

On the Horizon



Summer/Fall 2019 Edition

www.horizonwings.org

Welcome to Horizon Wings' semi-annual newsletter – On the Horizon. We would like to keep you informed of happenings, events, and news going on at Horizon Wings.

Our mission at Horizon Wings is to rehabilitate birds of prey for release into the wild, in order to maintain their population and to educate the community to enhance awareness of the environment. It is our hope by doing this that we reach people of all ages and creates the desire in them to help preserve our natural world.

Chrysos



On September 14th we lost our beloved Chrysos. It was a sudden event, beginning with her collapse and respiratory distress after arriving home from a program. She was rushed to Tufts where she died in my arms shortly after our arrival.

How do I even begin to find the words in which to eulogize this eagle? Yes, she was beautiful to look at, magnificent, stunning, a gentle giant, but she was so much more; a truly sweet and gentle soul who touched the lives of so many with her story of survival. She was grace and dignity and I was always in awe when with her, knowing the power she held in those talons, which sat so

gently on my arm. She would lean in close and look into your eyes, a true partner. She was, and always will be, the bird of my heart. I, along with others, will never forget her presence and what she gave to us.

We have no definitive answers as to why from her necropsy. In the words of the doctor "I did not see anything obvious on the gross necropsy of your eagle. She was in great body condition, lungs, air sac, trachea all look normal to me." We sent tissue samples out for histology, and again, although EEE and West Nile were ruled out, we received no specific answers.

Perhaps it was just her time to fly free, the lessons she needed to teach us had been taught. I have been reminded to take nothing for granted, always be gracious, and appreciate each moment you have with the ones you love.

Written by Mary-Beth Kaeser

Northern Saw-whet Owl Rescue

On the morning of November 25th, Jeanne received a wildlife call about a suspected injured owl in East Hartford. The caller – Anne from Garson Sign– stated that as personnel arrived for work an owl was just sitting on a ledge at the door way of the building. She also said that the owl was letting them approach it. Although it didn't look injured, she knew that something wasn't quite right with the bird. Jeanne asked that she text a photo of the bird so she knew what kind of owl she was going to be rescuing. Much to her shock when the photo arrived, it was a Northern Saw-whet owl. These little owls are on a least concern list in CT and we don't often get them into rehab.

Sandy and Jeanne jumped into the car and drove to E. Hartford. The rescue was very easy. The little bird was just sitting under a very large window. They were able to just walk up to the owl and pick him up. After getting him back to Horizon Wings, a full examination was done. There wasn't anything obvious that showed up. What a lucky little owl!



Jeanne took the owl home to rehab him. She gave him pain and anti-inflammatory meds along with fluid treatment for a couple of days. The assumption was that he flew into the large window and was stunned. After 2 days inside, the owl was eating on his own and acting feisty. We then moved him outside to a small aviary where he proved that his flight and vision were very good. The plan was made for a release on November 30.

Before we released this bird, we decided we wanted to get him banded. The Northern Saw-whet owl is on the least concern list in CT meaning that numbers are down and we need to start being aware of them and what might be affecting their populations. Carole Millard came to HW and took measurements on the owl and placed a band on his leg. The hope is that if this bird is ever found again, we will be able to see where it traveled to. It was determined that this owl was a male due to his size. He weighed in at 70 grams. The females are generally 1/3 larger than the males and can weigh up to 150 grams according to the Cornell website. Carole also was able to determine that this was a hatch year owl. She determined this by shining a black light on the feathers of an outstretched wing. There is a pigment in new feathers that fluoresces pink and when Carole shined the light on this owl's wing, it shined pink for sure.



These owls are pretty secretive and masters of camouflage. Recent studies have shown that they nest more frequently and further south than ornithologists originally thought. It is thought that mostly it is the females and juveniles that migrate. And they are also learning that they can migrate large distances.



Photos by Jeanne Wadsworth

Most likely our little guy was on migration when he struck that window. We released him only a couple of miles from where he was found in a grove of pine trees. He flew quickly out of our hands and with a purpose into a rather large pine tree. He sat in the pine tree, hidden in plain sight as the sun finished setting. Our hope is he will continue on his way, migrating further south. Good luck to this little saw whet. Stay away from windows.

We would like to thank the kind people at Garson Sign Co. in East Hartford for reaching out to us to rescue him. Also, thanks to our neighbor Carole Millard who is a master bird bander. It's so important to do what we can to save our raptors – large and small and learn about them in order to save them for future generations.

Written by Jeanne Wadsworth

Projects, Projects, Projects....

2019 was a busy year for projects. Due to the wet weather of previous summers, and the age of some of our aviaries, the huge project of refurbishing many of them began this summer. This involved moving birds around as some aviaries were stripped to their frames to replace wood and wire. At times we had to use the aviaries that are reserved for rehabilitation. A total of 8 aviaries have been redone this year! Many thanks to the volunteers who spent much of their time this summer on this project!



Grants received helped us to purchase a new outbuilding for our rehabilitation patients, and to better supply electricity to our rehabilitation area as well as providing food for our birds.



A privacy fence was installed as an Eagle Scout project by Hayden Eckblom, his family, and Scout Troop 15 of Tolland.

We took in over 50 birds for rehabilitation and gave 190 educational programs this year. Another busy year for Horizon Wings!

Thank You

Horizon Wings thanks all of you!

Vaughn and Sheila Numrych for your continued support.

Grants

Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut	The Connecticut Freemasons Foundations
The Hartford Audubon Society	The 1772 Foundation
First Light and Power	Katharine L.W. and Winthrop M. Crane, 3D Charitable Foundation

Veterinarians

Bolton Veterinary Hospital	Dr. Ann Bourke Northeast Bird Clinic
Kensington Bird and Animal Hospital	North Veterinary Clinic
Tufts Wildlife Clinic	

Our wonderful volunteer staff

Volunteers aren't paid. Not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.

Thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers who make Horizon Wings what it is. It truly takes a village and Horizon Wings has the best!

We are looking forward to a wonderful New Year, 2020 with all of you!

Wish List

- Lumber (Plywood, 2x4s, 2x6s)
- Roofing material
- Hardware (deck screws, rafter hangers, hinges, hasps)
- Pea stone for aviary flooring
- Zip-Loc freezer bags
- Cleaning supplies (paper towels, bleach, Simple Green)
- Office supplies (Postage stamps, paper, envelopes, card stock)
- Gift cards for building supplies
- Hardware cloth
- Disposable vinyl cleaning gloves
- Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3N5861N6S4TC1/ref=cm_go_nav_hz)

Please support your local merchants whenever possible!

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