

# *The Bald Eagle That Would Not Quit*

## **Full Transcript**

0:00:05.000,0:00:15.000

That particular bald eagle was found by a rancher about four or five miles west of Cedar City, Utah.

0:00:15.000,0:00:25.000

The eagle was on the ground, the rancher was a little concerned because the eagle looked like it was tame, it would just sit there.

0:00:25.000,0:00:30.000

The eagle sat there for a couple of days, then the rancher decided to give me a call.

0:00:30.000,0:00:35.000

That the eagle just wasn't moving and wondering if the eagle might be sick

0:00:35.000,0:00:39.000

When I first saw the eagle it was sitting under a group of cotton wood trees

0:00:39.000,0:00:42.000

Well you're standing, that's a good sign

0:00:42.000,0:00:53.000

No apparent injury, it was quite a ways from power lines and quite away from roads.

0:00:53.000,0:00:59.000

So not really understanding what could be causing the eagle to just be sitting there

0:00:59.000,0:01:04.000

I carefully approached the eagle and the eagle refused to move

0:01:04.000,0:01:12.000

Hi, how are you? You're sure a pretty thing.

0:01:12.000,0:01:20.000

And I scooped the eagle up and gave it a quick check over and it was incredibly skinny.

0:01:20.000,0:01:25.000

Which is a bad sign it hasn't been eating for a very long time

0:01:25.000,0:01:30.000

Probably hadn't had a meal in two, almost three weeks.

0:01:30.000,0:01:38.000

So obviously it went from a mild concern to a really critical condition

0:01:38.000,0:01:45.000

We determined that lead poisoning was the issue, because we couldn't find any physical injuries

0:01:45.000,0:01:48.000

the eagle had severe neurological issues

0:01:48.000,0:01:54.000

You treat the symptoms, you want to make sure the eagle gets lots of food, lots of fluids

0:01:54.000,0:02:01.000

subcutaneous IVs are in order, fluids, feeding tubes, medications

0:02:01.000,0:02:11.000

As far as being able to identify the issues, that really comes with experience.

0:02:11.000,0:02:18.000

You know I've been caring for these animals for the past 48 years

0:02:18.000,0:02:25.000

and I've got a pretty good handle on a variety of illnesses, diseases, injuries that occur

0:02:25.000,0:02:27.000

I really hate when they're too sick to bite.

0:02:27.000,0:02:33.000

All of the animals that come to our rescue center, at least almost all of them, are in absolutely critical condition

0:02:33.000,0:02:45.000

and it's a really bad thing when the animal just sits very quietly in the transport kennel and won't move and won't fight back

0:02:45.000,0:02:50.000

and those kinds of things, so I have to reach in a grab him

0:02:50.000,0:02:54.000

if he just lays there or sits there and acts tame

0:02:54.000,0:03:00.000

we know that eagle is in really poor shape

0:03:00.000,0:03:03.000

and so immediately we bring him out of the kennel

0:03:03.000,0:03:07.000

as quickly as possible get food and fluids into him

0:03:07.000,0:03:11.000

give him a thorough health examination

0:03:11.000,0:03:18.000

and then start to plan the treatment that the eagle will receive

0:03:18.000,0:03:20.000

in hopes of saving its life

0:03:20.000,0:03:23.000

and so that's kind of the point

0:03:23.000,0:03:28.000

any time that you see an animal, an wild animal that appears to be tame

0:03:28.000,0:03:30.000

it is deathly ill.

0:03:30.000,0:03:34.000

They do not want to socialize with us, they don't want to be a part of us

0:03:34.000,0:03:37.000

They just want to be back in the wild and left alone.

0:03:38.000,0:03:43.000

This particular eagle was in absolute critical condition

0:03:43.000,0:03:47.000

It had lost more than half its body weight

0:03:47.000,0:03:53.000

It probably was not going to survive

0:03:53.000,0:03:57.000

No matter what we did to help this poor animal

0:03:57.000,0:04:04.000

and I'm a little bit sensitive to not wanting to videotape

0:04:04.000,0:04:07.000

what I call dead eagles

0:04:07.000,0:04:12.000

and so my wife Susan says let's go video tape this

0:04:12.000,0:04:15.000

and I say, no, no, it

0:04:15.000,0:04:19.000

it probably wasn't going to worth the time to videotape it

0:04:19.000,0:04:25.000

this eagle has a very, very slim chance of survival

0:04:25.000,0:04:31.000

and so with extreme intensive care

0:04:31.000,0:04:34.000

for 11 days

0:04:34.000,0:04:38.000

where the eagle couldn't stand, couldn't move

0:04:38.000,0:04:42.000

and like I said feeding tubes and everything we could do

0:04:42.000,0:04:45.000

just to try to keep the poor little thing alive

0:04:45.000,0:04:49.000

after 11 days Susan approached me again

0:04:49.000,0:04:52.000

and says what about taking some videos

0:04:52.000,0:04:55.000

and very very reluctantly, I said okay.

