

# Pelican Talk

Fall 2021

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIVE WILDLIFE CENTER



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perfect  
match!**

*Details inside ...*





# Pelican Talk



## A Tangled Tale

By Hannah McDougall, Director of Communications

These days, we've all gotten used to wearing facemasks. But these protective measures should only be used by humans! Unfortunately, this wasn't the case for an Anhinga found with a cloth mask entangled in its beak. Anhinga's beaks are serrated to help them to hold onto slippery fish, and this resulted in the mask becoming completely entwined, preventing the bird from being able to open its mouth.

After three days and multiple concerned callers, we were finally able to contain the Anhinga to bring it in for treatment, where our clinic team carefully used scissors to remove the fibers of the mask. Besides being dehydrated and weak, the bird was otherwise in good condition and quickly bounced back after some fluids and a good meal. One week later, it was successfully released back to the wild!

Always be aware of the way in which you are disposing of your trash, and use an eco-friendly reusable mask when possible!

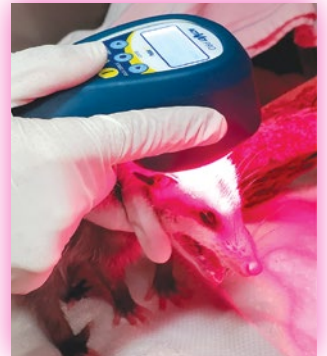
## The Power of Light: Laser Therapy

By Yaritza Acosta, Rehabilitation Manager

The use of laser therapy in veterinary medicine and wildlife rehabilitation has increased over the years as more and more veterinarians and rehabilitators are reporting anecdotal benefits in patient recovery.

Therapeutic lasers use light waves of a specific wavelength to cause alteration of cellular and tissue physiology. Light absorbed by cells stimulates electrons and activates cells to promote growth, proliferation, migration, and repair. Depending on the settings used, laser therapy can help by causing endorphin release, vasodilation (increase blood flow), muscle relaxation, decreasing inflammation and pain, and wound healing.

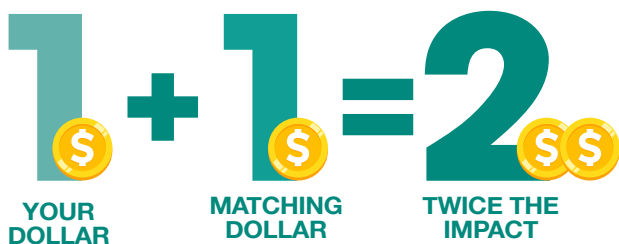
Laser therapy was crucial in the case of patient #1560, a young opossum that came in with neurologic symptoms, dull demeanor, a severe head tilt, bulging and trembling eyes, and walking in circles. He was treated with laser therapy, medication for inflammation, and supportive care of fluid therapy. After 8 days, the head tilt subsided, the eyes were normal, and the opossum was walking and responding normally!



This is just one case where laser treatment has helped with recovery. We've incorporated laser therapy into many of our treatment protocols and continue to see a vast improvement in the speed of recovery for many cases.

### A Perfect Match ...

## Donations Doubled Dollar for Dollar!



Thank you for reading our newsletter and for caring about the conservation and protection of our local wildlife. We hope you will consider a monthly recurring gift, capital campaign contribution, or one-time gift to support our mission or capital campaign today. **All gifts towards our wildlife rehabilitation efforts are being matched by The Batchelor Foundation and all gifts to the capital campaign are being matched by The Deeks Foundation.**

These two generous foundations have made significant leadership gifts towards our annual operations and expansion, and all gifts are being matched dollar for dollar. Give with confidence today by knowing that you are helping wildlife while also making history with the construction of our new hospital.



# Cardinal Condo

By Sarah Stinson-Hurwitz, Wildlife Intake Coordinator Assistant

In late July, a worried citizen noticed a couple of cardinal nestlings in some tall grass. After she brought them into the station, and after a quick check-up, our wildlife rehabilitators determined they were perfectly healthy and renesting them would be the best next step!

Do you know what to do when you find healthy uninjured nestlings on the ground? If the nest is out of reach and their parents are in the area (we recommend waiting a few hours to give the parents a chance to return if you don't initially see them) a renest is the next step! Rensetting is always our preferred choice for uninjured nestlings because momma birds are the best qualified caretakers for their babies. Rensetting entails gently placing the babies back in their original nest, or if their nest has been destroyed, making a new home for the babies with a small takeout container, plastic strawberry carton, or anything else with drainage.

This is exactly what we did for our little cardinal friends. We snuggled them into a new studio apartment and sent them back with the finder to be placed securely in their home tree. About 20 minutes after their renest, Momma Cardinal heard her babies calls, settled into their new home, and provided a nice fresh breakfast!



## 2021 Holiday Gift Guide

Don't wing your holiday gifts this year! As we all know, the holidays can be a very busy time of the year. But don't fret, our team at PHSS has come up with a list of im-peck-able gift ideas to help tackle your gift list early this holiday season.

Visit [pelicanharbor.org/holiday-gift-guide](https://pelicanharbor.org/holiday-gift-guide) for more information, ideas, and inspiration on gifts that give back this holiday season!



**Gift an honorary adoption of one of our ambassador animals!** Your recipient will receive a cute photo, certificate, and an invitation to come meet their adoptee.



**Magnificent Frigatebird shirts** are a great gift that are not only beautiful but also support the treatment of sick, injured, and orphaned native wildlife!



**Ambassador animal mugs** are the perfect gift for those on our list who we never know what to gift. Everyone loves a cute mug for their favorite warm beverage!



