



The bird doctors

When wild birds get sick or are injured, they have no master to turn to for help. But they have friends in the licensed wildlife rehabilitators who volunteer their time and resources to help the creatures recover. Hope, a blinded owl, has such a friend in Cindy Westra, 37, who lives between Bithlo and

Chuluota in east Orange County. Westra has been caring for the bird for about a month. After eating a poisoned rat and being temporarily paralyzed from the poison, Hope was struck by a car. The bird is gentle, and Westra thinks that is because it suffered brain damage. She won't release Hope

back to the wild, but will include the owl in the 'Back to Nature' educational tour that she and partner Carmen Shaw conduct at schools. Another star of the tour is Nina, the aninga (below) that has been with Westra for 7 months. The bird has a broken wing joint.