



# TAMARACK

## WILDLIFE CENTER



VOLUME 28 NO. 1

SPRING 2022

### The Mission of TWC

Our mission is to help Pennsylvania wildlife by

- Caring for injured, orphaned or ill wildlife in order to enable their return to the wild.
- Promoting appreciation and understanding of wildlife through education.

### Admissions

Call for admission instructions. Due to bird flu, birds may be admitted at an offsite location for examination and quarantine. At present time Tamarack is able to admit birds of prey all ages, adult songbirds, adult woodpeckers, wild ducklings, mammals all ages (except rabies vector species), reptiles, and amphibians. This is subject to change depending on case load.

For more information call 814-763-2574.

### Hours

Daily 9am-3pm  
by appointment.

Birds admitted offsite  
until further notice.

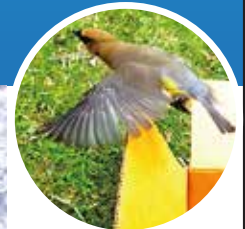
Evening admissions  
by appointment.



Official registration and financial information of TWC may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within PA:  
1-800-732-0999

Registration does not imply endorsement.

**YOUR HELP**  
*gives wildlife a*  
**CHANGE**  
*to go home!*



**Top:** Soaring Turkey Vulture release. **Middle from left to right:** Rick Holmgren, moments before releasing the Red-tailed Hawk he rescued; other patients going home including American Kestrel; Cedar Wax-wing; Eastern Cottontail. **Bottom clockwise:** Jessica Schombert frees a Cooper's Hawk; orphaned Red Squirrel; Virginia Opossum; Squirrel feeding; Painted Turtle release.





**Right top to bottom:** Recent patients including Eastern Milksnake; Eastern Bluebird; Cedar Waxwing. **Middle top to bottom:** Patients now released or soon to go free include Red-throated Loon; Red-tailed Hawk; Midland Painted Turtle; juvenile Virginia Opossum; American Kestrel; Long-tailed Duck. **Left top to bottom:** Maplewood Elementary Second Grade Students are excited to meet our ambassador raptors; Earth Day program with Juniper Village residents; TWC's Carol Holmgren returns a nestling Barred Owl to its nest site in collaboration with Wildlife In Need volunteers Sue DeArment and Mark Anderhalt, and landowners Donna and Dave Benson. The owllet is in the bag held by Sue, for Carol to carry up to its nest where the parents will resume care.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

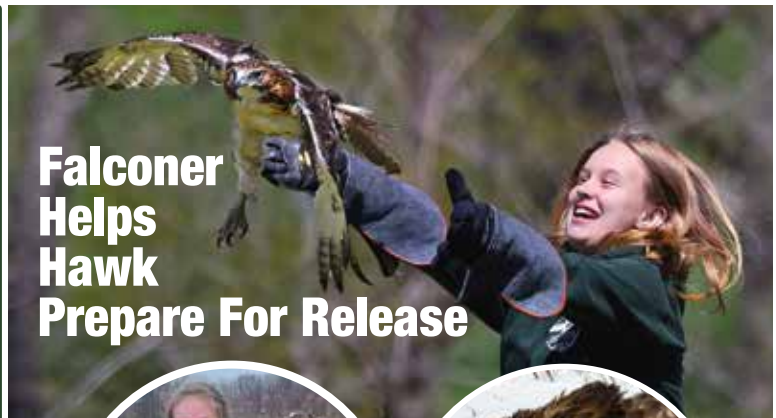
*Sarah Sargent, PhD, Board President*

Spring was late to arrive this year, but now the leaves are out and birds are filling the forests again with their beautiful songs. Baby rabbits, squirrels, opossums, and birds of all varieties are now entering the world. The staff, interns, and volunteers of TWC welcome the changing of the seasons as they poise themselves for the arrival of spring patients and gear up for programs. This year has been busy already with over 350 patients admitted for treatment, many more to come, and lots of programs being booked.

Other changes are happening too, including with our staff. We are excited to welcome Jess Schombert as our new Wildlife Rehabilitation Manager (WRM). Our previous WRM, Heather Wayne, has transitioned to a new job as a wildlife technician with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, where she is studying wild turkeys. She continues to be a part of Tamarack though, assisting with wildlife rehab and conducting education programs, now as a volunteer.

