

# WILD AT HEART

Wildlife Center of the North Coast's *Member Newsletter*  
Oct - Dec 2016



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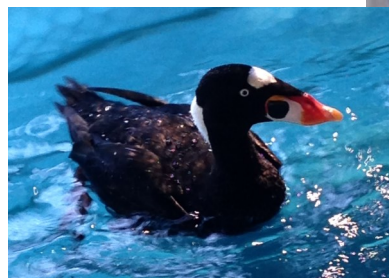
## A Windswept Winter for Grebes and other Seabirds

For most wildlife rehabilitation facilities, Spring and Summer are the busiest seasons—baby songbirds are hopping about, parent birds are caught by cats, baby mammals get separated from their mothers, and more. Here at WCNC, where seabirds are our specialty, Fall marks the beginning of our busiest time of the year. Most seabirds, like other birds, nest and care for their young during Spring and Summer. Fall, however, is when the seabird colonies are migrating from their nest sites to their winter grounds. This is when they run into trouble.

Those of us that live in the Pacific Northwest are all too familiar with the stormy days of Fall and Winter. The wind and waves pick up and birds end up washing onto shore. So, why do the birds end up on the beaches, and why can't they just go back out into the ocean?

Western Grebes, for example, are one of the most common Fall/Winter-time seabirds we see. These birds nest throughout the inland waters of the West, wintering at the coast. Once we see them, they have typically travelled a long way to get here. Many are freshly out of the nest still learning to catch fish on their own, so by the time they get to the coast, they are skinny from exerting so much energy on their migration. The SW winds push them into the break-waters at our beaches, and they go flippers-over-beak onto the sandy beach. They end up disoriented, exhausted from the fight, and their feathers are extremely dirty, which means they are no longer waterproofed and able to float. ("Waterproofing" protects the birds from getting wet—when waterproofed, the feathers keep the birds warm and dry). When we receive these bedraggled little guys, they are malnourished, dehydrated, hypothermic, and soaked to the bone. We warm them up, get them nourishing food, and wash them until waterproofed again. Then out they go, into our filtered pools to prepare them for release back into the wilds.

*As of October, we've seen 11 Western Grebes and expect more to come. Other birds that we see the most during the stormy Winter months are Northern Fulmars (see "Feathered or Furry", page 2), White-winged and Surf Scoters, Common Murres, and the occasional Loon. When beachcombing after a storm, keep your eyes peeled for these beautiful birds in need of our help!*



# NEWS FROM THE NEST WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOSH SARANPAA

I was 16 years old when I first started volunteering here at WCNC. I didn't know a thing about birds (and to be perfectly honest, I was terrified of them). When I first had the opportunity to work alongside Sharnelle, our former director and founder, I was amazed at how much knowledge, courage, and compassion could be packed into such a petite woman. She taught me that there is more to a bird than just a beak and some feathers—each of these animals have individual personalities, and more importantly, each deserves a second chance at life. Sharnelle constantly reminded me that all life deserves to be treated with compassion and respect—everything from the smallest spider (she loved her spiders), up to the largest tree. She encouraged me to become a wildlife rehabilitator, and do my part to mitigate the negative impacts we humans have on these creatures. I aspired to be just like Sharnelle, and she gave me the amazing opportunity of learning everything I could from her in eight-years' time.

We've made it through our first year without Sharnelle at the helm of the Wildlife Center. She had been preparing me to take over for her, but none of us thought it would've happened so fast. I wouldn't have survived this past year without my amazing new staff, our incredibly dedicated volunteers, and you—our Members! I am looking forward to working alongside and growing this organization with you—the Wildlife Center Family.

Thank you for your support!



## FEATHERED OR FURRY?

### FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR WILDLIFE PATIENTS

These beautiful seabirds may look like funny gulls with broken beaks, but they aren't... **Say 'Hello' to the Northern Fulmar!**

Habitat: Northern Pacific and Atlantic Oceans

Size: 15-19 inches long with a wingspan 3 1/2 feet wide

Food: Fish, fish and more fish - yum!

These awesome birds can live up to 50 years and don't start breeding until age 8! Fulmars also come in two color morphs - light (a grey and white combo) and dark (pictured above). If you encounter one, beware, their defense mechanism is projectile vomit... eeew.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### Join us for our 2016 Supporter Open House!