**Sponsor a room in honor of or in memory of a loved one.** There are plenty of giving opportunities in our new facility! Learn more at [pelicanharbor.org/capitalcampaign](https://pelicanharbor.org/capitalcampaign)



By Tori Fields, Wildlife Rehabilitator

Checking the health of the eyes during an intake examination is a common practice at Pelican Harbor. When examining the eyes of our avian patients, we primarily check for four things. We ensure the pecten is visible, there is no blood in the anterior or posterior chambers of the eye, normal pupillary response, and for corneal ulcers.

One main issue we see in our avian patients with head trauma are corneal ulcers. Corneal ulcers are basically a scratch on the cornea (surface of the eye) and can be extremely painful. To test for a corneal ulcer, we stain the eye with fluorescein stain, flush the stain out, and use the blue light on an ophthalmoscope to scan the eye for stain uptake (which will appear neon yellow on the surface of the eye). If we have a patient suffering from corneal ulcers, we prescribe them a minor pain medication and a topical eye drop.

One species we receive here at PHSS that seems to always present with corneal ulcers is the Chuck-wills-widow. For these patients, we will follow the procedures listed above, but we add one more step. Our veterinarians will temporarily suture the eyelids closed, leaving a small opening for us to give the eye drops. The patient will receive topical drops 3-4x a day and their eyelids will be sutured closed for about one week, longer depending on the severity. This technique may seem extreme, but by closing the eyes it allows the cornea to heal at a faster rate. This article barely "scratches the surface", but it gives you an idea of what injuries we look for in our wildlife patients.





# Pssst ... can we get your advice?



You know the old saying, “*You don’t know what you don’t know*”? Conversely, “*We don’t know who you know*” is also true. With more than 2.7-million residents in Miami-Dade, less than 2% of the population engages with us on social media or through our mailing list. **This is where you come in.** Are you part of a civic group or homeowners association that could host us for a virtual or in-person presentation?

Do you know a Family Foundation, conservationist, philanthropist, or business that may be interested in a donation or corporate sponsorship? If so, we’d love for you to make an introduction for us. Our team does incredible work, but it is only with the help of Good Samaritans like you that we have been able to treat over 37,000 patients and remain open daily since 1980. THANK YOU! Lastly, if you know of any community magazines, papers, events, or other opportunities for us to expand our network, please let us know by contacting our Director of Communications at [Hannah@pelicanharbor.org](mailto:Hannah@pelicanharbor.org)

## Uber Driver Turned Volunteer

By Kiki Mutis, Operations Manager

We live in a big county, 2,431 square miles, to be exact. Every year, thousands of people call PHSS hoping to get the sick, injured, or orphaned animal that they found to the clinic as soon as possible. Not everyone can bring the patient themselves because they are going to work, have kids to watch, or don’t drive. When our Operation Rescue and Release volunteer team cannot bring the animal, we call a rideshare, like Uber or Lyft. This is a story of an Uber driver turned volunteer:

*“One morning during the spring of 2018, I was introduced to Pelican Harbor Seabird Station through an Uber client I picked up. This one wasn’t like the usual late-night suspects—it was a gorgeous, majestic hawk.*

*To my surprise, when I arrived to pick up the ride, the gentleman who contacted me through the UBER app handed me a large plastic bin containing an animal. The bird was out-cold; it had fallen overnight in the homeowner’s yard.*

*I was completely unaware that a sanctuary like this existed in my area. Upon arrival, they took in the bird, and I could even call and check updates on the patient’s status. It was such an excellent experience, and I’m grateful for places like Pelican Harbor.”*

This experience was so impactful that Bryan is now part of our Volunteer team! You can also become a part of the rescue team by sponsoring a monthly Uber ride for a patient. A \$25 monthly donation will guarantee patients arrive as soon as possible to get the treatment they need!



## Nibbling on Native Fruits

By Nasim Mahomar, Assistant Wildlife Rehabilitator

All species require a healthy ecosystem with the necessary resources to thrive. At PHSS, we are tasked with raising many different species of orphaned wildlife in captivity. During this process, we try to offer the same resources that their parents would provide for them in the wild. It is very important to provide a diversity of food options so that our patients get the right nutrition to develop properly. Examples include wild coffee (*Psychotria nervosa*), sea grapes (*Coccoloba uvifera*), American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), pigeon plums (*Coccoloba diversifolia*), among many others.

This year we have already admitted over 400 Virginia Opossums, most of which were orphans. These opossums were raised with access to some native or locally found food in their diet so that they will know what to forage for after they are released. As a wildlife rehabilitation center, our goal is to make sure our animals will succeed after their time in our clinic and that’s why we go that extra mile to give our patients the best care they can possibly get! You can do your part to help out your backyard wildlife by planting these native species in your yard.



# Make a date with us!

October  
**16**



Sunset Cruise

November  
**18**



November  
**30**



December  
**11**



**PELICAN  
PARTY**

Find details at [PelicanHarbor.org](http://PelicanHarbor.org)



**Pelican Harbor**  
SEABIRD STATION

1279 NE 79th St. Causeway, Miami, FL 33138  
305-751-9840 | [PelicanHarbor.org](http://PelicanHarbor.org)



*Pelican Harbor Seabird Station (PHSS) is dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick, injured or orphaned Brown Pelicans, seabirds, and other native wildlife and the preservation and protection of these species through educational and scientific means.*



Pelican Harbor Seabird Station is located in a Miami-Dade County Park. We are grateful to Miami-Dade County Parks Department for the use of the facility and for our partnership that has allowed us to focus on our mission and the well-being of our patients.