFE STATION
WINTER OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY, Dec. 14th, 2024
11:00 AM until 2:00 PM
For more information call:
559-338-2415
Or email:
crittercreekwildlife@hughes.net

Gate will close at 1:30 pm to allow you enough time to tour. The Open House will be unguided, so the pace is leisurely offering more opportunities to take pictures (the critters have on their winter coats). Our volunteers will be on hand to answer your questions and to share stories about some of our permanent residents.

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36710 Sand Creek Road
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www.crittercreek.org

Visit our gift shop where you'll find unusual, hand-crafted gifts for the holidays.
We now accept credit and debit cards for items Totaling over $5.00.

Relieve the stress of the season with a visit to the foothills with family. We have a picnic area, so bring a lunch. Seeing wildlife is a delight for all ages.
Admission is by donation and field parking is free.

Happy Holidays