0:04:55.000,0:05:00.000

and so from the video of me acquiring the eagle

0:05:00.000,0:05:03.000

and getting it out of its airport kennel

0:05:03.000,0:05:07.000

to the very first video you see of me feeding the eagle

0:05:07.000,0:05:13.000

there was an 11 day period in there where I truly didn't believe the eagle would survive.

0:05:14.000,0:05:16.000

hey little guy

0:05:16.000,0:05:20.000

we're going to start off with some fluids

0:05:20.000,0:05:25.000

By the 11th day, the bird was standing which was a good sign

0:05:25.000,0:05:34.000

and it was the very first time that it was able to stand on a very very low perch

0:05:34.000,0:05:37.000

it was exciting that he was able to step up onto a perch

0:05:37.000,0:05:46.000

my little guy, how are we doing this morning? You want to bite, that's a good thing

0:05:46.000,0:05:55.000

Please understand, I have had animals make it even further than that in the recovery

0:05:55.000,0:05:58.000

and still not survive.

0:05:58.000,0:06:02.000

So there was a little glimmer of hope

0:06:02.000,0:06:05.000

we couldn't allow ourselves to hope too much

0:06:05.000,0:06:08.000

because the disappointment if we lost that eagle

0:06:08.000,0:06:10.000

would have been severe

0:06:10.000,0:06:18.000

that's my boy, okay, there's your fluids and your medicine

0:06:26.000,0:06:30.000

Do you want to try to do this standing on your own or should I hold you?

0:06:30.000,0:06:35.000

Let's see if we can do this with you standing on your own, sweetheart.

0:06:35.000,0:06:38.000

Initially there was three or four feedings a day

0:06:38.000,0:06:42.000

and in the process of the feeding I would

0:06:42.000,0:06:47.000

check the bird's weight and not use a scale

0:06:47.000,0:06:51.000

but I would take my fingers and feel its keel bone, its breast bone

0:06:51.000,0:06:56.000

and as the eagle regains strength

0:06:56.000,0:07:03.000

and weight, that breast bone, the muscle around the breast bone,

0:07:03.000,0:07:07.000

starts to cover more and more of the bone so the bone doesn't stick out as far.

0:07:10.000,0:07:13.000

Each feeding, three or four feedings a day, each feeding

0:07:13.000,0:07:17.000

would last about ten to fifteen minutes

0:07:18.000,0:07:22.000

and again, this is not an animal that I want to socialize with

0:07:22.000,0:07:23.000

this is not an animal that's a pet

0:07:23.000,0:07:28.000

this is an animal we want it to be wild

0:07:28.000,0:07:31.000

and so the less human contact, the better.

0:07:34.000,0:07:38.000

It would take about twenty minutes to a half hour

0:07:38.000,0:07:42.000

to prepare the food and fluids and medications for it

0:07:42.000,0:07:44.000

the food that we would start off using

0:07:44.000,0:07:48.000

because it would have a difficult time digesting

0:07:48.000,0:07:53.000

we wouldn't use whole animal carcasses

0:07:53.000,0:07:58.000

what we would use is either jack rabbit meat, cotton tail meat

0:07:58.000,0:08:01.000

pigeon breast, quail breast,

0:08:01.000,0:08:08.000

again, natural foods, and as the eagle continued to get stronger and stronger

0:08:08.000,0:08:12.000

then we could start giving what we call casting material

0:08:12.000,0:08:15.000

and that would consist of whole mice

0:08:15.000,0:08:20.000

for the eagle so that it would not only get a more complete diet

0:08:20.000,0:08:27.000

it would then be able to regurgitate the pellets to help clean out its digestive system

0:08:27.000,0:08:32.000

and then once the eagle is able to feed itself

0:08:32.000,0:08:34.000

then it would get whole carcasses of rabbits,

0:08:34.000,0:08:41.000

quail, pigeons, rats, mice, and the eagle would be allowed to free feed, or feed itself.

0:08:42.000,0:08:49.000

Our bald eagle, this morning, actually turned around on its perch.

