

Bird's eye View



The Recovery Wing, Inc.

Volume 5, Issue 1 Spring Edition 2009

A non-profit charitable organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of orphaned, sick or injured songbirds, their return to the wild, and preservation of their habitat

2009 — Another Successful Fundraiser!

Once again, old and new friends of TRW gathered at Southington's Aqua Turf Club to bid on fantastic auction items and take their chances on great raffle prizes! And once again, TRW's 2009 fundraiser dinner and auction was an incredible success!

Some 150 attendees enjoyed the fun afternoon on March 29 -- bidding on live and silent auction items and enjoying delightful buffet offerings - all to raise monies to ensure that TRW can remain in operation another year. And it was a great success! "I am so grateful that, despite the poor economy, our friends continue to believe in our mission," said President Jayne Amico. "We know that dollars are scarce, and we're very grateful for their continued support ." The event netted approximately \$25,500, about half of our anticipated operating costs for 2009.

For the second year, emcee Eric Hummel directed the afternoon's activities with humor. Attendees circled the spacious room, searching among the nearly 250 silent auction items and increasing their bids to remain competitive.

Eric also served as auctioneer for 10 live auction items, including 2 incredible beauty packages - one from Dr. Paula Moynahan, Waterbury, the other from Dr. N. V. Perricone, Meriden. Also offered were 2 wildlife opportunities -- a guided tour through Hammonasset Beach State Park with owner Jerry Connolly of The Audubon Shop, Madison, and an evening of wildlife watching



A sampling of the more than 50 baskets competed for during the silent auction

with Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen at Little Pond in Litchfield's White Memorial Conservation Center. Two weekend getaways – Newport from Cheryl Moran, and New Hampshire from Mary Claire Doyle, and an incredible Italian dinner for 8 by Filomena & Michael Arisco, Cheshire were also hotly contested.

Ten raffle items also received lots of attention, including a beautiful Peregrine Falcon silkscreen (donated by Janet & Rick Sandella), and 2 well-stocked gift baskets (one wine-themed and a second of cheese and snacks) from long-time donor Wine Country Gift Baskets of Fullerton, CA. Other raffle items included a birding library (by TRW Volunteer Amy Hopkins) and a German hand-blown stein decorated by an eagle (by Hilmar Brumme).

A 32" flat screen TV donated by Netsch Construction, Chester was the prize for the lucky winner of the special appeal raffle – TRW Volunteer Amy Hopkins of Guilford. Nearly \$2,200 was raised through this special appeal to cover the cost of repairs to the flight cages in which recovered adult birds and babies that have grown up sufficiently are prepared for release back into the wild. The flight cages allow birds to be acclimatized to the outdoors, including weather, sights and sounds, and predators. The ravages of time and of recovering woodpeckers practicing drumming skills have taken their toll over the years. So many thank you's are due! To our major sponsors – Andy Whalen—Maher's Paint & Wallpaper, Avon; Dr. Rodger Foster—Southington Veterinary

SAVE THE DATE
Sunday, March 28
2010 from
1:00—5:00 p.m.
at The AquaTurf
for our 5th annual
dinner and auction!

Happy Spring everyone!

We are certainly enjoying some spectacular days for getting out and doing some bird watching! With much of the garden work behind me and many birds already nesting, baby season is knocking at my door, As I type, I am listening to the buzzy trilling of 3 nestling downy woodpeckers with me in the office, whose tree came tumbling down after a storm. These adorable woodpeckers need to be fed every 30 minutes, so they are kept close by.



This year more than ever, I am incredibly humbled and grateful for the outpouring of support from all of TRW's friends – new and old. Thanks to all of you, our fundraiser was another great success, enabling TRW to carry on another season. The pavilion is finished, and our flight cages are repaired and ready to take on this season's birds.

This past winter I continued to pursue our mission of education by presenting "Supporting CT's Songbirds through Rehabilitation, Reducing Negative Impacts and Birdscaping." At one presentation alone at the UCONN Waterbury campus, there were 200 attendees!

Last Spring our conservation efforts included placing 4 nest boxes on privately-owned open land in Southington, with great results! Two pairs of Eastern Bluebirds and 2 pairs of Tree Swallows all fledged young. This year Mount Southington Ski Area has allowed us to place 4 nest boxes on its slopes. It looks like Tree Swallows are occupying 3 and the other has a pair of House Wrens. Sandy Brunoli is volunteering her time to monitor the boxes – an effective exercise program, as it is quite a bit of walking!

As always I am eternally thankful for the dedicated volunteers without whom TRW could not operate at this capacity. Thank you to all! Have a wonderful summer filled with bird song!

