

# TALES FROM THE TREE

*The Quarterly Newsletter of Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center*



Volume No. 1 Issue No. 2  
Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center  
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## ARE YOU SCIURUS?

The early part of the year always brings us an influx of Eastern Gray Squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*). This year was no exception – except that it brought us an extraordinary amount of these bushy tailed members of the rodent family. To date, we have admitted 105 gray squirrels, in addition to 5 Southern Flying Squirrels, 4 Fox Squirrels, 92 Virginia Opossums, 93 Eastern Cottontails and 9 White-tailed Deer fawns at our mammal facility.

Gray Squirrels are found throughout the eastern United States. While they can reach 1 to nearly 2 pounds (400-710 grams) as adults, we have received orphaned youngsters as small as 10 grams. These youngsters must be fed every 1-1/2 to 2 hours around the clock until they are 2 weeks old. Feeding frequencies are gradually lengthened until the squirrels are weaned at approximately 8-10 weeks of age. Spring babies are released at 12-14 weeks of age. Late fall babies may stay with us throughout the winter.



*Three day old Eastern Gray Squirrel*

Squirrels will typically have more than one nest, frequently moving the babies between nests if the primary nest is threatened, damaged or becomes infested with parasites. The nests generally look like a

large conglomeration of leaves very high up in the tree.

Squirrels typically have two litters of babies each year – one in the early spring and again in mid to late summer. Babies born later in the year typically stay with the mother throughout the winter.



*Approximately 4 weeks old*

A squirrel's tail serves many purposes – communication, shelter from the rain, a blanket in the cold and a rudder when swimming. It also gives the squirrel lift as it leaps from branch to branch, and can slow its descent should it fall from the tree.

Squirrels are frequently seen burying nuts. They do not remember where they have hidden the nuts, but can find their stash through their keen sense of smell. Some of their favorite nuts include hickory nuts, beechnuts, acorns and walnuts, but they will also chew on opening buds and enjoy a variety of fruits.

Chewing is important to squirrels. Their incredibly strong teeth grow constantly. Chewing on hard substances, such as the shell of their favorite nuts, helps keep their teeth ground down.



*Approximately 6 weeks old*

### ***The Chainsaw Brothers***

We receive many injured animals every year. Most injuries are caused by our domestic pets or automobiles. Sometimes unusual cases arrive that really break our hearts. This is the story of one of those cases.

A rescuer arrived at Ziggy's Tree with two injured baby gray squirrels. Her husband was trimming trees for the electric company and cut into a nest of squirrels. The mother and some of the babies were killed instantly. Two little males were able to escape, but had suffered extensive cuts to their backs and hind quarters. The wounds were flushed, the skin pulled back together and antibiotics were administered. They were placed in an incubator for the night and we prayed for a miracle.

The next morning, they were almost lifeless. We continued to provide medication, fluids and formula, and within a couple of days, they were becoming more active. By the end of the week, they were sitting up and eating on their own!

Their wounds healed nicely, and after a month, the only evidence of trauma were small scars crisscrossing their backs. They were released back into the wild this summer to live free and natural lives. Perhaps they will be responsible for the next oak tree sapling or blooming sunflower.

People often ask why we rehabilitate common animals. Quite simply, they are all God's creatures and deserve the best chance at life that we can give. We are all part of this great circle of life.

## **MAMMAL FUN FACTS**

Did you know –

- Squirrels weigh only 1 ounce at birth and are approximately one inch long. They have no hair or teeth. Their eyes open at 4-5 weeks of age, but they do not see well for another 2 or 3 weeks.
- Opossums are our only native North American marsupial. The female carries the babies in her pouch where they are nursed and protected from the outside world.
- Flying Squirrels don't fly like birds, but are equipped with a tough membrane that extends from the front legs to the back legs, allowing them to glide fairly long distances.
- Rabbits make their nests in the most unlikely places – in the middle of your yard, flower beds, and yes, sometimes in the enclosed dog run. They make a small indentation in the ground and line it with grass and hair from the mother's chest. This provides excellent cover for the babies. The mother is rarely seen at the nest. She visits the nest once or twice during the night to feed the babies. She stays away during the day so as not to attract predators.
- Groundhogs are born in an underground burrow and will grunt and "bark" to signal danger. They are very strong diggers – their tunnels help aerate the soil. They feast all summer on grasses and will hibernate in cold winter months.
- It is a myth that the mother will not come back if her babies are touched or handled by humans. That simply is not true. The maternal instinct is much stronger than any human scent.
- In Tennessee, wildlife rehabilitators are not permitted to care for bats or skunks due to the potential that these species carry the rabies virus.
- Armadillos are being found in Middle Tennessee in increasing numbers. They are prehistoric looking mammals that are closely related to anteaters and sloths.

## **THANK YOU!**

*Our Generous Supporters*

### **FAMILY**

Diana Manas in honor of LouAnn Partington  
Keith & Leslie Miller  
Gary & Jodie Mollohan  
Rick & Danielle Johnson  
Sherron & Marc Todd  
Shipra Putatunda

### **INDIVIDUAL**

Stephanie Vickers  
Sandra Hosse  
Brady Palmer, O.D.