0:08:49.000,0:08:54.000

That might not sound like a big achievement to most of you.

0:08:54.000,0:08:58.000

But in his weakened condition,

0:08:58.000,0:09:03.000

him being able to turn around on a perch...

0:09:03.000,0:09:05.000

remember, all of you who were in gymnastics, and you

0:09:05.000,0:09:07.000

and you practiced on the balance beam

0:09:07.000,0:09:09.000

and how difficult it was to turn on the balance beam?

0:09:09.000,0:09:12.000

Well these guys live on a balance beam their whole life.

0:09:12.000,0:09:16.000

and for him to have the strength and coordination to turn himself around on a perch

0:09:16.000,0:09:20.000

in his condition was a huge achievement

0:09:20.000,0:09:23.000

and so we're very very excited about that

0:09:23.000,0:09:27.000

this guy right here was incredibly ill

0:09:27.000,0:09:30.000

all indications were lead poisoning

0:09:30.000,0:09:33.000

he's got some neurological issues

0:09:33.000,0:09:37.000

he may have some vision issues

0:09:37.000,0:09:41.000

and we have saved his life

0:09:41.000,0:09:44.000

we are able to feed him, he's able to perch

0:09:44.000,0:09:50.000

and whether or not he will be able to become

0:09:50.000,0:09:52.000

physically fit enough to be able to return to the wild

0:09:52.000,0:09:55.000

we won't know that for months

0:09:55.000,0:09:58.000

but that's the goal, to get this guy back to the wild

0:10:00.000,0:10:02.000

Now here's the sad part, by federal law

0:10:02.000,0:10:06.000

if we can not return this eagle back to the wild

0:10:06.000,0:10:09.000

the eagle can be placed in an educational program

0:10:09.000,0:10:13.000

or the eagle must be euthanized.

0:10:13.000,0:10:16.000

and that, that just tears me apart

0:10:16.000,0:10:19.000

I've been caring for these guys for 47 years

0:10:19.000,0:10:22.000

and it just terrifies me thought

0:10:22.000,0:10:24.000

of working with this eagle for six months

0:10:24.000,0:10:29.000

and he not be able to be releasable

0:10:29.000,0:10:32.000

and that I will have to euthanize him

0:10:32.000,0:10:37.000

and I promise all of you that will be an extremely bad day for me.

0:10:40.000,0:10:46.000

That is why it's so very very important that we get the Cedar Canyon Nature Park up and running

0:10:46.000,0:10:48.000

The Cedar Canyon Nature Park will be a place

0:10:48.000,0:10:55.000

where non-releasable wildlife can be placed in natural habitats

0:10:55.000,0:10:58.000

and be used for wildlife education

0:10:58.000,0:11:03.000

well the first thing I want to do this morning is I want to check and see how much weight he's gained

0:11:03.000,0:11:06.000

and instead of using the scale, I will feel his keel bone, his breast bone

0:11:06.000,0:11:09.000

and, again, don't do this

0:11:09.000,0:11:12.000

this can be very dangerous

0:11:12.000,0:11:16.000

they do bite

0:11:16.000,0:11:19.000

yes you do, huh sweetie

0:11:19.000,0:11:21.000

oh that's a good boy, that's my baby, shhhh

0:11:21.000,0:11:27.000

now see I'm distracting him here to let me get my hands up under here and feel his breast bone