Change is afoot at our center as construction has begun on a new aviary to house several of our ambassador raptors, thanks to the generosity of a local family foundation. The design of this aviary will allow it to be adjustable and transportable as the center continues to grow and develop into the future.

The Tamarack community continues to grow, and we thank all of you for caring about wildlife and supporting wildlife rehabilitation and education in northwestern Pennsylvania. We could not do this work without you!



Katie Brozell has been a licensed falconer since the age of 16, and has volunteered at Tamarack for 4 years. When a young Red-tailed Hawk nicknamed "Cass" was admitted last summer, the bird quickly recovered from a concussion and heavy parasite load, but needed to learn hunting skills. TWC partners with falconers to help raptor patients learn these skills, so Katie volunteered to help Cass. She invested many hours with Cass this winter, and together they successfully hunted a variety of game from rabbits to meadow voles. This spring on a warm, blue sky day, Katie released Cass, now ready for life on her own.

## Thank you to all our members, on-site and helpline volunteers, educators, and medics for making this possible!

**Thank you to our spring and summer helpers:** Allegheny College students (Bonner and work-study): Katie Brozell, Kamryn Dorsett, Baraka Osborne, Velia Rodriguez, Danielle Savellano, and Inayah Toussaint. **Spring Intern:** Lilian Kline. **Volunteers:** Rachel Cherry, Lee Coates, John Dale, Martha Dale, Jim Daley, Cathy Davis, Dawn DeCrease, Linda Gleeson and family, Chris Green, Janelle Harrawood, Tim Kerr, Ann Kleinschmidt, Gina Kron, Abby Kuhn, Rachel Mannino, Cindy Ondish, Barbara Pagano, Leah Reibel, Jesse Russell, Megan Senovich, Melanie Tepper. **Summer interns are:** Victoria Kaufman, Christie Sawin, Hollin Williams, and Ellie Wanner. **Our fabulous Wildlife Helpline Volunteers, coordinated by Diann Bolharsky, are:** Rebecca Allen, Evon Barie, Diann Bolharsky, Rebecca Hart, Bob Hartman, Jessica Helsley, Julie Hirt, Gina Jones, Connie Kisner, Lynne Kasemer, Ginny Keim, Nancy Kerr, Lynne Martin, Brianne McClellan, Tammy Rodgers, George Roland and Peggy Steele. Substitutes are Cathy Davis, Connie Graham, Pam Jackson and Marcella Smith. **Thank you to Marc Johns and Marcella Smith who are stepping down after years of service on helpline!**

## Save the Dates for Erie and Crawford Gives!



Thanks to you, the Erie and Crawford Gives have been a fantastic source of support for our center's work. Save these dates! Erie Gives is Tuesday, August 9 and Crawford Gives is August 29-30. Pick one or join in both! You do not need to reside in the county to participate. On the respective dates, you can visit [www.eriegives.org](http://www.eriegives.org) or [www.crawfordgives.org](http://www.crawfordgives.org) to make a donation for Tamarack Wildlife Center, or mail a check ahead of time. A percentage of all donations made will be matched by the Erie Community Foundation or Crawford Heritage Community Foundation, increasing the value of every dollar donated. The more donations made to Tamarack that day, the more matching funds the center receives!

# Homecoming: TWC Welcomes New Wildlife Rehabilitation Manager

by Nancy Wisgirda



*The woman enters the enclosure, one arm encased in a falconer's glove. She closes the door behind her and stands ready, the gloved arm outstretched. The bird swivels his head to look at her with an arch, perennially fierce gaze. In a flash he launches from his perch and alights on the glove, settling himself with a ruffle of steel-gray feathers. His dark eyes are direct, fearless, and he looks at her as if to say, "Where do we go from here?"*

The woman is Jessica Schombert and the bird is Apollo, Tamarack's ambassador Peregrine Falcon. Jessica is no stranger to TWC. She worked at the center throughout her four years as a student at Allegheny College where she majored in Environmental Studies with a minor in Biology. Jess says that her time at Tamarack as a student changed her life, inspiring her love of birds and her passion to work together in a positive team. As a student, Jess

trained Apollo, using choice based, positive reinforcement techniques, and developed expertise in wildlife wound care and treatment of eagles. After graduation, Jess went on to become a Senior Aviculturist at the National Aviary. There she specialized in husbandry of seabirds, shorebirds, and other exotic birds. Like a proud parent, Jess is happy to show you photos of the baby Flamingos she raised and trained.

