



The Wild Side

Quarterly newsletter of
Peace River Refuge & Ranch

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www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

Flying Foxes have arrived

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Peace River Refuge & Ranch — *A True Sanctuary*

- * Fully licensed by state and federal authorities
- * Accredited by the American Sanctuary Association (ASA)
- * Recognized as a World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) *Member Society*
- * Animals receive *lifetime care* and are never bred or exploited
- * **Guided tours offered only twice a month by reservation**

Please join us in welcoming the six new female fruit bats to the sanctuary—*Pteropus hypoménalus*—Island flying foxes. The big beautiful girls' names are Venus, Aquarius, Typhoon, Valentine, River and Creole.

These flying foxes have been retired from the Lube Bat Conservancy. By placing them with our sanctuary for lifetime care, more space is made available for Lube Bat Conservancy's valuable conservation efforts to benefit wild populations.

These fruit bats have a wingspan approaching 4 feet, weigh 1 1/2 pounds and eat about half their

body weight in fruits and vegetables daily.

The new additions are housed along with their smaller cousins, Egyptian fruit bats, who have called the sanctuary home for many years.

There are slight differences in the dietary needs of these two types of fruit bats, so they are currently testing our ingenuity as we experiment with various ways to get them to eat the supplements they require on a daily basis.

In the wild, the Island flying foxes sleep in the treetops during the day. At the sanctuary they roost out in the enclosure where visitors can see them. Their

companions, the Egyptian fruit bats, are more difficult for visitors to see since they sleep in their cave-like roost and must be viewed through windows.



Island Flying Foxes are native to Indonesia with a wingspan approaching 4 feet!

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Gracie and Eclipse—Love at First Sight

Gracie, an elderly grey wolf who has been at the sanctuary for years, recently lost her companion to an aneurism.

Gracie has always been timid, but in the absence of her partner, she was pining away and becoming even more reclusive.



Eclipse in Indiana before coming to the sanctuary

As timing would have it, there were several wolves and other animals being rescued from substandard conditions in Indiana and a facility was needed to take a solitary male wolf. His name is Eclipse.

Gracie joined Eclipse in

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The Sanctuary Still Fighting to Secure Land

When an 8,000 acre housing development was approved near the sanctuary, we realized that a fight would eventually begin.

Similar fights in other areas have shown that the animals always lose the fight and are forced to move from the property with very little notice.

We made our plan to secure the future of the animals by making a long-range commitment to move them to a new location rather than waiting until we were forced to spend money on legal battles only to prolong the inevitable.

Although the recent economic

downturn will slow this process, the housing development has been approved and construction is sure to begin as soon as the market improves.

We have had our eye on a piece of privately owned land in the Ocala National Forest, one of the largest black bear habitats in the State of Florida. This land is surrounded on all four sides by thousands of acres of Federally protected land so that there will never be a risk of human encroachment again.

Before the economic downturn, we had agreed on a price for the land, but

things have not gone as smoothly as we had hoped. We are still in negotiations with the seller but the bottom line is that we still need as much of a downpayment as possible to make the purchase happen.

Once we have secured the land, it will still take us several years to completely build a facility before moving the animals.

Please help us to be proactive so that we are not backed into a corner with nowhere to go. **Your gift today will help to secure this land and the future of the animals.**

Shop for Mother's Day and help the animals at the same time

What if Peace River Refuge & Ranch earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to help the animals? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality

search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

It gets even better....

GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall with over 1,000 top online retailers. You pay the same price you normally would, and

You can also read about GoodSearch in the NY Times, Oprah Magazine, CNN, ABC News and the Wall Street Journal...

GoodShop donates up to 30% of each purchase to the sanctuary! Great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be helping the animals.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com or www.goodshop.com and be sure to enter Peace River Refuge & Ranch as the charity you want to support.

Help the animals—spread the word!

Flying Foxes have arrived!

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At night, they all fly together to feed on the fruit mixture that we make for them and to explore the thick tropical landscaping in their habitats.

All together, the fruit bats eat almost 30 pounds of fresh fruit every night!

Their favorite treat is the flowers from the bottle brush trees that are growing inside the habitat. They hang

precariously on the tiny, flexible branches and the weight of their bodies pulls the branches almost to the ground as they struggle to reach the bright red blossom at the end.

