

Bird's eye View



The Recovery Wing, Inc.

Volume 2, Issue 1 Spring Edition 2006

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

First Benefit Dinner & Auction a Success!

The Recovery Wing held its very first fundraising event at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington, despite a winter storm which postponed the event until March 5. More than 130 people attended the Benefit Dinner and



Everyone had a great time at the Aqua Turf

Auction, which began with a champagne toast and a meet-and-greet with Founder and TRW President Jayne Amico.



Emcee Lynn Miller, Founder of Le Nichoir, and Bob Rose, Auctioneer

Emceeding the event was Lynn Miller, wildlife biologist and Founder of Le Nichoir (The Nest), a large avian rehabilitation facility in Montreal, Canada. The event netted more than \$16,000.

A Live Auction and raffles for 24 larger donated goods and services followed delicious food offerings from the buffet. In addition, attendees bid on some 120 Silent Auction items throughout the afternoon. The Auction and Raffle items included a weekend

**Save the date . . .
Sunday March 25 2007
@ 1:00 p.m.
at the Aqua Turf for
our 2nd annual dinner
and auction!**

getaway in New Hampshire, a wine/hors d'oeuvres party for four at TRW's gardens, a backyard bird habitat consultation by Jayne Amico, bird feeders and houses, wildlife art, jewelry, dinner and gardening packages, amusement tickets and museum and theatre admissions.

The Recovery Wing extends a very special THANK YOU to all who attended, contributed financially, and donated food or auction items. Thank you's also go to our major sponsors: Maher's Paint and Wallpaper in Avon for its sponsorship of the event, and Academy Printing in Berlin for its printing services.

Our gratitude goes to Auctioneer Robert Rose of Action Auction Associates in Meriden for donating his services for our Live Auction. With everyone's generous support, The Recovery Wing's very first fundraiser was a resounding success and helped to ensure that TRW could remain in operation for another year!

President's Message

WOW! We accomplished so many goals in 2005. We started out the year by wanting to renovate the woodpecker flight cage and when we were done, we had renovated 3 flight cages.



We cared for 315 birds (a new record) while keeping our release rate at 70%. This is our sole measure of success!

We also achieved our education goals. Early last spring I presented two talks at the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Assn. conference in Minnesota on successful rehabilitation of songbirds and rehabilitating chimney swifts.

I also taught basic songbird rehabilitation for the CT DEP rehabilitators training day, and for New Hampshire rehabilitators, and advanced songbird care for the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council in Toronto, Canada. By late fall we were planning our first ever benefit dinner and auction.

We expect to rehabilitate as many as 400 birds this year and have 12 volunteers ready to care for them. But, we anticipate needing additional funding to care for these birds.

We look forward to sharing with all of you our successes of this upcoming 2006 season and are extremely grateful for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Jayne Amico

Adopt a Baby Songbird!

Cover the cost of raising one baby songbird by making a donation of \$50.00 or more. This donation will entitle you to a color photo of your adopted baby songbird and an invitation for you to be present at its release. Please fill out and return the form below.

Name: _____ Pick your species! Choose a 1st & 2nd choice

Address: _____ American Robin (CT state bird): _____

_____ Barn Swallow (Declining species): _____

Phone: _____ Red Bellied Woodpecker (Feisty!): _____

Email: _____ Call us and select your favorite: _____

Please mail the completed form with your check to:
The Recovery Wing, 1024 Mount Vernon Rd., Southington, CT 06489, or (860) 276-8433.

Or, if you would prefer to make a contribution toward The Recovery Wing's summer operating costs, please use the enclosed card. You can rest assured that all of your tax-deductible donation goes directly to the care, feeding and housing of orphaned, sick and injured songbirds.

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recoverywing@cox.net

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'Pretty Girl' - Our Little Downy Survivor



'Pretty Girl' in the flight cage still growing her damaged bill.

Last June, we received a call about a nest of Downy Woodpeckers. With horror, I listened to a tree cutter tell me he just put a chainsaw through a nest of downy woodpeckers, killing all of them but two. He felt terrible and was very concerned because one of the babies had a portion of its upper bill taken off by the chainsaw and was bleeding.

When the downies arrived, I opened the box and sighed with sadness when I realized they were just days away from fledging (leaving the nest). If only the tree cutter had waited just a few more days, they all could have survived. Amazingly, both downies were unscathed except for the bill injury. What incredibly lucky birds! Time would tell whether the bill would grow back or not.