0:11:27.000,0:11:27.000

there's my baby, oh such a good boy

0:11:27.000,0:11:32.000

oh you're doing better

0:11:32.000,0:11:35.000

he's got more weight on his breast bone right here

0:11:35.000,0:11:37.000

which means that he is putting on weight

0:11:37.000,0:11:39.000

so that's very very good

0:11:39.000,0:11:41.000

now that beak right there

0:11:41.000,0:11:44.000

is designed to rip large chunks of flesh

0:11:44.000,0:11:47.000

so he could certainly rip a big chunk of flesh out of my hand

0:11:47.000,0:11:51.000

but I am keeping him very calm here and he's doing okay

0:11:51.000,0:11:54.000

the next thing you have to worry about is his feet

0:11:54.000,0:11:56.000

these feet right here

0:11:56.000,0:11:59.000

600 pounds per square inch of crushing power in those feet

0:11:59.000,0:12:01.000

that's what he kills with

0:12:01.000,0:12:04.000

and he could drive those talons

0:12:04.000,0:12:06.000

through my hand and crush the bones of my hand

0:12:06.000,0:12:08.000

so when your dealing with wild animals

0:12:08.000,0:12:12.000

don't approach them. If you think they're sick

0:12:12.000,0:12:17.000

please call police dispatch, do NOT call 911

0:12:17.000,0:12:20.000

911 is for human emergencies

0:12:20.000,0:12:22.000

Call police dispatch, they will dispatch

0:12:22.000,0:12:25.000

a wildlife rehabilitator like myself or

0:12:25.000,0:12:29.000

a conservation officer who is skilled in handling these animals

0:12:29.000,0:12:31.000

and let them deal with it

0:12:31.000,0:12:33.000

because if you try to handle an animal like this

0:12:33.000,0:12:38.000

you may have to call 911 because it may very well turn into a human emergency

0:12:38.000,0:12:42.000

try to get you to a hospital with an eagle hanging off your arm

0:12:42.000,0:12:48.000

So please do not pick up or approach sick or injured wildlife.

0:12:48.000,0:12:49.000

Well it's time for his breakfast

0:12:49.000,0:12:52.000

and we're very pleased with how he's eating.

0:12:52.000,0:12:56.000

I've got a bag full of mice here

0:12:56.000,0:12:58.000

these are domestically raised mice here

0:12:58.000,0:13:00.000

that we order by the thousand to feed these guys

0:13:00.000,0:13:03.000

please understand these are like two bucks a piece

0:13:03.000,0:13:06.000

so feeding these guys is extremely expensive

0:13:06.000,0:13:10.000

and I use a pair of forceps to keep my fingers a little bit further away

0:13:10.000,0:13:12.000

so he eats the mouse instead of my hand

0:13:12.000,0:13:18.000

there you go, that's my boy

0:13:26.000,0:13:28.000

yes, now you know it's breakfast time, huh?

0:13:37.00,0:13:40.00

It's very important to feed them whole animals

0:13:40.00,0:13:42.00

not just meat

0:13:42.00,0:13:46.00

basically they need the fur, they need the feather, they need the bones

0:13:46.00,0:13:52.00

they need everything in order to help with their digestive system

0:13:52.00,0:13:57.00

and so this guy will put down a pretty good sized meal this morning

0:13:57.00,0:14:00.00

and that's really really good. Like I said he's gaining weight

0:14:00.00,0:14:05.00

he's got sufficient balance, he was able to turn around on his perch

0:14:14.00,0:14:19.00

but he's still very much a long ways from out the woods

0:14:19.00,0:14:23.00

he's got a lot of healing to do still

0:14:23.00,0:14:26.00

before he can be returned to the wild

0:14:41.00,0:14:44.00

k, you 'bout got a full crop there kiddo?

0:14:51.00,0:14:52.00

you had enough?

0:14:52.00,0:14:55.00

okay, that's a pretty good meal, that's almost a whole bag

0:14:55.00,0:14:58.00

okay, one more time, let me check you out here

0:14:58.00,0:15:00.00

yes, I know

0:15:10.00,0:15:14.00

okay, that's a pretty good sized meal that you've got in crop right now

0:15:14.00,0:15:16.00

So you're doing all right

0:15:16.00,0:15:23.00

we'll give you a dinner feeding a little later

0:15:27.00,0:15:29.00

you ready for some breakfast big guy?

0:15:29.00,0:15:32.00

are ya? you ready for breakfast?

0:15:32.00,0:15:35.00

We've had steady progress with the eagle

0:15:35.00,0:15:41.00

He's now jumping up on a perch that is about two and half feet off the ground

0:15:41.00,0:15:45.00

able to turn around, able to perch well

0:15:45.00,0:15:50.00

his balance is coming back, he's still very very weak

0:15:50.00,0:15:54.00

we are feeding him whole animals

0:15:54.00,0:16:00.00

but he still can't, doesn't have the physical strength to stand on a carcass and tear it apart

0:16:00.00,0:16:04.00

to be able to feed himself so we're still hand feeding him

0:16:06.00,0:16:08.00

how you doing sweetheart?

0:16:12.00,0:16:15.00

yeah, that's my boy, you've got a lot more meat on you

0:16:15.00,0:16:17.00

you were so skinny when we gotcha

0:16:17.00,0:16:20.00

you're feeling so much better

0:16:21.00,0:16:26.00

you start with three or four feeding a day and as the eagle starts to gain strength

0:16:26.00,0:16:31.00

and abilities to swallow and to feed itself

0:16:31.00,0:16:34.00

then it goes down to a single feeding a day

0:16:34.00,0:16:40.00

where you put a large portion of food in and allow the eagle to feed itself

0:17:02.00,0:17:07.00

Susan: what is a casting? Tell us what a casting is.

