

# Western Snowy Plover

## From Eggs and Fragile Chicks to Release

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**In 2010, 2 Western Snowy Plover chicks  
and 11 eggs were  
abandoned and then salvaged at the  
Bolsa Chica Wetlands Ecological Reserve.**



**They were hatched, reared and released.  
This is their story.**

# Western Snowy Plover – Pacific Population (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*)

**Listing Status: Threatened**



**Adult Male Incubating Eggs**

Russell Wilson  
Sea and Sage Audubon



# Adult Female



James R. Gallagher  
Sea and Sage Audubon

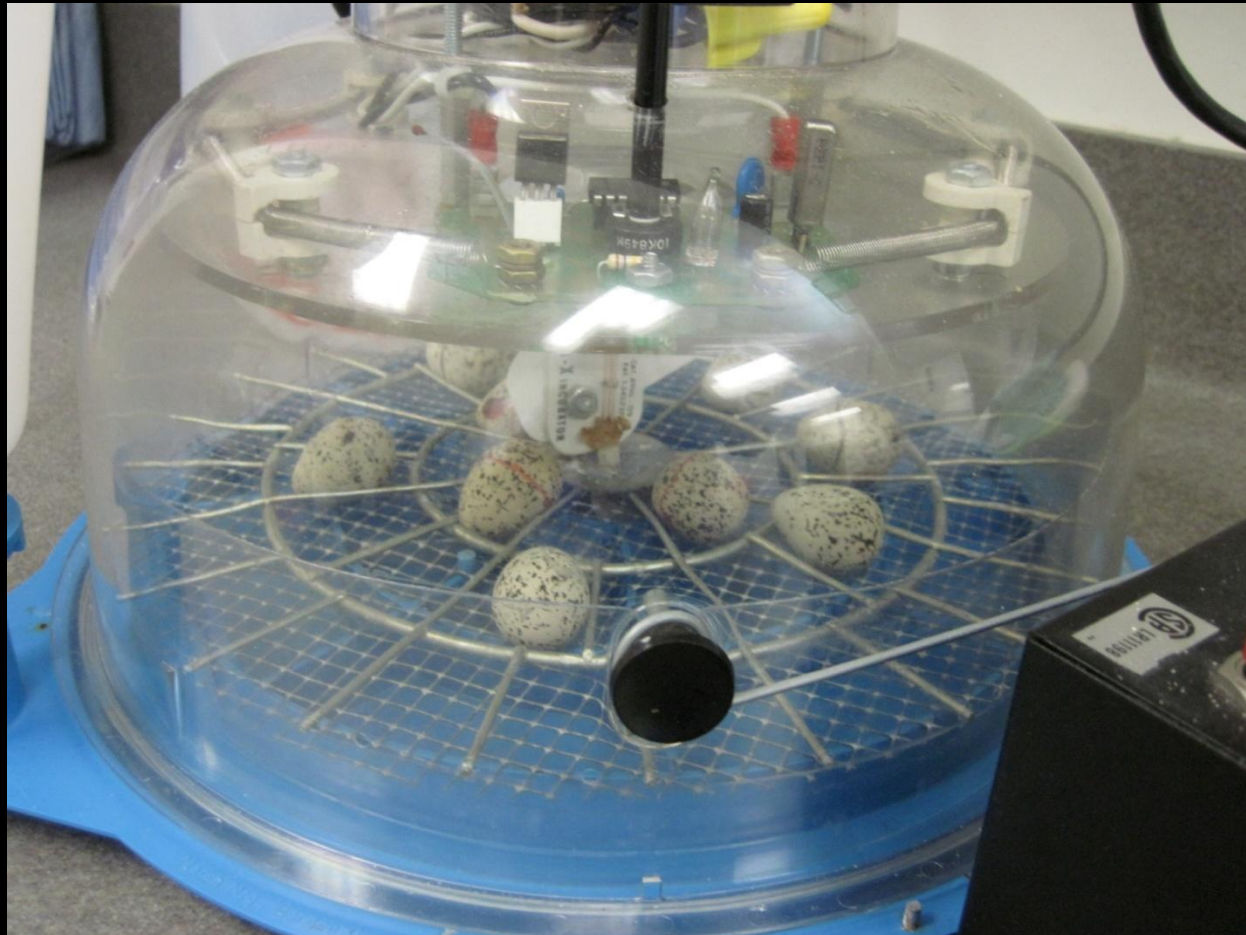
# Juvenile Resting in a Footprint



James R. Gallagher  
Sea and Sage Audubon

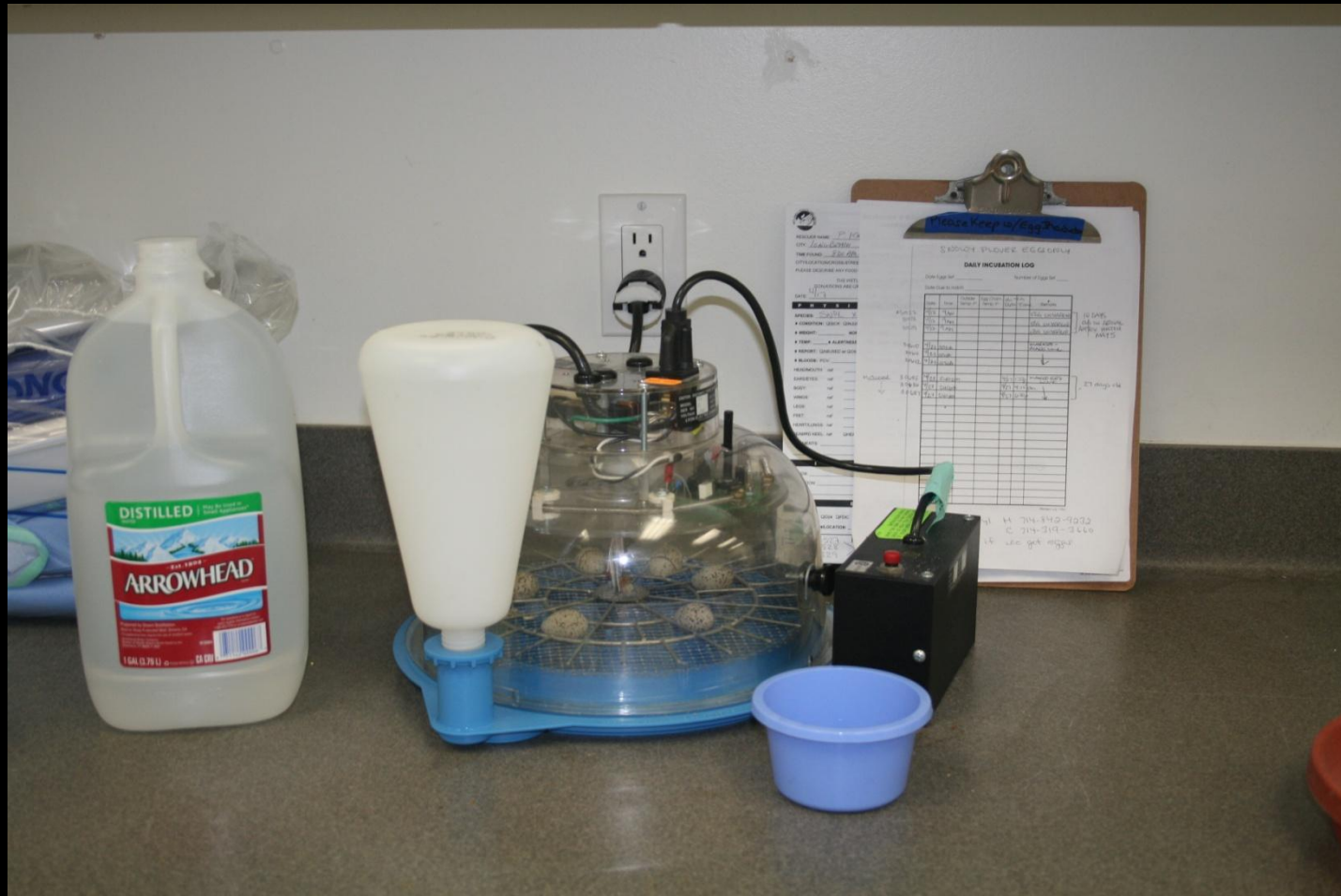


# Egg Incubator with Turning Mechanism and Motor



Ross Griswold

# Egg and Incubator Care



# Chick Hatching Sequence

























# Animal Intensive Care Incubator



# Food



...and live crickets!

Less than One Hour Old







Mirrors and Stuffed Animals make life a little less stressful for the little ones.

