

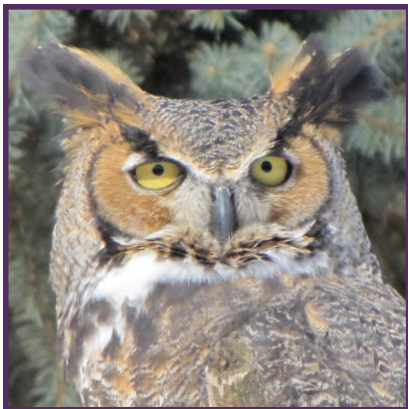
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Winter 2011

Having an Impact



Summer Camp Fun



Great Horned Owl



Our Incredible Staff

Recently, I sent a letter to our 100 plus staff emphasizing the impact they have in the lives of both animals and people and how the Howell Conference & Nature Center plays such an important role in our community. I'd like to share my thoughts with you.

Have you ever been at the grocery store, a restaurant, movie theater, or any other public place and see someone you haven't seen in awhile and they come up and ask, "Where are you working now?" And you answer, "The Howell Nature Center." And they ask, "What do you do there? What is the HNC?" Now the fun begins!

You start out by saying, "Well it's a nature center but it's also a camp and, yes they have high adventure and environmental education and wildlife rehab and a zoo." Well, by this time, you look at them and their eyes have already glazed over and they abruptly say, "Hey nice to see you again," and then quickly walk away. I know it happens; it's happened to me many times.

What we do cannot be summed up in a few words, but our impact is simple. It's true we do not fix cars, deliver mail, sell washing machines, or wait tables. We are in the business of "changing lives" and making a difference. Whether it is working with an at-risk group in the high ropes, doing low ropes with ARM, leading bible study for summer camp, bandaging a broken wing, leading a group through Wild Wonders, cooking food for a school group, on an offsite, teaching EE, or simply talking to someone on the phone about a baby

rabbit, we are having a positive impact on an individual life whether it has four legs or two or if it flies or crawls.

This impact comes in different forms. Sometimes it comes in teaching values of how important a life is or building self-confidence or gaining the strength to fly. It could be how to live more harmoniously with each other or with nature and perhaps teaching a new skill set. Sometimes it's a decision to follow Christ or to just give people the proper information to save a baby bird. It comes in small and large packages, with both short and long term results. At times we are just the link in the chain and other times the true catalyst.

Have you ever stopped to think in any given year how many lives, whether animal or human, we impact? Then using the degrees or the Kevin Bacon theory, think how many lives are impacted by those who leave here! The results can be amazing! My guess would be in the tens of thousands!

So you see the answer is easy! The next time someone asks you what you do simply say, "I am in the business of changing lives, and making a difference one life at a time."

I wrote this to illustrate the importance of who we are and the impact we can have in saving lives, changing values, teaching proper stewardship of wildlife, while building character and integrity and faith.

Richard Grant, Executive Director



Happy Holidays

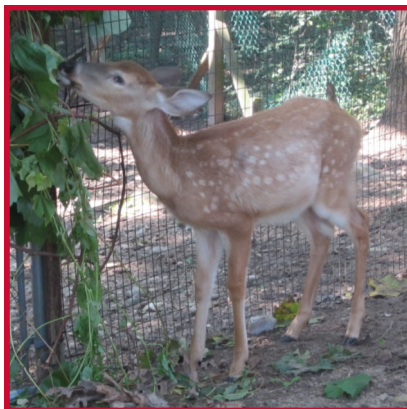
It has been a very busy year in the Wild Wonders Wildlife Park and we're not finished. If you haven't been out recently you will be in for a big surprise. As we continue to improve our facilities to become a family day-use destination, our front entrance has a whole new look. In July the dusty parking lot was replaced by a beautiful courtyard of gardens and a 30 foot whimsical tree sculpture donated by local artist Michael Monroe. Adjacent to the new courtyard is the new Nature Zone, a magical space for children to play, create and explore backyard nature and features turtles and flying squirrels.

We also have some new friends for you to meet in Wild Wonders. Last spring we acquired a highly endangered Short-eared Owl found with a clavicle fracture at Detroit Metro Airport. We added a beautiful Great Egret to the Wetland Habitat and finally, you'll want to come out soon to meet Odie, the adorable White-tailed fawn, before he gets any bigger. This little fawn was kept by a woman in her bathroom for 8 weeks last summer and has unfortunately now lost his fear of humans. He has captured the hearts of staff and guests alike.

Winter is a wonderful time to visit your wild friends at the Howell Nature Center, shop for your Christmas tree, take a quiet stroll through the woods or attend one of our fun winter events.....join us!

Wishing you and your family a blessed New Year,

Dana DeBenham
Director



Odie



News From the Wildlife Infirmary

By Maxine Biber—Wildlife Infirmary Manager

The summer, as usual, passed in a blur of animal emergencies, chirping songbirds, and ringing phones. We spent long days taking care of injured animals, and we raised small armies of ducklings, songbirds, squirrels and cottontails. Most of those animals have been released, and the last of the squirrels and opossums are growing up. Now, in the fall, we worry about the birds that might miss their migration – the Sandhill Crane, the Turkey Vulture, and the Great Egret that are still healing from their injuries.

