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# TALES FROM THE TREE

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



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## NOW THAT'S A BIRD OF A DIFFERENT COLOR!

The Eastern Bluebird (*Sialis sialis*) is one of our more commonly admitted species during the busy baby bird season. And this year was no different – except that one of these bluebirds was not like the others. We admitted our first albino Eastern Bluebird. We don't typically name birds that we are raising for release back to the wild, but we knew that this bird was not going to be releasable, so we started calling him "Little Parker" in honor of his rescuer, Susan Parker.



Little Parker was transferred to us by another rehabilitator due to our specialization in insectivorous (insect-eating) native species songbirds. He had been cornered by a dog and cat, with the result being some very dirty feathers but no obvious injuries. After a short course of antibiotics to counter-act any effects of the cat attack and some time to bathe and preen, Parker's natural beauty came through.

Since albinos can have a variety of issues which impact their ability to survive in the wild, we started looking for a permanent home where he could live out his life in safe and secure surroundings. The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in Columbus, Ohio agreed to take our little guy along with another young bluebird who was non-releasable due to a serious wing injury.



In order to transfer non-releasable animals to a zoo, sanctuary or wildlife educator, we must obtain permission from Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and US Fish & Wildlife Service. Our wonderful veterinarian, Dr. Amy Nickels with Pet Medical Center, provided us with the necessary documentation outlining why this bird was not releasable. After obtaining permission from both of our permitting agencies, it was back to the vet for a health certificate so that we could obtain permission from the Ohio Department of Agriculture to bring the bird into their state. It seemed like the paperwork was probably going to weigh nearly as much as the bird!

Since we were still in the middle of a busy baby bird season, we asked our friends at Wildlife Resources & Education Network (WREN) for assistance with coordinating transport to Columbus. They quickly suggested a local pilot who might be willing to lend a hand.

Enter Catherine Cavagnaro with Ace Aerobatic School. Catherine had rescued a bird earlier in the year that she brought to us, so was already familiar with the work that we do and was glad to lend a helping hand.



*Ready for take-off*

On transfer day, the birds were placed in travel boxes with enough food to tide them over for approximately three hour trip.



*Catherine and the birds en route to Columbus*

The staff from the Columbus Zoo was waiting to receive the birds at the airport at Ohio State University.



*At the end of the flight*

The birds arrived safely and were quickly settled into the quarantine area at the zoo. After a thorough exam by the zoo veterinarians and a short quarantine period, the birds were moved to the large walk through aviary at the zoo.

The zoo staff reported that this was the most exclusive ride that any of their birds had ever had!

### **About Eastern Bluebirds**

Bluebirds may be one of our most easily recognized and popular birds. Bluebird populations suffered a serious decline due to competition for nesting sites from introduced species, such as European Starlings and House Sparrows, loss of open space and natural nesting cavities and increased pesticide use.

Conservation efforts to provide nest boxes have helped with the recovery of the species. The North American Bluebird Society has bluebird box plans on their website, ([www.nabluebirdsociety.org](http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org)) along with recommendations for exclusion devices to keep non-native species from disturbing the nest.

Bluebirds are primarily insectivorous, with a diet including caterpillars, beetles, crickets, grasshoppers and spiders. The male bluebird is uniformly deep blue above, and the female is slightly grayer. They have a chestnut throat, neck, breast and sides with a white belly.

Bluebirds can nest as early as March, and may have two or three clutches of young, some as late as September. The nest is a loosely built cup inside a cavity, built mainly by the female in 4 or 5 days. They typically lay 4 to 5 pale blue eggs, but can have as many as 7. Both parents feed the babies. The young leave the nest at 15-18 days of age and are tended by the male while the female re-nests.

### **About Albinism**

Albinism is an inherited condition resulting in a complete lack of melanin pigmentation in the eyes, skin and feathers. True albinos are considered extremely uncommon. Both parents must carry the recessive gene in order for their young to be albinos.

Survival rates for albinos aren't known, but it is likely they do not survive long in the wild. They are more vulnerable to predators since they lack the protective coloration that would help them blend in with their surroundings. Since their feathers have no color, they are typically weaker in structure than normal feathers. Eyesight may also be an issue for albinos. With their pink eyes, they may have weak vision.