Sincerely,
Jayne Amico recoverywing@cox.net
President

(Continued on page 2)

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) – Adorable Little Flycatchers

This 7-inch sparrow-sized flycatcher often goes unnoticed due to its grayish brown drab appearance. Phoebes have a dark head and lack an eye ring or wing bars. Juvenile phoebes, however, can have dull wing bars and a yellowish belly. Eastern phoebes have a characteristic tail pump or wag when perched. They are one of our earliest spring migrants to return, arriving by Mid-March. The males announce their return with a signature deep, two-part burry PHEE- BEE phoe- bee song. Do not be confused by the whistled single part feeeee beee call of the black capped chickadee in the Spring; their song is a clear higher-pitched whistle.

Although they will forage in open, sunny areas, phoebes are more a bird of open forest and wet wood edges, preferring shadier locations vs. sunny. If you have a home with natural or dark colored siding in a shady location, you have a good chance of attracting Eastern Phoebes to nest. Ponds and streams are also important foraging areas for them.

The phoebe nest is constructed of mud, grasses and weeds; many times man-made materials such as string or cellophane are also incorporated. The nest is lined with soft materials such as hair and covered in moss.

Phoebe's main diet items are insects and spiders. Most frequently consumed are wasps, bees and ants, but they will also feed on dragonflies, beetles, grasshoppers, and adult tent moths. Thus, hosting phoebes is beneficial by controlling pesky insects around your home.

This Spring I was happy to see a pair of phoebes hanging around the swift and swallow pavilion. During the cold and rainy spells, I put out a tray



Phoebes are adept at sallying out to catch insects in midair

of mealworms which they happily devoured. I expected the phoebes to use one of the nest cups put up in the rafters in the pavilion for the barn swallows.

Imagine my surprise when I realized the phoebes had built a nest 13 feet down inside the brick swift chimney on one of the ledges! These fledglings have since left the nest by flying up and out the top of the chimney!

The Eastern Phoebe comes into rehabilitation most commonly due to nest removal or falls from the nest, and is also a common window strike victim. Applying CollidEscape to any window regularly receiving window strikes can reduce the need for rehabilitation.

I look forward to the return of our Eastern Phoebes each Spring as they are one of my favorite birds to watch and listen to. Now you know why we added the phoebe to our masthead! I hope you will also come to appreciate this adorable little flycatcher, whose tail pumping always makes me smile!



Phoebe's nest in Pavilion chimney- a long way up!!

(Fundraising, continued from page 1)

Associates; Jeff Hamel—Forestville Machine; Sandra and Howard Hoffen at The Hoffen Family Foundation - Englewood, NJ; Tim McMullen - Academy Printing Services, Kensington, Judy Clark - Brookside Pawn, Southington; new TRW Vice-President Cheryl Moran - Anthony Jacks and Bonterra Restaurants, Southington; Hartford Audubon Society; and fellow rehabilitator Suzie Gilbert of NY.

We Couldn't Do It Without You!

We cannot let this opportunity go by without huge thank you's to the many individuals without whose assistance TRW could not accomplish what we do!

As always, special thanks go out to **Dr. Theresa Cianciolo and staff at Kensington Bird and Animal Hospital**, and to **Dr. Rodger Foster and staff at Southington Veterinary Associates**, for their invaluable support with medical services and advice.

Our sincere thanks go also to **Roger and Jim Laferriere**, for their recent modifications to the Swift/Swallow pavilion. We are grateful to **Art and Kathy Kramer** of Southington, **Larry and Jean Mangini** of Plantsville, and **Eric Eichorn** of Yalesville, who repaired our flight cages, making them safe again for our birds to occupy as they get ready for release. These repairs were made possible by the monies raised by the special "feather" appeal raffle held at the 2009 Fundraiser Dinner.

We are grateful too, to **Kelly Klein** of Madison, who continues to assist us with the design, editing and layout of our publications, including the program booklet for the annual fundraiser dinner, the Fall snapshot publication, and this newsletter.

Heartfelt thanks also to TRW Board Member Kate Bryers for the welcoming champagne toast, and to all of the TRW volunteers who helped plan and set up for the occasion and solicited donations of items for the auctions. We are grateful too to all of those who donated absolutely wonderful goods and services for our attendees to bid on, as well as to our attendees for coming. Our collective thanks go out to all – you all have again made this fundraiser a grand success!

Identifying and Enjoying 2 Warbler Firsts

On October 29th we received an unidentified warbler which had been admitted by the

Tufts University Wildlife Clinic due to a window strike. I

was well-armed with a warbler identification guide, but this bird was easily identified, by measuring its tail length, as a Blackpoll Warbler -- a first for TRW! In its fall plumage, it can be confused with the Bay-Breasted Warbler.



Blackpoll ready to leave for Canada's boreal forests to breed!

The bird would not eat anything offered, probably the result of head trauma, and needed to be force fed. After 3 very long weeks of gentle hourly force feedings, the warbler began to eat on his own. This bird came in at 18 grams, and once he started eating, quickly soared to 24 grams, double his average body weight of 13 grams. Long distance migrants requires a lot of body fat to survive the journey -- this bird was still in migration mode!

