



Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.

Giving native wildlife a second chance ...

Spring/Summer 2018

**Contest
Announcement!!!**
*Help us design a new
t-shirt.
See flyer for
details.*

Inside this issue:

Opossums Are Remarkable 2
Creatures

Flight Cage Capital 2
Campaign

It Takes A Village (cont'd) 3

Grilled Owl? 3

We Need Your Help 4

Did You Know:

- A group of opossums is called a passel.
- Male opossums are called jacks.
- Female opossums are called jills.
- Young opossums are referred to as joeys, just like their Australian cousins.
- Eastern screech owls are only about 7 to 10 inches tall.
- Eastern screech owls have a wing span of 18 to 24 inches.
- Eastern screech owls are capable of catching insects in flight.

It's Raining Opossums!

Mother opossums with babies, single babies, twosomes, siblings of 3, 4 and 6 came pouring into Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary this spring season. This year we've had more opossums than we have ever had before. Our volunteers have been great about jumping in doing whatever needed to be done.

Several new volunteers, wanting to learn more, quickly mastered gavage feeding (inserting a feeding tube into the stomach) on the smallest orphan baby opossums. Since baby opossums don't suck well, gavage feeding is a fast and more efficient way of feeding them. We know exactly how much formula they are getting and we closely monitor the babies by obtaining a weight on each one when they come in. Their weight is used to determine exactly how much formula that baby should get. The precise amount is then fed via the tube. Charts are kept to ensure each individual baby is gaining weight and formula amounts are increased as they gain weight.



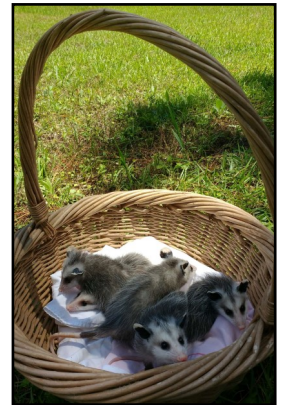
Mother opossum taking care of her babies while recovering at GCWS.

In order to tell the babies apart, we mark them with surgical markers and use those markings on the chart for identification. For example, one baby will have a single dot on his right ear, another baby may have three dots on his left ear, and so forth.

During weaning, we continue to weigh and track each baby so we can monitor their transition from formula to food. If one isn't gaining weight or starts losing weight, we can supplement via gavage feeding to help keep them healthy while making this transition.

A few of the spring babies have already been released and many more will be released very soon!!

We couldn't accomplish this without our volunteers!!



It Takes A Village...

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc. is a volunteer based organization. We have volunteers who have been with us for 30 years and volunteers who are brand new. No matter what initially brings a volunteer in, their love of animals and passion for helping those in need will be the force that brings them back. Each volunteer brings their own skills and offerings to GCWS, from specialized skills (like our veterinarians and builders) to cooking meals or cleaning cages or running errands (such as transports, vet trips and grocery/supply shopping). Each task is critical to saving these animals and no one person can do it all! If you're interested in volunteering, please contact us 850-545-3491 or email at info@goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org and let us know your availability and how you'd like to help.



Zef Fessenden stopped by a garage sale to benefit GCWS in December. Zef and his wife Oona live in Florida during the winter months. After learning about GCWS, he reached out to us and offered his handyman skills. Little did we know great friendships were in the making. During their months in Florida, Zef spends a day each week volunteering with GCWS. When Zef arrives at

Cont'd on page 3

Opossums Are Remarkable Creatures

Opossums are some pretty fascinating creatures!! Based on fossil records, opossums are one of the oldest types of mammals. They were present on Earth at the same time dinosaurs lived! Opossums are immune to rattlesnake, copperhead and cottonmouth venom. Their body temperatures are so low it is almost impossible for them to harbour the rabies virus.

Opossums are North America's only marsupial. It only takes 14 days from conception to birth. The babies are only 1/2 inch long and crawl to their mother's pouch where they stay there until they are fully developed. They stay inside the mother's pouch until they are 2-3 months old and nurse for 75 days before they are ready for solid food. Once they start venturing out of the pouch, the babies will ride on their mother's back for the next month or two.

