



# Twin Harbors Newsletter

## *Call of the Wild*

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Published and distributed by the Twin Harbors Wildlife Center (THWC). We rehabilitate injured, orphaned, sick, and displaced wildlife to give them a second chance at life by returning them "Back to the wild".

Each issue details up-coming events, wildlife/habitat information, as well as ways to help us meet our mission.

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### **Volunteer Orientation & Training Dates**

All orientations and trainings take place Saturdays on the following dates:

Feb. 25; March 18, April 15, May 13, June 24, July 22, August 19, and Sept. 16.

Orientation at 11:00 am

Training at 1:00 pm

### **Welcome to Twin Harbors Wildlife Center!**

**By Dr. Corrie Hines**

Our rehabilitation center was officially established in 2019 by Dr. Sonnya Wilkins and Dr. Corrie Hines. Dr. Sonnya has been rehabilitating wildlife for over 10 years; she began by being the veterinarian of record for another rehabilitator. She saw how many animals needed help, and became permitted by the state so she could provide more extensive care for the regional wildlife that was brought to her. Dr. Corrie has been involved in wildlife rehabilitation since 1997, starting by volunteering then becoming permitted as a rehabilitator with a large center in Lynnwood, WA.

We started in one small building (the old wildlife center). We have now made that room an isolation ward for possible avian flu patients, and have moved the small mammal room to the building next door. We are excited that we will have more room, and running hot and cold water and a sink this year! We also have the Annex, which is for injured adult mammals and raptors. We were also able to add the flight pen and a mews (see another article in this newsletter for more information)!

Since we are a newer, smaller center, there are certain species we cannot rehabilitate yet, although we can definitely triage and transfer to a larger center when needed. We are growing, though, and hope to be able to rehabilitate more species within the next 5-10 years.

If you are interested in helping us as a volunteer, please contact us! Dr. Corrie has orientations and trainings scheduled (listed to the left), and she would love to add you to our volunteer team!

## Know Your Cat

### Deb Campbell



Cats ...those kneading, cuddling, purring friends that so many of us humans enjoy as companions. Cats are the members of the Felidae family. These

family members are well equipped, agile and fast predators. This predatory nature is in all domestic cats, as well as their wild "cousins".

In our natural environment the domestic cat is an invasive species. When outside prowling, they are just doing what they inherently are meant to do. Cat attacks have significantly altered the ecosystem, with predation on small mammals and most commonly birds. Much of the wildlife brought into our center for care are a direct result of a cat attacks.

Don't take this wrong. We love our kitties!

So, what can we do to diminish domestic cat and wildlife confrontations?

1. Keep your cat inside.
2. Create a Catio for your feline friend to get outside. (What is a catio? See the link at the end of this article.)
3. Use a collar with a bell.
4. Leash train your kitty to go on cat walks.

Keeping your cat inside in areas where coyotes live, also protects your kitty from becoming prey.

We adore cats, we are passionate about keeping EVERYONE safe as possible and living their best lives.

Catio's are outdoor enclosed areas for cats. Check out the link below for some do-it-yourself ideas.

<https://catiospaces.com/catios-cat-enclosures/cat-behavior-enrichment/build-diy-catio-plan-for-your-cat/>

## Meet the winner of Twin Harbors Wildlife Center's Logo Contest

By Deb Campbell



The response to the logo contest was overwhelmingly received. So many wonderful entries came

in. But, Greyson's entry caught everyone's eye. Simple, clear, and represented Twin Harbors Wildlife Center well.

Greyson hails from Rhode Island where he attends a Technical Center that teaches through real world experience. His interest are in art and graphic design.

Greyson was inspired by the wildlife which are native to the Grays Harbor area and the patients that THWC cares fore.

We are grateful for Greyson's vision and will display this logo proudly.

**Congratulations Greyson!**

## Backyard Wildlife Habitat Enhancement In the Twin Harbor Area

By: Raeann Edwards

Regardless of where we live we encroach on wildlife habitat. Although this can, at times, lead to annoying and even costly or dangerous outcomes, there are things that we can do to encourage positive interactions for all critters involved. "Backyard" habitat enhancement can provide our displaced, wild neighbors a safe haven and provide us an opportunity for entertainment and education. This article will address winter habitat enhancement ideas for local Twin Harbor backyards.

Wildlife habitat consists of four basic components: food, water, shelter, and space to raise young. Providing some or all of these elements in your backyard will benefit wildlife and promote positive interactions.

Regardless of the size of the space you have to work with there are ways to support wildlife in the winter.

