



**“Busy” Times at the PWC Center**  
*by Marcelle Bakula*

Another "baby season" has arrived at the Rehabilitation Center! How do I know? Well, the phone rings more often (I usually arrive early before my Sunday closing shift to input Membership information) and I think the phone rang 5-6 times in the first hour I was there this past week; the isolation room and seabird room are filled with carriers on every available surface; it takes longer to get every animal fed and medicated and therefore the staff and volunteers don't get to leave at 6:00 PM closing time; and I observe that our beloved Director looks a little "sleepy" by the end of the day.

I check in with Debbie Buckheim and ask how many baby birds she's caring for: oh my, I hear: over 20! How does she do it? And I see Kathy Duncan with three teeny, pink baby opossums that need to be hand fed formula and hear about how many animals she has to feed when she gets home...How does she do it?!



Nestling songbirds



California quail

Next, I meet a visitor from the Bay Area visiting his dad in Paso Robles and he's just saved a cat-caught bird from a neighbor who thought killing it with a brick was a solution. He drove to Morro Bay and joined PWC on the spot! And then, there are the callers who want to know if the bird they brought in (that hit their car as they drove along, or saved from a neighbor's cat) had "made it" or not. Rosemary Slater calls to give me the good news I was hoping to hear: the early Sunday AM caller who was convinced that the two darling fawns in her front yard had been abandoned by their mom for two or three days, listened to our explanation of "normal" deer behavior and sure enough: Mom did come and take care of her little darlings!



But, at the same time we may *feel* "tired", there is something very exciting in being this busy.

It's not just about "being" busy: it's the variety of the animals arriving, it's the opportunities to learn something new; the opportunities for the public to become animal rescuers and for the phone volunteers to educate the public about why not to bring the cute fawn inside. It's the baby opossums who have now grown big enough to release. It's finding the nest that the red-tail hawk nestling came from and getting it put back; it's a chance for Claudia Duckworth to train several of "us" to creance (fly a "tethered" raptor so it can build-up wing-strength after being in captivity) and, it's the emails from other rehab groups in California looking for "buddies" for a single rabbit or baby squirrel and finding out that that they are going through the same exhaustion we are!

In a few months, things will settle down and some delayed chores around the Center will get completed and maybe even some volunteers will feel a little "bored" with the slower pace of late fall & winter, but it's the "resting time" before it all starts again next spring!

Thanks to all of you who "survived" another "baby season"!



Baby Opossums



Red Tailed Hawk Fledgling



Cat-Caught Mourning Dove

