

Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care busy with birds, bobcats and bears

By Tom Millham

As some of you may be aware, we now have five bobcats in house. We have had a total of six this year, which is the most we have ever had.

The one we got in about a month ago was just with us for about three days after being hit by a car in the Woodfords area. We got her back so she could – hopefully – take care of her babies.



LTWC volunteer Wayne McKnight throws a golden eagle into the air as a way to exercise it. Photo/John Adamski

Of the five we have left, three of them came in on May 20, the second day of our annual training seminar. About three weeks ago, one of those original three was limping in our bobcat cage. As it turned out, she somehow broke her right front leg.

Dr. Kevin Willitts took an X-ray and determined the exact damage, then took her down to Reno for a specialist to perform the surgery, which was successful. However, for the next three

weeks, our instructions were to leave her alone as much as possible to allow her to heal.

Willitts took a follow up X-ray Sept. 20 and determined that she has healed about as much as she is going to. So, after she woke up from her sedative, we let her out of her pet carrier to be with her two siblings. The three of them have been getting used to each other and so far no fur is flying.

For more than 25 years, Willitts has been there to volunteer his time for the betterment of the wildlife entrusted to LTWC.

Yes, we still have Chips and, now, Sierra. Chips came to us from the Chips Fire near Lake Almanor about 2½ weeks ago and Sierra came to us from the Sierra Army Depot near Herlong (just south of Susanville) where he got separated from his mother. He is about one week older than Chips.

After we clear up Chips' problem with Coccidia, we will be able to put the two together. Other than the Coccidia, Chips is doing very well and growing every day. Since we now have two cats, almost the same age, we will most likely raise them here at LTWC and then release them in a suitable environment early in the new year. We will keep you updated on all five bobcats.

On another note, we will be releasing another golden eagle Sept. 23. We plan to meet at LTWC at 10am, then caravan up toward old Highway 40, west of Donner Lake. The exact location will be determined Friday. Anyone who would like to join us is welcome. We anticipate the release to take place at or around 11:30am.

Tom Millham is secretary-treasurer for Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

Riley Rettig shot this video of the Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care eagle release earlier this summer near Carson Pass: