



Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.

Giving native wildlife a second chance ...

Spring/Summer 2020

Our Annual T-shirt Contest Is Back!!!

Help us design our 2020 shirt.

See insert for details.

It's a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo (and They're Cuckoo)!

This baby yellow-billed cuckoo is another first for Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc. He was found in a driveway with no nest in sight. From the moment he opened his mouth begging for food, we knew he wasn't one of the typical songbirds we receive on a regular basis and it took us a little bit to ID him.



Yellow-billed cuckoos are members of the Cuculidae family (the same family as road-runners). In Southern United States, many people call them a rain crow or storm crow because of their tendency to call at the sound of thunder.

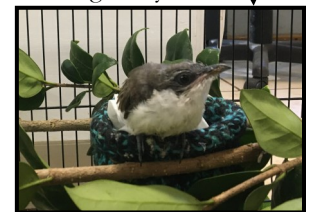
↓ Arrival day ↑

Some birds like yellow-billed cuckoos, have papillae in or around their mouths. These are sometimes referred to as landing lights or runway lights and are thought to help guide the parent to the baby's mouth when they are inside a dark nest (or in a dark tree in the case of some cavity dwellers). As the baby grows, the papillae disappear. And boy do these yellow-billed cuckoos grow fast. The difference in the pictures to the right were only 8 days apart!!!



Eight days later ↓

There are noticeable differences between the yellow-billed cuckoo and other songbirds from the very beginning...egg laying. Yellow-billed cuckoos eggs hatch asynchronously, meaning the mother bird starts incubating the first egg as soon as it is laid. As she continues to lay eggs, as many as 5 days can pass between the first and last egg. As the eggs begin to hatch, there can be as many as 5 days between each egg hatching. Their eggs require only 9-11 days of incubation. Both mom and dad sit on the eggs equally during the day, however dad takes the nightshift. The growth timeframe of yellow-billed cuckoos are very different from most birds as well. Chicks are born naked but become partly covered in pin feathers within 24 hours. They are active within 10 minutes of hatching. When they are a couple of days old, the chicks can make a buzzing sound that resembles an insect. A few days later, they can vocalize a low barking call when disturbed. The young birds may leave the nest and climb about in branches after only about a week. Because of the differ-



Did You Know:

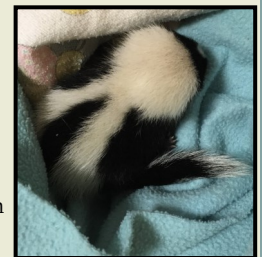
- Wild gopher tortoises have a life span of 40-60 years.
- Tortoises in captivity can live more than 100 years.
- Gopher Tortoise eggs incubate for 90 days before hatching.
- Skunks can run up to 10 mph.
- Skunks have a very keen sense of smell and hearing.
- Skunks have very poor eyesight being unable to see objects more than about 10 feet away.

He's a Cute Little Stinker...



through most of this process. Once that was under control, the poor thing had a mite breakout. Apparently he also had mite eggs that hatched. After several days of treatment, good nutrition and TLC, he was parasite free and standing on his own. He is expected to make a full recovery.

A gentleman looking out his window spotted a swarm of flies in his backyard. When he went to investigate he discovered this little fellow...all alone, not moving and covered in flies. During transport he was warmed up so that work to save him could continue as soon as he arrived at GCWS. The initial exam showed no physical injuries but he was covered in fly eggs. If not removed quickly and allowed to hatch, the fly larvae would begin to consume him so work to remove the fly eggs as soon as possible was critical. Fortunately, he could rest and sleep



It's a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo (and They're Cuckoo) cont'd from page 1

ence in time between the eggs hatching and speed in which they develop and leave the nest, the oldest sibling might fledge before the last egg hatches. Dad will continue to care for the first offspring while mom will care for the last one. Yellow-billed cuckoos can fly about 3 weeks after hatching.

Yellow-billed cuckoos are common in the Eastern US, but are more commonly heard than seen. They spend most of their time in the thick canopy of trees searching for their food of choice....caterpillars. Individual cuckoos eat thousands of caterpillars per season and may eat as many as 100 at one sitting. They supplement this diet with beetles, ants, spiders, small wild fruits and seeds. While most songbirds cannot eat caterpillars with hair-like setae, cuckoos can consume them because they have the ability to shed their abdominal lining. The cuckoo actually sheds the stomach lining and disgorges a pellet in a manner very similar to owls. At first glance, the yellow-billed cuckoo may look like the average songbird but it is definitely different in many ways. We've all heard the adage "Never judge a book by its cover." Never judge a songbird by the way it looks.



