

FRIENDS OF BALLONA WETLANDS

May 5, 2006

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MALLARD MISSION NOT IMPOSSIBLE

Playa del Rey - Neighbors on Manchester Blvd. came to the rescue of a mother Mallard duck and her 10 ducklings yesterday. Jerry and Regina Rodman saw the bewildered family scuttling back and forth across Manchester Blvd., Momma in front of her frightened brood. Desperate to know how to handle the situation, Regina and Jerry called Friends of Ballona Wetlands, where Board Member Lisa Fimiani (also on the State Board of the Audubon Society), who knows her way around birds, immediately responded. When she arrived on the scene, Jerry, Regina, and their neighbors, Florrie Goldman and Laura Yost, had been attempting to capture the duck family for over an hour. They had managed to catch Mom and had her in a cat carrier case. Seven of the ten ducklings were also rescued and safely ensconced in a cardboard box. But three were still missing. The rescuers and two other neighbors searched everywhere – including under cars, in driveways, in parking lots – with no luck. Then, to their horror, they spied them scooting out from a driveway, heading straight for the street. Some of the rescuers got out in the street, stopping traffic, while the others corralled the last ducklings under parked cars and deposited them in the box with their siblings.

The rescuers had been in contact with Dr. Edith Read, manager of the Ballona Freshwater Marsh, who offered to take in the family. Depositing the Mallards in their car, they met with Dr. Read and released the brood at the shore of the marsh. Momma went first and she really knew what to do – bee-lining across the marsh into the protective tall reeds with her big brood paddling madly to keep up with her. An American Coot got too close to the ducklings and Momma gave it what-for. Two male Mallards on the prowl followed for a while, but Momma wasn't the least bit interested and they gave up.

According to Lisa Fimiani, lost duck broods are an all too common scenario that often ends sadly. “I understand from the IBRRC (International Bird Rescue Research Center) that there are many orphaned Mallard ducklings at this time of year who've lost their parents in perilous situations -- over 100 at the Center alone. We are so glad we could give this story a happy ending, thanks to people like Jerry and Regina and their neighbors. These are the people who take time out of their busy schedules to save the world – one duckling at a time.”

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