



Pelican Press

Spring 2023

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIVE WILDLIFE CENTER



Pelican Run 5K

SATURDAY • MAY 6TH, 2023

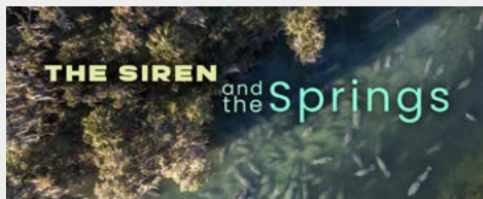
Join us for our second annual Pelican Run 5k on May 6th, 2023 at Haulover Park. Registration for this family-friendly walk/run includes an event t-shirt, participation medal, and overall & age group medals.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER TODAY!



SPEAKER SERIES

Hosted on the **second Wednesday of each month** at the **Pelican Harbor Marina**, our Natural History Speaker Series covers a variety of topics in ecology, conservation, and research.



Wednesday, April 12th • 5:30-7:30pm

"The Siren and the Springs" with Live Narration

Speaker: Richard Kern, Natural History Filmmaker



Wednesday, May 10th • 5:30-7:30PM

Capturing Florida Panthers, A Tree Climber's Perspective

Speaker: Dennis J. Giardina, Everglades Region Biologist and member of the FWC Panther Capture Team



Wednesday, June 14th • 5:30-7:30

American Crocodiles at Turkey Point

Speaker: Mike Lloret, Wildlife Biologist

AN EYE FOR AN EYE

By: Yaritza Acosta, Wildlife Rehabilitation Manager

On Christmas day 2022, PHSS admitted an Eastern Screech Owl that showed the classic signs of head trauma. It was weak, unable to stand, and had inflammation in the eyes. We began treatment of fluid therapy, oxygen therapy, and laser therapy, along with anti-inflammatory medications. However, signs of infection in the right eye soon surfaced, and treatment was adjusted to include antibacterial medications, both orally and topically on the eye.

After a week, the eye showed no indication of improving, so we brought the owl to the Animal Eye Guys in Miami Gardens, where we often consult with Dr. Jessica Martinez on ocular cases. She was concerned about not only bacterial infection but a fungal infection that somehow was creeping inside the eye. The treatment plan was again modified, and the owl was given stronger topical antibiotics and anti-fungal medication.

After almost three weeks of trying various treatments and medications, there was no progress in its condition, and Dr. Martinez suggested the eye be removed to prevent the infection from spreading and other issues from arising. On February 16th, the owl had an enucleation surgery where the entire right eye was removed. Luckily, since owls rely mostly on their sense of hearing to hunt, they can often be released with just one eye. As of now, the owl is healing well and will soon start extensive live prey school and flight conditioning to gauge its eligibility for release.





REMEMBERING HARVEY RUVIN

PHSS mourns the loss of one of our most dedicated supporters and friends, Harvey Ruvin. A committed supporter of environmental issues, Harvey was the longest-serving elected official in Miami-Dade County. First elected to office in 1968 as the mayor of North Bay Village, he later served on the County Commission through the 1970s and 1980s before serving seven consecutive four-year terms as the county's clerk.

Harvey was instrumental in securing a home for our wildlife hospital in 1991, presiding at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, serving as a valued Board member, and later a Lifetime Honorary Director, and speaking most recently at the Celebration of Life service for our founder Harry Kelton last year. During his speech at the service this past November, Harvey shared, "When I think of Harry and Darlene ... so unusual ... two people that not only believed and understood that they were a part of nature, but they lived their lives based upon that premise - something we all should do."

A tireless and generous supporter of our mission, Harvey will be deeply missed.



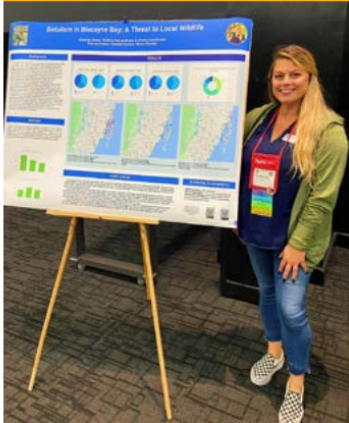
PHSS STAFF PRESENT AT 2023 NWRA CONFERENCE

By: Stephanie Moure, Operations & IT Manager



The field of Wildlife Rehabilitation requires continuous learning, adaptability, and collaboration to increase the level of care and treatment of our sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife, as well as improve the operations of a nonprofit wildlife hospital. Every year, the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) hosts a symposium where rehabbers from different centers across the nation gather to discuss and share information that would benefit other centers and their care for patients. This year, Pelican Harbor Seabird Station is proud to have had three staff members from different departments selected to present at the symposium!

AMANDA BURKE • WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR



Amanda, Wildlife Rehabilitator and Intern Coordinator, presented about Botulism in Biscayne Bay and shared the efficacy of Toxiban and other treatments used as well as the water conditions at the time of patients being admitted. This presentation helped other centers that may not be as familiar with botulism in birds as it may not occur as often in their location as it does in Miami.

HANNAH MCDUGALL • DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS



Hannah, Director of Communications, presented the benefits of using social media to reach new supporters and spread the word about the work we do. As a nonprofit organization, fundraising and education are just as important as the work our medical team does in the hospital. This presentation helped us share what we have learned from our social media presence so that other centers could up their social media game and reach more supporters.