Now, in much the same way as many birds return home from their long journey southward to winter grounds, Jess has completed her own migration. She has found her way back to her roots, back to the bird and the people who inspire her. Jess gets to implement her passion for animal welfare as she oversees patient care, ambassador training, and recruits and trains volunteers. She is an advocate of patient and ambassador enrichment, a program that provides mental as well as physical stimulation for the birds. Sharing her love of wildlife, Jess lights a fire of excitement for care of our environment in volunteers and education program participants. She is a self-proclaimed bird nerd, and proud of it.

*We are excited to welcome Jess back to our team!*

## Go **WILD** and join us at a program!



Education is key to our mission and we are excited to offer a lot of programs this summer and fall. Our wildlife ambassadors will be on display and eager to connect with all who attend each event. We will be out and about in our community, as well as hosting public programs on-site. Details for the on-site programs will be announced on our Facebook page and website. We are wildly hoping to see you soon!

**Friday, June 17**  
Camp Marshmallow  
Millcreek Mall  
11am-11:45am

**Wednesday, June 22**  
Shontz Memorial  
Library  
Conneaut Lake, PA  
11am-12pm

**Tuesday, June 28**  
Active Aging Center  
Picnic  
Meadville, PA  
10:30am-11:30pm

**Saturday, July 9**  
Pymatuning Onion  
Festival  
Pymatuning, PA  
11am-11:25am &  
12pm-12:25pm

**Thursday, July 14**  
McCord Memorial  
Library  
North East, PA  
1pm-2pm

**Saturday, July 16**  
Tamarack Wildlife  
Center  
Saegertown, PA  
1pm-2pm

**Saturday, August 6**  
Tamarack Wildlife  
Center  
Saegertown, PA  
1pm-2pm

**Wednesday, Aug. 24**  
Goodell Gardens &  
Homestead  
Edinboro, PA  
7pm-8:30pm

**Saturday-Sunday,  
September 10-11**  
Wild Wind Folk Art  
Festival  
Pittsfield, PA  
10am-5pm

**Sunday,  
September 25**  
TWC Open House  
Saegertown, PA  
TBA

## Intern 2021-2022 Spotlight:

# BARAKA OSBORNE



### Background:

Baraka is a rising junior majoring in Psychology and minoring in English at Allegheny College. He grew up in Newark, DE and interns at TWC through Allegheny's Bonner Program.

### What did you like best in your internship?

I've always wanted to work with animals, but have never had an opportunity like this. It's amazing to hold a Great Horned Owl for treatment, help examine an eagle, or feed a baby squirrel. I also like working with the other people here and seeing how passionate they are.

### What surprised you in your internship?

Before, I was aware of wildlife rehabilitation but until being here, I had no idea how much care, knowledge and skill goes into it. In the exam room there are so many tools! The staff are prepared for the best and the worst. They are professional and caring, for the animals, volunteers and each other.

### What inspired you to care about the natural world?

Growing up, I was an "outside kid." Being outside so much has helped me get closer to nature.

### What message do you have to share?

Step outside your comfort zone. Try something new! Until coming to Tamarack I had no idea how much care and skill goes into wildlife rehabilitation. I am happy and grateful to be at Tamarack.



## Bird Flu Outbreak

As you may have heard, a new severe form of bird flu known as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus, subtype H5N1, is causing illness in both domestic and wild birds. It is hoped this will subside with warmer weather. First detected in North America in December, it has spread throughout the US, resulting in the loss of 35 million domestic poultry, as well as numerous wild birds. In our region, HPAI has been confirmed in Bald Eagles and wild ducks, but has not been as impactful as other areas of the country.

This flu variant can be carried and spread by waterfowl, shore birds, gulls, and crows that show no symptoms. It is highly fatal to poultry, raptors, and some other wild bird species. Biologists are concerned it could become transmissible to humans, but this has not been an issue thus far. TWC has been collaborating with the PA Game Commission and professionals at other rehab centers and zoos to monitor the incidence of HPAI, protect TWC's beloved education birds, and keep our staff, volunteers, and the public safe.