0:17:07.00,0:17:12.00

a casting is what is undigested

0:17:12.00,0:17:13.00

you can see right here

0:17:13.00,0:17:15.00

what we're feeding him is whole mice

0:17:15.00,0:17:19.00

and he'll eat the whole thing

0:17:19.00,0:17:23.00

and then whatever he doesn't digest, the fur and bones and that kind of stuff

0:17:23.00,0:17:28.00

he'll regurgitate into a pellet that comes out

0:17:28.00,0:17:31.00

people are more familiar with owl pellets

0:17:31.00,0:17:34.00

but all birds of prey cast pellets

0:17:35.00,0:17:37.00

here's a pellet, right here

0:17:40.00,0:17:49.00

and this is basically fur and bone and whatever else is not digestible

0:17:49.00,0:17:55.00

and they regurgitate that about 24 hours after they've eaten

0:17:55.00,0:17:58.00

and I gave him an evening meal last night

0:17:58.00,0:18:02.00

and so he might not have brought it back up yet

0:18:02.00,0:18:07.00

so he doesn't want to eat and put food on top of his casting so he can cast a little easier

0:18:28.00,0:18:30.00

and when I bring my hand in here what I'm doing is I'm feeling

0:18:30.00,0:18:38.00

for his keel bone and basically I don't want to pick him up and put him on a scale everyday

0:18:38.00,0:18:43.00

and so I can check and see if he's gaining weight by feeling the keel bone right here

0:18:43.00,0:18:47.00

and he's really put on a tremendous amount of weight since I first got him in

0:18:47.00,0:18:51.00

So that's what I'm doing there is just checking his weight.

0:19:07.00,0:19:08.00

Once you start to eat then you go

0:19:08.00,0:19:10.00

You just have to get him to start

0:19:39.00,0:19:41.00

but as I've told everybody before

0:19:41.00,0:19:43.00

he's not out the woods yet

0:19:43.00,0:19:46.00

he's still very weak

0:19:46.00,0:19:48.00

yes I know, we'll feed you a little later after you've had your casting

0:19:48.00,0:19:51.00

after your casting has come up, we'll give you some breakfast

0:20:00.00,0:20:05.00

you're all right, that's my boy

0:20:06.00,0:20:10.00

the basic rule is that these are wild animals, these are not pets

0:20:10.00,0:20:15.00

and the less human interaction, the better.

0:20:15.00,0:20:20.00

and so we try to minimize all human contact as much as possible.

0:20:21.00,0:20:24.00

Where you're dealing with wildlife

0:20:24.00,0:20:30.00

once they start feeling better and healthier, they do not want to be in captivity

0:20:30.00,0:20:35.00

and that's kind of a point where things get a little bit dangerous

0:20:35.00,0:20:44.00

because you walk in there and you need to continue the physical examination of the bird

0:20:44.00,0:20:47.00

but they don't want to be touched

0:20:47.00,0:20:55.00

as you saw in the earlier videos the eagle just sat there, I could touch his head and touch his chest

0:20:55.00,0:20:57.00

and make sure that he's putting on weight

0:20:57.00,0:21:01.00

once they get to the point where you walk in the chamber

0:21:01.00,0:21:04.00

and they fly across the chamber, they do not want to be touched

0:21:01.00,0:21:07.00

they do not want you to grab them, to hold them

0:21:07.00,0:21:11.00

then it becomes a point where

0:21:11.00,0:21:13.00

you take a pole net

0:21:13.00,0:21:16.00

you still have to do the examinations

0:21:16.00,0:21:18.00

you take a pole net and you walk into the chamber and you net the bird

0:21:18.00,0:21:22.00

grab the bird's feet, watch out for the beak

0:21:22.00,0:21:27.00

because he will certainly at this point and time bite you viciously

0:21:27.00,0:21:33.00

the bird has regained its wild sense of independence

0:21:33.00,0:21:38.00

and it doesn't like the idea of having to socialize with a human

0:21:38.00,0:21:43.00

and so it's a really, really good sign when that eagle flies back and forth across the chamber

0:21:43.00,0:21:46.00

and I have to go net the eagle

0:21:46.00,0:21:48.00

to give it its physical examinations

0:21:48.00,0:21:53.00

and make sure the eagle is getting close to ready for release

0:21:58.00,0:22:00.00

Here's what's going to happen now, I've got to go in and I've got to catch him

0:22:00.00,0:22:02.00

This is a completely wild eagle

0:22:02.00,0:22:04.00

We've had him for a couple months, we want to get him back in the wild

0:22:06.00,0:22:08.00

and I'll be really honest with you, we don't want him to like me

0:22:08.00,0:22:10.00

we want him to be afraid of humans

0:22:10.00,0:22:14.00

when he leaves he'll fly far away and stay away from humans for the rest of his life

