

NEW MEXICO WILDLIFE CENTER

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

A Golden Eagle's Healing Journey

Golden Eagle patient 25-1011 signifies a collaborative success for our hospital team and Hawks Aloft, Inc (HAI). In mid-August 2025, Darrell and Michelle Frazier found a Golden Eagle that was unable to fly in their hay field in Thoreau, NM. The eagle was so weak that they were able to grab the injured bird and transport him to HAI. No fractures or wounds were found and treatment for dehydration and shock was initiated immediately, focusing on fluid replacement and gavage feeding a high protein, easily digested diet.

After 2.5 months in care at HAI, the eagle was eating solid food. However, he needed more space for pre-release conditioning. HAI transferred the bird to NMWC on November 1 where **he would spend another 2.5 months rebuilding muscle.** The eagle was moved to our 100-foot pre-release flight enclosure and began daily physical therapy.



Dr. Kariana Atkinson with HAI holds the Golden Eagle while an assistant feeds him

"It is always a pleasure to partner with New Mexico Wildlife Center in rehabilitation. Working together is the best of all possible options for recovering birds."

—Gail Garber, Executive Director, Hawks Aloft, Inc.

(Continued on p. 2)

Upcoming Events

Spring Into Summer FREE: Sat, May 23
Wild About Wildlife: Sat, July 18
Volunteer Orientation: Sun, May 3

Caring Kids Learn Empathy for Animals



Beth Thompson presents to Caring Kids

Caring Kids Wings and Paws is an educational program collaboration between New Mexico Wildlife Center and the Santa Fe Animal Shelter (SFAS). Young people learn **responsibility, compassion, safety, and environmental awareness** to encourage healthy connections with both companion animals and wildlife. Since 2018, this program has been provided for free to fourth grade classes in Santa Fe and the surrounding area.

Educators from both **NMWC and SFAS bring live animals to classrooms.** NMWC focuses on the causes and prevention of injury to wildlife, the steps to take if there is wildlife in distress, and what happens after an animal comes to NMWC's rehabilitation hospital.

Students are evaluated on their understanding of animal emotions, behavior, safety, and adaptation, as well as human treatment of animals and wild animal habitats. After graduating as Caring Kids, students have a better understanding of how they can make a difference in the lives of

(Continued on p. 2)

(Eagle Journey, cont'd.)

NMWC Rehabilitator Lizz Kendall explains what that entailed, "Hospital staff and interns would stimulate him to fly as far as he could and slowly increase the distance. **At first the eagle wasn't able to complete more than one pass or gain much lift.** He would come down to the ground and run instead. Within the first week, the eagle had gained enough muscle to stay aloft for a couple laps, but was still becoming winded. Our team monitored him closely for signs of stress on top of exertion to know when to end sessions, and they gradually increased to twice daily exercise."

By the middle of December, Golden Eagle 25-1011 was able to fly from the ground up to the highest point in the flight enclosure and complete more repetitions. His aerial agility was improving, dipping down to fly underneath perches and then angling back up. **This was a great sign that the eagle was getting close to release.**



Darrell Frazier and Gail Garber release rehabilitated Golden Eagle 25-1011

Photo by Kristin C. Brown photography

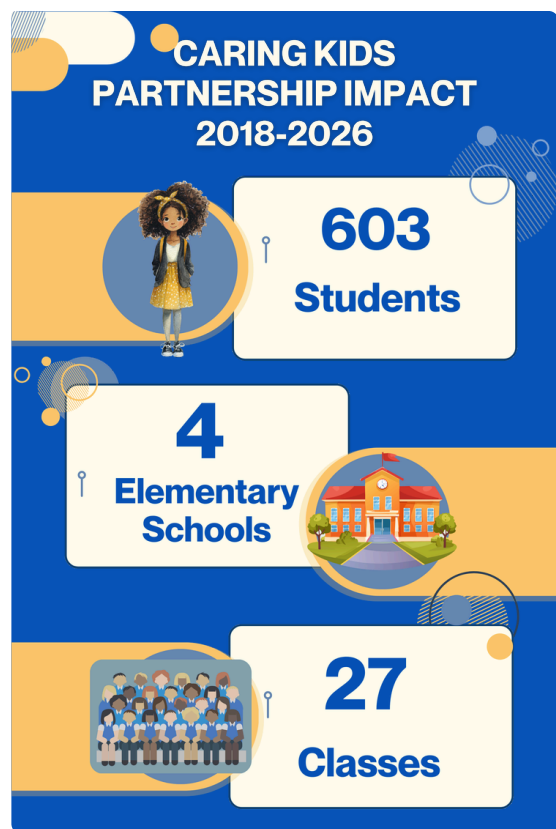
Garber shares the special moment of returning to the site with the eagle's rescuer on January 17, 2026: "It was with much anticipation that I joined Darrell on the opposite side of the crate and together we opened the door. The eagle exploded out, flap-hopping about 40 yards distant. . . . We watched. We waited. He surveyed his new domain. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, **he lifted his mighty wings and rose straight up into the sky.**"

(Caring Kids, cont'd.)

individual animals -- both in their homes and in their natural habitat. Here are some examples of what they learned, in their own words:

- "Companion animals can still cause conflict with wild animals so that's why some wild animals go to the wildlife center."
- "Wild animals need special care."
- "If wild animals are hurt I bring them to the wildlife center and put it in a box with airholes."