When we think of attracting and providing for our wild neighbors, of course food tends to be foremost in our thoughts. Whenever possible plants provide the best food sources, even during the winter months. Plants that produce seeds, nuts, and fruits and berries year-round or late into

the fall and winter are ideal choices. Some native plants with these characteristics include serviceberry, red osier dogwood, Oregon ash, red twig dogwood, beaked hazelnut, viburnum, Oregon grape, Nootka rose, Sitka mountain ash, kinnikinnick, bitter cherry, red current, cascara, Pacific yew, and Pacific wax myrtle. Additional food benefits of these plants are that they also attract insects which provides another food source, and they provide browsing and foraging opportunities to many mammals. Including a variety of native plants in your landscapes is an ideal way to enhance a backyard habitat.

Gardens are another great way to provide winter food sources if you hold off on trimming and



Image: Getty

removing garden waste.

Leaving the dried flower heads, stems and roots provides great forage for many critters during the winter months. Waiting until late spring to "clean up" the garden ensures that seeds, berries, and insects are available through the winter.

If you don't have the room or resources to provide a garden or a variety of native plants for your winter visitors, other enhancement opportunities exist. Feeders are a good way to supplement winter food sources and can be stocked with seeds, nuts, berries, suet cakes, or pollen. Feeders can be as simple as a cone or paper roll covered with peanut butter and seeds, (continued on Page 4)

or a dish filled with nuts and berries. For more fun and easy feeder ideas, check out the websites listed at the end of this article.

Gardens and other backyard areas can also provide excellent shelter. Leaving yard clippings, leaves, and woody debris in layers and piles will give birds and small mammals protective spaces and foraging areas. Wood piles also make great shelter. Leave wide spacing and criss-cross patterns to be used by a variety of both birds and mammals. Hold off trimming trees, shrubs and hedges until the spring and leave fallen dead trees. All of these create valuable shelter. Additionally, this leftover debris and vegetation will provide birds and small mammals with nest building materials come spring.

Again, if you don't have the space, or lack ample natural vegetation, bird houses are great shelters for many small animals and birds. These can be easily created from a variety of recycled materials, keeping down costs. Bird houses also have the added benefit of keeping rodents and birds from taking up shelter in places that you don't want them, such as rafters, vehicles, and outside furniture cushions.

No matter the size of your "backyard" there are ample opportunities to share it with wildlife. Following some of the ideas provided in this article will help many wild critters during the winter and beyond. If you are really serious about backyard wildlife enhancement, The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife have a "Habitat at Home" program and will even provide a certification sign. Information on that

program can be found at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/habitat-at-home>

For even more backyard habitat enhancement ideas and information, check out these websites:

<https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities>

<https://gardenforwildlife.com/>

<https://thehomeschoolscientist.com/easy-to-make-bird-feeders/>

<https://www.familyhandyman.com/list/14-easy-diy-winter-bird-feeders/>

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## Single Use Plastics ... Forever!

By: Karen Huff

It's everywhere. It seemed like such a good idea, until it didn't anymore. If your shampoo bottle is made out of plastic, it won't break if you drop it in the shower and you won't be standing on one foot yelping while you try to pull out that shard of glass in the other foot while getting blood all over.....your soda, likewise, isn't gonna break, you don't have to remember to take those bottles back to get your deposit refunded. Plastic packaging is lighter, it costs less to ship. It's strong. Your plastic grocery bag is easy to carry and it doesn't get wet. Better living in the modern world.

But then, these nagging questions start coming up. Did someone say those plastic water bottles leach into your drink when exposed to UV? What is the extent of the biological damage? Why is it showing up in mother's milk? How is it affecting the creatures we share the earth with?

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Most plastic bags end up in landfills, if they don't just blow away and end up as litter first. But we can recycle them, right? Like we do with the bottles? Fifty percent of the plastic that has ever been produced has been produced in the last twenty years. According to EPA figures, only nine percent gets recycled. That is not much. If I toss a cardboard berry basket out my window, it turns into dirt in a few months. If I carelessly drop my glass bottle on the beach, its pieces will polish into sea glass and eventually break down to the sand it came from. Not so with any of the plastic containers. Yet it is so difficult to avoid them. Carrots come in plastic bags. Carrots don't need bags. Berries and cherry tomatoes come in plastic containers. Bags in the produce department are plastic and don't need to be. Your tap water, at least in most places, is just fine.