They have room to spread their enormous wings and fly around their new home, landing on thick ropes that have been strung from the ceiling for their enjoyment.



The flying foxes will certainly put an end to anyone's irrational fear of bats. These beautiful girls relax in the center of their habitat as if to show off to everyone

Wild bobcat hit by a car, makes a full recovery

Early one Friday morning, the phone rang at the sanctuary. On the other end of the line was a woman who was frantically trying to find someone to help with a bobcat that had just been hit by a car. She saw him lying on the side of the road and realized that he was still alive.

We rushed to the scene to pick up the injured cat. He was taken straight to Dr. Jernigan in Sebring, FL, one of the many veterinarians that we work with. The bobcat was bleeding from the nose and on the edge of consciousness.

It feels good to be able to help an injured native animal to recover and be safely released

After multiple x-rays and a thorough exam, the doctor determined that he was suffering from a serious blow to the head but he didn't have any broken bones and his other injuries were minor. He had a lot of bruising and would be in quite a lot of pain,

but had a reasonable chance of recovery if he could overcome the head injury.

We treated him with medication to reduce swelling on the brain and anti-inflammatory medication for pain and swelling and hoped for the best. He made a slow recovery.

For the first few days, he could not sit up. We gave him injections of fluids and continued with the medication to control the brain swelling and manage his pain. Soon he was able to sit and began to eat soft ground chicken.

We discovered that he was only able to eat meat that was finely ground, so we carefully prepared his meals.

Soon he was standing and drinking on his own. By the end of two weeks, the pain that was preventing him from eating properly had subsided and he was back to eating normally,



Wild bobcat, steadily recovering from a head injury

crunching bones and all.

He still didn't seem to have it together though—his sense of balance was off and he wasn't as alert as he should have been. We crossed our fingers and waited.

Thankfully, at the end of the third week, he was back to acting like a wild bobcat should. He was alert and

responsive, eating and drinking well and ready to be set free.

We contacted the owner of the property next to where he was hit and obtained permission to go back on the property, away from the highway, to release the cat in his own territory.

Our sanctuary is dedicated to the lifetime care of nonreleasable wild animals, but it feels good to be able to help a native animal to recover and be safely released when we can.

Alternative Break Students are heroes for the animals

Once again, the Alternative Break groups have come to the rescue!

Every year, we have enjoy having winter and spring break groups from a variety of colleges with us to do volunteer service.

This year, it was Florida State and Eastern Michigan University, followed by Ohio State University.

Grand Valley State University (Michigan) was lined up to come again this year but a scheduling conflict on our end prevented their participation (definitely our loss!)

The Alternative break students arrive



Ohio State University Alternative Spring Break group

well organized, enthusiastic and ready for hard work. We love having them

because we are able to accomplish those projects that require a large number of strong backs all at one time.

This year, they helped us to finish the top of the new cougar habitat and build the barrier fence to allow visitors to see the cougars in their new home. They helped us to build last few hurricane lockouts and shift doors to help ensure the safety of all of the animals in the event of another storm and helped to trim back landscaping that was damaged by a hard freeze.

What fantastic volunteers!

Thank you!

Gracie the wolf has a new friend!

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howling the very first night. She hadn't howled since the loss of her partner.

Although they were still separated until we could ensure that Eclipse was healthy, Gracie was more at ease simply knowing that another wolf friend was nearby.

After healing from his neuter surgery and catching up on his veterinary care, Eclipse was introduced to Gracie. It was love at first sight.

The introduction went wonderfully - Eclipse even shared his food with Gracie!

They have been together nonstop ever since...

Gracie, Eclipse and all of the animals at the sanctuary have you to thank. This couldn't have happened without your help!



Gracie (left) and Eclipse (above) smell the scent of one another before their first meeting

Our new food preparation building is almost finished

In 2004, Peace River Refuge & Ranch was directly hit by three hurricanes in under 6 weeks. The facility was devastated and had over \$200,000 in damage.

Thankfully, although all of our animal habitats were damaged, we had no injuries or escapes.

