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# TALES FROM THE TREE

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



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Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center  
Website: [www.ziggystree.org](http://www.ziggystree.org)

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92 Maple Ave., Tullahoma, TN 37388  
E-mail: [ziggystree@aol.com](mailto:ziggystree@aol.com)

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## PATIENT GALLERY

### A BIRDIE ON THE GOLF COURSE

Great Horned Owl, Patient 24, was initially found in a grove of trees in the middle of the golf course at the McMinnville Country Club. It is not uncommon to find these owls on the ground – they can leave the nest up to 4 weeks before they are able to fly. We had recommended to the staff at the golf course that they monitor the owl to make sure they parents were still feeding it, and that it should be left alone.



*Great-horned Owl brancher*

Unfortunately, the owl was “bird-napped” - taken by an unlicensed person who thought they could care for the bird. Working with state and federal law enforcement officials, we were finally able to obtain possession of the bird. He seemed none the worse for his week-long ordeal.

That same day, his sibling was spotted in the same area where he was initially found. We met with the golf course staff and the local TWRA game warden and placed both owls back into a tree near where they were found. Several of the country club members were in attendance, taking pictures and vowing that no one would be allowed to mess with “their owls”.



*Siblings reunited and back in the wild*

The golf course staff continued to monitor the young owls and reported to us on a daily basis. There was evidence on a daily basis (bunny and bird parts) that the youngsters were being fed by the parents. After a week, both owls had climbed so far up the tree that they were no longer seen. A successful reunite – and a great form of rodent control for the area!

The Great Horned Owl is the largest owl we have in this area. They are chiefly nocturnal, but may also hunt crepuscularly (at dawn and dusk) and may be found almost everywhere from the forest to the city. One of their favorite foods is apparently skunk – proof that they do not have a strong sense of smell. They can nest in trees, caves or on the ground. They generally take over the abandoned nests of squirrels, crows or other large birds of prey.

The Great Horned Owl typically lays 2 to 3 eggs each year. The young hatch asynchronously (they do not hatch at the same time), so there can be a significant size difference between the oldest and youngest. The young stay with the parents several months, typically until late fall.

## ANOTHER GOOD REASON TO KEEP CATS INDOORS

Free roaming domestic cats are responsible for the death or injury of millions of songbirds each year. Indigo Bunting, patient A119, was one such casualty.



*Male Indigo Bunting*

Found near Decherd, the bird was missing part of his left wing, had a severe eye infection and was nearly scalped. He was also very thin. We started him on antibiotics and a good healthy diet.

With the severity of the wing injury, it was obvious he would never be able to fly good enough to migrate and would not be releasable. Thus began the search for a permanent home for him, where he could live out his life in safety while being able to help educate people on our native songbirds. He was transferred to his new home at the Columbus (Ohio) Zoo on June 14.

Indigo Buntings are most commonly found in woodland clearings and borders and brushy pastures, but may be spotted around bird feeders as well. Their diet is primarily insects but they also eat seeds and fruit. They winter anywhere from southern Florida and central Mexico to Panama and the Bahamas.

In breeding plumage, the adult male is a deep blue color. During the winter that blue is obscured by brown and buff edges. The adult females and younger birds are generally dull brown on their backs with buffy breasts and bellies and diffuse streaking on the breast.

## POPCORN ON STILTS

Three of our most recent admissions were three day-old Northern Bobwhites (patients A364 - 366), our native species of quail. Originally taken to Walden's Puddle in Joellton, the chicks were transferred to us as we have more specialized facilities for these small, high stress birds.



*Northern Bobwhite hatchlings*

Initially housed in a very warm incubator, the birds were provided with plenty of natural cover in which to hide. After progressing to a larger indoor cage, they were moved to our large flight cage. They spend most of the day hiding in a brush pile in the aviary. Once they are a little older and all flying well, they will be released into a covey at Bark Camp Barrens.

The population of Northern Bobwhites in Tennessee has been declining over the past 30 years, as much as 70 to 90% in some areas. According to the TWRA website, the most influential impact on the bobwhite is the loss of nesting habitat and protective cover. Bobwhites depend on multiple types of adjoining habitats, so its presence is a good indication of vegetation diversity. The removal of fencerows and hedgerows, continuing development, removal of timber and brush and spraying and mowing of highway and utility rights-of-way all contribute to the decline of the bobwhite population.

Bobwhites feed and nest in coveys of up to 30 birds except during nesting season. Their diet is roughly 85% vegetation and seeds and about 15% animal matter (insects, snails, spiders). The young can fly when they are only 12 days old.



*Northern Bobwhite, approximately 1 month old*

## WILDLIFE IN WINTER

Most of us are familiar with human responses to lack of resources, but what do animals do during the hard times caused by harsh winter weather, storms or drought? While humans can alter their environment to accommodate physical limitations, animals must adapt to a wide range of conditions.