Saturday, November 12 from 12 noon - 4 pm

*We will have refreshments and take small groups on a tour of our facility. This will be an enjoyable afternoon to meet our small/new staff, mingle with friends, and get a behind the scenes look at how we do things, as well as our plans for the future.*

**Please RSVP by Wednesday, Nov 9 by calling (503) 338-0331 or email [members@coastwildlife.org](mailto:members@coastwildlife.org)**

### Gifts That Make a Difference Fair

Saturday, December 10 from 12 noon - 4 pm

McTavish Room at Liberty Theater

*Join area nonprofits for a day of holiday cheer, sign up to volunteer, donate in honor of your favorite family members, and more.*

### A Wild Night for Wildlife - a Benefit Event

Tuesday, December 27 from 4:30 pm - close

Fort George Brewery + Public House

*Good times, great friends, a raffle and 100% of the profits on all food + drinks sold? It's gonna be awesome!*



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

We feel so fortunate to have such an incredible team of volunteers! We literally could not keep our doors open without them. They are a dedicated, hardworking, and sassy group - **we love them dearly.**

In the future, this section of the newsletter will feature our awesome team—one by one, so you can get to know them, share in their delight working with our patients, and why they find this work so fulfilling.

But for now, in this first issue, we'd like to thank them as a whole. Our on-site care team puts in **over 6,000 hours per year**, scrubbing, swimming, and feeding our patients; our animal transport crew drives **hundreds of miles**, rescuing wildlife in need of our help; and our community outreach team shares **hundreds of smiles** with friends, new and old.

## Would you like to volunteer?

WCNC is looking for volunteers to help with patient care at the center and those to join the animal transport network we have set up along the coastline from Newport, OR to Long Beach, WA - especially on the Long Beach Peninsula. Anyone interested in lending a helping hand can email [volunteer@coastwildlife.org](mailto:volunteer@coastwildlife.org) for more information.



## WISH LIST ITEMS

*We update this list as items are in short supply.*

Costco or Home Depot Gift Cards

### Medical Supplies:

Costco Brand Nitrile Exam Gloves  
(mediums are our favorite size)

### Cleaning Supplies:

Clorox Bleach  
Simple Green Concentrate  
Garbage Bags  
High-efficiency Laundry Detergent  
Heavy Duty Scrubbing Sponges  
Heavy Duty Scouring Pads  
Clorox Disinfecting Wipes

### Food Supplies:

*-None at this time-*

### Office Supplies:

Stamps

*\*We currently do not need any towels or sheets for bedding*

## Wildlife Center Staff

Joshua Saranpaa  
*Executive Director*

Lindsey Nicolas  
*Development + Communications*

Christina Vitazko-Merten  
*Wildlife Rehab Technician*

Roger Sansom  
*Facilities Caretaker*

## Board of Directors

Lisa Lewis, DVM  
*President*

Melyssa Graeper  
*Secretary*

Lynette Scribner  
*Treasurer*

Curtiss Clumpner  
Melisa Colvin  
Agnes Waliser

# REMEMBERING SHARNELLE FEE



**Sharnelle will always be missed, but the legacy she left behind lives on in our hearts and in everything we do.**

This past September marked the one year anniversary of our founder's passing. Sharnelle Fee had an incredible passion for helping animals, for conservation, and education; and was a champion for wildlife in need. She founded the wildlife center in 1997 and moved from Portland to the coast, where she set up shop to specialize in seabird rehabilitation.

"I have never met anyone as absolutely dedicated and mission-focused as Sharnelle," says Vicki Bucklin, a longtime volunteer at the center. "She cared for nothing other than what was best for the birds and didn't mind if she offended anyone who didn't agree with her (views). Sharnelle worked side-by-side with the volunteers, never asking them to do anything she hadn't done herself at least a million times," Vicki remembers. "She earned the admiration and respect of those she worked with, and inspired so

many people in our community and beyond." "She was fun – and funny!," says Joshua Saranpaa, current Director of WCNC, with a laugh. "Sharnelle had such a sense of humor. She was also a tireless worker. She'd run circles around everyone every single day, but she loved her volunteers," he adds with a smile, "despite the fact she liked birds more than people."

What started in Sharnelle's small mobile home trailer nearly 20 years ago has grown into a fully functional wildlife hospital including nineteen outdoor enclosures and a variety of pre-release pools. We continue Sharnelle's mission of honoring the dignity of each of our patients, respecting their wildness, and returning them to their natural home as quickly as we can.

From safe, secure kennels inside for those patients needing critical care to long flight aviaries and therapy pools outside, we plan to build upon Sharnelle's dream and become a state of the art wildlife hospital, recovery center, and wildlife-conservation education center. In five years' time, our aim is to be open to the public with an education center onsite dedicated to Sharnelle.

