

Spring 2008

Edition



# New Homes for the Raccoons

Each year, NWRI receives more calls to help baby raccoons whose mothers have been killed, or who have been stolen from their mothers. It is a constant struggle to find the volunteers, supplies, and facilities to take care of these babies for their extended stay in rehabilitation. Because we do not release raccoons into the wild until they are at least 18 weeks old, and because of their unique caging and nutritional requirements, we require more resources to care for them than for almost any other species we handle.

Last year, we found ourselves in need of at least four more wilding cages for raccoons, just to make it through the season. With all labor donated, these large cages still cost over \$200 each to build. An e-mail plea for assistance was sent out to our membership, and once again, Lynne and Jack Baldwin answered our call for help! An \$800 donation from the Baldwins allowed us to build three of our four new cages last year, and the fourth will be built this summer. These cages are the largest of our wilding cages, and comfortably rehabilitate eight raccoon babies at a time. They also provide the babies with adequate climbing, digging, and fishing room to learn and hone the skills they need to survive in the wild.



Our raccoon volunteers were thrilled to receive such large cages in which to rehabilitate their orphans, and to ensure that they had the skills they needed for reintroduction into the wild. Our new caging additions will also allow us to assist in raccoon research this fall in cooperation with a graduate student from St. Louis, so that we can learn more about raccoon behavior. This study will analyze how raccoons respond to the scent of other raccoons and recognize other members of their community. Gathering this valuable information will allow us to develop our understanding of raccoons further, and through that understanding, help us refine our rehabilitation skills.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the Baldwins, and to everyone who donates time, money, and supplies each year to NWRI. We couldn't do it without you!



NEBRASKA WILDLIFE REHAB, INC.

# The Critter Chronicle

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## A Message From Our Board

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As we start of another spring in Nebraska, we take a moment to pause and recognize how truly far NWRI has come in the past few years. The creation of the new Web site two years ago has increased public interest in NWRI, not only from people needing help with wildlife issues, but also from people wanting to volunteer their time, and school and community groups wanting to schedule NWRI speakers.

NWRI already provides a valuable service to our community – we care for many orphaned and injured animals, assist thousands of people who reach us through our telephone hotline, and educate dozens of school and community groups each year. However, the influx of new volunteers and rising interest in the environment and our native wildlife, have positioned NWRI to make even further progress in our community.

In the near future, NWRI will be partnering with the South Dakota Working Bat Group to provide books on bats free of charge to elementary school libraries in the Omaha area. Look for more on that in our next newsletter!

We also are working on new grants, and searching for private donors, to fund environmental education and habitat restoration projects with elementary school, and junior high and high school students in Nebraska. If you or anyone you know is interested in contributing to this effort,

please contact us through our hotline at 402-341-8619 (option 1), or through our Web site at: <http://www.nebraskawildliferehab.org>

We also continue to discuss the best way to make our presence in Nebraska more permanent and widely recognized by opening a wildlife rehabilitation and education facility. Although this is a difficult task to accomplish, we are certain that with the tenacity of NWRI members, and the generosity of our community, this dream will be accomplished.

As always, we are constantly looking for ways to serve our membership as well. We are currently planning a late summer general membership meeting. If you have a topic you would like addressed at the meeting, or a speaker you'd like to hear, let us know, and we'd be happy to try to schedule it.

Don't forget to renew your membership! This will ensure you continue to receive our newsletter and announcements regarding upcoming meetings and classes. The membership form is on page 7 of this newsletter.

In the next newsletter, look for updates on all of these programs and plans, and for a schedule of events for the second half of the year. Thank you for your support!

## Thanks to Our Friends and Donors

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Jack and Lynne Baldwin  
Samantha Deloa  
The Friedland Foundation  
Brian and Gina Hall  
Kuba Travnicek  
Wal-Mart—132nd and L St., Omaha

# Fox Release

Almost every year, NWRI takes in orphaned and injured red foxes. Although they are not uncommon, it is always exciting to be a part of their rehabilitation process. Last year, we received an orphaned fox kit early in the spring, and it was successfully released in the late summer. At about the time the first fox was released in August, the Cefreys, long-time NWRI members, trapped an adult female fox suffering from mange in their neighborhood. Just as treatment on the female fox began, another fox, this time an adult male, was found after he was hit by a car outside of Springfield. Although he was thin and suffering from abrasions and severe bruising, he had no broken bones, and settled in nicely to re-



**Kaci Caldwell and Laura Stastny preparing the foxes for transport to the wilding facility**

cover with his new companion in one of our carnivore cages. After a few months of rest, rehabilitation, and food, both foxes were ready for release. After a week in a

wilding facility, both foxes were released together on private property outside of Fort Calhoun.