Due to concerns about the virus, please do not arrive unannounced at the center with a wild bird! We are still treating birds, but they are being admitted at an offsite location for evaluation and testing prior to moving to the center for treatment. Our phone helpline volunteers will give you instructions for admission.

### You can help control the spread of this bird flu:

- Don't feed wild waterfowl, which can cause them to congregate and increase transmission.
- You can leave up songbird feeders and baths, since there is no evidence of transmission among songbirds.
- Please inform the Game Commission at 717-787-4250 if you find a raptor, turkey, grouse, gulls, crow, or 5 or more waterbirds either dead or displaying neurological symptoms such as circling or holding the head in an unnatural position. Do not approach the animal.
- If you have poultry or pet birds, protect them by reducing their exposure to feces of wild waterfowl and other wild birds, and by cleaning/disinfecting your footwear and equipment before entering their enclosure. Report any signs of disease to the PA Dept. of Agriculture.
- Wildlife Rehab centers and other nonprofits housing birds are investing substantial resources for enhanced biosecurity. If you have the capacity, please support them with an extra donation. It is especially appreciated at this time!

To learn more about this virus, please visit our website. We will post updates on the virus on our Facebook page as they are available. It is hoped the virus will subside with the advent of warmer weather. Time will tell!



## Winter into Spring at the Center

**Carol Holmgren, Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator**

Summer is here! Our days begin with the sweet scent of species-specific milk formula for infant cottontails, squirrels, and opossums. Nestling raptors and patients needing medications are next to weigh, examine, and treat. Spring is the start of our busy season, as we are admitting new patients daily, releasing others, fielding phone calls, and giving education programs.

In preparation for this season, we have ordered supplies (thank you to all who supported our Spring Shower!), pursued continuing education, and updated protocols to keep us on the forefront of best practice. Rehabilitation manager Jess Schombert is increasing on-site laboratory diagnostics we give patients, and thanks to a local family foundation, construction has begun on a new aviary for several of our ambassadors!

The spread of a new variant of Avian Influenza among wildlife rocked our world, but with biosecurity protocols in place, we have a plan to keep our ambassador raptors and patients safe. We are admitting avian patients offsite for examination and testing, and on-site have increased disinfection and limited access. Hopefully, the virus subsides as the weather warms.

Education programs are a joy, as we see eyes light up with amazement at meeting a hawk or owl up close. Whether it is a young person or elderly, the delight is the same, and always thrilling to witness. We hope to see you at a program soon! Our hearts also leap with joy to see our patients grow healthy and go free. In recent weeks we have released Red-tailed Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, Turkey Vultures, Barred Owls, Painted Turtles, Eastern Cottontails, Virginia Opossums, Cedar Waxwings, Northern Cardinals, and Mourning Doves. More will be released soon. Each one was aided by someone who found it and took the time to get it help.

If you are wondering whether an animal needs admission or assistance, our wildlife helpline specialists are just a phone call away at 814-763-2574. Whenever possible, we strive to keep wild families together. In recent weeks, we have successfully counseled callers on reuniting infant squirrels and cottontails to their mothers, and reunited several families of owlets that had fallen from their nests but were uninjured. Of course, when reuniting is not successful or a patient is injured, we are here to provide treatment and care.



**Tamarack's incredible  
2021 Annual Report,**  
including a listing of donors, is  
available at our website  
**[www.tamarackwildlife.org](http://www.tamarackwildlife.org)**

With your help we treated over 1125 patients, shared inspiring educational programs, celebrated Lady Hawk's 30th Hatch Day and had a strong financial year. Thank you to each one of our donors, supporters, volunteers, and staff who made this possible.