Some animals escape the winter cold and limited food sources by hibernating - retiring to a den after putting on some extra fat or laying in stores of food in their burrows. Many birds alter their environment by migrating to a more suitable climate. They may travel anywhere from a few hundred miles to several thousand miles in search of adequate food and shelter.

Other birds may alter their eating habits to survive harsh weather conditions. Some birds, such as robins, that exist mainly on insects during the summer become berry eaters during the winter.

And some apparently ignore the weather. Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*) are quite territorial this time of year as they begin nesting in November. The young will be hatched early in the year, and may leave the nest as early as February.

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### WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR WILDLIFE IN FALL AND WINTER

#### Do...

- *clean active feeders every week; mold and mildew grow quickly*
- *find ways to leave wild, uncultivated areas in your garden*
- *garden with native plants that help wild birds and mammals survive winter cold and food scarcity*
- *prepare to plant animal friendly gardens in the spring*
- *use less paper for holiday gifts; gift wrap with a printed, finished surface is not recyclable*
- *prune now when you are less likely to endanger tree-dwellers*
- *keep your cat indoors for indoor rodent control and its own safety*

#### Don't....

- *remove snags and brush piles until or unless they are a fire hazard – they can provide a winter home for a variety of species.*
- *dispose of holiday decorations carelessly; they can be hazardous for both domestic and wild animals*
- *use toxic slug and snail bait; new non-toxic varieties are now available*
- *use rat poisons. They enter the food chain and kill indiscriminately.*
- *use sticky traps. They kill many other species as well as rodents and are inhumane.*
- *leave cat or dog doors open; your house will seem particularly inviting in cold weather to wild intruders*

## OUR HERO

This past April, we received a call from TWRA Cannon County Game Warden Mark Vance. The city of Woodbury had removed an old dead tree near the downtown area. After cutting the tree down, they discovered a nest of Barn Owls. Officer Vance asked if we could take the owlets for rehabilitation. Of course, the first question we asked was “can we find a way to keep them with the parents?”



Barn Owls

Officer Vance was willing to give it a try. We provided him with contact information for our friends at the Hungry Owl Project to secure plans for an owl nest box – an artificial home which would provide them with adequate space for them to grow while still allowing the parents to return to feed them.



TWRA Officer Mark Vance

By that evening, Officer Vance had built the nest box and secured the assistance of Middle Tennessee Electric to place the nest box about 50 feet up in a tree that was located within 50 yards of the original nest site.

And then, to make sure that the parents found the owlets in their new nest site, Officer Vance returned to the area at midnight to watch for the parents. Within 15 minutes, he saw an adult Barn Owl circling the area. The adult then went to the nest box, checked it out, and left. Just 5 minutes later, it returned with a vole to feed the babies. And within another 5 or 10 minutes, the other parent came in with more food. Success!!!!

Barn Owls are a wonderful natural way to control the rodent population. To learn if your property is suitable habitat and obtain nest box plans, check out the Hungry Owl website at [www.hungryowl.org](http://www.hungryowl.org).

# THANK YOU!

## *Our Generous Supporters*

### SUPPORTING

Jeff Cashdollar  
Don & Janet Hall

### FAMILY

Sara & Richmond Ross \* Nancy Melton \* Paige Rasmussen  
Miranda Taylor \* Patty Marvel\* Vickie Cox \* Dan Pitts \*  
Rubye Kemp \* Stephen Coapman

### INDIVIDUAL

Loma Oakley \* Nancy Crecraft \* Warner Park Garden Club  
Diane Bice \* Lynette Ville deRey \* Joy Clay \* Lori Benson

### VETERINARIANS

Pet Medical Center – Tullahoma  
Black Fox Veterinary Clinic – Murfreesboro

### IN-KIND & CASH DONATIONS

Walden's Puddle Wildlife Rehabilitation Center \*  
Chattanooga Zoo \* Tullahoma Animal Control  
Linda Reed \* Lena Stair \* Mamie McClure  
Amy Hibdon \* Martha Flynn \* Frances Belcher  
Shawn Maxwell \* Erica Kivenas \* Emilia Page  
Louise Hunter \* Karen Johnson \* Gayle Shelton  
Gloria Crick \* Jean McKee \* Jodie Mollohan \* Wayne Parris  
Pamela Clark \* Peg Rindfleisch \* Chloe Cerutti  
Jen Adams-Harrison \* Janet Davis \* Luann Carrick  
David Graf \* Donna Claxton \* Kelly Shuttleworth  
Rex & Susan Carter

### VOLUNTEERS

Mary Ann Partington  
Jeff Cashdollar  
Brenan Bailey  
India Partington  
Janet Hill  
Vollie Stone

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 birds or small mammals, contact LouAnn Partington, Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator, at 931-393-4835.

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

## 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).

**Website/Facebook Maintenance:** We are looking for a volunteer with one or two hours a month to spare to help keep our website and Facebook page updated. Contact us at [ziggystree@aol.com](mailto:ziggystree@aol.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, 92 Maple Ave., Tullahoma, TN 37388. Board members are responsible for setting policy for the organization and assisting with fundraising activities. Time commitment is less than 10 hours per month.