Amazingly about 3 weeks later, Tufts admitted another window strike warbler, which was identified as a Connecticut Warbler. The bird was not eating well and was very thin. I was dismayed to see it only weighed 6 grams, as a Connecticut Warbler should weigh around 15 grams. Tufts was treating the bird for coccidia, which can cause weight loss. The warbler readily consumed the "all - u - can eat" small mealworms and waxworms offered. I was delighted to see a continuous weight gain. I shared the information about the warbler with Connecticut's birding community through the CTBirds listserv. A

gentleman responsible for Massachusetts' avian records replied, asking for information regarding this bird originating from MA and photographs to substantiate this record. After viewing the photos, he kindly informed me of 2 details in the bird's field marks which identify it instead as a Nashville Warbler -- humble pie for me, and another first for TRW!

The Nashville now weighed 11.2 grams, but their average weight is 8.7! Another overeater, hard-wired to add fat to make its long journey south!

Both spent the winter at TRW, enjoying free flight in the clinic all day. By early spring, the birds were molting into breeding plumage and the Blackpoll revealed its sex, as it was molting into male plumage and was non-stop singing. Happily, both birds were released in May when migrating warblers returned to our area.



Nashville shows off its complete white eye ring and bright yellow throat!

I hope this article inspires all of you to read up on warblers. Although they continue to be a steep learning curve for me, we are thrilled to have released them back into the wild!

The TRW Swift/Swallow Pavilion is Completed and Occupied!!

On Saturday, May 10, 2009, the new chimney swift/barn swallow pavilion was officially dedicated. Friends of TRW who donated toward the construction or costs attended the event. A beautiful plaque, donated by TG Industries of Meriden, was mounted on the structure. The ceremony was kept brief, however, so as not to disturb the nesting American Robins and Eastern Phoebes which were incubating eggs in the pavilion and chimney, or the bluebird or tree swallow pairs which had nestlings in nearby nest boxes.

TRW began construction in April 2008 in the hopes of inviting these declining species to nest here! After the loss of her unlined house

chimney in the January 2007 fire, Jayne feared that her chimney swifts would not be able to nest in her newly-lined chimney. Funds toward this project were raised through a special appeal at our 3rd annual benefit dinner in March, 2008. Our thanks to everyone who contributed toward this effort!

TRW's special emphasis and expertise with birds such as swifts and swallows, which require specialized feeding, housing and other care made construction of the pavilion a natural part of TRW's continuing efforts to preserve habitat. We are hopeful that swifts and swallows will soon find the new pavilion a welcoming nesting spot!



This plaque recognizing donors to the pavilion was mounted at the dedication ceremony

Board of Directors

Jayne Amico, President
Cheryl Moran, Vice President
Kate Bryers, Member

Melissa Baston, Treasurer
Carole Donagher, Secretary
Ann Winch, Member

Bird's eye View



The Recovery Wing, Inc.

In 2008, Admissions Totaled 220 Birds of 55 Species

We have released 148 (67%) of these birds back into the wild!

Eastern Bluebird	25	Northern Cardinal	3	Blue-winged Warbler	
American Robin	21	Pileated Woodpecker	3	Bobolink	
Chimney Swift	18	Tufted Titmouse	3	Eastern Kingbird	
Northern Flicker	15	White-throated Sparrow	3	European Starling	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	11	American Woodcock	2	Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Baltimore Oriole	9	Black-capped Chickadee	2	Killdeer	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	9	Common Grackle	2	Nashville Warbler	
Barn Swallow	8	Dark-eyed Junco	2	Northern Waterthrush	
Downy Woodpecker	7	Hermit Thrush	2	Pine Warbler	
Northern Mockingbird	7	Mourning Dove	2	Red-eyed Vireo	
Hairy Woodpecker	6	Scarlet Tanager	2	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	
American Goldfinch	5	White-breasted Nuthatch	2	Song Sparrow	
Eastern Phoebe	5	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	Tree Sparrow	
Cedar Waxwing	4	American Crow	1	Veery	
Chipping Sparrow	4	Belted Kingfisher	1	Virginia Rail	
House Finch	4	Blackpoll Warbler	1	Willet	
Cliff Swallow	3	Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	Winter Wren	
Gray Catbird	3	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	Wood Thrush	
House Wren	3			Total	220

Species listed in bold are species with the Greatest Conservation Need (GCN), according to CT DEP

The Recovery Wing, Inc.

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Fun Facts about Phoebes

Did you know that:

- Phoebes pump and tail wag when perched
- Phoebes are name-sayers, singing a burry phee-bee phee-bee song
- Phoebes will nest on/under human structures like your porch, deck or eaves
- Phoebes make their living by eating numerous small flying insects each day
- Phoebes can be attracted to open top mealworm feeders
- Phoebes catch insects by perching on wires, clothes lines, fences or low branches; they fly out to catch the insect and return to the perch.

Keep up to date with the latest happenings at The Recovery Wing by visiting us at www.therecoverywing.org. If you prefer to receive your newsletter online in color & save postage, please email us @ jayne@therecoverywing.org.