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## From Fragile to Flight: Your Help Can Lift Baby Birds!

Spring brings the promise of new life for wild birds, and at Wild Nest, spring also floods our hotline and fills our facility with tiny, hungry mouths needing our help to survive and return to the wild. Last year, Wild Nest cared for nearly 1,000 baby birds —hatchlings, nestlings, and fledglings—many orphaned when their homes or parents were lost to untimely tree cutting, pets, window collisions, glue traps, and a number of other threats. Beyond that, our volunteers educated thousands of callers and community members about ways they can help birds and reduce threats in their communities.

Thanks to Wild Nest Supporters like YOU, those birds got a second chance at life. At a time when bird populations are facing steep declines, every survivor matters. And to ***a 100% volunteer-led organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of Georgia's wild birds and educating the public about their conservation***, every dollar, and every volunteer hour, matters.

During baby season we take in an average of seven patients per day and care for over 100 patients at a time, the majority of them babies. On average, we spend

roughly 40 days raising, weaning, and preparing a bird for release at a cost of \$40-\$100 per baby, depending on the species and age at intake. Our team of nearly 200 volunteers provides hands-on care for 12 hours a day, every day of the week during baby season from March to October.

## Your financial support goes directly toward bird care!

| Donation Amount | Item Description   |
|-----------------|--|
| \$10            | Purchases a small soft-sided habitat   |
| \$25            | Purchases 500 live crickets to enable fledglings to practice hunting skills            |
| \$35            | Purchases a month's supply of earthworms for two Brown Thrashers, Georgia's state bird |
| \$50            | Funds the nursery for a day  |
| \$200           | Purchases formula for a clutch of baby birds until they wean and become self-feeding   |
| \$350           | Funds the nursery for a week*  |

\*Donors at the \$350 level and above will be recognized in our next newsletter.

Your support provides the resources we need to further our mission to save Georgia's wild birds and educate the public about their conservation. [CLICK HERE to make a one-time or monthly donation using the yellow DONATE button on our website.](#)

**Thank you for caring about Georgia's birds. We are grateful that you are a part of our flock.**



## **Wild Nest Receives Georgia Ornithological Society Grant**

Wild Nest was recently awarded a Bill Terrell Avian Conservation Grant from the Georgia Ornithological Society (GOS) to purchase a handheld X-ray machine and accompanying equipment and protective gear to improve the quality of care for our injured bird patients. With approximately 1,500 bird intakes each year, we see a wide range of species and injuries, from herons tangled in fishing line to hummingbirds injured in window collisions. In 2023 we treated 383 adult birds—80 different species—including migratory birds referred through Birds Georgia’s Project Safe Flight program. Many of the victims we treat are species of concern, experiencing steep population declines in recent decades, including Chimney Swifts, Wood Thrushes, and Chuck-will’s-widows.

When a bird is admitted to the Wild Nest clinic, internal injuries, particularly from window strikes and other collisions, are sometimes not obvious with a physical exam. An X-ray machine will significantly improve our ability to diagnose and treat patients as they are a valuable tool for finding fractures, dislocations, foreign bodies, joint damage, organ displacement, and sometimes disease processes. This technology will enable us to perform triage and treatment more quickly and precisely. According to Nancy Eilen, Wild Nest’s founder, the X-ray machine will be a “game changer.”

Not only will an X-ray machine increase the efficacy and quality of care for

patients at Wild Nest, it will also enable our husbandry committee to collect data on the impact of window strikes, cats, and other sources of bird death and disability in Georgia. Wild Nest's operations manager, Jennifer Gilmer, notes that "data on injuries and outcomes will be shared with partners, including GOS and BirdsGeorgia, as well as be used by student interns on research projects. We hope that the use of this technology will provide important insights to inform conservation and education efforts for birds."

We plan to install the X-ray machine and start training our bird care supervisors soon. We hope the technology will be fully operational by this summer and in time for fall migration, when we treat the highest number of patients injured in window collisions.



An X-ray will improve our ability to diagnose and treat injuries for patients like this Chuck-will's-widow, injured in a window collision.

## **Second Life Supports Georgia's Birds**

Wild Nest Bird Rehab was thrilled to receive a grant from [Second Life](#) to support our mission to rehabilitate Georgia's wild birds and return them to the wild. An Atlanta-

based 501C(3) non-profit founded in 2011, Second Life operates an upscale thrift store and online store that raise funds to benefit animal rescue organizations.

Wild Nest was delighted to host Second Life's founders Tanya Mahrous and Toby Tobias for a tour of Wild Nest this spring. They got to see feeding time for the first orphaned nestling songbirds of the season, as well as several recovering adults in care, including a talkative mockingbird in the aviary. Tanya and Toby noted that they really didn't know a lot about birds and that Wild Nest is the first grant recipient whose work focuses on wild birds rather than rescued cats and dogs. We are so honored!

In 2018, Second Life reached their goal of donating \$1 million to animal charities, and they are well on their way to raising \$2 million. Animal lovers who want to support their community-based work can help by donating, shopping, volunteering, and spreading the word about their stores. Check out their 5,000+ square foot store in Avondale Estates or consider donating gently-used clothing and household items. Thank you, Second Life, for your support!





Wild Nest founder Nancy Eilen (right) gives Tanya Mahrous and Toby Tobias, Second Life founders, a tour of Wild Nest.

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