A lot of young opossums are found alone as a result of the mother opossum being startled or chased and the babies falling out of her pouch or off of her back as she tries to run away. A mother opossum will not return for lost babies and the babies cannot survive on their own.

The opossums long tail helps them in climbing but they cannot hang from branches using only their tail. Opossums are omnivores (eat plants and animals). One opossum can consume an estimated 4,000 ticks per year.



Opossums are not territorial. They move constantly and search for food at different locations. They are nocturnal animals and have very poor eyesight and sense of hearing. Luckily their sense of smell is excellent and they use this to find food.

Opossums have 50 teeth. When threatened, they will show all 50 of their teeth but all they want to do is get away. Yes, these mammals really do "play possum". It is actually a completely involuntary and automatic physiological response to danger (like fainting). During this state, they mimic the smell and appearance of a dead animal. The lips may be drawn back, teeth bared, saliva foams around the mouth and they may emit a foul smell. They can "play possum" for 1 minute to several hours. Many injured opossums have been killed by well meaning people who find a catatonic animal and assume the worse.

Opossums are solitary animals and live alone when not breeding. Their life span is only a couple of years in the wild.



This mother and all of her babies survived being hit by a car. Although the driver did not stop, a good Samaritan did. After discovering the mother was alive and her pouch was full of babies, she called GCWS. Please safely check for babies when you see a dead or injured opossum.

Flight Cage Capital Campaign

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary is kicking off a capital campaign for a flight cage for large birds such as hawks, owls, crows, etc. To meet the federal requirements, the cage will be 50 feet long, 10 feet wide and 12 feet tall. Currently, when our birds of prey are ready for reconditioning we have to transport them to another facility (sometimes 7 hours away) with a large flight cage to test their flying ability and allow them to strengthen their wings. Sometimes we have to wait for a flight cage at another facility to have an opening. We had a large outdoor cage where the raptors could stay during this period, but Hurricane Hermine destroyed the cage (and several other cages). We desperately need this new cage in order to provide required flight time and space for these birds before we can release them. The estimated cost for this cage is \$10,500. We have created a "Fundraiser"

on Facebook so you can follow the progress. You can donate directly on that page, our regular Facebook page, via our website or mail in your donation and make a note that it is specifically for the flight cage.

Editors note: The Federal requirements for flight cages for eagles are 100 feet long 20 wide and 16 tall. Eagles, black vultures and turkey vultures will still be sent to Audubon Bird of Prey Center in Maitland for reconditioning.



It Takes A Village... (continued from page 1)

GCWS, he first greets our education screech owls and then starts working on the list of projects on the "Zef Board". Whether it's tackling cage repairs (replacing door hinges or replacing a cage floor), putting up gutters or just coming up with ways to make our lives easier and more organized, Zef's creativity and excellent skills are invaluable to Goose Creek Wildlife!

During one of our work days, Zef's wife Oona prepared and served lunch to all the hard working volunteers, which everyone greatly appreciated!!!



Dr. David Hale, DVM

—For more than 30 years, Dr. David Hale has provided veterinarian care to Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary's patients. Whether it is a dove with a broken leg, an eagle with a broken wing, a fawn with an infection or an opossum with a spinal injury, Dr. Hale has tirelessly provided the diagnostics, medicine and surgery they needed...asking nothing in return.

Since many of our patients arrive in critical condition, Dr. Hale often provides emergency advice via phone and text messages. Non emergency wildlife patients are seen between scheduled appointments at his busy practice at Cross Creek Animal Clinic, 2728 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL. Dr. Hale often stays after hours to make sure every

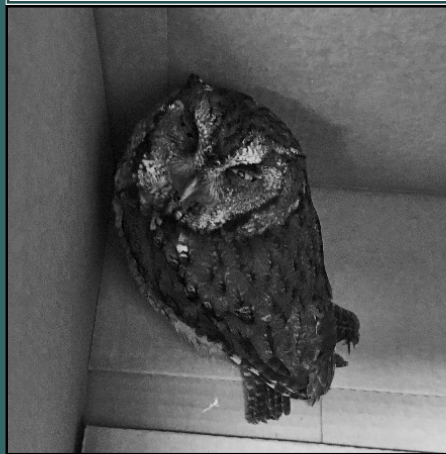
patient is seen. How very fortunate we are to have someone so knowledgeable whose passion and dedication to the care and well being of animals aligns with ours!

