

Flight Plan Rehab

Gazette



July 2025

New Turtle Center



The big event of the early summer was the May 26 delivery of a greenhouse destined to become Flight Plan's new Turtle Center!

One large pool (about 750 gallons at maximum capacity) can house 6-8 turtles depending on their stages of recovery.

Turtle Center, cont'd.



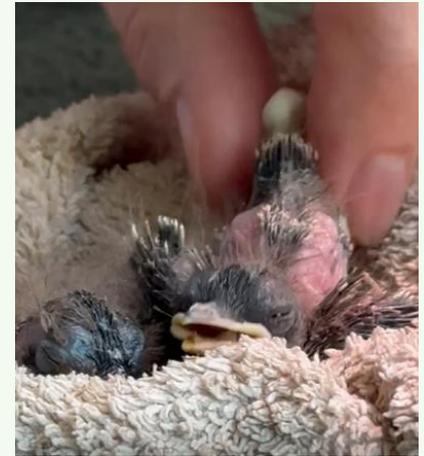
Just outside the rear door, an additional pool (about 250 gallon capacity) can be reserved for Snapping Turtles when other pools are occupied by Painted Turtles.

Some turtles are recovering here from shell repairs and/or surgeries performed by Dr. Avery Berkowitz at [Maine Wildlife Rehabilitation](#).



Phoebes!

Eastern Phoebes start their families in June, and 30-some orphaned youngsters have been admitted in past weeks. Among them have been several like those in the photo to the upper right – so recently hatched as to earn the moniker “egglets.”



As egglets mature here, they are joined by others a little older at the time they were orphaned. One adoptive family of five is shown to the left.

Other Kinds of Egglets: House Finches

As our skills with newly-hatched songbirds became known, we were sometimes asked to take egglets whose species had not been identified. Some turned out to be species outside our specialty range, including two clutches of House Finches (shown here as nestlings and fledglings).



More Egglets: Starlings

On two occasions, birds that turned out to be European Starlings arrived either while in the process of hatching or shortly after hatching. Often mistaken for American Robins at this young age, their wide mouths soon provided the definitive clue to their identity.



Chickadees

Another unanticipated admission was a clutch of orphaned Black-capped Chickadees. They needed help immediately (one had already died), and in that particular time and location, Flight Plan was able to provide it.

Once they had stabilized, putting their needs first, we decided to keep them here rather than subject them to the stress of relocation to another center.



Kshanti Greene



They took over the Sunroom when they fledged, creating a temporary housing shortage for other guests!

House Wrens

House Wrens are cavity nesters that prefer to remain out of sight. They thrive in private habitats strewn with brush – but when it was time for these two to stretch their wings, the Sunroom and Flight Cage were already occupied by species with different furniture arrangements!

The solution was a pop-up tent that could tuck into a corner of the Flight Cage. Furnished with boughs from a hemlock that had come down in a winter storm, the tent provided the perfect habitat for fledgling wrens, while additional tenants did their own thing in other parts of the Flight Cage.

The two fledglings were released into a thicket on property hosting other House Wrens, one of which came over to greet the newcomers!



Laura Suomi-Lecker

Help Wanted!

We'd planned ahead for the Turtle Center, and we had expected the usual array of aerial insectivores, but an increasing range of species meant increases in supplies and equipment!



We've needed more of just about everything, including habitats (like the tent for the House Wrens), a second brooder, double our weekly mealworm order, and a wider variety of foodstuffs.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to folks chipping in with [funding](#) to help give Flight Plan's birds and turtles a fighting chance!



Kshanti Greene

Assistance with care-giving, transportation, habitat work, and photography were provided by operation team-mates Kshanti Greene, Terry Heitz, Deb Huard, and Sue Stone.

What's Up Next?

Breeding season for flycatcher and swallow species is underway but can last through July, so we'll continue to admit them in the weeks ahead. In fact, more Barn Swallows and Eastern Phoebes have recently arrived – and we've almost reached our 2024 total of 113 birds!



Mid-late July is a typical hatching timeframe for Chimney Swifts! We're expecting to admit orphaned swifts very soon, and we'll tell you about them in an end-of-summer installment.

Flight Plan greatly appreciates the continuing support of Regional and Species Specialist Biologists with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Until then,
Diane
& Marc