Don't kidnap. Every year we receive numerous fledglings, fawns and other babies that were doing exactly what they were supposed to be doing when a well-meaning person took them away from their family. Fledgling birds leave the nest before they can fly. Fawns are left alone for most of the day for safety while the mother forages for food. Some baby mammals are small when they venture out on their own. If you aren't 100% certain an animal needs rescuing, watch before you intervene. If you aren't sure, call us for advice. Text us a picture. Let us help you make the best decision for that animal. Wildlife is much better off with their parents when possible.

Don't play with wildlife. Every year, we take in wildlife that die because they were "cute." Last year, even after being advised not to touch them, two baby raccoons were played with because they were "too cute not to." Someone was scratched, nothing major....except now both babies were required to be euthanized (not by GCWS, but by The Florida Health Department) and tested for rabies. Last year we also received a nest of birds that came to us after parents thought it would be a good lesson for their kids to take care of them for a few days. The babies had broken legs and were malnourished. Not a good lesson. **DON'T PLAY WITH WILDLIFE. DON'T ATTEMPT TO RAISE WILDLIFE. PLEASE!!!** It's hard enough for these animals (and it's illegal). Please don't make it harder simply to satisfy your curiosity. If you want to help them become a volunteer at a licensed wildlife rehabilitation center.

It Takes a Village



She's like a hurricane....Catherine "Cat" Kynoch has been volunteering with Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc. for nine years.....amazing since she's only 23. She started volunteering at

14. Her passion for helping animals started at a very early age and has stayed an important part of her life. Whether it's a mouse, an eagle, a chinchilla, a pig, a snake or an opossum, if an animal needs help, she's ready! Cat helps GCWS raise orphaned wildlife, assists with cage cleaning, prepares wildlife diets, grocery shops, performs rescues and releases and now helps train new volunteers. She doesn't think twice when it's time to catch an adult red-tailed hawk in their outdoor cage to take to the vet for a follow-up or a snake that needs to be held for medical attention. She's always willing to help with anything we need. Her love for helping animals guides her in her professional life as well. She volunteered at the Tallahassee Museum for eighteen months and now works at Cross Creek Animal Clinic (CCAC) while still volunteering with GCWS. (We're not sure when she sleeps!) Now that she works for Dr. Hale at

CCAC, she helps care for wildlife dropped off there and transports animals to and from the clinic. Even after working a 10 hour shift, Cat still swings by to help with evening feedings. "I know that the baby I'm feeding wouldn't be alive if people like me didn't take those extra minutes out of their day to care for and feed them. I truly take joy in caring for wildlife." And Catherine...it shows!

When she's at Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, just don't get in her way because she's like a hurricane moving through checking on, cleaning and feeding everyone. We appreciate you!!!



How Did Covid-19 Effect Our Wildlife Sanctuary?

We've been asked how Goose Creek was effected by Covid-19 since we work with wildlife. Like most everyone, the coronavirus hit GCWS in ways we didn't anticipate or expect. Individuals and businesses everywhere experienced major changes and obstacles. Volunteer based non-profits were not immune. As for GCWS, we were hit in many different ways. We lost all of our student volunteers when the colleges closed their campuses and students were sent home. GCWS is approved to award direct individual study (DIS) hours for biology majors. We lost a lot of hands that fed babies and tended to the cleaning with that group. We also have several college service groups that donate time in the form of project specific work days to GCWS. We lost those too. The loss of all of these student volunteers came at a critical time just as baby season was beginning. A larger percentage of our regular volunteers opted to shelter in place and stay home as well. Due to the uncertainty surrounding this virus, we did not accept new volunteers who would require hands-on training and limited the number of volunteers at any one time in order to minimize close contact between people.

Additionally, all fundraisers GCWS benefitted from were cancelled. Traditionally, GCWS has received a large amount of supplies during FSU's "Chuck It For Charity" event held at the end of each semester as the students move out. We get everything from laundry detergent to dishes and even small appliances. It's like Christmas at GCWS and this event did not happen this year either. Compounding that, stores sold out of cleaning supplies, bleach, paper products and sanitizers, all of which are critical in daily cleaning at GCWS.

Even our rescues looked and felt different. Most rescues involve a direct hand off of an animal or face to face conversations with the person seeking help. Most all of our recent rescues had no direct contact with humans. Conversations were held through windows from 10 feet away or on cell phones while the person seeking help stayed inside while we captured an injured animal on their porch. Vet drop offs, pick ups and appointments were curbside with information given via emails and phone calls.