### **VETERINARIANS**

Pet Medical Center – Tullahoma  
Black Fox Veterinary Clinic – Murfreesboro

### **IN-KIND & CASH DONATIONS**

Linda Reed \* Valerie Hubert Steve Coapman  
Eloise Sherrell \* Makesha Parker \* Joyce Moore  
Sandra Pennington \* Cheryl McMullen  
Donna Soderlin \* Robyn Mitchell  
Jeff Cashdollar \* Mona Fears  
Larry Hoyte Reed \* Gary Adams  
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Sharon Rudolph \* Katie Johnson  
Dibrell Morford & Neal Gant  
Michelle McCord \* Rene & Tammie Osborne  
David Byrd \* Karen Brown \* Melanie Dailey  
Anna Marie Smoker \* Susan Martens

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Mary Ann Partington \* Peg Rindfleisch  
Jeff Cashdollar \* Brenan Bailey  
Amber Stoep \* Dennis Monsewicz

We accept donations in memory of and in honor of a loved one or cherished pet and will feature that donation (as well as print a photo of your loved one, if provided) in our next newsletter.

We are available to conduct programs for schools, civic and church groups. For more information or to schedule a program, contact LouAnn Partington at 931-393-4835 or e-mail [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com).

For assistance with orphaned or injured small mammals or fawns, contact Angela Hensley at 615-631-2205.

For assistance with orphaned or injured birds, contact LouAnn Partington, Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator, at 931-393-4835.

For assistance with large mammals, such as raccoons, bobcats and coyotes, contact Walden's Puddle Wildlife Rehabilitation Center at 615-299-9938.

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### **Board Members**

President – Angela Hensley  
Vice-President – LouAnn Partington, Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator  
Secretary/Treasurer – Chuck Hensley  
At-Large Directors – Jan Brandon

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### **Newsletter Staff**

Editor LouAnn Partington  
Contributors Angela Hensley, LouAnn Partington  
Photographs courtesy of LouAnn Partington

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## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**Newsletter** – If you would like to contribute an article or have suggestions for articles, please contact LouAnn Partington at 931-393-4835 or [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com).

**Animal Transport** – Can you help pick up animals from outlying areas and transport to one of our rehabilitation facilities OR return the animal to its habitat once it's recovered? Call Angela at 615-631-2205 or e-mail [ziggystree@aol.com](mailto:ziggystree@aol.com) with your availability.

**Education Programs** – If you'd like to help with upcoming programs, contact LouAnn Partington at 931-393-4835 or [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com).

**Board of Directors** - If you would be interested in serving on our Board of Directors or would like to nominate someone to our Board, please submit resumes via e-mail to [ziggystree@aol.com](mailto:ziggystree@aol.com) or mail to Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, PO Box 330756, Murfreesboro, TN 37133. Board members are responsible for setting policy for the organization and assisting with fundraising activities. Time commitment is less than 10 hours per month.

## WISH LIST

Paper Towels  
Facial Tissue  
Bleach  
Laundry Detergent  
Nuts (pecans, walnuts, acorns)  
Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, potatoes)  
Fruit (apples, blueberries, strawberries, grapes, blackberries)  
Gift cards (grocery store, Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply)  
Bird seed (millet, finch seed, black oil sunflower seeds)  
Chick Starter (unmedicated)  
LCD Projector  
Copy Paper  
Heating Pads (without automatic shut-off)

## QUOTES FOR THE DAY

"One drop of water helps to swell the ocean... None are too small, too feeble, too poor to be of service. Think of this and act."  
- Hannah More



*Newborn Eastern Cottontail*

"To live in this world you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go." - Mary Oliver

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love." - Mother Teresa

## NEWS

The spring tornadoes and summer heat wave definitely had an impact on our patient load this year. Baby mammals came in earlier and it seemed like breeding season never stopped. Our baby bird season started a few days later than normal, but we are seeing record numbers. TWRA also approved our Wilson County facility to care for orphaned or injured fawns up to 8 pounds.

Our next newsletter will feature stories and information on some of our avian patients from this year. We've already admitted nearly 450 birds, mostly orphaned or kidnapped babies. Migration is now in full swing and we'll likely admit some birds who are injured during their travels through Tennessee.

Our Kroger gift card program continues to bring in much needed funding – we've received 2 checks so far and are well on our way to the next cash disbursement. If you have purchased and are using a Kroger gift card, THANK YOU! If you would like to purchase a gift card, please call LouAnn at 931-393-4835 or via e-mail at [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com).

We're pleased to welcome our newest volunteer, Dennis Monsewicz. We met Dennis when he and his wife Brooke brought us an injured Mourning Dove. He has graciously volunteered to assist with upgrading and updating our website. We hope to have the website fully operational in the next few weeks, which will include the capacity to accept on-line donations.

Along with upgrading our website, we are establishing a Facebook page which will allow us to provide ongoing updates on our furred and feathered patients.

The most recent edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association quarterly journal featured an article in its "Practitioner's Forum" by our bird specialist, LouAnn Partington. The article, entitled "Songbird 101" details the steps in setting up a songbird rehabilitation program and was the result of a talk given at NWRA's 2009 conference.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Name:

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Address:

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Telephone:

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E-mail Address:

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Are you interested in volunteering in the following areas:

- Environmental Education
- Wildlife Rehabilitation
- Fundraising

Membership Category

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual     | \$25           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family         | \$40           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business | \$100          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate      | \$250          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer      | \$500          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate       | \$1000 or more |

**Make checks payable to: Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center  
and mail to  
PO Box 330756, Murfreesboro, TN 37133**

Not sure what to get for that special someone for birthdays, anniversaries or just because? Consider giving them a one-year membership to Ziggy's Tree! Members receive our quarterly newsletter and invitations to special events and programs that are held throughout the year.

*Your mailing label contains your membership expiration date.*

*Ziggy's Tree strives to be environmentally conscious. We are happy to provide our newsletter via e-mail. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of our newsletter, please contact us at [ziggytree@aol.com](mailto:ziggytree@aol.com) to be placed on our e-mail list.*

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