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Pelican Press

Fall 2022

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIVE WILDLIFE CENTER

Want to make a lasting difference?
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A Legacy Takes Flight

Christopher Boykin, Executive Director

Our Building Committee and team continue to make great strides towards our new building and expansion to an 8,000-sq.-ft. wildlife hospital and education center on our new 2.6-acre riverfront preserve. We expect to break ground in November, with an anticipated completion date of December 2023. The State of Florida recently awarded us with a \$500,000 in-kind grant, where a licensed contractor of the state will perform environmental sampling and soil remediation. We have raised \$8,000,000 of the required \$14,000,000 for the expansion and are very grateful to the 160 donors and foundations that have stepped up to invest in wildlife and partner with us on this exciting and much-needed expansion. Additionally, we have secured numerous letters of support for the project and held a public meeting at the property last month to update the neighbors and address any questions. Pelican Harbor Seabird Station is Miami's native wildlife hospital and has provided invaluable services to wildlife and the Miami-Dade County community for over four decades. **We need your help now more than ever. Be a part of history, by making a gift to our capital campaign. If you're interested in a tour of the preserve or learning more, please contact Rebecca@pelicanharbor.org.**



Donate today!

Take advantage of special offers like Behind-the-Scenes tours, Sunset Cruises, and more!



The Story of a Stilt

Samantha Martinez, Environmental Educator

Envision taking your regular early morning walk, each the same as yesterday and the days before, except for one curious discovery: a little bird with a tiny speckled body and disproportionately long legs scurrying across the path. This is what happened to Councilman Roger Coriat of Cutler Bay when he stumbled upon a baby Black-necked Stilt. At first, he let the baby be, assuming its parents were nearby. However, he saw that the stilt was still alone later that day, wandering across a parking lot right before it began to rain. Councilman Coriat decided to take the stilt in, where he kept the baby safe and warm overnight, and contacted PHSS first thing in the morning.

Besides being an orphan, the stilt luckily seemed to be in perfect health. Our staff quickly made an imitation environment using shallow water dishes and foliage as well as images and calls of adult Stilts to prevent habituation and ensure this patient has the best chance of surviving in the wild. Once the baby was settled in, he was offered small pieces of fish, insects, and worms and began eating right away. Over the next 45 days, the stilt continued to grow, eventually topping out at 140 grams, 9x larger than he was upon intake! In late July, it was time for him to return home, marking our first-ever release of a Black-Necked Stilt.

A huge thanks to the Cutler Bay Community Fund at the Miami Foundation for not only helping to get this little one in for care, but for providing funds for his treatment as well. Good luck out there "Mr. Beaks!"



Meet Jefe, Aggie, and Ms. Nigel, Our Newly Adoptable Ambassador Brown Pelicans

Stephanie Moure, Operations & IT Manager

JEFE

Jefe lives up to his name and is definitely the boss of the flock! One of our oldest residents, Jefe suffered head trauma in 1998 that resulted in a lack of fear of humans. While this makes him too friendly for the wild, it also makes him the perfect fit to travel with us to educational events and presentations.



AGGIE

In our early years, staff would frequently feed the wild pelicans so that we could get a closer look for hook and line. We have since stopped this practice, but Aggie became so accustomed to the feedings that she refused to hunt on her own. She became a permanent resident in 2018 and is now spoiled with two meals a day.



MS. NIGEL

Ms. Nigel came to us in 1998 by way of the Miami Seaquarium. Looking for an easy meal, she dove into the pool of their sea lion exhibit to steal some fish. Unfortunately, she was bitten by one of the sea lions, fracturing her wing beyond repair. Named after her late partner, Mr. Nigel, Ms. Nigel has now taken a liking to Felix.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO "ADOPT" A PELICAN TODAY!



Got Milk?...Not So Fast!

Carolina Labro, Wildlife Rehabilitator

We all know that milk is a critical component of nutrition for the healthy growth, development, and survival of any wild baby mammal. It supplies essential fats, proteins, antibodies, vitamins, and minerals to the neonate during a very important part of its life. But did you know that there are two crucial aspects of milk when raising orphan babies? They are Components and Compositions.

Milk has six major components: water, fat, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. However, its composition differs widely from species to species. This difference is closely associated with an animal's environment, diet, and life history and is why it is so important never to attempt to bottle feed any orphaned wildlife you may find. For example, Herbivorous species produce milk lower in concentrations of fat and protein due to a diet based on plants and grass. Conversely, Omnivorous species produce milk high in fat and protein from animal matter in their diet.