**They usually do not eat until ~24 hrs old.  
First Food is in a Very Shallow Dish.**



**Dried bloodworms in very shallow water and ground cat and trout chow on the substrate.**

# One – Two Days Old

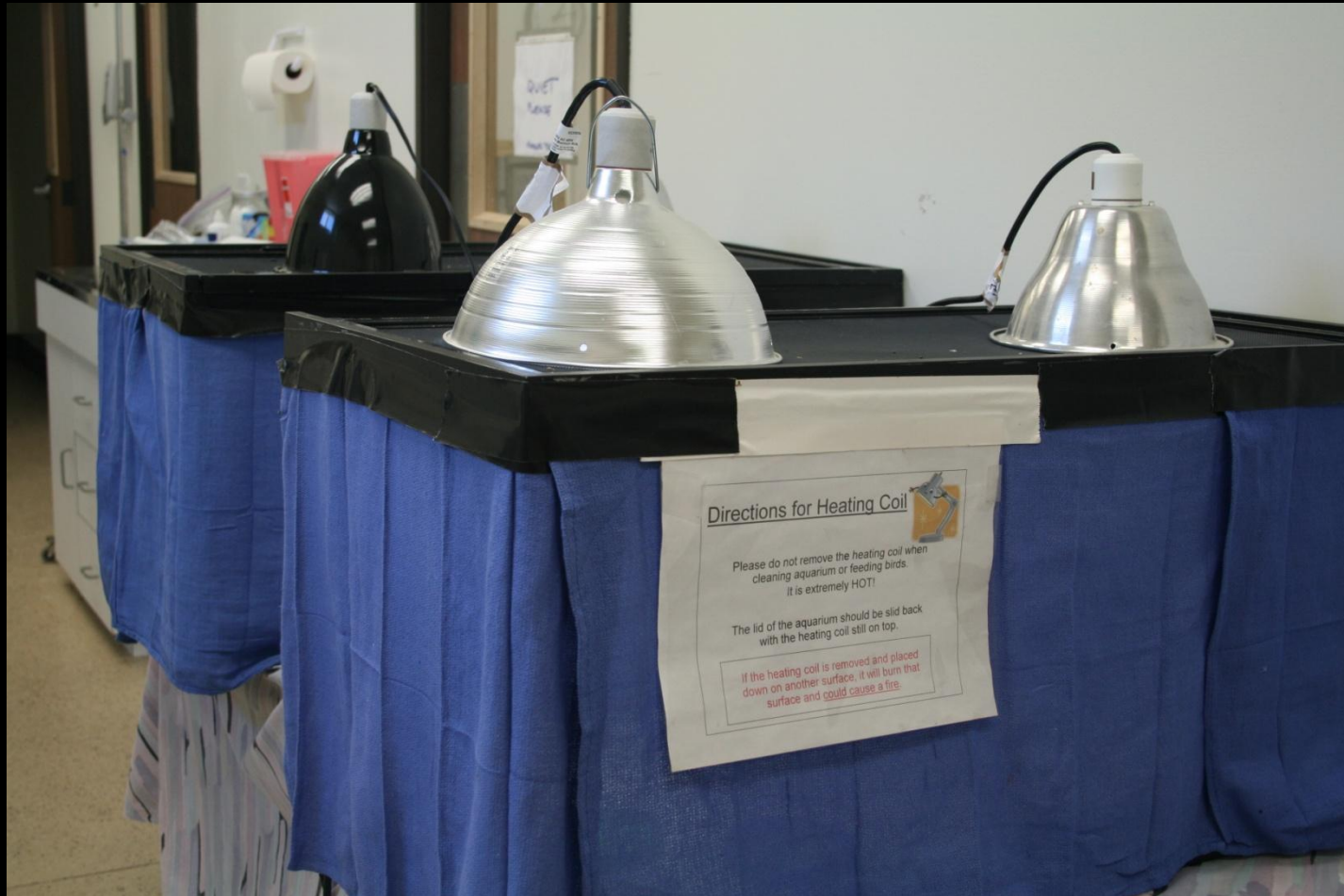


More food items are added





# The Chicks are Moved to Terrariums at 2-3 Days of Age



~ 8 Days Old



Patti Griswold





Monica Frank



Monica Frank

# Banding

The plovers are banded with a USFWS band as well as plastic color bands.



Paige Buccola



**Color tape is put over all of the bands, so they actually have two color bands on each leg.**

**The plastic bands and tape are heat sealed.**



Paige Buccola



Paige Buccola

Each individual has its own unique color combination so that identifications of live birds can be made in the field.



Paige Buccola





Paige Buccola

**The four color bands are read from the left leg to the right leg, top to bottom.**



This one reads yellow buckskin : green blue, or yn:gb  
yellow (y) over buckskin (n) on the left leg  
green (g) over blue (b) on the right leg

# Reporting Color Banded Western Snowy Plovers

## Colors used:

Aqua = a

Black = k

Blue = b

Green = g

Lime = l

Orange = o

Pink = p

Red = r

Violet = v

Yellow = y

White = w

Buckskin = n

Silver (metal  
service  
band)=s

1. Read left leg bands first, top to bottom, then right leg bands, top to bottom
2. Colors can fade – Aqua & Pink may fade to white
3. Important to note the date, color band combination, exact location and if the bird is alive or dead. If bird is dead report metal band numbers as well as color bands..
4. Report color banded Snowy Plovers found in Orange or San Diego Counties to: Cheryl Egger at: [dc.egger@verizon.net](mailto:dc.egger@verizon.net) Then, see #5, below.
5. Report color banded Snowy Plovers found elsewhere to the BBL (Bird Banding Lab) at: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/>



# Moved to Outdoor Aviary at 20-25 Days



Killdeer are raised in the same aviary.  
The two species can be reared together  
if they are similar in age and size.

# Release Box 2010



Designed and built by Peter Knapp



# Adjusting to their New Environment











# Peter Knapp Opening the Doors







**Released Juvenile**  
**yn:br (yellow over buckskin,**  
**blue over red)**



~35 days old

Although it is best for them to be successful breeders in the wild, in 2010, 13 Western Snowy Plovers are back into the wild that would not have survived without human intervention!