0:22:14.00,0:22:15.00

that's a good thing

0:22:15.00,0:22:18.00

Now the net allows me to get him as quickly and efficiently as possible

0:22:18.00,0:22:21.00

So I'm going to step in, I'm going to grab him with the net

0:22:21.00,0:22:24.00

and grab a hold of him then we'll walk him over to the car

0:22:24.00,0:22:28.00

There's my boy

0:22:34.00,0:22:37.00

Shh, shh, shh, shhh

0:22:37.00,0:22:39.00

There's my boy

0:22:43.00,0:22:44.00

gotcha

0:22:44.00,0:22:49.00

sorta got ya

0:22:49.00,0:22:52.00

oh we love that

0:22:52.00,0:22:55.00

like I said, he's not tame, he's fighting like mad

0:22:55.00,0:22:57.00

that's really good, we like that

0:22:57.00,0:23:00.00

He's ready to go back to the wild where he belongs

0:23:00.00,0:23:03.00

Let's get a hold of his feet here

0:23:03.00,0:23:06.00

there we go, there's my boy

0:23:06.00,0:23:12.00

for those of you who have seen the previous videos of this eagle

0:23:12.00,0:23:17.00

you can recognize that he is 100% feisty

0:23:17.00,0:23:21.00

and fighting and he wants to go back to the wild so bad right now

0:23:21.00,0:23:26.00

so that is wonderful, he is ready

0:23:26.00,0:23:29.00

if he wasn't fighting with me, I'd be worried

0:23:29.00,0:23:36.00

since he wants to fight, that's terrific, we are going to get this guy released

0:23:36.00,0:23:43.00

that's the goal to get them back in the wild as quickly as we can

0:23:43.00,0:23:48.00

and efficiently as we can if I can him to let go the net here

0:23:48.00,0:23:51.00

little bit of a hassle but we're almost there

0:23:51.00,0:23:54.00

One more talon to let loose

0:23:54.00,0:23:56.00

There we are, there's my boy

0:23:56.00,0:24:00.00

Oh I know, you can bite me, that's all right

0:24:00.00,0:24:03.00

There's a common belief among many native peoples

0:24:03.00,0:24:08.00

that if you say your prayers to an eagle feather the eagle will carry your prayers to god

0:24:08.00,0:24:11.00

so when I have an eagle that's ready to return back to the wild

0:24:11.00,0:24:16.00

we will frequently seek out individuals or organization that could use some extra prayers

0:24:16.00,0:24:19.00

and give them the opportunity to release the eagle

0:24:19.00,0:24:21.00

herein lies the problem

0:24:21.00,0:24:26.00

by the time I can say okay the eagle is healthy enough

0:24:26.00,0:24:28.00

it's ready to be returned back to the wild

0:24:28.00,0:24:32.00

the eagle is fighting with me

0:24:32.00,0:24:34.00

the eagle does not want to be in captivity

0:24:34.00,0:24:37.00

the eagle could injure himself in captivity

0:24:37.00,0:24:43.00

and so when I call an individual or organization and say

0:24:43.00,0:24:44.00

we need to an eagle release

0:24:44.00,0:24:47.00

the vast majority of times

0:24:47.00,0:24:50.00

they say well okay can we do it next month?

0:24:50.00,0:24:53.00

Can we do it in three or four weeks?

0:24:53.00,0:24:55.00

and the answer is no

0:24:55.00,0:24:58.00

the moment that eagle is ready to be returned to the wild

0:24:58.00,0:25:00.00

he has to be returned to the wild

0:25:00.00,0:25:03.00

okay, now this is a hood

0:25:03.00,0:25:05.00

and this is his stress protection

0:25:05.00,0:25:08.00

these guys their eyesight is so good, a lot of movement

0:25:08.00,0:25:10.00

especially transporting him in the car

0:25:10.00,0:25:13.00

will frighten them, they can injure themselves

0:25:13.00,0:25:16.00

and so we can put the over his head

0:25:16.00,0:25:20.00

and block his vision so he'll sit much quieter in the car, he'll be a lot calmer

0:25:20.00,0:25:24.00

this is his stress protection, this is the first time a hood has gone on his head

