



Pelican Press

Summer 2023

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIVE WILDLIFE CENTER

THE COST OF CARING

We all can relate to the positive feeling you get when you donate to a charity. At PHSS, we believe in transparency and integrity in the use of funds entrusted to us by generous donors like yourself. We also believe in maintaining the highest quality of care. In recent years, PHSS has invested in state-of-the-art medical equipment thanks to your support. We have also invested in more clinic staff and veterinary care to keep up with the growing demands of our patient load. There are 148 patients in care at the time of this writing, and it costs over \$3,000 per day to run our native wildlife clinic, which is the only one of its kind in all of Miami-Dade County. Below is the cost breakdown for a Red-shouldered Hawk who was in care for 79 days recovering from an eye infection and a broken leg. This is just one patient of the thousands that we admit each year. **Can you help us continue to care for these animals by making a donation today?**

SPECIES: RED-SHOULDERED HAWK



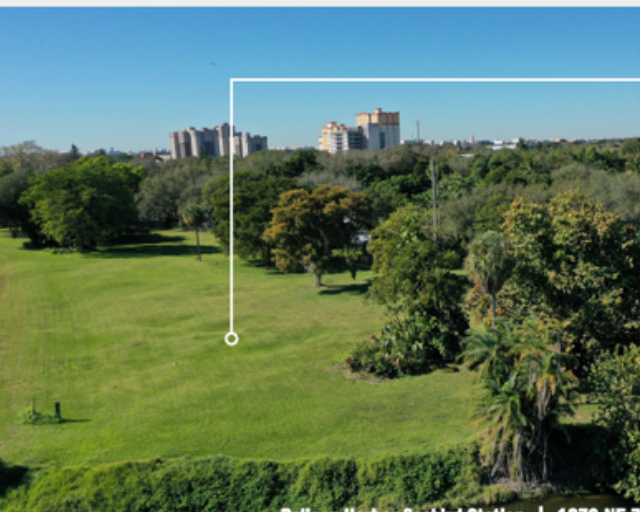
SCAN ME TO DONATE TODAY!



	Unit Cost (\$)	Total Units	Total Cost (\$)
Ambulance Travel Price Per Mile	\$4.00	8	\$32.00
Initial Exam	\$35.00	1	\$35.00
Veterinarian Recheck Exams	\$50.00	9	\$450.00
Anesthesia	\$60.00	4	\$240.00
Assisted Feeding (by Tube/Hand)	\$10.00	22	\$220.00
Crop Swab	\$5.00	1	\$5.00
Bacterial Culture and Sensitivity Test	\$100.00	1	\$100.00
External Wound Management	\$5.00	8	\$40.00
Eye Medication Administration	\$3.00	122	\$366.00
Eye Stain to View Corneal Abrasions	\$15.00	1	\$15.00
Iv Fluids	\$100.00	1	\$100.00
Subcutaneous Fluids	\$45.00	12	\$540.00
Hospitalization Per Day (Indoors)	\$50.00	58	\$2,900.00
Housing Per Day (Outdoor Enclosures)	\$20.00	21	\$420.00
Medication Given by Injection	\$15.00	16	\$240.00
Medication Given by Mouth (Oral)	\$5.00	130	\$650.00
Radiographs (Per View)	\$60.00	6	\$360.00
Splinting/Bandaging (Broken/Fractured Bones)	\$40.00	2	\$80.00
Orthopedic Surgery (Pinning Bone)	\$1,000	1	\$1,000
Use of Sterile Surgical Instruments	\$50.00	2	\$100.00
Specialized Diets (Rodents)	\$10.00	60	\$600.00
TOTAL COST			\$8,493.00

UNVEILING A NEW CHAPTER IN OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

As you may know, our new property was formerly under the ownership of Julia Tuttle, who transformed the land into a flourishing orange orchard. The historical application of fertilizers and pesticides has led to the presence of trace amounts of arsenic in the soil, and we are in the process of finalizing plans for our soil remediation project, funded by a generous grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. This is the first step forward before we begin non-native tree removal and then vertical construction, marking significant progress in our journey! **If you're interested in learning more about this project, including naming opportunities for bricks, rooms, and enclosures, please contact Christopher@pelicanharbor.org.**



Assistant Director Chloe Chelz and Board Chairman Robert Glidewell meet with prospective contractors who were bidding on soil remediation and civil work

COLLABORATION IS KEY

By: Hannah McDougall, Director of Communications

Teamwork makes the dream work, and here at PHSS, we believe that sharing information and resources is the best way to promote growth within the field of wildlife conservation.

For the past 6 years, we have partnered with institutions like The University of Florida, Cornell University, and Nova Southeastern University, offering our patient cadavers to assist in their avian research. While this can be sad at first, we are comforted by knowing that this partnership allows these animals' lives to serve a second purpose.

We have also partnered with the Florida Shorebird Alliance (FSA) since 2017, helping to conduct rooftop bird counts of Least Tern and Black Skimmer populations. These numbers help the FSA to detect changes in the abundance, distribution, and overall productivity of breeding shorebirds and seabirds over time. Based on the data received from monitoring, FSA partners can implement effective management strategies and develop conservation guidelines.

