

"Mr Cranky" the unfortunate events that led to the fortunate event for one juvenile Bald Eagle

A happy ending for Mr. CRANKY but for others it's not. Please help spread awareness about lead bullets. This beautiful juvenile Bald Eagle ingested a rabbit that contained a lead bullet. Here is the story of the last two month journey.

On January 18th as we neared the second bank of silver maples along Goshen Bay Road I noticed a large raptor on the side of the road in the grass. I didn't want to stress it or spook it so I asked my trusty scope buddies Amanda and KC to get on it. It was a juvenile Bald Eagle. We stayed a ways back and watched it for a few minutes. A couple times it flapped its wings to no avail to get off the ground. This beautiful majestic bird was in trouble. It needed HELP!! I decided to go try to find a box back in town that we could transport it in. I ran into the Sheriff and he contacted DWR. KC and Amanda continued on with the field trip. After finding out that help was on the way I grabbed Amanda and the kiddos and we went back to wait. When we got back the Eagle was not where we'd left it. We drove up and down the road looking everywhere for it. We thought well maybe it flew off.

I was on the phone with Jeff Cooper and he'd asked if I had checked all the bushes. We turned around for another pass and Amanda spotted it over the fence line by a sagebrush. It was in the muck in a cow pasture. At first glance it looked as if we were too late, I truly believed it was dead. My heart just broke. By then hours had passed. While I was talking to Jeff again we saw slight movement of the head. It was alive!!! There was still hope!! Jeff sent me Debbie's number and I called her at Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation in Price.

She gave me instructions and said you've got to hurry! Once you get it in the car, call me. There can be no children and no radio. Well, we had Ember and Tatum, so I called Holly. I knew she could help, and even though she was already headed down I-15, she turned right around and came back. Within a half hour she hopped the fence, put a blanket over it, wrapped up its talons and we hopped in her car. We headed for Price.

Debbie headed towards us and we met her at the Thistle turn off. The Eagle was still alive! Debbie explained that it was probably one of two things a gunshot wound or lead poisoning. She assured us that she is one of two rehabbers in Utah certified to treat lead poisoning! As she was putting it in the truck it began to scream and seizure! She came back and told us she was positive it was lead poisoning and hurried off to get treatment started! Holly and I just sat there and took a moment and cried. An emotionally draining ordeal.

Until you've watched these magnificent creatures suffer at the consequences of lead bullets you will never understand the excruciating pain that these birds endure. I pray that we may spread awareness of the seriousness of this issue. Let's keep our wild things wild and be better stewards!

A few minutes ago I got this update from Debbie:

Thanks Suzi. BTW, bird is still alive. Treatment was started immediately when I got back.

Anyone is welcome to share this post and let's help spread the word! I'm grateful that our Raptor Route led us to this Eagle and pray the treatments will take effect! Bless your heart Debbie!!



This is where we found him off the side of the Goshen Bay road

When I got back from trying to find a box or crate he had moved up the road and hopped the fence and was in the cow pasture.



I thought we watched him take his last breath, but then Amanda saw him move again.

Juvenile Bald Eagle Found:
<https://youtu.be/-GgQIDJ2DGA>



Here is Holly and I taking him to Price, Debbie met us on the way by the Thistle turn off



Holly with him on her lap telling me he's still breathing!

These next shots are the ones Debbie sent when she got to the rehab.



He looks dead. We all prayed he would make it through the night!!
As you can see he looks pretty bad!



On January 24th we got an update and the Eagle got the nickname Mr. CRANKY.

Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation

An update on our lead poisoned Bald Eagle. These videos were taken this evening during our last feeding. He's a force to be reckoned with. He is doing well and has been on his two day break of chelation treatments. Tomorrow, they start again.

He's standing!!!!



And he's squawking and cranky!

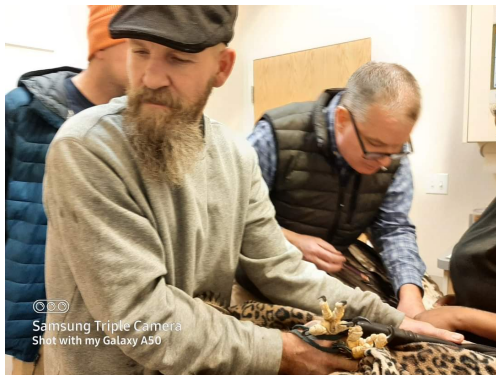


The next update came on January 31st

Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation

This past Sunday, Dr. Dan Harmer who runs Castle Country Vet Clinic came in to x-ray our Bald Eagle to look for any visible ingested lead remaining in the bird. Everything looked good and we ran another blood lead level to confirm what we were seeing.