STEPHANIE MOURE • OPERATIONS & IT MANAGER



Stephanie, Operations and IT Manager, discussed the benefits of having a website that is easy to set up, use, and maintain not only for the manager but for the user as well! Working in the nonprofit field means every staff member wears multiple hats and sometimes learning how to work in a department you have never worked in before. In this presentation, we share the behind-the-scenes of our own website to help other organizations with theirs.

We are proud to have had our staff present and bring back vital information to improve our treatment of our patients and overall operations at PHSS!



FUN FACT: Harry Kelton, founder of Pelican Harbor Seabird Station, presented at an NWRA symposium and introduced the cottonfish method of feeding Brown Pelicans and other seabirds a fish stuffed with cotton in order to retrieve swallowed fishing hooks! His presentation helped centers nationwide integrate this procedure and help hundreds of patients avoid invasive procedures and make quicker recoveries.



FISHING LINE: A FORMIDABLE FOE

By: Sarah Stinson-Hurwitz, Associate of Development & Major Gifts

Vultures, lovingly known as nature's garbagemen, are keystone species that perform the necessary task of ridding the environment of disease and detritus by eating carrion (dead animal flesh). In February, a hiker in Greynolds Park spotted one of these majestic creatures trapped 40 feet up in an Oak tree. Thankfully, a Florida Fish and Wildlife officer quickly sprang into action and contacted us to hatch a plan. We contacted Fire Rescue of Dade County to capture the helpless bird and bring him in. The rescue team carried their tallest ladder down the hiking trail, climbed to the top of the tree, and saved the Turkey Vulture from a slow and certain death. He was a victim of litter, entangled with the tree by a measly six-inch long piece of monofilament fishing line. We are so grateful to the kind hiker who spotted him, the Fire Rescue, and FWC for working with us to get the vulture into care!

Upon arrival at Pelican Harbor Seabird Station, our rehabilitation team thoroughly examined the vulture and removed the fishing line wrapped around the bird's wing. Although it was a small piece of line, it had damaged and twisted the vulture's primary feathers. Though the bird was weak and stressed from the entrapment, the rehabbers were happy to discover he had no broken bones. The patient is now well on their healing journey, and we expect they will be ready to return to the wild soon!

Improperly disposing of fishing lines has dangerous consequences for wildlife. It all too easily makes its way into our beloved birds' beaks, wings, and stomachs. We are responsible for protecting these creatures and mitigating negative human impacts on our ecosystems by discarding fishing lines into the designated receptacles at fishing sites. Because when lines are left in the environment, it is not a matter of if an animal will become entangled, but when.

DID YOU KNOW: Monofilament fishing line takes 600 years to decompose!



A FEATHERED FOSTER

By: Samantha Martinez, Environmental Educator

In early January of this year, a fledgling Brown Pelican was found outside of its nest in the Florida Keys. The bird was renested by the Marathon Wild Bird Center, but after several days and consistent observation from afar, the baby's parents did not return, and the young pelican began to wander outside of the nest in search of food. Unable to survive on its own at this age, the pelican was brought to Pelican Harbor to be raised until release.

Fortunately, PHSS has a great asset in the form of our ambassador pelicans, specifically Jefe, who has been at PHSS for over two decades due to a neurological issue. PHSS staff decided to introduce the baby pelican to Jefe, knowing that he could teach the young one the skills it needed to survive in the wild. At first, Jefe was a bit wary of the newcomer but quickly began to take more of an interest in the young one and soon became a great example of adult pelican behavior for the baby to mimic.

The orphaned pelican is still at PHSS in one of our outdoor enclosures with two other wild pelicans, where he can continue to learn how to fly and collect food on his own before eventually being released back into the wild. He receives limited human interaction to prevent habituation and grows stronger each day.



HOSPICE FOR "OLD MAN JENKINS"

By: Jacqueline Schoppe, Wildlife Rehabilitator

In late December, weak and unable to fly, a scrappy-looking Royal Tern found his way to Pelican Harbor wearing a federal band on his ankle. As it "terns out," this bird was banded as a nestling in North Carolina in 1993, making him only a year younger than the oldest tern ever recorded! This immediately earned him much love and respect from everyone at Pelican Harbor, as well as the nickname Old Man Jenkins (although the sex of this bird was never determined).

As a Royal Tern, Old Man Jenkins likely spent the past 29 years gliding up and down the U.S. Atlantic coastline, hovering over shallow bodies of water, and plunge-diving for small fish and crustaceans to eat. He perhaps migrated to the more southern parts of the U.S. during the winter months and headed to more northern beaches in the warmer months to monogamously mate and raise young.

After just a few days in care, 22-2033 gained noticeable strength and energy, giving the clinic team hope that it might be possible that he could make a full recovery, despite his age. Supportive care was continued for another week, and more improvements were noticed. The bottoms of his feet were no longer swollen and sore, and he began to hold his wings in the proper position. Things seemed like they were looking up for our elderly friend.

One morning, however, we came in and noticed the tern looking extra weak, and he could no longer stand or walk. We immediately put him on oxygen and administered subcutaneous fluids, which seemed to help, and he was back to his normal self after a couple of hours. However, over the next couple of days, we came to the conclusion that we were caring for a hospice patient. On New Year's Day, 2023, it became clear that it was time to release our tired bird, not into the wild, but from his pain and suffering. As rehabber, it can be hard to let go of a patient who you held out hope for, but we are pleased to know this bird lived a long life along the beautiful east coast. Our special bird will always be remembered at Pelican Harbor and hold a place in our hearts for years to come.