Within a few weeks the bill had started to grow. Every few days I would use a file to shape it, as the saw had cut it jaggedly. I would talk softly to her and say, "it's okay sweetie, I am just trying to fix your bill, you're still my pretty girl." Soon I found myself

Thank You To All!

TRW is very grateful to Dr. Theresa Cianciolo and staff at Kensington Bird and Animal Hospital, and to Dr. Roger Foster and staff at Southington Veterinary Hospital, for the ongoing medical services and advice they so generously provide for the songbirds in our care.

We also extend our gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to Tim McMullen and staff at Academy Printing Services in Kensington for continuing to print our stationery, business cards, brochures, and this newsletter.

And again we extend a special thank you and our appreciation to Kelly Klein of Madison for her artful design and layout of this newsletter.

calling her 'Pretty Girl' and before long, so was everyone else.

By August the bill was fully grown, although no matter how much I filed and shaped, it was not lining up properly. But Pretty Girl had proven she could survive just fine; she could excavate, find and eat insects in bark, and was fully functional, so we released her along with her sister.

By late fall it was apparent Pretty Girl was staying. Each day she would fly in for a handout and could be seen foraging in the area. She chose a roost pocket under our porch to sleep in and this is where she slept every night for the next eight months. She would come for a handout each day, and every evening I'd see her peeking out of the roost pocket before going to sleep.

Early this May I noticed her left eye was very swollen. Not knowing whether it was due to injury or illness, I chose to catch her and brought her into the clinic. As I looked her over, my heart sank as I could see Pretty Girl had a brood patch; she was either incubating eggs or caring for young. I could only hope the male would carry on.

Soon it became apparent Pretty Girl had lost vision in her left eye. Nonetheless, she was behaving normally and could navigate well and find food, so with great trepidation I released her for the second time back into the wild. That night her roost pocket remained empty. Five days later I had not seen her at all on the property, despite scanning every downy I saw. I feared for the worst and berated myself for letting her go.

On Saturday morning, I noticed a downy on the suet feeder and immediately my eyes went to the right leg to check for a band, and there it was, shining in the sun. She accepted a handout and then flew high up into the tree, where she was joined by a male downy woodpecker. As I watched them fly off together, I knew I had made the right decision and my heart filled with joy knowing she lives on.

With many thanks and appreciation to our 2005 donors – We couldn't do it without you!

Stephanie Akers
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Juvenile Ruby Throated Hummingbird

Attracting Ruby Throated Hummingbirds to Your Garden

The best way to attract Ruby Throated Hummingbirds is to put up a brightly colored feeder in a conspicuous area. They can begin to arrive in our area as early as the first week of April, with most birds arriving by the first week of May. We always get our feeders up no later than the April 15th, but this year the weather was so mild we had them up the first week of April just in case a bird came our way. Our first bird arrived April 26th, which is the earliest date on record for us. People who live by the coast or along the river valleys tend to have the earlier arrivals than the more inland locations.

When choosing a feeder, our recommendation is to find one that is easy to clean and does not have a large capacity. We use a saucer style made by Aspects called Hummzinger Mini. It has an 8oz capacity, 3 feeding ports with perching, a built in ant moat, and a brass hanger. We find the inverted bottle type feeders very difficult to keep clean and have a lot of wasted nectar at each cleaning.

We make our own nectar by using one part table sugar to four parts water, using half the water hot out of the tap to melt the sugar, and the remainder cold so it is ready to serve after mixing. There is no need to add red dye to the water, nor should you purchase hummingbird nectar with red dye or any other additives in it, as there have been studies that proved red dye to have a negative effect in hummingbird reproduction.

Proper maintenance of your feeder is of the utmost importance. If the sugar water is allowed to become cloudy or develop mold, you run a very great risk of infecting the hummingbird that drinks from it with a fatal fungal infection. We have a very simple way of remembering to change and clean the feeders.

We do it every other day; this way there is no confusion as to when it needs to be done. We strongly recommend this system!

Planting trees, shrubs, vines, annuals, and perennials will ensure that the hummingbirds never need to venture far from your garden. For maximum impact, planting large groups of flowers works best. Planting clusters of 5-7 or more plants of the same variety offers a lot of nectar in one location versus one plant here and one plant there. Hummingbirds also enjoy bathing but need very shallow water to do so or a fine mist to fly through. There are hummingbird misters you can purchase that attach to your hose to provide a fine mist for them to bathe in.