0:25:24.00,0:25:26.00

so he's never worn one before

0:25:30.00,0:25:34.00

there we go

0:25:34.00,0:25:39.00

this particular eagle release we basically just said

0:25:39.00,0:25:42.00

anybody that wants to go up to Brian Head

0:25:42.00,0:25:46.00

which is the ski resort northeast of Cedar City

0:25:46.00,0:25:48.00

and stand at the top of the mountain

0:25:48.00,0:25:52.00

and release the eagle, we're going to release the eagle back to the wild

0:25:52.00,0:25:57.00

and we offered everybody, adults, not children

0:25:57.00,0:26:02.00

any adult that was there, if they would like to be the person to actually release the eagle

0:26:02.00,0:26:05.00

we would put their name in a fishbowl

0:26:05.00,0:26:10.00

and draw a name and that's the person that releases the eagle

0:26:10.00,0:26:14.00

the reason that we make any wildlife release public

0:26:14.00,0:26:15.00

especially eagle releases

0:26:15.00,0:26:17.00

is to educate the public

0:26:17.00,0:26:23.00

when I first moved to Southern Utah as a volunteer wildlife rehabilitator

0:26:23.00,0:26:27.00

we were receiving about a dozen shot eagles every year

0:26:27.00,0:26:31.00

and it wasn't that the people of Southern Utah hated eagles, they just saw no value in them

0:26:31.00,0:26:36.00

and so they would drive out through the agricultural areas and say there's a big bird, let's shoot it

0:26:36.00,0:26:41.00

38 years of school programs

0:26:41.00,0:26:43.00

38 years of Scout programs

0:26:43.00,0:26:44.00

38 years of community events

0:26:44.00,0:26:48.00

38 years of wildlife releases for the public's education

0:26:48.00,0:26:53.00

we receive a shot bird of prey about one every other year maybe even less

0:26:53.00,0:26:58.00

and so it's the education, you know,

0:26:58.00,0:27:05.00

that eagle release will save more eagles than I will save in a year

0:27:05.00,0:27:08.00

because the general public gets to see how beautiful they are

0:27:08.00,0:27:10.00

how majestic they are up close and personal

0:27:10.00,0:27:14.00

and see their value and once the eagle is in the sky

0:27:14.00,0:27:17.00

I guarantee every one that attended that eagle release

0:27:17.00,0:27:20.00

when they go back out to eagle habitat

0:27:20.00,0:27:23.00

will be very careful not to injure eagles

0:27:23.00,0:27:29.00

the purpose for the release first is to return the animal back to the wild

0:27:29.00,0:27:31.00

that's the primary focus

0:27:31.00,0:27:33.00

the second is education

0:27:33.00,0:27:40.00

the third is always to help bring awareness to our volunteer wildlife rescue organization

0:27:40.00,0:27:46.00

and so people get the opportunity to see and understand the work that we do

0:27:46.00,0:27:54.00

and like I said, taking the animals out and just turning them loose without the public

0:27:54.00,0:27:58.00

is certainly easier for us, especially me

0:27:58.00,0:28:04.00

but we could release injured wildlife all day long

0:28:04.00,0:28:07.00

but if nobody knows we released them

0:28:07.00,0:28:09.00

and that we cared for them

0:28:09.00,0:28:12.00

then we'd have a very hard time raising money for our wildlife rescue center

0:28:12.00,0:28:21.00

the US Fish and Wildlife service will not allow us to band rehabilitation animals

0:28:21.00,0:28:26.00

now we can band, we can get a banding permit and we can band

0:28:26.00,0:28:31.00

baby eagles in the nest or we can band eagles on their migration

0:28:31.00,0:28:36.00

trap them and take measurements for scientific study

0:28:36.00,0:28:42.00

but they do not allow us to band wildlife rehabilitation animals

0:28:42.00,0:28:44.00

North of town here we have a

0:28:44.00,0:28:46.00

a roosting site where we have

0:28:46.00,0:28:51.00

as many as fifty bald eagles come in and roost in the evenings

0:28:51.00,0:28:55.00

Are any of those the eagles that I rescued?

