

Newsletter 2018

A Bakers Dozen

Last winter was quite an eruption year for Snowy Owls. Thirteen of them were admitted to Kindred Kingdoms between November and May. Snowy Owls are considered nomads and they wander into New York from Canada looking for food. One particular owl was quite a mystery to us. It was found flying around in the basement of the McCarthy Building right on South Salina Street in the middle of downtown Syracuse. When we arrived to retrieve it, we found that there was only one way to get to the basement of the building and that was by elevator. There were no stairways or windows,



so how on earth did this bird get there? The basement was very large and we explored everywhere to see if we could find an unsuspecting entrance. Finally, we found an uncapped air vent in the ceiling that must have been how it had gotten in. We figured that perhaps he had landed on the roof and had gotten mobbed by crows that inhabit the city. Looking for refuge, it probably ducked into the vent on the roof and slid seven stories to the basement. He had been there for at least three days that the employees knew of. Needless to say he was quite thin, but not injured. We brought him back to our facility, weighed him, rehydrated him and fattened him up over time. Soon he was ready for release and we found a snow laden field at a farm not far from us and sent him on his way.

Bald Eagles Everywhere



Just one of the many bald eagles that came to Kindred Kingdoms this year.

Brother and Sister

In April we received a call from Ryan Rockefeller, the DEC large game biologist from south of Buffalo. He called to tell us two orphaned cubs had been found in Alfred Station in Allegheny County. A search of the area found no sow anywhere. Ryan picked them up and we met him in Ithaca. They were huddled together like two tiny balls of black fur. When we got them back to Kindred Kingdoms, we weighed them and found the little male to be



only 3.125 pounds and the female was 4.06 pounds. At this size they had just left the den to follow their mother, but they were still nursing. They readily took to their bottles and ate vigorously. Before long they were starting to nibble on minced apples, baby food, berries, and a variety of other soft foods. When they were totally self feeding and eating more solid foods, they were moved to our large outdoor bear habitat so they could be monitored by hidden cameras and have no more human contact. By the time fall rolled around, they were ready to be released back to their home territory. Ryan came to get them and take them home. It is always bittersweet to see them go, but we know we have provided them with all the climbing, caching, hiding, denning, digging skills they need to survive in the wild.

Purple Gallinule

On January 25, 2018

I received a call from Larry Mellnitz in Glenfield, NY. Glenfield is a village in the town of Watson up in Lewis County on the Tug Hill Plateau. His daughter had recently come home and told him there was a strange looking bird on the front porch steps. He went to look and sure enough it was a bird that should not have been in



Lewis County, New York in January. It was a Purple Gallinule with iridescent purple, turquoise, and green feathers. How it got there is anybody's guess, but one thing was for certain, it would not survive the northern winter. Larry drove it to us and we prepared a habitat for it to winter over in a heated building. After extensive research, we found a variety of foods that gallinules eat in the wild. To match its nutritional needs, we fed it chopped spinach and other greens, mealworms, and small shrimp, along with chopped berries. When spring finally arrived, we were faced with the dilemma of where to release it. I spoke with my Audubon friends and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and we jointly decided that the gallinule needed to go back to the south, since it was much more a tropical bird. On May 7th, Chelsea Carter and her sister Melissa, two of our longtime volunteers, packed it up and drove it fifteen hours straight south to the Savannah Marsh in Northern Georgia, near the South Carolina boarder. There were many more Purple Gallinules spotted in the marsh and he wasted no time taking right off and joining them. We all wished him God Speed and may he have his wanderlust out of his system.

Short-Eared Owl - Still Endangered

Short-eared owls are still on the Endangered Species List here in New York. Yet, Kindred kingdoms had two of them stay with us over the winter. Both were then banded by the New York State DEC and released back to the wild between Ithaca and Seneca Falls where they had originally come from.



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