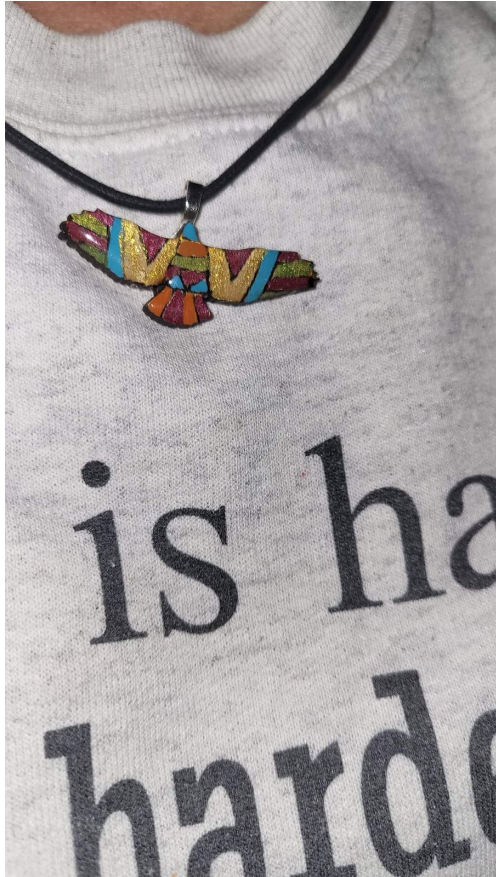
This bird has so much fight in him and now, our biggest concern is damage he is doing to his feathers fighting to get out of his enclosure. To deal with this, I asked a friend who is also a falconer with his eagle permit to creance this bird to determine if the lead did not harm his flight abilities. He will do as I asked of him and NOT develop any sort of relationship with this bird which is how falconry is normally done. Rehabilitation with help from falconers HAS TO BE done completely different. We are both hoping for a quick turnaround so that we can get the bird back here and banded. Next step will be release.



Next update February 5th

Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation

Yesterday we took the new Bald Eagle to our wildlife vet in Payson, Dr. Jay Ipsen. We had blood pulled to check that the lead did not do any further damage. Ian Pogue, Parker Boyack and Dewey Giddings were all there to help and learn. Thank you Dr. Ipsen and Jya. One step closer to release.



Holly got me a memoir necklace for our Bald Eagle Adventure! I love it!!!

February was a long month we didn't hear much as it spent time with Ian Pogue the Falconer making sure it could fly!

On Monday March 13th I got a text from Debbie:

Suzi, your Eagle is getting his federal band on him later today. One step closer to release.



Here he is getting his federal bands

The next day, March 14th I got this text:

"Suzi, would you please call me?"

I called her and she said he was scheduled for release on Saturday March 18th!! She gave me Ian's information and I contacted him. He gave me the when and where and I got the word out!!

Saturday March 18th

Meet at the Gunnison Maverik at 11:00 am

We will leave from there and take a dirt road to the Gunnison Reservoir overlook where we will release him!!!

I couldn't wait!! I was so excited!! Saturday couldn't come fast enough our Eagle would finally be free again!!! I had fun painting him for Holly and I. My daughter, the artist, came to the rescue when he started to look like a toucan. So we signed it SH2.



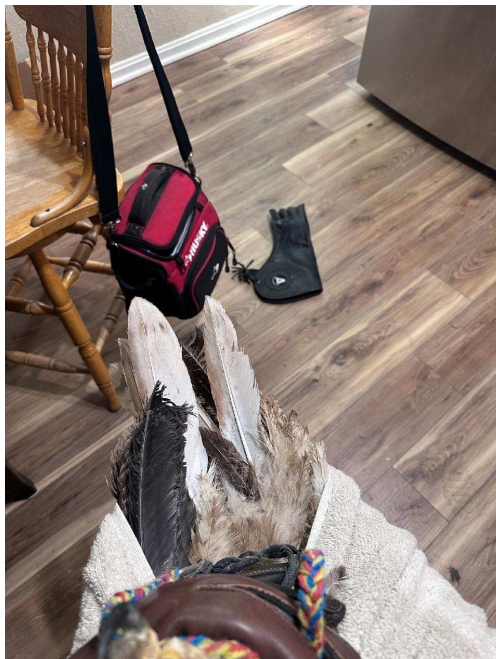


Here's the Eagle in the crate at Maverik



Saturday we all met at the Gunnison Maverik.

Ian told us how he had got up at 4 am to give the Eagle a new tail. Being in rehab and being handled, he had lost all but one tail feather. So he got a new Ferruginous Hawk tail. The tail of a bird that had been hit by a car a month or so ago. Because of its extensive injuries it had to be euthanized, so he harvested the wing and tail feathers and properly buried the hawk. Mr Cranky had a new white Ferrug tail.



He explained the logistics and that when we got up there he would get the crate out of the truck and place it over by the overlook. We could quickly take some photos.



Well Mr Cranky was showing his crankiness and Ian said we have to do this now, so we formed our half circle behind the crate and he opened it!!!

Mr. Cranky release video: https://youtu.be/hN5D_N6IxBI



I didn't have many words. It all happened so fast!! Amanda said it best, "it's just so awesome since it's a Bald Eagle, it means more!"
Tears when we found you and tears when you flew free!!!



Our country's symbol of freedom!! Two months to the day since we found it in Goshen!! Thank you Debbie Souza-Pappas and all the volunteers at Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation, Dr Ipsen and Ian Pogue! You are amazing! We appreciate all your work! An experience I will never forget!!! With my mom, Jessie, Tatum and Ember and a bunch of others!



Once again I am grateful to Debbie, all the volunteers at Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation, Dr. Harmer, Dr Ipsen and Ian Pogue for all they do!! This is a true miracle moment! Please remember to spread the word to others to stop using lead bullets!! This was a happy ending but others aren't!

If you'd like to make a donation here is the link: <https://wildliferehabprice.wixsite.com/2ndchance>