Dr. Hale...Mentor, teacher, diagnostician, surgeon and friend. We couldn't do this without him! The next time you see Dr. Hale, please thank him for all he does for these animals!



Above, Dr. Hale performs surgery on a pelican's broken wing.

Grilled Owl?



No! This is not a recipe for an unusual backyard BBQ dish. It is an amazing story of survival for one lucky screech owl.

It all started very early one the morning in Perry, FL. A consultant to one of the plywood mills had an early morning meeting. He left the motel in his Ford F-150 and arrived at the mill seemingly without incident. He did recall seeing a bird on the highway but believed he had missed hitting it.

After the meeting was adjourned, he and another attendee walked back to their vehicles. The companion said he heard something under the hood of the Ford. Their closer inspection revealed an Eastern Screech Owl wedged between the radiator and the grill - STILL ALIVE! Getting the owl out of there seemed impossible. Someone suggested consulting with the mechanics at Timberland Ford right there in Perry. Unable to come up with any other option, the consultant decided to drive over there.

The service manager said they would have to remove the grill, a lengthy process but the only possible solution. The driver agreed and the mechanic performed the time-consuming extrication. The owl was still alive but quite docile, most probably in shock. He placed the owl in a cardboard box (see photo) and called Chad Taylor, the local FWC officer. Chad in turn called Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary. Timberland Ford did all that work for free! Thank you Timberland Ford for caring and taking action!!

Upon arrival at GCWS, the screech owl was examined and evaluated. Remarkably, this little owl suffered no broken bones and no head trauma! He was treated for shock (warmed and given fluids). By the following day, he was alert and eager to eat. Since we didn't know where he came from, we started getting him used to a nest box. He stayed at GCWS for rest and observation for a short period before being released. When release time came, we took the owl and his nest box to a safe location and installed the box. The owl has a new home and a new house!

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.

Like us on Facebook to keep up to date with stories, events and fundraisers!

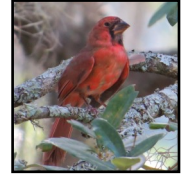
Animal Hotline: 850-545-3491

Business (mailing only) Address:
3400 Williams Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Business Phone: 850-508-7587
E-mail: info@goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org
www.goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org

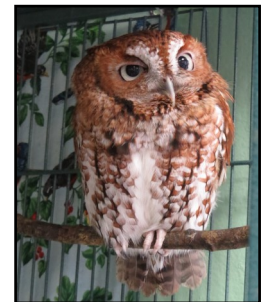
Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc., 3400 Williams Road, Tallahassee, FL 32311 registers annually with the State of Florida. (Registration number FL CH 5849.) A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free within the State (800) 435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State.

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We Need Your Help!!!

We desperately need your help in order to continue helping our injured, sick, orphaned and displaced wildlife. These animals don't have owners who can help with their expenses. They won't have adoption fees that help offset their medical and food costs. Their specialized formulas aren't cheap. The required medicines are sometimes expensive. The unique caging requires constant upkeep and repairs. The cleaning supplies are utilized daily. Enrichment (toys, hiding food in something natural they have so search for, frozen fruit in ice trays, etc.) is vital to preparing the animals ready for release into the wild. The joys are great but the heart-breaks are devastating. Yet every day our volunteers are ready to face another day of obstacles, uncertainty, endurance and love in the hopes of saving one more life. Please help us continue helping them. Participate in one of our fundraisers. Purchase much needed items from our wish list. Adopt an animal in someone's honor. Host a party/benefit fundraiser (wild animal baby shower, bake sale fundraiser, dinner party with friends, silent auction or raffles, food drive for the animals, etc. just to name a few). Everyone needs a reason to have a party, right? Have fun and make a difference at the same time! Please help us help them!