After October first you want to look closely at any hummingbird you see, as it may not be a



Rufous Hummingbird copyright Jim Zipp 2003

Ruby Throated Hummingbird. Every fall to early winter along the east coast, including Connecticut, vagrant hummingbirds are found at feeders or late flowering plants. The most common vagrant hummingbird found in

CT is a Rufous Hummingbird. This is a western hummingbird species but is regularly being found along the east coast in the fall and winter.

The trick to attracting them is to keep your feeder up, clean and with fresh nectar, and plant late flowering hummingbird plants, such as the fall blooming salvias. We finally give up when we no longer have hummingbirds visiting our feeder and it is freezing solid at night. If your sugar water is frozen or slushy on a cold morning, and you have a hummingbird using it, replace the slush with fresh, lukewarm sugar water. If you do have a late hummingbird show up, please contact The Recovery Wing so we can come out and identify your vagrant hummingbird and help you to assist it if it gets into cold-weather trouble.

Our top hummingbird plant choices

Trees

Crabapple
Cherry
Catalpa
Black Locust
Mimosa

Shrubs

Bush honeysuckle
Weigela
Flowering Almond
Kolwizia
Flowering Quince

Vines

Coral Honeysuckle
Red Morning Glory
Trumpet Creeper
Mina Lobata
Cardinal Vine

Perennials

Monarda
Lobelia
Catmint
Phlox
Red Hot Poker

Annuals

Salvia Guaranitica
Cuphea
Fuschia
Salvia Coccinea
Salvia Greggii

Bird's eye View



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A Bird Friendly Yard Is An Organic Yard

Most garden centers now offer a full line of four step organic lawn and garden products to prevent weeds, reduce grubs and promote healthy soil year round. Pesticides and herbicides applied for undesirable insects or plants, which contain warning labels and require posting notice of application, can pose serious harm to birds which feed specifically on them. Most birds do not recover from exposure to these poisons.

Do not expect to discover dead or dying birds as a result of pesticide use. Once they have become affected and cannot function properly, in an effort to protect themselves, most birds seek deep cover and hide.

To find out what you can do to positively impact songbirds, please keep reading (inside) !

**A total of 315 birds, representing 48 species, were admitted during 2005!
We released 219 birds back into the wild, a return rate of 70%!**

American Robin – 50	Scarlet Tanager – 2
Chimney Swift – 43	Brown Headed Cowbird – 2
Eastern Bluebird - 18	Carolina Wren – 2
Barn Swallow – 17	European Starling – 2
Northern Flicker – 17	House Wren – 2
Tufted Titmouse – 12	Pileated Woodpecker – 2
House Finch – 12	Rose Breasted Grosbeak – 2
Eastern Phoebe – 10	White Breasted Nuthatch – 2
Downy Woodpecker – 10	Dark Eyed Junco – 2
Baltimore Oriole – 8	Brown Thrasher – 1
Black Capped Chickadee – 8	Blue Jay – 1
Northern Cardinal – 8	Hairy Woodpecker – 1
Ruby Throated Hummingbird – 8	Magnolia Warbler – 1
Red Bellied Woodpecker – 7	Ovenbird – 1
Gray Catbird – 7	Red Eyed Vireo – 1
Cedar Waxwing – 7	Red Winged Blackbird – 1
American Goldfinch – 7	Wild Turkey – 1
Northern Mockingbird – 7	Great Crested Flycatcher – 1
Mourning Dove – 7	Belted Kingfisher – 1
Chipping Sparrow – 6	Common Yellowthroat – 1
Song Sparrow – 4	White Throated Sparrow – 1
Killdeer – 3	Golden Crowned Kinglet – 1
House Sparrow – 3	Ruby Crowned Kinglet – 1
Wood Thrush – 3	Hermit Thrush – 1

The Recovery Wing, Inc.

1024 Mount Vernon Road ~ Southington, CT 06489
(860) 276-8433

Fun Facts: Hummingbirds ~ Flying Jewels of the Bird World

- Hummingbirds' wings beat an average of 78 beats per second! Not only can hummingbirds hover effortlessly, but, they are capable of flying backwards!
- Hummingbirds' legs are so small and weak, they will fly before attempting to walk.
- The hummingbird's heart is the largest in relation to its body size, and when resting, beats an average of 500 times a minute.
- Hummingbirds burn up so much energy that they need to eat every 15 minutes. If a human being burned energy as fast as a hummingbird, he or she would need to eat 155,000 calories a day!
- Hummingbirds fuel up at flowers and feeders for quick energy, but are actually insectivores, catching tiny insects which provide protein, minerals, vitamins and fat.

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.