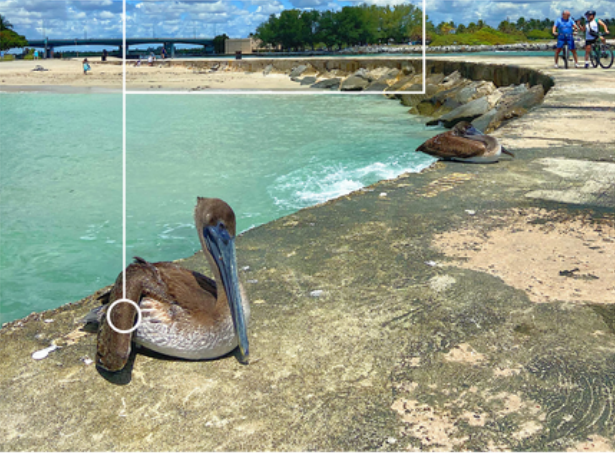
	COW MILK (HERBIVORE)	OPOSSUM MILK (OMNIVORE)
PROTEIN	2.6%	8.4%
FAT	3.9%	11.3%
LACTOSE	4.6%	1.6%

Throughout lactation, the composition of a mammal's milk will change drastically to meet the nutritional needs of each developmental stage. For example, a baby Grey Squirrel at three weeks requires a formula with a high fat to low protein ratio. When the same Grey Squirrel reaches six weeks, it now requires a formula low in protein and high in fat.

Although there is no perfect substitute for natural milk, there are specially formulated wildlife milk substitutes based on the analysis of the species' natural milk. It is important to know that feeding an orphaned wild baby the wrong formula will cause delayed growth in size, sparse fur, muscle weakness, bone abnormalities, lack of tooth development, and even death. This is due to their immature GI tract being unable to process milk with inappropriate compositions. This includes cow's milk, evaporated milk, human infant formula, plant-based milks, and any homemade recipe.

Knowledge of the specific nutritional requirements of orphan wild babies is vital to support healthy growth and to increase the chance of releasing an animal that can survive in the wild. If you ever come across a wild baby animal, be sure to bring it to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible, and do not attempt to feed it!





Keep Our Wildlife Wild!

Amanda Burke, Wildlife Rehabilitator & Intern Coordinator

In September 2021, a Brown Pelican was admitted to Pelican Harbor with a fractured humerus bone in its right wing. Orthopedic surgery was performed where multiple pins were placed in cross sections across the bone to stabilize the fracture and enable the bones to fuse properly. In addition to the pins, an external fixator device was also placed at the site. This involves a piece of acrylic encased in a tube that is placed on the outside of the wing to keep the pins in place and limit rotation so the bone heals properly. What followed was six months of hard work on the part of not just the rehab team but the pelican himself. Every day it received physical therapy and medications to aid in his healing. We had to ensure he would have a full range of motion in his wing so that he could fly, hunt for food, and most importantly, live and thrive on his own in the wild.

In March 2022, six months after its initial intake, release day finally came for our pelican. He had completed his physical therapy and proved to us he could fly and hunt on his own despite a persistent but benign wing droop. He was released with another pelican on our property here in Miami, where they flew off together, and we considered it another successful release.

However, over the next couple of months, we got numerous calls from people worried that the pelican was unable to fly due to his wing droop. After some time monitoring him and multiple

visits to the jetty, it was determined that he was not thriving in the wild due to consistent human intervention and he was brought back to PHSS for further evaluation. We decided to relocate him to an area that would not have the amount of human interaction he had in his previous release area.

Then, we started getting calls about Facebook videos being posted of people interacting with him in various ways around the Haulover Jetty area—touching him, petting him, feeding him fish, and attempting to “help” him even though he was more than capable of taking care of himself. Despite numerous attempts of release at different locations, the pelican kept returning to the Haulover Jetty, where he had seemingly become irreversibly accustomed to being fed by humans. Because of this, he was deemed unreleasable by our veterinarians and had to be permanently placed at a sanctuary, where he will live out the rest of his life in captivity.

Please remember when you see a wild animal, they are just that – wild. In order to thrive and survive, they need to keep their wild instincts. The best way to be a friend to wild animals is to stay as far away as possible and let them live their lives without our influence. As always, refrain from feeding, holding, or petting wild animals, no matter how friendly they may seem!



Batchelor MATCH IS BACK!

Thanks to the generosity of The Batchelor Foundation, all donations up to \$100,000 are being matched! With your impact being doubled, now is the perfect time to give. We can't do it without you!

1 + 1 = 2

YOUR DOLLAR MATCHING DOLLAR TWICE THE IMPACT



Mowgli The Model

Scan the QR code to read more!



We are excited to share that our ambassador Eastern Screech Owl, Mowgli, graces the most recent cover of The Atlantic Magazine. Photographed on-site at PHSS by Shayan Asghamia, her portrait accompanies the article “Our Blinding, Blaring World” by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Ed Yong on the topic of how anthropogenic sensory pollution affects the animal world at large.



MAKE A DATE WITH US!

**SEPT
10**



FULL MOON CRUISE

Time: 6:30-8:30 pm
Where: Crandon Park Marina

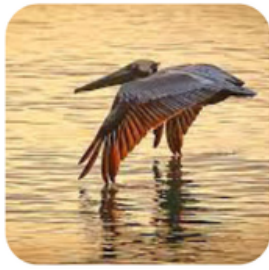
**SEPT
14**



*WEBINAR: FLORIDA'S
INVASIVE SPECIES*

Time: 6:00-7:00 pm
Where: Zoom

**OCT
15**



*SUNSET CRUISE: PHSS TOUR &
CHAMPAGNE*

Time: 5:00-8:00 pm
Where: Pelican Harbor Marina

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