*Honorarium*



## In Honor Of

**Jeff Mott - In honor of Jeff's Birthday**  
from Catherine Mott

## In Memory Of

**Willis Booth** from Lisa Booth • **John Eshenbaugh** from Regina Johnson  
**Peanut the Bunny - In loving memory of Peanut the Bunny** from Kaitlyn Blackburn  
**Joan Stewart** from Ed & Diane Pavilonis • **Terry Suscheck** from Robin & James Dunn  
**Terry Suscheck** from Mary Kalicky • **Terry Suscheck** from Kerry Standliff  
**Terry Suscheck** from John & Kathryn Darr • **JC Warden** from Matt Gullatta • **Betty White** from Janice Bojarski

To make a contribution in honor or memory of someone, donations can be made online or mailed to:  
 TWC, 21601 Stull Rd, Saegertown, PA 16433. Be sure to include: whether this is in honor or memory;  
 name/address for TWC to send acknowledgment; your (donor) name/address.  
*All members and contributors (except those desiring to be anonymous) will be listed in our annual report.*

## Sponsorships Make Great Gifts!

You can give a sponsorship of an ambassador for \$30 per year! Sponsors receive a certificate of sponsorship, a 4x6 photograph, and a brochure about their ambassador. Sponsorship funds help provide food and medical care.

You can sponsor on our website (TamarackWildlife.org) or fill out the form below, indicating whether this is for a gift, and send the form long with a check to

**TWC, 21601 Stull Road, Saegertown, PA 16433.**

- ☐ Ruby, Red-tailed Hawk
- ☐ Lady Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk
- ☐ Sophia, Barred Owl
- ☐ Myrtle, Box Turtle

- ☐ Watson, American Kestrel
- ☐ Apollo, Peregrine Falcon
- ☐ Romeo, Great Horned Owl
- ☐ Willow, Eastern Screech Owl
- ☐ Luna, Barn Owl

*Apollo,  
Peregrine  
Falcon*



Name of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Recipient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Recipient's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wish List

- Paper towels • Bleach • Kitchen scissors, heavy duty
- Liquid laundry detergent for high efficiency machines (he)
- Trash bags, 30 gallon • Newspaper (no glossy pages) • Forever stamps
- Cohesive bandage, 2"
- Fresh fruit/veggies/greens (call to verify what is needed)
- Nuts in the shell, including acorns and hickory nuts
- Nuts shelled, including walnuts and almonds • Puppy pads
- Surgical drape (unused from hospital surgeries)
- Sterile saline or lactated ringers (IV bags)
- Wood pine or ash shavings for bedding (not cedar)
- Dog toys such as HOL-ee Roller or durable dog toys for ambassador & patient wildlife enrichment
- Fake flowers and greenery for patient housing enrichment
- Latex or nitrile exam gloves, all sizes
- HP Ink Cartridges HP 952XL black and HP 952 color
- Simple Green D Pro 5 cleaner/disinfectant
- Gift cards to Tractor Supply, Home Depot, Walmart, Amazon



*Nestling American Kestrels, raised at the Center and released.*



*Bluebirds raised from nestling by Tamarack's songbird specialist, Gina Kron*

*For more great ideas, look up Tamarack Wildlife Center's Amazon Smile wish list at <https://tinyurl.com/tamarackwild>*

# TAMARACK

## WILDLIFE CENTER

(814) 763-2574  
www.TAMARACKWILDLIFE.org  
21601 Stull Road Saegertown, PA 16433



NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SAEGERTOWN, PA  
PERMIT NO. 46

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## Spring 2022 Newsletter



## Yes! I want to help wildlife!

Become a member of TWC and help wildlife. Members receive two newsletters per year and are invited to our annual open house. Your donations are tax deductible and give you the satisfaction of helping our native wildlife. If your membership is not up for renewal but you wish to provide extra financial support, your additional donation or memorial contribution is always welcome.

Donate on our website ([TamarackWildlife.org](http://TamarackWildlife.org)) or send contributions to:

**Tamarack Wildlife Center**  
**21601 Stull Road, Saegertown, PA 16433**

### Annual Membership:

- |                          |                       |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chickadee.....        | \$20-29         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | American Kestrel..... | \$30-99         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Horned Owl..... | \$100-499       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Peregrine.....        | \$500-999       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Golden Eagle.....     | \$1,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Amount.....     | \$ _____        |

I'd like to receive  
the newsletter via:

☐ Mail ☐ Email

(If email,  
please list below)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

### All Contributions are Tax Deductible!

*If your address label is incorrect,  
please let us know.*

#### TWC's

Executive Director.....Carol Holmgren  
Director Emerita.....Suzanne DeArment

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