In addition, we transferred multiple Gopher Tortoises to ZooMiami last year, where they are being used as wild subjects of a study using radiotelemetry to track their movements and determine wild population distribution.

We are proud to be contributing to projects like these and look forward to conducting research of our own in the future!



ABUSED TURTLE RELEASED

On March 16th, PHSS received a call from a kayaker who had come across an alarming discovery: two turtles had been chained together and were stuck hanging in a Mangrove tree.

The turtles both had holes drilled into the edge of their carapace (upper shell) and illegible writing on their plastron (underside of the shell). These freshwater turtles also displayed issues with buoyancy, an indicator of respiratory complications most likely due to being in saltwater. At PHSS, the turtles were unchained, given subcutaneous fluids, and placed in an oxygen chamber to decompress. Sadly, the Florida Red-Bellied Cooter's injuries were too severe, and it passed away shortly after intake. However, the Peninsula Cooter was able to pull through and was successfully released back into the wild after one month in care.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is investigating, but with minimal evidence, these cases usually run cold. If you ever come across a situation like this, please report it to FWC and contact us immediately so that we can provide care and, hopefully, help find those who are responsible.



SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: INDIGO BUNTING

By: Yaritza Acosta, Wildlife Rehabilitation Manager

The Indigo Bunting is a small migratory songbird that breeds in eastern North America and winters in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and sparingly in South Florida.

While migrating and in winter, Indigo Buntings forage in fields, lawns, grasslands, shrubs, trees, and, if you are lucky, sometimes bird-friendly backyards.

The breeding males are a beautiful blue all over, with slightly richer blue on their heads and a silver-gray bill. Females are brown, with faint streaking on the breast, a whitish throat, and sometimes a touch of blue on the wings, tail, or rump.

Indigo Buntings, like most other species of birds, migrate at night, using the stars for guidance. They possess an internal clock that enables them to continually adjust their angle of orientation to a star—even as that star moves through the night sky. Interestingly, only the male birds sing, and young buntings will learn their songs from nearby males rather than their own fathers.



THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD

By: Jacquelyn Schoppe, Wildlife Rehabilitator

On April 5th, a bald alien-looking fuzzball with naked claw-like arms made its way to PHSS by way of a good samaritan who had found it weak and being pecked at by larger birds on the edge of a fishing canal. As adults, Common Gallinules are beautiful marsh birds with smooth, charcoal-gray feathers and long yellow legs who stride graciously around fresh or brackish waters. However, as nestlings, they are the true Danny Devitos of the pond. This little 16-gram ugly duckling immediately stole our hearts.

After just a few days in our care, our bulb-shaped martian made his presence even more known with his loud vocalizations and bottomless-pit appetite. Offering a variety of worms, insects, and small fish several times a day, it seems we could never keep his food bowl from quickly becoming empty, and after just a week in our care, he had over doubled in weight! In a natural environment, our little guy would have grown up in a family unit with a few other lovable fuzzballs. Unfortunately, no other centers around South Florida had received a baby his age to pair him with, so our little guy shared his incubator with the best friend we could find him, his own reflection in the mirror and a feather duster.

Our creature soon outgrew the caging in the clinic and was moved into an outside enclosure where he could better practice his hiding and foraging skills in a more natural environment, away from human voices and contact. Now weighing over 200 grams and displaying natural foraging behaviors and vocalizations, he will soon be scheduled for release, rejoining the marshes as a beautiful juvenile gallinule in a true ugly-duckling storybook ending.



TOO CUTE TO CARE FOR?

By: Carolina Labro, Wildlife Rehabilitator

As humans, we have a nurturing instinct that must sometimes be put aside to do what is in the best interest of an animal. Such is the case when we see videos on social media of people raising wild orphaned birds. While they may appear cute and harmless, this behavior often leads to irreversible imprinting.

Imprinting is the way animals learn to identify other members of their species and develop a concept of their own identity. This learning process develops by visual contact with its parents and, depending on the species, can occur in the first few hours to the first days of hatching. Imprinting allows birds to learn appropriate behaviors, postures, and vocalizations of their own species. Imprinting is crucial for their survival in the wild, enabling them to choose an appropriate mate once they reach sexual maturity, as well as recognize predators and find food on their own. Once wild animals develop their identity, they will identify with that species for the rest of their lives!

Evidently, no human that raises a baby bird can teach these natural and critical behaviors to the animal. They will not learn it unless it is from their parents, siblings, or conspecifics. To avoid the risk of imprinting when in care, PHSS provides our baby birds with camouflaging feather dusters, greenery, tree bark, and covered enclosures. We use species-specific sounds during feeding, and we only interact with them directly when necessary, such as when providing medical care or tong feeding.

If you raise a baby bird and decide to set it free, it will naturally fly away because it will always choose freedom. However, that does not mean it will be able to fend for itself or survive in nature. Without the proper care, it won't know how to find its own food, find the appropriate mate, defend itself from predators, or even be able to properly communicate with other birds. Just as a toddler cannot be left alone to cross the street by themselves, even though they know how to walk, we cannot expect birds to survive with limited skills.