During this time when people are uncertain and uneasy about the future, donations (food and monetary) have been impacted significantly. We are very understanding of this. We are individuals as well. We have jobs, families and loved ones to worry about too. But the wildlife still had their baby season. The injured and orphaned wildlife still needed our help (and still do, as baby season is still in full swing). In reality we've taken more calls and seen an increase in animals this year because so many people are home (vs. being at work or school) and spending time outdoors enjoying nature and therefore a larger number of people are encountering wildlife in need (or thought to be in need). Because the wildlife needs us...we need you! If you can help in any way, please do so. There are many options and suggestions for ways you can help GCWS mentioned throughout this newsletter from donating time, money or supplies to hosting a fundraiser to benefit GCWS, spearheading a supply drive or an online donation drive and so much more. Hands on or off, there are many ways you can help.

The Tortoise and The Dog



Gopher tortoises are a protected species found throughout our state. Gopher tortoises and turtles are not chew toys. Sadly dogs don't know either of these facts.

Every year we receive injured turtles and tortoises as a result of dogs playing with them and chewing on them. Some survive, some do not. Some survivors are releasable, some are not. The gopher tortoise pictured here came in with a lot of damage to the front of his legs, but his toes and legs were intact. He had a long road to recovery, but he did make a full recovery and was released back to his burrow. The land owners are now aware of the burrow and the risk to the gopher tortoises and have made arrangements to keep their dogs away from this area of the property.

Unlike box turtles, gopher tortoises cannot pull their head and legs inside their shell and close up for protection. Their only defense is to pull their head in as much as possible and cover their head with their front legs. Leg and claw damage are by far the most common dog injuries to these gentle creatures.

Per FWC, wildlife rehabilitators across Florida report as many as half of the injured gopher tortoises taken in are as a result of injuries from dogs. Train your dog with basic commands. Control your dog with a leash. If you have burrows in your yard, make sure the tortoise has a chance to retreat to his burrow before letting your dog run. Do not let your dog approach a gopher tortoise or their burrow. These burrows provide refuge for more than 350 species, including snakes. It is illegal to impact a gopher tortoise burrow in any way.

If your dog does injure a gopher tortoise or a turtle, or if you come across an injured one, please seek help immediately from the closest licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Let them know the exact location where the gopher tortoise was found. They play an important role in our ecosystem and need to be returned to their home when possible.

Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc.

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

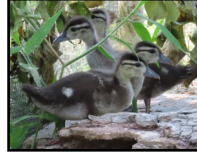
Animal Hotline: 850-545-3491

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

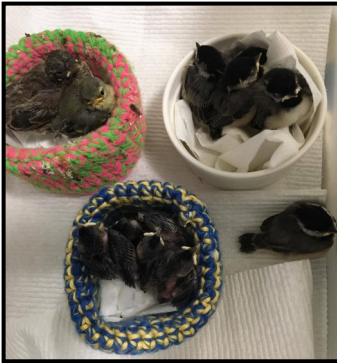
Business Phone: 850-508-7587
E-mail: info@goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org
www.goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org

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 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. Cleaning supplies are utilized daily. Enrichment (toys, hiding food in something natural they have to search for, frozen fruit in ice trays, etc.) is vital to preparing the animals for release into the wild. The joys are great but the heartbreaks 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, 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!



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

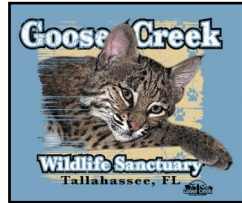
Or visit our website at www.goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org to donate via PayPal.

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

Calling all Artists and Photographers!!

Help us design our 2020 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 our annual 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.



Contest Rules:

- Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Inc. will have the rights to use artwork submitted.
- Submitted designs must be your original work.
- Eligible designs must feature native Florida wildlife.
- Entries will be accepted from now through August 1, 2020.
- Submit entries to info@goosecreekwildlifesanctuary.org or mail to GCWS, 3400 Williams Road, Tallahassee, FL 32311 (GCWS may need to contact you for a high resolution print if you are selected as the winner.)
- 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 the 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
- Towels & flat sheets (no holes or strings)
- EXACT powder (baby bird formula)
- Natural peanut butter
- Canned green beans or carrots (no salt)
- 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
- Fresh produce
- Bleach
- Garbage bags
- Masking tape
- Vet wrap



- Dawn dish detergent
- Environmentally friendly laundry detergent
- Dry erase & permanent markers
- Kleenex tissue
- Kleenex Viva paper towels
- Latex & kitchen gloves
- Heavy duty leather gloves (welder's 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, pet supply stores, Amazon, etc.)

Adopt an Animal in Honor of Someone

Visit our website for more information on how to sponsor an animal in someone's name.



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.

Check out our Amazon wish list. Go to www.smile.amazon.com and click on "Amazon Smile Charity Lists" in the drop down menu under "Accounts and Lists." Type in "Goose Creek Wildlife Sanctuary" for the charity you're searching for. It's that easy!