# THE LATEST HAPPENINGS

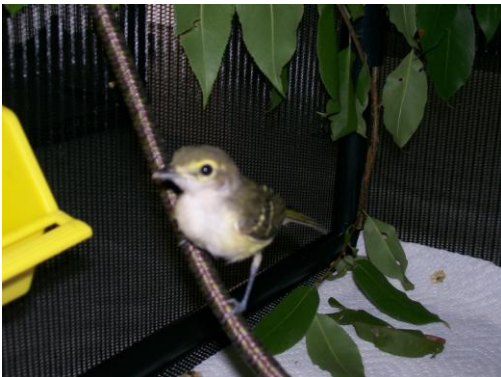
Our second round of baby mammals is in full swing. We have continued to take in Eastern Cottontails all summer at a much higher rate than in past years.

We are also seeing a big influx of Eastern Gray Squirrel babies. We are at 70 babies with more calls on an almost daily basis. The youngsters we are admitting are also much younger than we would expect at this time of year. Although we hope to have some released before winter, we are looking at the prospect of over-wintering more babies than in previous years. We'll be putting out requests for donations of pecans, walnuts, hickory nuts and acorns, as well as gift cards so we can purchase perishable items (fruit and veggies) this winter.



Our mammal team can use some additional volunteers to help care for all these babies. If you can commit to a 3 to 4 hour shift once a week for the next few weeks, please text Angela at 615-631-2205.

Baby bird season is officially over. A big THANK YOU to the volunteers who helped feed many hungry mouths this summer – Brenan, Valerie, Joanne, Tahira, and Jessica. The additional aviary space (thanks to grants from the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee and the Sanders Foundation) helped us move the birds along, but we still had a full house from April through August. We also had a couple of firsts – a Blue Grosbeak (injured adult) and a Yellow-throated Vireo (fledgling, caught by cat).



*Yellow-throated Vireo*

Another first for our baby bird season – five species of swallows in care at the same time. We had Purple Martins, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow and Cliff Swallow – all successfully released! The Purple Martins were released into the roost in downtown Nashville and the Rough-winged Swallows at Woods Reservoir while the other swallows were banded by Dr. David Aborn of UT Chattanooga and released at the VW wetlands. It was also a first for Dr. Aborn – the first Cliff Swallow he ever banded.



*Cliff Swallow*

We were also fortunate to be featured in two newspaper articles. The Tullahoma News reported on our albino Eastern Bluebird, while the Daily News Journal in Murfreesboro featured our release of three American Kestrels as a live Facebook feed and a front-page article. Links to both articles are on our Facebook page.

We couldn't do what we do without the support and cooperation of other rehabilitators. Alix Parks with Happinest Wildlife Rescue has been allowing us access to her flight cages for larger birds that need time to build up their strength. And Sherry Teas, Happinest's songbird specialist, has been volunteering with us this summer and taking some of the larger, noisier birds (jays and grackles) so we could concentrate on the smaller, more delicate birds – a win-win for the birds and both organizations.

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"If only I could so live and so serve the world that after me there should never again be birds in cages." - Isak Dinesen "The Deluge at Norderney"

"You can't be suspicious of a tree, or accuse a bird or a squirrel of subversion or challenge the ideology of a violet." - Hal Borland

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For assistance with orphaned or injured mammals or general questions about mammals, call or text Angela at 615-631-2205.

For assistance with orphaned or injured birds or general questions about birds, call LouAnn at 931-393-4835 or 931-841-9781.

***Looking for a project for your scout troop, church, school or civic group? We'd love to have more squirrel nest boxes, and could also use small bluebird or woodpecker boxes to use with our young cavity nesting birds. Contact us for more information.***

### KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to support us through the Kroger Community Rewards program.

For privacy reasons, Kroger does not provide names of those who have signed up to support us. So even though we can't thank you personally, please know that we are extremely grateful for your support.