Looking back, a few images stand out in my mind. A young Eastern Phoebe flying up into a tall tree, and surveying the world from a high perch for the first time; an American Bittern shooting out of a carrier and then slowly stalking up a slanted cattail to blend into its surroundings; a fawn trotting across a grassy clearing in the morning sun.

Those moments are built on top of many hours of work, worry, and trying to make the best decisions for the animals. The small fledgling Phoebe was a challenge, and it took dedicated care and ingenuity to get the picky youngster to eat and grow, until we could feel confident about letting it go. The American Bittern was huddled in a post office parking lot in Flint, where it had proba-

bly hit a window on its way south. Its injuries were superficial, and we found a large marsh from which it would hopefully be able to continue its migration. The fawn was found lying in the road next to its dead mother. Its rescuers were concerned about the fawn's inability to stand – it had two broken front legs. The next four weeks saw the young doe with a matching pair of leg splints; eight weeks later she was trotting across the enclosure with the other fawns. It is one of my best memories.

On its way out of the carrier, the Bittern took a swipe at my finger, and has left me with a thin scar from its razor-edged beak. That's a good memory also. I continue to feel honored and privileged to meet these animals, as do most of us who work in the infirmary.



American Bittern



This holiday season, let the spirit of giving make a difference to wildlife through a gift to the Howell Conference & Nature Center.

Print Name(s) _____
 Business Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Check enclosed *Payable to Howell Conference & Nature Center*

Please charge my credit card:

Visa MasterCard

Account number _____

Expiration date _____ Security code (3 digits from back of card) _____

Signature _____

Name on card _____

Return this form to:

Howell Conference & Nature Center — 1005 Triangle Lake Road, Howell, MI 48843



Winter Special Events at the HCNC

Call (517) 546-0249 to register for these events.

Christmas Tree Sales

Huge selection of fresh-cut Fraser, Douglas, and Concolor Fir. Poinsettias, wreaths, and roping are also available. Featuring Michigan Snowfresh Trees! Tree shaking and wrapping available. Wildlife display and refreshments on weekends.

Sales begin Friday, November 25 and continue daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Hayride with Santa

Enjoy a delightful hayride with Santa, sing holiday songs, and warm up with hot chocolate and cookies.

December 2, 3, 9, & 10; Fridays 6, 7, & 8 p.m. — Saturdays 5, 6, 7, & 8 p.m.

\$8 adults, \$6 kids, Under 2 free

Reservations required.

Breakfast with Santa

Join us for a delicious pancake breakfast with all the trimmings. Santa will visit with children and provide a special gift for each child.

December 10 & 11; 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

\$8 adults, \$6 kids, Under 2 free

Reservations required.

Camp Frosty

Keep your children busy during the holiday break! Nature activities, crafts, games, wildlife park tours, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, sledding, and more! Kindergarten—5th grade.

December 22, 23, 27 & 28; 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

\$33 per day, per child

Reservations and prepayment required.

Photography Workshops

Photograph birds of prey and mammals in a beautiful natural setting. Led by well-known wildlife photographer, Steve Gettle, each session includes a presentation by Steve, lunch, and several hours of outdoor photography time. All skill levels welcome, but please have working knowledge of your equipment. Dress for the weather!

January 21 & 22; 11:00 a.m.

\$55 per session for HCNC members; \$60 non-members

Reservations required.

Groundhog Day Celebration

Celebrate Groundhog Day with Michigan's Official Woodchuck, Woody! After the prediction, enjoy a complimentary continental breakfast.

February 2; 8:15 a.m. prediction

No charge!

Owl Nights

Come out and enjoy a live owl show and take an evening walk calling in owls. Hot chocolate and cookies are served. Recommended for kindergarten age and up.

February 10 & 11; 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

\$7 adults, \$5 kids

Reservations required.

Scenes from Summer Camp





**Howell Conference
& Nature Center**

1005 Triangle Lake Road • Howell, MI 48843
(517) 546-0249 • howellnaturecenter.org

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The mission of the Howell Conference & Nature Center is to promote awareness of all God's creation while providing for physical, mental, and spiritual healing and growth.



"A Wild Wonderful Night" A Big Success

On October 27, the Howell Conference & Nature Center hosted the 8th Annual "A Wild Wonderful Night" at the Johnson Center at Cleary University. Nearly 300 attendees spent the evening sampling food from 13 local restaurants, bidding on live and silent auction items, enjoying live jazz music, and supporting the Nature Center.

At the end of the night, nearly \$45,000 was raised to support the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Programs at the Nature Center. Pi's Asian Cuisine of Brighton won the Kili Award for best food and overall presentation.



Give a Wild Gift this Holiday Season

This holiday season, the Howell Conference & Nature Center is again offering our popular Adopt-An-Animal opportunity. For \$65 you will receive the individual story of one of our wildlife ambassadors, species information, a 5x7 photo, an adoption certificate, and a plush stuffed animal of your ambassador.

You may adopt our Great Horned Owl, Virginia Opossum, Snowy Owl, Flying Squirrel, Porcupine, or Bald Eagle. The proceeds from your Animal Adoption will help provide x-rays, surgeries, antibiotics, caging, and food for the 2,300 animals brought in to our care each year.

What a wonderful gift for the animal-lover in your life this holiday season! Call 517-546-0977 to adopt an animal today!