**Top: The healed foxes in their wilding cage, late fall (Female left, male right)**

**Below: Free at last!**



## In The Spotlight... Tanya Woodside

The board members and team leaders of NWRI are constantly searching for ways to increase our exposure in the community – not only to identify new volunteers and donors, but also to ensure we can reach the most people to educate them about wildlife. We participate in many activities each year, including Earth Day.



One person who found NWRI at Earth Day in 2006, and started volunteering with us later that winter, is Tanya Woodside. When asked why she decided to contact NWRI, Tanya said, “I had thought about volunteering with a wildlife group for quite awhile. I knew I wanted to help and work with wildlife in some way but I didn’t know how to get started. When I found out about the opportunities with the NWRI, it seemed perfect.”

Tanya started with NWRI by becoming a trans-

porter for animals from the Nebraska Humane Society. Her enthusiasm and dedication soon led her to help in many other ways as well. In January of 2007, she took the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council’s Basic Skills 1AB class we sponsored in Omaha, and that led her to become an animal caregiver in addition to a transporter. In 2007, she rehabilitated raccoons, bunnies, and birds, and assisted with the rehabilitation of other species as well.

Although Tanya had no prior animal care experience, except being a proud greyhound mom, she quickly and eagerly learned everything she could about our native wildlife, their natural histories, and their care. When asked what her biggest challenge was as a new rehabilitator, Tanya stated that “it was learning how to care for each type of animal and what to do in each circumstance.” Now she sees the larger picture. “Now when I think of my biggest challenge, I think more in terms of challenges for NWRI and finding out what role I can take in moving us towards our group goals.”

*(continued on page 6)*

# 2007 Animal Statistics

<b>Bats:</b>		Northern Cardinal	1
Big Brown	367	Northern Flicker	2
Hoary	4	Purple House Finch	2
Eastern Red	11	Purple Martin	2
Silver-Haired	1	Red-Bellied Woodpecker	1
		Red-Headed House Finch	2
		Starling	5
<b>Carnivores:</b>		<b>Squirrels:</b>	
Coyote	3	13-Lined Ground Squirrel	98
Red Fox	4	Fox Squirrel	8
Badger	1		
<b>Gamebirds:</b>		<b>Waterfowl:</b>	
Chukar	1	American Coot	3
		Blue-Winged Teal	1
<b>Opossums:</b>	265	Canada Goose	4
		Mallard	24
<b>Rabbits:</b>		Pied-Billed Grebe	1
Eastern Cottontail	196	Ring-Billed Bull	1
		Wood Duck	40
<b>Raccoons:</b>	258		
<b>Reptiles &amp; Amphibians:</b>			
Bullfrog	1		
Bullsnake	1		
Garter Snake	3		
Red-Eared Slider	12		
Snapping Turtle	1		
Yellow-Bellied Slider	1		
<b>Rodents:</b>			
Beaver	1		
Mole, Eastern	2		
Woodchuck	55		
<b>Songbirds:</b>			
American Robin	13		
Barn Swallow	3		
Blue Jay	3		
Chimney Swift	8		
Common Nighthawk	3		
Dark-Eyed Junco	2		
Mourning Dove	11		
Ring-Necked Turtle Dove	1		
Rock Dove	53		
Common Grackle	10		
Horned Lark	1		
House Sparrow	6		
Kildeer	2		



A young coyote rescued from North Platte, NE  
Summer 2007

# 2007 Photos



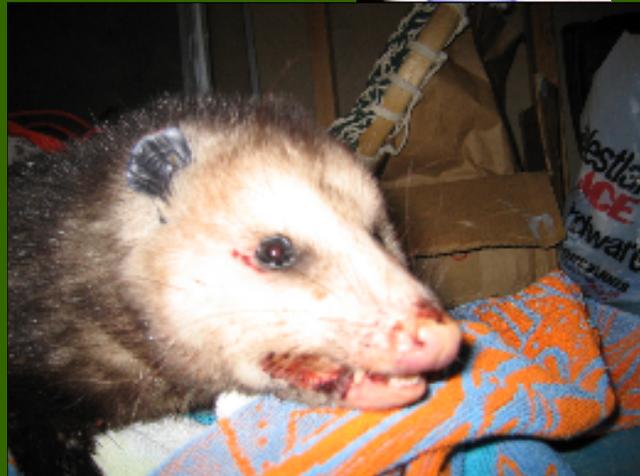
**Above:** Female fox in care during mange treatment  
**Below:** Juvenile raccoons on release day



**Above:** Adult female badger  
**Below:** 3-week old raccoon  
**Left:** Fox squirrel



**Below:** Infant black fox squirrel, spring 2007



**Above:** This adult male opossum suffered severe facial injuries when he tried to escape from a live trap.

# NWRI In the Community

## Tanya Woodside (continued from page 3)

On that note, this spring, Tanya decided to take a larger role in the organization, and became the raccoon team leader. She has also taken the initiative to help contact new volunteers and organize orientations and training classes. As raccoon team leader, she also handles the raccoon calls that come in from the public on our hotline. About this she notes that she is "passionate about making a difference regarding our local wildlife. This means not only working with animals but also in working much more directly and often with people to help answer questions and help resolve issues coexisting with wildlife."

