

Wildlife Investigations Laboratory



Wildlife Rehabilitation
2009 Annual Report
California Department of Fish and Game

Submitted by:
Nicole Carion
Associate Wildlife Biologist
Wildlife Investigations Lab
December 2010

As a condition of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Wildlife Rehabilitation permittees are required to provide an "End of the

Year Annual Report” to notify the Department regarding the species, number and final disposition of wildlife received.

The End of the Year Annual Report includes reporting the disposition of animals handled in the following categories: Total number of species received, total number transferred, total number pending (still being evaluated), total number released, total number expired, and total number euthanized. The reports are sent to and kept by the state wildlife rehabilitation coordinator. This report summarizes the results of 2009 wildlife rehabilitation activities (numbers are approximate).

In the year 2009, one hundred and six (106) permitted California wildlife rehabilitation facilities received 79,007 sick, injured or orphaned wild animals from the general public. As in previous years, the majority of wildlife species brought to facilities were birds. In 2009, a total of 58,509 birds were received, 20,223 mammals and 275 reptiles. Birds represent 74 percent of the animals received, mammals represent 25 percent and reptiles represent < 1 percent of the animals received. See Table 1.

Species	Total	Percentage
Birds	58,509	74%
Mammals	20,223	25%
Reptiles	275	<1%

Table 1. Summary % of Types of Terrestrial Species Received (2009)

The most common mammal brought into rehabilitation facilities in 2009 was the non-native Virginia Opossum, *Didelphis virginiana* (7,391). The majority of the opossums turned in from the public were from urban areas around the San Francisco Bay Area and the Los Angeles/ San Diego area. The most common bird turned into rehabilitation facilities was the Mallard Duck *Anas platyrhynchos* (7,000) also commonly from urban areas. Other animals frequently turned into rehabilitation facilities in 2009, include House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus* (4,789), Mourning Doves *Zenaida macroura* (3,300), Raccoons *Procyon lotor* (1,832), Eastern Gray Squirrels *Sciurus carolinensis* (1,134) and Eastern Fox Squirrels *Sciurus niger* (999). Over 300 different species of birds and over 50 different species of mammals were turned into rehabilitation facilities.

Eighty four birds that are classified as State and/or Federally Threatened or Endangered Species were turned into rehabilitation centers in 2009. These species included 11 Bald Eagles *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, 38 Swainson’s Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*, 4 Spotted Owls *Strix occidentalis*, 10 Snowy Plovers *Charadrius alexandrinus*, 2 California Clapper Rails *Rallus longirostris*, 3 Black Clapper Rails *Laterallus jamaicensis*, 10 Least Turns *Sterna antillarum*, 6 Bank Swallows *Riparia riparia*, 1 Bell’s Vireo *Vireo bellii*.

Animals classified as “Big Game” species in the Fish and Game Code are not allowed to be possessed by wildlife rehabilitators; however, the Department does allow orphaned fawns and bear cubs to be rehabilitated and released under conditions provided in the Wildlife Rehabilitation Memorandum of Understanding.

A total of approximately 537 deer fawns were turned into rehabilitation facilities in 2009. The Wildlife Rehabilitation MOU states all fawns must be rehabilitated only with other fawns from the same deer herd. There are approximately 81 deer herds identified by the Department in California. Each facility has a map of the deer herds and must seek approval if a single fawn from another herd is placed in a neighboring/different herd. Protocol requires a quarantine period before placing new fawns in with other fawns. Fawns raised with other fawns are less likely to become imprinted and therefore every effort is made to try to incorporate single fawns into a group.

The data collected from “2009 End of the Year Reports” was totaled by each Department Region and reports are available for each Region. This will enable any person interested in wildlife rehabilitation data to see how the different Regions of California compare to with respect to species and numbers.

The table below shows the total number of wildlife species received by rehabilitation facilities since the Department started compiling the data in 2004.

Year	Total Number Animals Received
2004	83,000
2005	75,696
2006	69,153
2007	68,437
2008	70,233
2009	79,007

Table 3. Previous Year End totals compared to 2009 Totals

Nine black bear cubs were deemed rehabilitation candidates in 2009. Four were from Southern California, specifically, two from Duarte (sow shot by member of the public) and two from Bradbury (orphaned for reasons unknown). The cubs from Southern California were rehabilitated at Southwest Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education in Scottsdale, Arizona. Two cubs were from Carnelian Bay on Lake Tahoe (sow shot by member of the public). The two cubs from Carnelian Bay were sent to Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care. Three cubs from Yosemite National Park were transferred to Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care by the National Park Service. The three cubs from Yosemite were siblings from one sow who was humanely euthanized because she was deemed a public safety threat.

The two cubs from Carnelian Bay were released February 4, 2010, (all cubs are released within 70 miles from where they originated) in a manmade bear den (also referred to as a winter release). Ear tag transmitters were placed on the cubs. During telemetry flights on March 15, 2010, and April 8, 2010 both cubs' transmitters were functioning as "active". On September 20, 2010 one of the cubs' transmitters was heard functioning as "active".

The four cubs from southern California were released but were not given ear tag transmitters. All cubs are given ear tags (either plastic or metal) with a reference number. One of the cubs was later shot by a member of the public while coming through a dog door in a cabin. No other information regarding the other three is known.

The three cubs from Yosemite National Park were also released. No further data provided.

All VHF ear tag transmitters are mostly monitored by a specially equipped department airplane. The transmission can be picked up by the plane via telemetry equipment from approximately a 1-5 mile radius if there are no obstructions. Transmitter verification comes from monitoring a signal emitted frequency from the VHF ear tag and most of the time is not visually confirmed. Note: the battery life is approximately 12 months.