



WPeNewsletter March 2012

edited by Carmen Klapperich

Walden's Puddle is a 501c3 non-profit. We receive no State or Federal funding.
We are able to do this important work only because of the generosity of our community of donors.

Thank you for making the following releases and transfers possible:

All Walden's Puddle releases are in loving memory of Dugan Coughlan Davis, may her memory be eternal.

The Davis family has requested donations in her memory be made to Walden's Puddle because of her love for animals

Releases in February:

Eastern Cottontail, 1
Raccoon, 1
Red Fox, 1

Barred Owl, 2
Cooper's Hawk, 1
Dark-eyed Junco, 1
Pigeon, 3
Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1
Red-tailed Hawk, 2
Turkey Vulture, 2

Transfers in February:

Virginia Opossum
Chattanooga Arboretum and Nature Center

A very successful rehab and release . . .

Late in November **Tim DeArmist** and his son were boating on Percy Priest Lake. They saw a bird struggling on the surface of the water and were able to get close enough to rescue it. It was a **Ring-billed Gull** with a fishing hook caught in its feathers and fishing line wrapped around its right wing and left leg. Tim and his son cut the line away but the bird made no attempt to fly off. They noticed that its wing drooped very badly so they called WP.

Tim rushed the gull to WP on his motorcycle. [!!!] Ideally, an injured animal should be transported to WP in a dark, warm, quiet, towel lined box to keep it as stress-free as possible. Despite its unorthodox arrival staff was happy to get the rather rattled gull safely admitted.

There was no fractured bone so staff wrapped the wing to hold it in proper position and to prevent the gull from stepping on it. He was given fluids and put on the schedule to visit Dr Corwin. Staff kept his enclosure covered because it stressed him to see the room - and most likely the humans and other animals. The next day he was happily eating all the minnows staff could feed him.

He was treated for parasites, diagnosed as having a slipped tendon, and given bedding that would prevent his feet from developing pressure sores. Staff worried that the drooping wing would prevent the gull from being released, so they kept it wrapped through the middle of December. A few days after unwrapping the gull finally was able to hold his wing properly. He was moved to the Bird room on December 16, then moved outside to acclimate on December 21. On January 6 the gull was moved into the Small Raptor Flight Barn to prepare for release.

On January 8, 2012 the gull was returned to Percy Priest Lake where WP volunteer **William Bollinger** took the photo at right.

Ring-billed Gulls prefer to nest near fresh water in the interior of our continent which is why we see so many in parking lots, garbage dumps, beaches, and fields. For more info go to

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ring-billed_Gull/id/nc

FYI: There is no such thing as a "seagull." Gulls are birds in the family Laridae. They are most closely related to the [terns](#) (family Sternidae), [auks](#) and [skimmers](#), and more distantly to the [wadlers](#). Most gulls belong to the large genus *Larus*. Apart from the [kittiwakes](#), gulls are typically coastal or inland species, rarely venturing far out to sea.

<http://www.avianweb.com/gullspecies.html>



A true story to illuminate and inspire. . . .

Long-time supporters of Walden's Puddle know that we put forth a lot of effort to educate the public about the proper ways to handle injured or orphaned wildlife. Instructions for what to do until you can get your animal to WVP - or another licensed wildlife rehabber - are on our phone message and on our website <http://waldenspuddle.org/> Unfortunately, not everyone knows about Walden's Puddle or knows that Tennessee state law prohibits individuals from keeping wild animals without a permit.

Here is a story with a sad beginning, a bittersweet middle, but very satisfying ending. . . .

Paula Wilt, country girl and animal lover, was on her way to work one morning when she saw what she thought was a kitten walking across the road. The cars ahead of her were trying to avoid hitting the little animal but as she was pulling over a truck grazed it. When she got out of her car to rescue it she discovered that it was a baby Opossum whose eyes and ears were still sealed.

Paula continues the story: "I picked him up and looked around for more. I found another by the edge of the road. I looked all over, but there was no sign of the mother.

I took them to my vet but was told they do not see wildlife. I took them home. I named them Crash and Eddie after the opossums in one of my favorite movies, Ice Age. Little Crash died from his injuries the next day. Eddie, however, rode in my bra to stay warm and I raised her on kitten milk. She also liked to ride on my head. She slept with me. I loved this creature more than I could have ever imagined.

