

JOIN US AT DRIVE FOR THE WILD, SEPT 20!

saving wild lives

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SOUND WILDLIFE SHELTER

A CENTER FOR REHABILITATION AND EDUCATION SERVING THE GREATER WEST SOUND REGION

It's Baby Season! *Tips for keeping wildlife families safe*

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SPRING 2014

West Sound
**WILDLIFE
SHELTER**

WILDLIFE HOSPITAL
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Photo: Dottie Tison

Keeping Animal Families Together

It's baby season here at the Shelter, and we are receiving several baby animals every day. Injury is one reason we receive baby animals into our care, but we receive more babies each year for another reason – abduction.

Each year in spring and early summer, people find baby birds or mammals in their backyard or in local parks and thinking they are orphaned, pick them up and carry them away. This is known as wild animal abduction.

Then what should I do if I find a baby animal without its parent(s)?

CALL THE SHELTER. We can help you determine if the baby is truly in distress, and give you some instructions on how to handle a baby if it does indeed need to be brought to the Shelter. Here are a few points to consider when finding a baby animal.

Every year we get babies at the Shelter that are born healthy but are inadvertently harmed by people who pick them up and take them home because they are cute, cuddly, and even a bit friendly. But what really happens is that the baby is removed from its family, and the parents lose a baby. This is traumatic for both the parents and the baby. Because of this, the baby is deprived of the natural care of its parents, their best teachers of how to survive in the wild. We can never be a better substitute for wild animal parents!

Removing babies isn't always necessary. Wild animals are excellent parents by instinct, and trust that their babies will stay 'home' when they leave to forage for food. For example, mother deer leave for hours a time to forage and trust that their fawn will stay bedded down in the same place until they return. This is how deer have developed over time. Also, baby birds that have fallen from the nest are not alone. Their parents are usually hovering nearby to help them and take care of them on the ground. But if you find a baby bird, you can do the parents a favor and return the baby to the nest if you can safely reach it. And don't worry about handling it, the parents won't mind.

Taking babies also increases the danger of imprinting and habituation. Imprinting is when babies open their eyes and identify with their own

species, and it is very important that babies don't imprint on humans. The best way to help this is to leave the baby with its parents. Habituation is when animals get very used to being around humans, like raccoons that think that humans are a food source. Wild animals that become habituated are very likely to become a nuisance, unfortunately sealing their fate, possibly because of well-intended humans.

Help us to keep healthy babies with their parents! If you know of anyone who has taken a baby wild animal, please convince them to contact the Shelter. We can help by taking the baby and providing the correct food and life-saving care it needs. And no doubt, if you find a baby animal that is obviously in need of our help, please contact us immediately at 206.855.9057 x 1.



Wish List (For a complete list of items please visit our website)

Flat sheets	Paper towels	Masking tape	Nolvasan
Pillow cases	Large trash bags (45 gal)	Bleach (Make sure it is for disinfecting)	(Chlorhexidine)
Towels (bath size)	Liquid laundry detergent (unscented)	Cable ties	Disinfectant
Tools of all sorts (hand & power)	Liquid hand soap (regular – not antibacterial)	Astro Turf door mats (new)	Door mats (new)
Cleaning brushes, sponges	Duct tape	Ceramic bowls	Nitrile disposable gloves
"Dawn" liquid detergent (Original)		Gift Cards (hardware & pet stores, gas, retail stores)	Heating pads (non automatic shut-off)
Toilet paper			Dust & paint masks
			Cotton balls

West Sound WILDLIFE SHELTER

WILDLIFE HOSPITAL & EDUCATION CENTER

The West Sound Wildlife Shelter provides injured, orphaned, and sick wild animals a second chance at life and promotes the well-being of wildlife and their habitats through public outreach, education, and involvement.

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More Tips to Keep Wildlife Safe

The Shelter receives hundreds of orphaned and injured babies every year due to tree trimming and other yard work. Birds, squirrels, rabbits and other animals are injured or killed when their nests are unintentionally destroyed by pruning trees and shrubs during the nesting season, and by other forms of yard work. But, with a little planning and caution, you can prevent injury or worse, and help your landscape flourish at the same time!



The shelter would like to offer these guidelines for yard work and cleaning so we can keep wildlife families safe and together.

- The single most important thing you can do to protect wildlife when trimming trees and bushes is to LOOK BEFORE

YOU CUT. Large birds' nests are large and visible, but the majority of songbird nests are small and camouflaged. You may not see nests until too late.

- If you MUST trim during spring and summer, hire arborists, landscapers and tree trimmers who are "wildlife-friendly" -- concerned with the health of your trees and the birds and squirrels that nest in them.
- Keep trees healthy! The best time to prune and trim is when trees and bushes are dormant...incidentally avoiding the disruption of active nests! Proper trimming keeps trees and shrubs healthy and improves wildlife habitat.
- If you see a new or occupied nest -- simply postpone your pruning until the young are grown. Remember to check for nests in any wooded debris or in dead trees before removal as they can be prime nesting spots.
- If you disturb a nest -- place it securely back in the tree or shrub that it came from. If the nest is too damaged to return, but the eggs are intact or the babies are alive, place the nest in a small box with holes for drainage (don't use a berry basket as little legs could get caught in the mesh). Secure the container to the tree as close to the original location as possible. Then, watch from a distance to see if the parents return. This could take several hours -- be patient.

