

 **Cleo's Critter Care**
Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation

"To love a rescuer, you must understand her passion to heal is a calling, NOT a choice. Saving wildlife is part of one's soul."

Spring/Summer Issue 2024

Welcome to *Critter News*, the first quarterly newsletter for Cleo's Critter Care Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, sharing all the news of the urban critters in our midst!

Spring was off to its usual fast start and Cleo Watts, the founder of Cleo's Critter Care, is keeping busy taking in orphaned or injured wildlife across the greater Pasadena community.

Cleo is the only small mammal rehabber in the area and anyone who has visited her facility, called her to rescue a wild animal, or witnessed the love and compassion she has for our urban wildlife, knows our community is better off because of the important work she does for all of us, but especially for the critters who are abandoned, hurt, or orphaned.

You can continue to help these efforts by getting the word out about Cleo's Critter Care, donating to our non-profit, or volunteering to help wildlife in need.



Cleo's Critter Care founder cradling an opossum who came into her care after being trampled by a horse in January. The critter was successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild in March 2024.

Cleo's Critter Care Rescue & Wildlife Rehabilitation

cleocrittercareca@gmail.com

www.cleocrittercare.org

Tax ID# 23-7197703



News and Events

Our first **Cleo's Critter Care Fundraiser** was held on March 15th at the Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens.

We are grateful for those who attended in person, volunteered or donated a silent auction item.



The event was supported by over 50 local businesses who donated auction items, our generous sponsors — **Laura and Phil Huffman, Krystal and Jesse Davies, Donna Chen, JoAnna and Steve Schilling, [Hummus Labs](#) in Pasadena, [The Basic Nail Shoppe](#) in Pasadena, and [Attitude Boutique](#) in Sierra Madre** — and 70 generous donors who attended our inaugural gala.

Cleo explains to donors, Paula Marie and Tim Snyder, the many ways in which their donations will be used to feed and rehabilitate the wildlife that comes into her care.

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Check out some more snapshots from our first-annual fundraiser:



TOP LEFT: Sponsors JoAnna and Steve Schilling joining our generous donors at the first-ever Cleo's Critter Care Fundraiser

TOP RIGHT: Event volunteers (left to right) Jessie Schiewe, Jessica Fraijo, and Gabby Rocha posing in front of the organization's new logo banner

**Stay tuned for news about our next gala,
tentatively scheduled for June 2025!**

Cleo has also been busy attending community events to raise awareness for Cleo's Critter Care and to support the community that she serves.

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Some recent events include a **special fundraiser at Attitude Boutique** in Sierra Madre, which provided 25% of their sales to Cleo's Critter Care on March 9th.

To attract attention to the sale, Cleo and volunteers set up an information booth in front of the store and also had a custom cut-out of a baby raccoon Cleo rehabilitated after it was found suffering from a broken arm. This raccoon was released back into the wild last October.



ABOVE: Vange LeClerc, JoAnna Schilling, and Cleo standing beside the attention-grabbing cut-out of a baby raccoon in front of Attitude Boutique.

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Cleo and the Critter Care volunteers also attended **the Wistaria Festival** on March 17th, a Sierra Madre event attended by over 5,000 people.

On April 27th, Critter Care volunteers celebrated **Earth Day** with other organizations focused on saving the planet and our wildlife. Thanks to Sierra Madre for being such great supporters of Cleo's Critter Care!



TOP LEFT: Amanda Squitieri and daughter Edith Bridel volunteering at Cleo's Critter Care booth during the Sierra Madre Earth Day celebration.



TOP RIGHT: Cleo and volunteer, Miranda Liu, posing at the Wistaria Festival where volunteers spoke with curious attendees about the habits and behaviors of our wildlife neighbors.

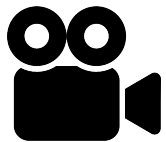
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Come and support us at the **July 4th Independence Parade in Sierra Madre**, where Cleo and volunteers will appear in the parade and be joining the festivities. The parade begins at 10 am along Sierra Madre Blvd, starting at Sunnyside and ending at Rancho Road.



Cleo in the News!

Cleo's Critter Care was recently featured on the local news station, KCAL News, in February when she and Kim Bacher, of the **Exotic Animal Veterinary Center**, teamed up to rescue a raptor that had been shot.

Hear this important story by **clicking the photo below**:



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Volunteer of the Year

~ Meet Bonnie Thom ~

Cleo's Critter Care has an incredible team of volunteers who donate their time and energy in pivotal ways to the cause of helping local wildlife. This year, we wanted to focus on one standout volunteer in particular and awarded her the first-ever "Volunteer of the Year" Award at our 2024 Fundraising Gala.

Bonnie Thom has always gone above and beyond in the assistance she's provided to the organization. Some of the work she has contributed includes sewing custom incubator pads for neonatal mammals, crafting nutritionally balanced "picky blocks" for juvenile squirrels to munch on, and volunteering her time at the facility each week to support whatever is needed.

Bonnie is a true champion of wildlife and Cleo's Critter Care is blessed to have such a talented volunteer. We are honored to highlight Bonnie Thom as our first Volunteer of the Year!



Did You Know...?



Baby season is all year! Racoons, squirrels and possums are typically born in spring but like everything in nature, there's a catch! Racoons tend to need care up to 6 months before release, and female squirrels can give birth to two litters annually during the spring and fall. All this means little down time for Cleo and her team and keeps the Critter Crew very busy most of the year!



Playing Possum When threatened, opossums run, growl, belch, urinate, and defecate. And when all else fails, they "play possum" and act as if they're dead. It is an involuntary response (like fainting) rather than a conscious act. They roll over, become stiff, close their eyes (or stare with their eyes open), and bare their 50 small teeth. This can last up to 6 hours, so if you discover a possum in your backyard, view it from a safe distance and contact us only if you believe it may be in danger.



Fledging raptors and owls: If you find a fledgling in your yard, do not assume it is in distress. It may be learning to fly and its mother is likely close by. Monitor it closely, keep pets and other birds from harassing it, and, if possible, place it back in the closest tree or limb. If mama does not come to feed it for 24 hours, call us for support.



Watch out when trimming trees! The most common way birds and mammals are orphaned or hurt is by tree trimming. It is best to avoid any trimming during nesting season and wait to do all tree trimming during September through January. And if you do any trimming, make sure you have your arborist fully inspect your tree for nests BEFORE they start chopping. Also request that they use methods to avoid harming animals or birds. For more information, go to [Golden Gate Bird Alliance](#) for tips to keep our wildlife safer.

Thank you for contributing to our amazing spring season. We hope you enjoyed our inaugural newsletter and if you have any suggestions for our next publication, please send comments to cleoscrittercareca@gmail.com Please stay tuned for our next newsletter scheduled for September 2024!

Join our Critter Crew!

Here are some ways to get involved, either by volunteering your time, providing equipment, supplies, or food for wildlife, or donating a tax-deductible gift.

\$250 Gold Crew Member - Your support goes to the care of *all* of our wildlife where needed, including but not limited to nutrition, medical care, comfort, habitat, and emergencies

\$100 Silver Crew Member - Your support goes toward the care and feeding of a critter for three months

\$50 Bronze Crew Member - Your support goes to the care and feeding of a critter for two months

\$25 Crew Member - Your support goes to the care and feeding of a critter for one month

\$10 Critter Crew – Your support helps us continue to fulfill our mission

Volunteer Critter Crew – Contact us for ways you can give of your time to support our mission!

Amazon Wish List – click the wish list link to support us on Amazon by purchasing an item in support of our wildlife!

Our animals thank you for supporting the vulnerable wildlife in our community. We couldn't do this without you!