As she grew I fed her the things I thought opossums should eat. I left the porch light on at night and caught her bugs, spent a fortune at the grocery store on things we would try but she didn't like, and her favorite was crickets from the pet shop. I was wrong and she got sick. Research on the internet pointed me to **metabolic bone disease**. [http://www.opossumsocietyus.org/metabolic_bone_disease.htm]

I tried my best, but I made it worse. I was devastated. I had made her sick and didn't want to admit I needed to give her to someone who knew what they were doing. I know that my ignorance gave her this disease. In my heart I knew what the right thing to do was. It still hurts me when I think that she will not be like other opossums. She will not grow to normal size or may not live as long.



I reached out to some people I found on the internet that were supposed to be opossum rehabbers, but never got a response. I couldn't find anyone close to my hometown. I then turned to Facebook. To my surprise there is a large opossum rehabilitation community there. I befriended a lady in Murfreesboro who runs P.R.A.Y. (Possum Rehabilitation and You). I was super excited because she was close!!! She could not take her, but recommended that I contact Walden's Puddle. And you know the rest." [Paula has become a valued volunteer at WVP]

She continues: "I have since made a lot of friends on Facebook who share a love of Opossums. Through Bettina's recommendation I have signed up for the Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation course offered by IWRC [International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council] . If anyone had told me a year ago that I would love Opossums I wouldn't have believed them. Eddie has taught me so much about her wonderful species.

If our story will help one little opossum then I don't mind telling it a million times. I'm on a mission now to save as many opossums as I can by educating people and getting my permit so I can be a licensed rehabilitator. Oh, and when I realized Eddie was a girl I didn't want to change her name in honor of Crash so she became Eddie short for Edwina."

Paula has since joined the National Opossum Society and the Opossum Society of the US. <http://www.opossum.org/>
<http://www.opossumsocietyus.org/>

On Sunday February 19 Paula drove Edwina to her new permanent home at the Chattanooga Arboretum and Nature Center.



CARING FOR WILDLIFE 24/7

Walden's Puddle is the only professionally staffed wildlife rehabilitation and education center in middle Tennessee.

Baby Season 2012 has begun!



These baby squirrels arrived at WP during the first week of February after their trees were cut down, their nests destroyed, and their mothers killed or displaced. When they are this small they are cared for by home-based wildlife rehabbers who can provide around the clock feedings. They will return to WP when they are down to four daily feedings of formula.

Here in Middle Tennessee November, December, and January are usually the safest months for doing things like clear-cutting trees since there are probably no birds or mammals nesting.



Beginning in February, however, - especially when we've had a mild winter - it is best to spend a day or two observing the tree you want to trim or cut down. If there is an active squirrel's nest, you will see the mother running back and forth to it. You can also bang on the tree to see if the mom will run out.

NEVER blindly cut into a tree because there is a very good chance you will cut right through the middle of a nest of baby squirrels, raccoons, or owls. And when it is baby animal vs chainsaw--the baby animal usually loses.

Winter is the time of year when WP sees a lot of injured birds of prey. Some are first year birds who need to improve their survival skills, but most get into trouble because of a run-in with some human structure.

This **Great Horned Owl** was found entangled in a soccer net.



Can you tell how happy he is now?



Winter is also the time staff and volunteers deep clean the rehab rooms and make needed repairs to equipment.



Animal care staff, **Laurie Campbell** and **Rebecca Duke-Powers** examine and evaluate the progress of two Barred Owls to determine if they are ready to be moved to a pre-release outdoor enclosure.



This Ring-necked Duck got into trouble while wintering in Spring Hill. These birds are found in Tennessee during the non-breeding season and more likely to be seen on small ponds and shallow lakes than other diving ducks. They start heading north in April to nest across central Canada and the northern United States.

This duck obviously does not care to have paparazzi disturb his swim time!





This **Raccoon** came to WP after spending 2 weeks visiting a Middle Tennessee yard looking for shelter and food. Upon examination staff discovered that both ears were torn, his body was covered in scars, and he had bald patches where his fur had been pulled out. He had a broken rotten tooth that had to be removed and a right elbow injury.

From all indications this raccoon had been used as bait to train coon hunting dogs. Unfortunately, WP sees a few of these admissions every year.

Bettina Bowers-Schwan, animal care director: "This raccoon's face and body is literally covered in scars from bite wounds. It is gut-wrenching to imagine the torture this animal must have endured for months and possibly years."