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### **Board Members**

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

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### **Newsletter Staff**

Editor LouAnn Partington  
Photo Credits: LouAnn Partington (Great Horned Owls, Indigo Bunting, Northern Bobwhites) and Bob Stoetzel (Barn Owls)

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## WISH LIST

- 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)
  - Laundry Detergent
  - Nuts (pecans, walnuts, acorns)
  - Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, potatoes)
  - Facial Tissue
  - Bleach
  - Paper Towels
- 

## QUOTES FOR THE QUARTER

"God never made an ugly landscape. All that the sun shines on is beautiful, so long as it is wild."

----- John Muir

"Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground."

-----Anonymus

"But now, says the Once-ler, Now that you're here, the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear. UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

-----Dr Seuss

## NEWS

Although our spring squirrel season was very slow, baby bird season more than made up for it. We took in 110 birds in April and another 100 in May. We average 3 to 4 intakes a day during our busy summer months. Our "in care" numbers continued to grow until July when releases finally overtook our intake numbers.

The end of baby bird season does not mean the end of our work. At this time of year, we start to see emaciated juvenile birds – those that may not have fully learned hunting skills from the parents, or that have been injured during their first months on their own. And we are already into the second baby squirrel season with 15 Eastern Gray Squirrels and 2 Southern Flying Squirrels in care.

We will once again be participating in the CITGO Fueling Good program. CITGO gives away thousands of dollars in gift cards to charities each year. All you have to do is vote for us daily once the voting opens on October 17<sup>th</sup>. We'll be sending an e-mail to provide the link to the voting page and further information on the contest.

In an effort to reduce our administrative costs, we plan to convert as many members as possible to an e-mail copy of the newsletter. If you are currently receiving a paper copy, please e-mail [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com) to be added to our e-mail list. Reducing our administrative costs will allow us to use our available funding for food, caging and medical supplies for our wild critters. And you have the added benefit of getting a full color copy of the newsletter!

As always, we'd like to thank each of you for your continuing support. Your donations have helped us provide food, shelter and medical care for nearly 500 animals so far this year. We couldn't do it without you!

## SIX NON-CASH WAYS TO SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE

**At your birthday and the holidays.** Ask your family and friends to send a gift in your name to Ziggy's Tree, or to purchase an item on our wish list.

**Shop at Kroger's using one of our rechargeable gift cards.** Four percent of the amount you recharge on the card goes to Ziggy's Tree, and you can recharge as many times as you want to. Information on the program is available on our website. Contact us at 931-393-4835 to get your card now!

**Buy using Goodshop.com** A shopping website with hundreds of merchants. Ziggy's Tree gets a percentage (up to 30%) of each transaction. Type "Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center" into the "who do you Goodshop for?" box.

**Search using Goodsearch.com** A powerful Yahoo search engine. Ziggy's Tree gets a penny per search. Type "Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center" into the "who do you Goodsearch for?" box.

**Write a review on our GuideStar profile.** GuideStar is used by many funding agencies to research non-profit agencies. You can help us by going to our GuideStar profile at [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) and writing a review of our organization – how we've helped you or what the availability of our services means to you and the community at large. Positive reviews will encourage more funding agencies to support us.

**Like us on Facebook.** And ask your friends to like us to. You'll be able to hear about our new admissions and releases as they happen, and stay current on any special events or fundraising activities we are doing.

Ziggy's Tree Wildlife Rehabilitation Center  
92 Maple Ave.  
Tullahoma, TN 37388



**NOTICE: YOUR MAILING LABEL CONTAINS YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE.**

To avoid any interruption with delivering your newsletter, we ask that you renew at least one month before the date shown. Use the Membership Form provided below.

**PLEASE RENEW, STAY INFORMED, WE NEED YOU!!!**

**YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE, I AM ...**

- A NEW MEMBER**  
 **RENEWING MY MEMBERSHIP**

Memberships are for one year  
Gift Memberships are also available.

**Please Mail This Form To:**

**Ziggy's Tree WRC  
92 Maple Ave.  
Tullahoma, TN 37388**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.**

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Family	\$40.00
___ Supporting	\$100.00
___ Sustaining	\$250.00
___ Advocate	\$500.00
___ Wildlife Champion	\$1000.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive my newsletter by email.

I am interested in volunteering in the following areas:

- \_\_\_ Environmental Education  
\_\_\_ Wildlife Rehabilitation  
\_\_\_ Fundraising

Checks should be made payable to Ziggy's Tree WRC.

Not sure what to get 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 held throughout the year.

*Ziggy's Tree strives to be environmentally conscious. If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of our newsletter, please check the box above or e-mail [louannpartington@yahoo.com](mailto:louannpartington@yahoo.com) to be placed on our mailing list.*