

Key West Wildlife Center Board of Directors 2013

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Key West Wildlife Center

MISSION

The Mission of The Key West Wildlife Center is to ensure the future of our diverse native wildlife by providing timely rescues and quality rehabilitation with the hope of release back to the wild.

The Key West Wildlife Center is located inside of the seven acre Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park at 1801 White Street in Key West Florida. We are open every day of the year from 9am-5pm. Visit and enjoy observing native flora and fauna while walking on the paved trail through the indigenous park. The nature walk includes a freshwater pond and two aviaries. The center is great spot for observing migratory birds in both the fall and spring. The Key West Wildlife Center operates a clinic on the property that enables us to provide treatment to injured and sick wildlife.

WHAT IS WILDLIFE REHABILITATION?

The goal of wildlife rehabilitation is to provide professional care to sick, injured, and orphaned wild animals so ultimately they can be returned to their natural habitat. Occasionally, individual animals that have recovered from their injuries but are not able to survive in the wild are placed in educational settings if they meet a strict permitting criteria.

WILDBIRD & WILDLIFE SERVICES:

The Key West Wildlife Center provides rescue and rehabilitative care to over 1200 native wild animals a year with a focus on wild birds. The Center also rescues Sea Turtles and responds in support of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation to get eyes on injured marine mammals and terrestrial mammals. We provide 24-hour emergency rescue services for wildlife from mile marker 0-15 in Key West. Our focus is on rescuing, rehabilitating, and returning our patients back to the wild. We have a small number of permanent residents who serve as wildlife ambassadors for environmental educational purposes. Presently the Key West Wildlife Center's annual budget for our wildlife rehabilitation program is approximately \$50,000.00 of which one hundred percent comes from donations.

CHICKEN SERVICES:

While our wildlife rescue and rehabilitation services are solely funded through donations, our chicken services are funded by the City of Key West. Since 2009, the Wildlife Center has been part of a concession agreement with the City of Key West to provide rescue, medical, nutritional and relocation/adoption services for local feral chickens. Our annual budget for the City of Key West's chicken program is approximately \$49,000. We strive to provide the best possible environment for the chickens under our care with an emphasis on nutrition and cleanliness. We rescue many sick, orphaned, and injured local chickens as a result of car strikes, respiratory diseases, avian pox, botulism, cock-fighting injuries, broken legs, wing injuries, and eye injuries, just to name a few. Our center focuses on all aspects of optimal nutrition and a clean facility to help rehabilitate the sick and injured birds we rescue. We provide high protein chicken feed and add fresh produce as a dietary enhancement donated by St. Mary's Star of the Sea Mission. We provide medical care to help sick and injured birds get in optimal shape before we find them new homes. We also partner with the citizens of Key West to

provide solutions for chickens that are not wanted on their private property or businesses. Citizens or businesses can borrow humane chicken traps for a totally refundable security deposit of \$100.00 to trap chickens on their own property. It is the individuals or businesses responsibility to bring the chickens to the center in a timely manner. The chickens brought to us are provided care and then given new homes on the Florida mainland. For individuals or businesses who do not wish to trap the birds themselves, we also work with independent local Belinda Coyner who will trap chickens for a fee and then bring them to our center.

WHERE DO THE CHICKENS GO?

Since June of 2011 we have worked pro-actively to find a number of properties and partner with individuals on the Florida mainland who can provide care and good homes for Key West chickens. Some of our rescued chickens are housed on an organic orange orchard in Lake Worth to provide pesticide free bug control. There is a 3000 acre farm animal rescue ranch near Lake Okeechobee that also provides space for our birds. In August of 2012 we partnered with a ranch in the Fort Meyers area that has an eight acre property to provide a loving home for our chickens. These are just a few of the locations we have found where caring individuals maintain properties that provide ideal homes for the Key West chickens.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

The Key West Wildlife Center hosts many different educational activities during the year. We work closely with local non-profit Reef Relief by hosting a weekly educational program with a focus on environmental issues and respect for the environment with an emphasis on native versus non-native issues for their Summer Coral Camp. We host the Kindergarten class of Sigsbee Charter School in a tour every year to discuss issues relating to wild birds and the environment. Other schools that tour our facility include Key West Montessori and Home School groups. We host tours of our facility for the United States Navy, Coast Guard and various school and church youth groups in coordination with volunteer projects. We have presented educational programs to The Audubon Society of the Florida Keys concerning local Least Tern nesting populations. We presented a talk on our rescue and rehabilitation programs to The Mel Fisher Museum. We open our facility to behind the scenes tours for the Florida Keys Birding and Wildlife Festival as well as present an educational program at the Migration Mania Festival hosted annually by the Key West Botanical Garden.

PAVILION RENTAL:

We provide affordable party rental location for the Key West Community at the Pavilion in the Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park. We allow families a low cost rental fee in order to host birthday parties, wedding parties, bridal, and baby showers. These events are very popular and allow local working families to celebrate events year round at an affordable venue. These events are available to all in the community and are very well utilized by the local Cuban, Haitian, Bahamian, and Conch Communities. We also rent the Pavilion at little or no cost for the Southernmost Runners Club and the Southernmost Bocce Club for league play and awards ceremonies. We maintain a public restroom facility that is open every day of the year and in the evenings for holidays like the Fourth of July and festivals such as the Reggae Moon Splash and Bike Week.