It's time to re-enroll. Kroger requires that you verify every August that you wish to remain enrolled and support Ziggy's Tree. If you missed the August deadline, you can still go on-line to support us. Just go to [www.kroger.com/community\\_rewards](http://www.kroger.com/community_rewards), and enroll your rewards card, selecting Ziggy's Tree as your charity. You still get gas points and discounts – and Kroger donates money to us!

Don't have an e-mail address or computer access? You can still sign up. Just call 1(800) KROGERS, OPTION 3 or 1(800)576-4377, OPTION 3.

And please ask your friends and family to enroll and support us!



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### WISH LIST

- Gift cards (grocery store, Lowe's, Home Depot, Tractor Supply)
- LCD Projector
- Heating Pads (without automatic shut-off)
- Nuts (pecans, walnuts, acorns)
- Vegetables (broccoli, carrots, kale, sweet potatoes, zucchini)
- Paper Towels
- Facial Tissues
- Toilet Paper
- Reptariums (any size)

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### SUPPORT ZIGGY'S TREE

- Become a member – just complete the application on the back of this newsletter, or visit our website to download and print an application.
- Give a gift membership to a friend!
- Purchase items from our wish list.
- Donate newspapers (we use those to line cages and cover the tables under the cages)
- Contact us about volunteer opportunities, such as transport, animal releases, administrative/office work, fundraising, board membership or contributing to our newsletter
- Like us on Facebook and stay updated on releases, admissions and other news.
- Invite us to speak to your church or civic group – we love to tell people about the work we do!

***Check our website at [www.ziggystree.org](http://www.ziggystree.org) for other ways you can support us!***

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!

## SUSTAINING

The Bucket Foundation

## SUPPORTING

Amanda Moore  
Judith Miree Wood  
Brady Palmer, O.D.  
David Saunders

## FAMILY

Charalin Kipker \* Jackie & Robert Taylor \* Ginny Masters  
Sheila Coleman \* Kimberly & William Dutzek  
Robin Mitchell

## INDIVIDUAL

Annette Master \* Paula Sedita \* Shantrell McDaniel  
Deborah Bomar \* Sandy Hosse \* Susan Parker  
Mike Blackburn

## VETERINARIANS

Pet Medical Center – Tullahoma

## IN-KIND & CASH DONATIONS

Banjo Baby Squirrel Fund  
Wildlife Resources & Education Network  
Amayla Knight \* Robert Underwood \* Regina Watts

## VOLUNTEERS

Animal Care: Brenan Bailey, Sami Green, Joanne Groat,  
Valerie Bjorn, Sherry Teas, Tahira Mohyuddin, Jessica  
Fikejs, Angela Hensley, LouAnn Partington

Social Media Tiffany Woody



## 2015 RELEASES

### June

1 Canada Goose  
1 American Robin (renested)  
1 Common Grackle  
10 Eastern Bluebirds  
8 American Robins  
5 Carolina Wrens  
1 House Finch  
3 Downy Woodpeckers  
6 Eastern Phoebes  
6 Brown Thrashers  
5 Northern Flickers  
4 Tufted Titmice  
1 Groundhog  
31 Eastern Cottontails  
2 Virginia Opossums

### July

1 Mourning Dove  
1 Wood Duck  
1 Brown Thrasher  
8 Northern Mockingbirds  
5 Eastern Bluebirds  
20 American Robins  
4 Northern Rough-winged Swallows  
2 Eastern Phoebes  
1 Yellow-throated Vireo  
1 Brown-headed Cowbird  
3 House Finches  
1 Barn Swallow  
1 Cliff Swallow  
1 Tree Swallow  
2 Eastern Bluebirds – transferred to  
Columbus Zoo  
19 Eastern Cottontails  
4 Virginia Opossums

### August

1 Mourning Dove  
1 Canada Goose  
12 Carolina Wrens  
5 Northern Mockingbirds  
6 Chimney Swifts  
2 Purple Martins  
1 Wood Thrush  
1 Eastern Bluebird  
1 Blue Jay

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 newsletter.

*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 [ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com](mailto:ziggystreewildlife@gmail.com) to be placed on our mailing list.*