

# On the Horizon



Winter/Spring 2019 Edition

[www.horizonwings.org](http://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.

## Barred Owl Irruption



Thus far, 2019 has been a very busy year. Like other rehabilitation facilities in the area, we had an influx of Barred Owls this past winter, mostly young birds hit by cars. There are a couple of theories regarding why so many were seen this past winter. Last spring was wet and a good year for amphibians, which meant the Barred Owls had plenty to feed their young, increasing their chance of survival. Then came the colder weather and snow, which makes hunting more difficult, especially for young birds. This, coupled



with the idea that small rodents were not as plentiful due to the wet weather and their burrows being flooded, left the owls spreading out in search of food.



*Photos by Jeanne Wadsworth*

## Exciting News...

We have received grants from both the Eastern Community Foundation and the Connecticut Freemasons, which have enabled us to improve the delivery of electricity to our aviaries, and to purchase a custom-made out-building to be used for rehabilitation. Many thanks to both foundations for their generosity, along with Kloters Farms in Ellington, Connecticut for helping to provide the out-building.

And as of the end of June, we have also completed 100 educational programs. Never a dull moment!

*Written by Mary-Beth Kaeser*

# Whoooo is in the Chimney

In early April, Scott Beebe, the animal control officer for the town of Andover received a call about an owl stuck in a chimney. Stacie Rhault, a volunteer at Horizon Wings works with Scott and was there when he received the call. They found out that the homeowners had been away for the weekend and when they returned they heard the owl hooting in the chimney.

When Scott and Stacie arrived, it took them quite a while to locate the bird, but they finally found it and were able to reach in with a stick to get it. It was a Barred Owl. Stacie transported it to Horizon Wings and assisted in giving him a bath in Dawn liquid soap, because it was covered in soot from the chimney. There were flakes of soot in his eyes that needed to be flushed out several times over the course of the next couple of days. He received a total of 3 baths and was given fluids, pain medication, eye ointment, and antibiotics.



Because we were concerned about the possibility of permanent eye damage, we brought the owl up to Tufts Wildlife Clinic. Fortunately, the doctors there gave it a clean bill of health. He just needed to receive treatment for a few days, to eat some mice, and then to spend a couple of days in the flight aviary to make sure everything looked and sounded okay. After spending 2 weeks in rehabilitation, it was finally able to be released.

We were very happy to release him back in the same yard, with the owners and Stacie present. The owners of the home had done some renovations and installed a cap on their chimney so that no other owls would get into trouble by trying to make a nest there. During this Spring season alone, Horizon Wings received a total of 4 barred owls that had been stuck in chimneys. Unfortunately, this was the only one of the four that was able to be released.

Please think about capping your chimney to help our wildlife. Thanks to everyone involved in helping this lucky Barred Owl get a second chance at life!

*Written by Jeanne Wadsworth*



*Photos by Jeanne Wadsworth*

# Earth Day Fair 2019

Wind and intermittent rain did nothing to dampen the spirits of the nearly 250 people who joined us this past April in celebrating our 8th annual Earth Day Fair at Horizon Wings. Visitors had the opportunity, individually and



*Photo by Ali Parkes*

in small groups, to get up close and personal with their favorite raptors, meet new ones, and interact with our friendly and knowledgeable handlers. In addition, two formal programs were offered featuring 4 different species of owls and our Bald and Golden Eagles. Myles Ieradi and his Red-tailed Hawk delighted the audience with a live demonstration of falconry training and techniques. But that's not all. Many of our fellow rehabilitation organizations from around Connecticut joined us, offering everyone a chance to see and learn about other animals. Lavender, the opossum, made an appearance with Pam and Bill Lefferts from Ferncroft Possum Rescue (Woodstock) and Gerri Griswold from White Memorial Conservation Center (Litchfield) brought a bat and corn snake.

Jeanne Kramer represented Connecticut Wildlife Rescue (Chaplin), responsible for small mammals, rabies vector species, and deer. Liz Bennett was also present from Bandit's Place (Hartland), a domestic animal, waterfowl, and deer rescue organization. Annie and Mike Bourke of Cairn O Mohr Farm brought their Soay sheep and had a display explaining all the steps involved in turning a sheep's fleece into a finished knitted garment.

In keeping with this year's Earth Day theme, recycle and reuse, children personalized their own reusable cloth tote bag with colorful owls and flowers. Many of the children's faces sported sparkly butterflies, rainbows, and animal designs painted by Adria Mecca at the face-painting booth. At the education station, children enjoyed dissecting owl pellets to discover what owls had eaten. They also learned to identify species of raptors by the sound of their calls and by examining the differences in their feet, talons, and wings. Jim Calchera was on hand with his fur and skull collection.

Of course, the food tent was as popular as ever. It offered an array of enticing goodies, from hot chili, hot cocoa and coffee, to lemonade and desserts of all types. There were even rice krispy treat nests with jelly bean eggs and marshmallow cookie confections shaped like little Bald Eagle's heads. Across the way, the raffle booth offered a varied assortment of tempting items from which to choose, including an artist's welded metal owl sculpture, kestrel nesting box, and dog diving lessons.

Many thanks to all who came out to join in our celebration. Fundraisers like our annual Earth Day Fair are essential to the health and maintenance of the birds in our care and to the success of Horizon Wings' rehabilitation and education mission. We could not continue our work if not for the generosity and support of the entire Horizon Wings community. Our sincere thanks and gratitude to the volunteers and especially to all those individuals and families who continue to support us.



*Photo by Ali Parkes*

*Written by Patricia Cebrelli*

## 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](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3N5861N6S4TC1/ref=cm_go_nav_hz))

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