Teachers notice the impact too, as one shared, **"I love that students have a new interest in both domestic and wild animals. They also talk more about what they observe out in the community. They know they can make a difference!"**



Volunteer With Us

Volunteering at NMWC is a wonderful opportunity to observe and learn about native wild species while making a meaningful contribution. To get started, email volunteer@newmexicowildlifecenter.org.

Ambassador Animal Updates



Canyon
Collared Lizard



Phoenix
Aplomado Falcon



Truffle
Western Hognose Snake

Please welcome the 2025-2026 additions to the Ambassador Animal Education Team! These representatives of native wildlife traveled unique paths to join us. Each of their life stories teaches a lesson about conservation.



Onyx
American Crow



Mojave
Common Chuckwalla



Diego
California Kingsnake

We hope you visit soon to meet the Ambassadors and learn about their importance in our state's ecosystem.

Hint: You can sponsor an Ambassador Animal as a gift for yourself or someone else! Visit our website and click on **Support Us**.



Echo
Sandhill Crane



Mortimer
Turkey Vulture



Boreal Toads



Yucca
North American Porcupine

Since January 2025, we have had to say goodbye to several beloved Ambassador Animals whose stories impacted thousands of visitors who came to meet them. Whether a charismatic large feline, a talkative corvid, a graceful raptor, or an enigmatic arachnid, their care and quality of life was our highest priority.

The years shown indicate when each joined NMWC as an Ambassador.

We express our deepest gratitude for their service.

2006



Joni
Bobcat

2016



Hopper
Swainson's Hawk

2017



Pancho
American Kestrel

2018



Cody
Black-billed Magpie

2021



Olivia
Bald Eagle

2024



Ocho
Oklahoma Brown Tarantula

Letter from the Executive Director



Welcome to Spring at New Mexico Wildlife Center!

The year 2026 brings with it **New Mexico Wildlife Center’s 40th Anniversary!** Since 1986, NMWC has been caring for and educating about New Mexico’s wildlife. Across four decades NMWC has grown in its scope of work and expanded its mission. That sustained growth is a result of being anchored to the core values of delivering the highest level of care for injured, ill, and orphaned wildlife and educating learners of all ages about how best to live with our wild neighbors.

It’s an exciting year ahead as **construction begins on Phase 1 of the Master Site Plan.** Stay in the know through our website, newsletters, and social media about **special 40th anniversary events** and new education program offerings. Keep an eye out too for happenings in the hospital, especially as we head into the busy “Baby Season”!

Thanks to the support of donors past and present, NMWC has become a recognized leader in the areas of wildlife rehabilitation, conservation, education, and wildlife husbandry. **The continuing generosity of donors ensures that New Mexico Wildlife Center will be here for the next 40 years and more** serving the citizens of New Mexico and the wildlife they love.

Please take a moment to return the enclosed envelope with your donation or visit newmexicowildlifecenter.org to make your gift online.

Sincerely,

Matthew Miller, Executive Director

**New Mexico
Wildlife Center
1986 - 2026**



Bubo the Great Horned Owl with an uncharacteristic halo

Capital Campaign Launch

Now in our 40th year of dedication to wildlife, we are looking beyond the horizon at our future. A **Master Site Plan** has been developed to guide facility expansion ensuring we can continue to provide exemplary wildlife veterinary care and educational programming now and into the next 40 years. **Join us on our journey** to create a Center that enhances our ability to achieve our mission. **Donate to help make the vision a reality.**



2025 Annual Report

A Message from Jeffrey Hanus,
NMWC Board of Directors President and CEO

2025 was a productive, busy, and rewarding year for New Mexico Wildlife Center (NMWC) with several important and notable accomplishments in our program areas. Our **Hospital admissions increased** over 2024 with 1,085 patients spanning 164 different species - a 17% increase! Through grants and matching donations, the Hospital now includes New Mexico's *only* pre-release enclosure for the **rehabilitation of multiple aquatic species**. NMWC added **13 new Ambassador Animals** as shown in this newsletter, and the Education team conducted 547 presentations **reaching over 11,000 visitors and students**. We began expanding our education programming by working with nonprofit, state, and federal partners on recovery and reintroduction of extirpated species like Black-footed ferrets, Boreal toads, and Thick-billed parrots.