We have been steadily rebuilding the sanctuary, beginning with the most important structures, perimeter fencing, animal habitats, etc. Rebuilding our infrastructure such as our food preparation building, vet clinic, storage sheds and horse barn that were destroyed has been left for last.

As we plan ahead to move the sanctuary, we have decided to avoid putting any unnecessary energy into rebuilding those last items that we can live without. However, we still need to do *something* better for food preparation.

Since the storms, we have been preparing food for almost 200 animals in our own kitchen. This has been

difficult to manage to say the least.

Late last year, we suddenly lost all of our daily donations of animal food. This required that we quickly find a way to store large quantities of food so that we could place wholesale orders on a weekly basis.

We have acquired a beautiful stainless steel sink and small work table—now we need to finish assembling the building itself

Thanks to grants from the MAH Foundation and the National Anti-Vivisection Society, we were able to quickly purchase the commercial refrigerators that we needed to begin ordering produce on a wholesale basis.

With your help, we have managed to maintain our cash flow in order to purchase the food that was once donated. Now it is time to make more efficient use of our valuable volunteer help.

Our volunteers have been faithfully

carrying food from the refrigerators to the main house for preparation—and then taking all of the supplies back out again.

Since we had already set aside enough indoor space for the big refrigerators, we reorganized one of our storage sheds and have been steadily making it into a food preparation area as well.

We have acquired a beautiful stainless steel sink and small work table—now we need to finish assembling the building itself.

Here's what we need:

- *Volunteers* that are experienced in finish carpentry, flooring, plumbing and electrical
- A new small window A/C unit that runs on 110 volts
- A long stainless steel table for food preparation
- Drywall and supplies, PVC wall board and supplies, plumbing, and electrical supplies and flooring materials

Yes!! I will help!!

I know the need is great and I want to support the animals at Peace River Refuge & Ranch

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

_____ I am enclosing my tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

-OR-

_____ Please charge my Visa___ or MasterCard___ in the amount of \$ _____

My card number is: _____ Exp. _____

Name on card: _____

_____ Please send instructions for me to set up regular monthly gifts from my bank account or credit card

Comments: _____

The animals can count on me!!

Why doesn't the sanctuary have regular visiting hours?

As a true accredited sanctuary, our concern for the well being of the animals must always come first.

As many of you already know, most of the animals at the sanctuary have suffered at the hands of humans before their arrival here.

As a result, it is not in line with the definition of 'sanctuary' if we allow our need for funding to override the right that the animals here have to a stress-free environment.

The compromise that we have found

If you would like to visit the sanctuary, please call us at 863-735-0804 or contact us through the website at www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org to schedule a guided tour

is to offer exclusive guided tours twice a month, led by one of our founders.

By limiting the frequency of tours and ensuring that the people are accompanied by someone that the animals all know and trust, we can satisfy everyone.

We are still mindful of the privacy that the animals require and the animals are confident that all of the strangers will maintain a respectful distance because they are with someone they have grown to trust.

We request a minimum donation of \$15 per person for a 2-hour guided tour, to help with the care of the animals.

The more notice you have, the more likely we are to be able to accommodate your requested date. To request a tour, contact us at 863-735-0804 or through our website www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

On any given day, there are almost 200 animals at Peace River Refuge & Ranch Here's how your donations help with their care:

- **\$ 25** buys monkey biscuits for all of the primates for five days
- **\$ 75** feeds the fruit bats for a day
- **\$200** provides glucosamine supplements for all of the arthritic animals
- **\$1,000** pays for the care of all of the animals for one day
- **\$5,000** feeds a tiger for a year

Peace River Refuge & Ranch

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The Wild Side

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Nonprofit wild animal sanctuary
and educational facility



Dear Friends,

Your continued, caring support has allowed us to provide lifetime care to so many animals in need. From black bears abandoned, left to starve for three years at a tourist attraction in New York — to a wolf that had been living in solitary confinement in a small cage in Indiana, every animal at the sanctuary has you to thank. Now they have room to roam and a wonderful sanctuary to call home.

Now more than ever, we need your continued support. Please share this newsletter with a friend and help us to increase the number of sanctuary friends to ensure that the animals continue to receive the level of care they deserve.

Happy Spring!

Lisa Stoner, VP