We have all seen the news about the Pacific Garbage Patch, the heartbreaking photos in National Geographic of an albatross, dead because there was so much plastic in her stomach, she starved. We've seen it with marine mammals and seen heartbreaking entanglements as well. We know there are dead zones, where life thrived not long ago, because there is enough pollution to deplete the oxygen content of the water. What we don't see are the microplastics that have broken down from bags, bottles containers, cigarette filters, microfibers in clothes, microbeads from cosmetics, etc. Anything that ends up on land will eventually end up in a waterway, then in the ocean. If it ends up in the ocean, you don't have to be a fish to be in peril, because we live on a planet with a water cycle. Evaporation happens,

then condensation, then rain or snow. It comes back to us. We may not swallow the yogurt container, but we eat food grown with water, we eat fish, we breathe moist air.

The Stanford Hopkins Marine Station of the Pacific released a study on data compiled by Matthew Savoca from 2010-2019 on plastics concentration 750 ft down, among cetaceans; 126 blue whales, 65 humpbacks and 29 fin whales. Blues ingested approximately 10 million pieces of plastic daily; fins, the smallest, ingested 6 million.

Let's move to land. An Environmental Science and Technology Institute report in 2019, (Coxi, Covington, Davies, Dower, Juanes and Dudas) showed that microplastics ingested in the American diet showed an average ingestion of between 39,000 and 52,000 particles of microplastics per day, depending on age and sex. It went up to 90,000 if the subject got all their water from plastic bottles. If you include the particles from inhalation (yep, just breathing), the numbers rise to between 74,000 and 121,000 particles per day. We don't yet know all the implications for human health; research is in progress.

We do know enough to know that plastics pollution, both in production and disposal, is a major factor in threatening the health of our oceans and our planet. We need to change what we choose to buy, we need to let companies know we care, and we need to pressure elected officials to base legislation on actually protecting the increasingly fragile ecosystem we are all a part of.

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## New flight pen and mews allow full-service raptor care!

By: Dr. Corrie Hines

Driving past the wildlife center, you may have noticed the vaguely round, tall structure on the property - and just this past month or so, you may have seen a "room" attached to it. What you are seeing is the flight pen (the round structure) and an attached mews.

A year or two ago, we received a grant from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for \$60,000 for the flight pen; we also received many donations from private community members and companies. This pen is a very large enclosure in which large birds of prey (hawks, eagles, etc.) can build flight muscles, acclimate to outdoor conditions, and increase strength prior to release. Until we had this cage, we had to transfer our raptors to larger centers for flight time. Fortunately, we have strong relationships with the larger centers, and they were able to house our raptors until they were ready for release; then the birds would be transferred back to us so they could be released in the areas in which they were found.



In late October/early November of 2022, we received a grant from Partners for Wildlife for \$15,000 for the mews. Mews are smaller outdoor enclosures that are big enough to allow large raptors to stretch their wings and flap a bit without flying longer distances. This building is the middle step in rehabilitation; when a raptor first arrives, they are housed in the Annex while they heal from whatever injury or illness brought them to us. Once they are healed but not quite ready for full flight, they will be housed in the mews to start to gain strength. When they are ready for full flight, then the connecting door between the mews and the flight pen will be opened and they can have the room to really fly and regain all of their strength and mobility.

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### Special links ...

**Link for helping injured wildlife:** <https://www.wrawildlife.org/injured-wildlife-help>

**Link for CE for raptors:** <https://www.umn.edu/training-opportunities/raptor-academy>

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## What animals make nests in car engines?

It's odd, but to a wild animal (and even some domestics), the warmth of a car engine just minutes after you've parked it can be very inviting. **Cats, rats, raccoons, and squirrels** have been known to climb into engine compartments and set up a home in that tight, forbidding space. What should or should not do? Check this website for good ideas to keep animals out of engine and what you should do before starting your car.

<https://mastservicecenter.net/how-to-keep-animals-from-invading-your-engine-compartment/>



<https://twinharborswildlife.org/>

## As we get closer to the start of the new baby season ...

We have started to gather the supplies that we will need to help the wildlife. If you have been looking for a way to help the wildlife and weren't sure how to help, we have updated our Amazon wish list to reflect what we are looking for. Use this QR code or click on this link to take you directly to our Amazon site.



[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3VIPMHCSFBWSW?ref\\_=wl\\_share&fbclid=IwAR0buJERaONKsRISApMYI3hwdJtKGrM2EOwr\\_gCU6IJwR0JDkHpVs goDqUM](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3VIPMHCSFBWSW?ref_=wl_share&fbclid=IwAR0buJERaONKsRISApMYI3hwdJtKGrM2EOwr_gCU6IJwR0JDkHpVs goDqUM)

## Board Members:

- Dr. Sonnya Wilkins, President
- Dr. Corrie Hines, Vice President
- Lauri Leirdahl, Secretary
- Jeff Lewis, Treasurer
- Talia Bailey
- Debbie Campbell

## Interns:

Amy Bledsoe and Karla Kershaw

## Contact Information

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