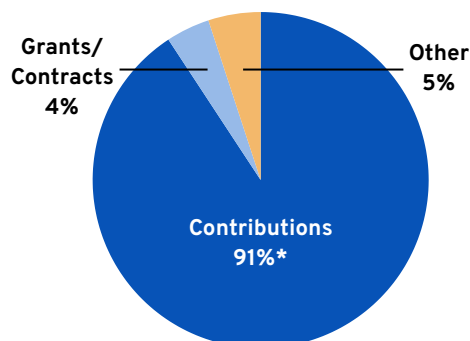
Education and Hospital staff led workshops at state and national wildlife professional conferences. NMWC staff grew by adding **Dr. Ashley Kramer**, DVM as full-time wildlife veterinarian and **Anna Tobin** as Director of our Education program. Other new staff include Wildlife Rehabilitator **Libby Bukovec**, Communications Specialist **Karen Lanier**, and Administration and Volunteer Specialist **Lucero Dominguez**.

Generous funding from our valued individual donors, board members, partners, foundations, grantors, and programs allowed us to carry out these facility improvements, expanded education outreach, and enhanced level of care for wildlife patients all while ending the year in a positive financial position. As additional measures of our success, NMWC once again earned a four-star rating from Charity Navigator and the Platinum Transparency seal from Candid (GuideStar).

In September, NMWC publicly announced a **new Master Site Plan and Capital Campaign** to increase our capacity to care for wildlife. Phase 1 is already underway and is partly funded by a very generous multi-million dollar bequest from a couple who lived in Roswell. We're excited to share this news with you, and we'll keep you updated through our website, social media, and emails.

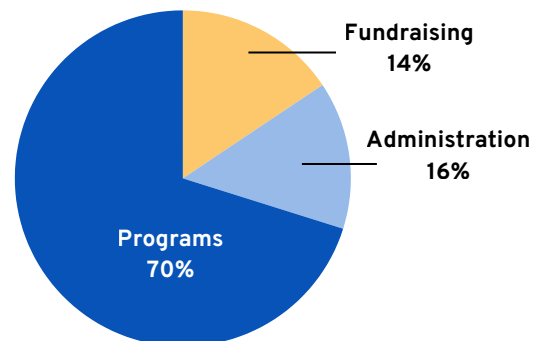
NMWC protects wildlife through rehabilitation, conservation, education, and public engagement. We remain passionate about this mission because our work is more important than ever in the face of declining wildlife populations and changing climate. It is a cause that unites communities across all economic, political, cultural, and societal backgrounds. On behalf of NMWC's Board of Directors, I invite you to join in and support us on our journey to protect New Mexico's wildlife, because a better world for wildlife is a better world.

Revenue Sources



*Includes large bequest

Operational Expenses



Donating to NMWC means... *You* make an impact!

Along with the many ways your gifts make it possible for NMWC to protect the wildlife you love, here are a few examples of funding for specific projects and the impact they made in 2025 and beyond.

Hospital & Rehab means... Saving More and Varied Wildlife

A Hand-held Digital Ultrasound means... *In-house, quick diagnoses for precise treatment plans*
Safe Capture Equipment means... *Safely sedating large mammals from afar for tests and exams (NM's Only)*
Aquatics Enclosure means... *Rehabilitating a wide range of water-dependent species*



Special Case of the Year:

American White Pelican 25-20,
from land to water again...

Copy the URL to learn about this case:
bit.ly/4btSas7

Education Program means... Excellence for Ambassadors & Visitors

New Reptile Displays mean... *Enhanced, species-specific habitats improve their quality of life*
Paved ADA Walkway means... *Opportunities for all people to visit outdoor displays and learn*
Professional Development means... *Best practices, sharing protocols, recognized leadership*



Special Case of the Year:

Olympia the Peregrine Falcon
from resident Ambassador Animal to
living in the wild again...

Copy the URL to learn about this case:
bit.ly/4bxINJ0



Collaboration means... Expanding Our Reach

San Diego Zoo ↔ NMWC consulted with SDZ on pronghorn rehabilitation and needs, placement for "Hatch" to provide New Mexico pronghorn genetics
Cornell University ↔ NMWC Ambassador Animal Program Director, Anna Tobin presented on developing a raptor ambassador enrichment program
Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) ↔ NMWC joined the SAFE (Saving Animals from Extinction) Committee for recovery and reintroduction of extirpated Thick-billed Parrots
US Forest Service + US Fish & Wildlife Service + NM Department of Wildlife + Highlands University ↔ NMWC is a partner in a program for recovery and reintroduction of extirpated Boreal Toads
NM Department of Wildlife, State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) ↔ NMWC is a member of the implementation committee
Santa Fe County Open Spaces ↔ NMWC has a MOA for releasing rehabilitated wildlife
Northern New Mexico College Internship Program ↔ NMWC hospital is a teaching space for local students interested in veterinary medicine



Thank you to all of our friends and donors who supported NMWC in 2025.
We couldn't do it without you!

For a complete list of donors, visit newmexicowildlifecenter.org/donors.