Yes, I care! I want to help give these animals a second chance at life!

Send your donation to our mailing address*:

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary
3400 Williams Road
Tallahassee, FL 32311

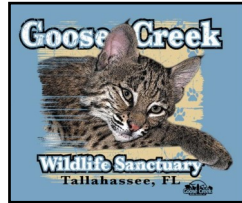
Or visit our website at www.goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org to donate via PayPal.

*This is our mailing address only. This is not an animal drop off location.

Calling all artists and photographers!!

Help us design a new t-shirt for Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary

Win a \$50
gift card!!



Have your
talent printed
on t-shirts!

How would you like your artwork to be showcased on t-shirts? Show us how creative you are and send us your design for a new Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary shirt. If your design is chosen, we'll give you a \$50 gift card to Amazon and a shirt featuring your very own artwork! The winning designs will then be available for sale online for a limited time and all proceeds will benefit GCWS!

Winners will be selected in each of two categories: photography and art. Art may include drawings, computer generated designs, photo shopped pictures and anything in between. Winners will be showcased on our website, our Facebook page and in our next newsletter.



The Rules:

- All submissions become property of Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.
- Submitted designs must be your original work.
- Eligible designs must feature native Florida wildlife.
- Entries will be accepted from now through October 1, 2018.
- Submit entries to info@goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org or mail to GCWS, 3400 Williams Road, Tallahassee, FL 32311 (Mailed entries must be mailed flat.)
- Be sure to include your name and contact information with your entry.
- Colors in artwork on actual shirt design may be limited and enhanced by shirt company to ensure the best representation. If not included in your design, Goose Creek's name will be added to the design in a complimentary manner.
- Artists may submit multiple designs.
- By entering the contest, you agree to the rules.

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.

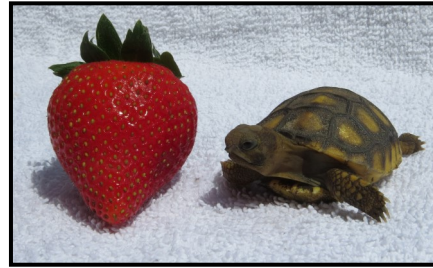
Wish List



- Baby receiving blankets
- Baby toys
- Ferret cubes & hanging hammocks
- Fleece material & sweatshirts (for bedding)
- Towels & flat sheets (no holes or strings)
- Super Preen vitamins
- Canned green beans or carrots (no salt)
- Canned pumpkin



- Peanut butter
- Cheerios
- Sardines (with skin & bones)
- Unsalted pecans, peanuts and sunflower seeds (shelled & unshelled)
- Vegetable baby food (stages 1 & 2)
- Chicken baby food (stages 1 & 2)
- Marrow bones (dog treats)
- Pedialyte
- Zoo Med canned box turtle diet
- Suet
- Wild bird seed
- Live mealworms



- Seasonal fresh produce
- Kleenex Viva paper towels
- Kleenex tissue
- Dawn dish detergent
- Environmentally friendly laundry detergent
- Bleach
- Masking tape
- Vet wrap
- Dry erase & permanent markers
- Latex & kitchen gloves
- Scrubbing sponges & cleaning brushes
- Heating pads (no automatic shut offs)
- Hot hands
- Chlorhexidine solution
- Yard Tools (rakes, water hoses, spray nozzles)
- Gift cards (gas, grocery, hardware stores)



Online shopping is fun and easy!! Do your shopping at www.smile.amazon.com and select GCWS as your charity of choice and we receive a percentage of your purchases at no additional cost to you!

And while you're there, check out our Amazon wish list. Simple click on "lists" in the upper right hand corner. Then click on "find a list" and type "Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary" in the name you're searching for. It's that easy!