- If the parents do not return - and the nest has babies, keep them warm, dark and quiet and contact the shelter at 206.855.9057.

Other things you can do to protect wildlife families:

- Repair holes in your attics, under decks, anywhere where wildlife can get in and potentially build nests for their babies.
- Know before you mow. Please check high grass and other potential ground nesting areas before you mow your grass. Bunnies in particular like to nest in high grass.
- Check for turtles, salamanders and other amphibians and reptiles before raking wet leaves or using a leaf blower.
- If you must fertilize, please check with your local garden center for the best organic and natural fertilizers.
- Avoid using bug zappers, it kills innocent insects that are a source of food for many birds and their babies.
- Keep your pets on a leash.
- Keep your cats indoors.

Remember, with some planning and attentiveness, you can help keep wildlife babies alive and families together. For questions about wildlife, please contact the shelter at 206.855.9057 or visit the website at www.westsoundwildlife.org.

West Sound Wildlife Shelter Events



1st Annual Drive For The Wild

Saturday, September 20th, 2014

White Horse Golf Course | Kingston, WA

1:00 pm - 7:00 pm

\$125/pp | \$450/team

Tournament Highlights

Shotgun Start | Scramble

Awards BBQ dinner

Hole-in-One contest

Hit the Green

Longest Drive

Putting contest

Closest to the Pin

.... more!

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit
www.westsoundwildlife.org

Conserving Natural Areas for Wildlife and People

By: Sandra Staples-Bortner, Executive Director
Great Peninsula Conservancy
www.greatpeninsula.org

Sometimes individual animals have an unfortunate encounter with humans (or natural accidents) that bring them to the West Sound Wildlife Shelter for aid. But keeping wildlife out of the shelter is everyone's goal. Ensuring diverse and healthy wildlife populations starts with ensuring diverse and healthy habitat.

Our region's forests, streams, and shorelines are home to an incredible variety of wildlife. Conserving these natural areas is critical to sustaining the bears, squirrels, songbirds, owls, frogs, turtles, and fish that use them for food, shelter and reproduction.

Locally, a mix of public and private entities acquires and manages land for conservation purposes. Washington's Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife hold significant acres of conservation land on the peninsula. Kitsap County owns 6,000 acres of parklands including several large heritage parks. Ports, park districts, PUDs and cities also play a role in land conservation; for example the City of Bremerton's 3,000-acre forested watershed, which supplies the city's drinking water, also protects habitat.

On the private side, nature conservancy organizations (also known as land trusts) play an important role. In a conservation strategy unique to land trusts, lands of significant conservation value may remain in private ownership but be protected in perpetuity by a legal agreement known as a 'conservation easement'. The conservation easement permanently restricts future development of the land while also placing other protective provisions on the land.

Conservation easements are often used to protect a farm, working forest, or acreage surrounding a rural home. The farmer, forester or homeowner continues to enjoy the benefits of land ownership while gaining assurance that the land will never be converted to a housing development or strip mall. One of the roles of the conservancy in these arrangements is to enforce the conservation restrictions, forever!

Whether protected through outright ownership or a conservation easement, conserved lands are good news for wildlife, whose habitat is gradually being whittled away in the face of expanding urbanization.

The Conservancy is excited to share the details of a habitat conservation project now underway at the north end of the Kitsap Peninsula. Working with many partners, Great Peninsula Conservancy and Kitsap County have obtained partial funding to purchase 270 acres on Grovers Creek at the head of Miller Bay.

This special property is not far from Kingston and contains a variety of unique habitats that have long since disappeared elsewhere, including a remnant old growth forest of hemlock, cedar, and Sitka spruce. These old trees provide refuge for a variety of songbirds, owls, and other forest species. Someday, they also could provide nesting habitat for threatened marbled murrelets – a small seabird with the unusual habit of nesting in old growth trees far from the sea.

Grovers Creek and its connected wetlands provide additional habitat. Beavers have built dams across the stream and bears prowl the thick undergrowth in search of edible plants, grubs, berries and fish carcasses. Young steelhead, chum, and coho thrive in the fresh, clean waters of Grovers Creek and find safe passage to the stream's outlet at Miller Bay and then on to Puget Sound.

People also benefit from engaging with nature. Who isn't inspired when walking amidst trees that are hundreds of years old? Thrilled at the sight of an orchid? Awed at a bear track? Sustained by the clean air and clean water that are the natural byproducts of healthy forests and wetlands?

Conservation of the Great Peninsula's natural habitats is good for wildlife and people. You are invited to join Great Peninsula Conservancy in this important work!



Hiker admiring an old growth tree on the Grovers Creek Project site.

Photo: Joe Walsh