Steve Nifong, TWRA Assistant Chief of Boating and Law Enforcement, states that capturing a raccoon from the wild for dog training is **"100% illegal."**

With good food and care this Raccoon should recover enough to be released in a safe location far away from humans.

Many hands make light work

A small army of humans use their talents, skills, experiences, and imaginations to insure that the injured and orphaned wildlife that come to Walden's Puddle receive the care they need to return to their rightful place in the world.

We, the staff, volunteers, and board members, wish to offer special thanks to the many donors and supporters who make our work possible and even a little easier.

Grants recently awarded by:

Whole Foods 5% Day
Cal Turner Family Foundation
The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
Clarise Ann DeQuasie Fund

Special donations:

Fontanel/Gaylord Christmas Tree
Mr & Mrs Ted Welsh/United Way
HCA
Network for Good
Sharing Spree

Grants applied for:

Frist Technology

We would also like to acknowledge the following for their nearly daily contribution of services and supplies:

Airport Animal Clinic
Volunteer Veterinary Hospital
Inglewood Kroger
Green Hills Whole Foods
Centerplate @ LP Field
Nashville Humane Association
Harris Demolition
Veterinary Ophthalmology Services

Vandy Students pitch in. . .

A group of 18 students from Vanderbilt University worked at WP under the direction of board chair Lane Brody. They raked and cleaned around the building, and put together all the crates and cages that were scattered around out back without parts. Lane said it was like "doing puzzles." The crates are now ready to be hosed and cleaned thoroughly and brought inside to prepare for the admissions of Baby Season 2012. **Many thanks!**

Ongoing Fundraising to benefit Walden's Puddle:

Please remember to use the following when shopping online:

Goodshop <http://www.goodsearch.com/>

I Give <http://www.igive.com/>

Sharing Spree <http://www.sharingspree.com/deals/nashville>

Artful Vision <https://www.artfulvision.com/>

Fundraising Past and Future . . .



Music City PHiNs (Parrot Heads in Nashville) held a charity event to benefit Walden's Puddle at Margaritaville on February 18. Lane Brody and WP board member Jim Africano attended the event and spoke to the PHiNs about our work.

Whole Foods in Green Hills has selected Walden's Puddle as a recipient of their 5% Day in March.

On Wednesday March 7 volunteers from WP will sit at a display table to educate and accept donations. Be on the lookout for local media promoting this event, including TV, the Tennessean, the Nashville Scene, Twitter, Facebook, Whole Foods' website, etc.



The Walden's Puddle Ebay account is in action!

100% of the money raised from the items sold through this account will be sent straight to WP.

In addition, this account is listed with Mission Fish <http://www.missionfish.org/index.html>

Anyone selling items on Ebay can opt to donate a percentage of their sales to Walden's Puddle.

Please view the current items at http://www.ebay.com/sch/waldenspuddle/m.html?_nkw=&_armrs=1&_from=&_ipg=50&_trksid=p3686

Happy Bidding!

New Items Added Daily!



Tennessee Wildlife news.



Get up close and personal with Elliot and Eloise, a mated pair of Bald Eagles who have established a nest by a golf course near Chattanooga. Two high definition cameras have been placed in the tree with the eagles. The cameras record activity from just above the nest and from a distant side view day and night. The footage is streamed live for all interested parties to view and will give us a look into the life of a bald eagle family. <http://www.harrisonbayeaglecam.org/>

The project is being initially funded by The Friends of Harrison Bay State Park, the United States Golf Association Green Section, and the East Tennessee and the Middle Tennessee Golf Course Superintendents Associations.

Lane's media project. . . .

Lane Brody is working on an informational DVD that will be made available to the public to show the important work that staff and volunteers do for Tennessee's wildlife.

"I am continuing the work on the Walden's Puddle promotional DVD. It is going very well and my producer and I are making sure we cover all aspects of the organization. We enjoyed filming at the Puddle Sunday and capturing "a day in the life." Thank you everyone who was there for speaking on camera and helping us show who we are! I estimate another three weeks of work."

If a picture is worth a thousand words then this DVD will be a priceless tool for informing the public about WP's mission.

WP Chairman CEO

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for more information go to
www.waldenspuddle.org



One of WP's educational raccoons takes a peak to see if it is Spring yet.