0:28:55.00,0:28:55.00

maybe, but I have no way of knowing

0:28:58.00,0:29:03.00

I would like to say that this particular eagle stands out

0:29:03.00,0:29:10.00

because of its success and its willingness to fight for its life

0:29:10.00,0:29:14.00

and we were able to return it to the wild

0:29:14.00,0:29:21.00

but that's a story that has occurred in my life hundreds of times

0:29:21.00,0:29:23.00

we need a lot of help

0:29:23.00,0:29:25.00

probably the first and foremost that we need

0:29:25.00,0:29:34.00

is people who have the skills and abilities to raise the funds necessary to build the Cedar Canyon Nature Park

0:29:34.00,0:29:36.00

to build our wildlife rescue center

0:29:36.00,0:29:41.00

to build the visitor center, natural history museum,

0:29:41.00,0:29:45.00

to build the eagle flight cages

0:29:45.00,0:29:54.00

and to build the exhibits where non-releasable wildlife can be on display for the public to see and for educational programs

0:29:54.00,0:30:02.00

then I certainly need skilled individuals who are educators

0:30:02.00,0:30:05.00

to do wildlife programs, I need

0:30:05.00,0:30:11.00

skilled individuals who are highly qualified in veterinary services

0:30:11.00,0:30:14.00

I need builders, I need contractors

0:30:14.00,0:30:15.00

I need custodians

0:30:15.00,0:30:22.00

I need people willing to roll up their sleeves and help to run the Cedar Canyon Nature Park

0:30:22.00,0:30:24.00

and keep it running and beautiful

0:30:24.00,0:30:27.00

I need people with botany experiences

0:30:27.00,0:30:29.00

for the native plants

0:30:29.00,0:30:31.00

There's a million things that I need

0:30:31.00,0:30:35.00

and so, you know, I always say

0:30:35.00,0:30:37.00

and this is so very true

0:30:37.00,0:30:44.00

that everyone not only has skills that we could use

0:30:44.00,0:30:48.00

but everyone knows someone that could help the Cedar Canyon Nature Park

0:30:49.00,0:30:51.00

Everyone wants to play with the animals

0:30:51.00,0:30:53.00

and I certainly understand that

0:30:53.00,0:30:55.00

but these are wild animals

0:30:55.00,0:30:58.00

and because we're working with wild animals

0:30:58.00,0:31:02.00

there's a two year training program you have to go through before you can even volunteer

0:31:02.00,0:31:05.00

So if you really would like to help us

0:31:05.00,0:31:10.00

there's a lot of other avenues that we could really really use

0:31:10.00,0:31:14.00

and in the process if you're local in the Cedar City Utah area

0:31:14.00,0:31:18.00

and would like to eventually be able to work with the animals

0:31:18.00,0:31:22.00

I need you to volunteer in other areas

0:31:22.00,0:31:26.00

to help develop the Cedar Canyon Nature Park and our wildlife rescue center

0:31:26.00,0:31:29.00

and the people that help us do that

0:31:29.00,0:31:31.00

will certainly be first in line

0:31:31.00,0:31:35.00

to be able to work with the sick, injured, orphaned wildlife

0:31:35.00,0:31:37.00

as the nature park develops.

0:31:37.00,0:31:40.00

Susan Tyner: Visit our web site, [gowildlife.org](http://gowildlife.org)

0:31:40.00,0:31:43.00

We've got beautiful wildlife t-shirts

0:31:43.00,0:31:50.00

Martin is an amazing photographer and has beautiful photographs of all kinds of wildlife

0:31:50.00,0:31:52.00

including this eagle

0:31:52.00,0:31:55.00

if you would like to make a donation and

0:31:55.00,0:31:57.00

receive some of his beautiful photography

0:31:57.00,0:32:00.00

we also have a wonderful book out called Healer of Angels

0:32:00.00,0:32:05.00

it's stories of Martin growing up in his youth

0:32:05.00,0:32:08.00

and overcoming a lot of difficulties as a child

0:32:08.00,0:32:12.00

the wisdom of his grandparents, it talks about how

0:32:12.00,0:32:14.00

he got into falconry

0:32:14.00,0:32:17.00

and the first bird he ever got

0:32:17.00,0:32:20.00

all kinds of wonderful stories

0:32:20.00,0:32:22.00

it's very inspirational

0:32:22.00,0:32:24.00

it will have you laughing and some of it will have you crying

0:32:24.00,0:32:27.00

it's a great read, so any of those things

0:32:27.00,0:32:32.00

if you're interested in, it helps us to raise money to build the nature park

0:32:32.00,0:32:35.00

and take care of our wildlife rescue, thank you very much

0:32:35.00,0:32:40.00

Martin: and if anybody would like to make a \$25 donation to the Southwest Wildlife Foundation

0:32:40.00,0:32:46.00

I will send you a beautiful head shot portrait of this bald eagle.

0:32:46.00,0:32:55.00

♪ acoustic guitar music ♪