What's in the future for Tanya? She hopes that NWRI can become a larger presence in our community in the future. She believes that a permanent wildlife rehabilitation facility, more volunteers, and additional local education programs will all propel NWRI to that goal, and she is willing to work hard to make it happen. NWRI and the wildlife of Nebraska are lucky to have Tanya on our side!



Tanya with  
a feathered  
friend  
Summer  
2007

## Orangutan or... fox squirrel?

MACCLENNY, Fla. - An animal sneaking around Baker County is not an orangutan as originally thought but likely a fox squirrel, state wildlife officials said Friday. Officers with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission laid doughnuts at a base of a tree after residents reported seeing a "big orange ball of fur."

The animal was probably an orange phase fox squirrel, Fish and Wildlife investigator Ken Holmes told The Florida Times-Union. The red-orange animals can grow to be about 2 feet tall and can climb in trees. "I'll be astonished if it's an orangutan," Holmes said. "I can quite confidently say it's probably not an orangutan."

He said the animal's eating habits did not match with the patterns of a primate. "I'm not discounting anything," Holmes said. "However, this creature, whatever it may be, simply isn't acting like a primate." *(from Yahoo! News)*

## Volunteer Opportunities

### **Animal Transporter**

With this position, you will be given a single day of the week to act as the liaison for our organization with the Nebraska Humane Society. In this position, you will go to the Humane Society on your assigned days and triage and pick-up wildlife that is to be released or transferred into NWRI's care. You will then either release the wildlife into appropriate habitat, or you will transport it to the appropriate caregiver. Requirements include a vehicle (preferably not a compact!), valid driver's license and auto insurance. You will need to possess people skills and the ability to make independent decisions based on the training you are provided. You will have the opportunity to interact with the widest array of animals of any NWRI volunteer in this position. The time commitment for this position will be one to three hours per week depending on the season. We ask that if you sign-up for this position, that you commit to a minimum of one year of volunteer service. This is an incredibly important position, as the Nebraska Humane Society is our largest source of animals taken into care!

### **Other Opportunities**

Other volunteer opportunities exist as well, including animal caregiving, picking up donations, fundraising, and speaking. If you are interested in helping out, please let us know!

## Wish List

- Towels
- Hand Towels
- Old sweatshirts and t-shirts
- Live traps, medium and large sized
- Incubators
- Gram scales
- Heating Pads
- Fencing, chain-link and privacy
- Puppy and kitten food
- Bleach
- Paper towels
- Canned Cat Food



# Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc.

Dear Friends:

**It's membership renewal time again for NWRI ...** for those who joined or renewed after September 1, 2007, you are being "grandfathered" for the year 2008 and membership dues are not required until 2009. All other members are asked to renew their membership and send their dues for the year 2008. With your continued support as an general member, you receive

- Our newsletter with all the latest news on the wildlife front,
- Announcements of NWRI seminars being offered in your area,
- And access to our **hotline 402-341-8619** where you will receive that extra help needed when caring for sick and/or injured wildlife

Even though membership requires little on your part, it means a lot to us. With your support as a member, our wild friends are provided with food and medical treatment as they recover and are readied for release.

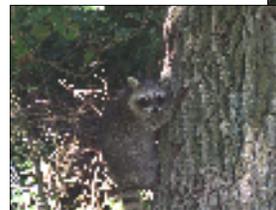
Please use the form below indicating your level of participation for the year 2008 and submit it along with your membership renewal as soon as possible. By rejoining, you continue as part of a special group of people all over the country whose care and concern for wildlife is enriched by belonging to NWRI.

It is good to know that you, along with a loyal group of animal lovers from all around the Great Plains area, actively support the NWRI. Thank you for your past and ongoing support!

Sincerely,

**Laura Stastny**

Laura Stastny  
Treasurer  
Animal Operations Chair



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

m Enclosed is a check to cover my annual membership fee.

m \$25 general       m \$50 patron       m \$100 benefactor

If you would like to make a donation as well, space for your personal information is provided on the last page of this newsletter. Please mail to the address provided

