



An American Wigeon convalesces in a pool in preparation for release into natural habitat.

International leader in wildlife rehabilitation grew from grassroots

This special anniversary edition of *To The Rescue* is dedicated to the growth and advancement of Wildlife Rescue Association of BC from its humble beginnings over four decades ago. It's hard to fathom that in the beginning the only support for injured and orphaned wildlife was provided by just a few dedicated and passionate individuals from their homes.

Over the years Wildlife Rescue Association has moved from a grassroots effort of devoted individuals passionate about helping animals, to an internationally recognized organization with professional standards of care. Wildlife Rescue Association was the first centre in Canada, and a respected pillar of knowledge to the global rehabilitation community.

This concentrated effort of a few dedicated volunteers led to the creations of Lower Mainland Wildlife Rescue Association in 1979 and gradually, as the reputation of the organization grew, the new name of WRA Wildlife Rescue Association of

BC was adopted. Within a few years, the organization had moved to its current location on the south shore of Burnaby Lake, where customized indoor and outdoor facilities were constructed to help Wildlife Rescue accommodate the increasing caseload and provide substantial improvement to wildlife care. During the early years the facility was only open during the summer months. Grants were scarce and it wasn't until 1985 that Wildlife Rescue transitioned into a year-round operation and was able to hire the first full-time employee.

Liz Thunstrom, Past President of

Grassroots
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Message from the Executive Directors

We are so excited to bring you this 40th Anniversary edition of *To The Rescue*. This milestone and achievement of success is due to the contributions and commitment from thousands of people who highly value the importance of Canada's wildlife. Thank you for being a part of this wonderful community.

This newsletter looks back at the hard work and memories that have accumulated over this time. To start off, we want to give you an update of most recent developments.

In 2018 we looked to the future by taking steps towards new significant growth. Changes were made to our current facilities and operations that include expanding much needed programs.

A large development is the Outpatient Care Program, which encompasses three complicated aspects of wildlife services; the Helpline, Rescue Operations and Hospital Admissions. The Helpline handles all the incoming calls from public, animal shelters, veterinary clinics and other partners, 18,302 calls in 2018 to be precise. This team coordinates the next steps; education and information is shared, wildlife situations are assessed to provide wildlife with the best path forward. When needed our Rescue teams are dispatched. This highly skilled team of volunteers are deployed to assess the animal's situation, return young to their parents whenever possible and capture and transport injured or truly orphaned wildlife. Our Admissions team takes in all animals arriving at the hospital from the rescue team and from the public. Building on the experiences of the summer of 2017, the Health Check Program was introduced in 2018. Outpatient team members work with the public to keep young, healthy birds with their parents and often reunite the babies that have taken into care by well meaning citizens.

In 2018, the wildlife hospital became very involved in a Canadian Wildlife Service program involving Trumpeter Swans that suffer from lead poisoning. Acquiring a machine that tests for lead levels in blood was acquired, made possible by a generous donor. The information provided allows the wildlife technicians to provide more accurate diagnosis and thus best treatment and outcome for each individual animal.

Growth continues in the Fund Development team as well. The hire of a Development Director and new Communications Coordinator allows us to build stronger donor programs, apply for important grant opportunities, manage innovative campaigns, expand social media



**Co-Executive Directors
Linda Bakker and Coleen Doucette**

outreach and develop a structured long-term strategy for fundraising.

As we look to the next 40 years of success, the Board and Executive Team are developing plans for improvements of property and facilities, including a new wildlife hospital. We have designed a staged approach that takes many things into consideration, above all, the needs of wildlife. You will see more changes occurring, in order to increase our ability to save more lives.

~ Linda and Coleen

Wildlife Rescue Association of BC

5216 Glencarin Drive
Burnaby, BC V5B 3C1 Canada

WILDLIFE HELPLINE **604-526-7275**
ADMINISTRATION **604-526-2747**
EMAIL **info@wildliferescue.ca**
WEB **www.wildliferescue.ca**
INSTAGRAM **@wildliferescue**
FACEBOOK **wildliferescue**
YOU TUBE **Wildlife Rescue**
TWITTER **WRAofBC**

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EDITOR **Vindi Sekhon**
PHOTOS **Paul Steeves**
DESIGN **Norisa Anderson**
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Grassroots

Continued from Page 1

the Wildlife Rehabilitators Network of BC, and former Wildlife Rescue volunteer and staff person, says the early years were remarkable. “This organization established from its humble beginnings at our first home in Nature House, to the current location is still reputable today because it was founded by a collective group of people passionate about animals,” says Liz. “Wildlife Rescue was always run by a board of directors who brought in a lot of viewpoints that truly focused on the welfare of animals. This is still true today because animals have helped shape the way and we continue to see that as the organization continues to respond to the changing needs.”

Volunteers played a vital role in shaping the formation of this organization, ensuring the rehabilitation and education supporting wildlife care was always in the forefront. “We did not have phone lines to respond to public inquiries, I oversaw the volunteer, education and animal care programs with limited resources and with individuals that were available. The use of social media and technology were obscure during those early years,” shares Liz, laughing. “You all have become so professional,” she adds on.

Liz shares a memorable story that captures the improvised protocols that were in place during the early years. A broken beaver dam in Surrey, left a young beaver orphaned from its family. The kit was still nursing and required 24/7 care. Liz had a pool in the back, so she brought the beaver home to ensure development in water was provided while nursing the baby beaver until its teeth were fully erupted. “Once the teeth met, it wanted nothing to do with me” says Liz. She often took coyotes, raccoons and herons to her home for round-the-clock care. These protocols have drastically changed in the last four

decades. We have specialized on-site facilities with staff and volunteers who oversee the growth and progress of animals in care.

“Longtime volunteer Diane Simmons would feed squirrels under her desk as the secretary to the Mayor of Port Moody,” shares Liz. “We did the best we could with what we had and somehow it always came together.” During those early years the government granted permission to raise raccoons and beavers at home, so young mammals were taken home in

business operations,” says Coleen. “Animal care operations had grown faster than the business foundation that supported programs. Providing animal care had primarily been reactionary and in the last few years we have become more responsive to the changing needs of urban environments and the care we are providing animals.”

Working within the governments regulatory requirements, the vision, mission and values have always remained the same with the purpose

Wildlife Rescue Association has moved from a grassroots effort of devoted individuals passionate about helping animals, to an internationally recognized organization with professional standards of care.

backpacks. At the Centre, “A coyote in care jumped up and chewed its way through a window, the same situations happened with a woodpecker and a beaver. We had to put bars on the windows after that to protect them from escaping,” says Paul Steeves, longtime volunteer and photographer for Wildlife Rescue Association. “A lot of trial and error took place during the early years to meet the construction needs that would ensure the safety of the animals.”

Following in the footsteps of many talented people, Coleen Doucette stepped into the role of Executive Director in 2015. After several years on the Board of Directors, she understood that there was a growing need to expand the business infrastructure to align with the rapid increase in animal caseload. “From 2009 to 2015 there was a massive influx of patients needing care. This increase demanded the organization to grow its practices and standardize

to continually improve the welfare of urban wildlife. Within the last five years, Wildlife Rescue has established new systems and programs to meet the expanding needs of wildlife and educating the public. Our programs support the public with on the spot information as to how and when to intervene for the good of the animal, as well as providing the highest standards of medical and rehabilitative care.

Wildlife Rescue Association continues to provide leadership, education and optimal care to rescue wildlife. Wildlife Rescue has treated over 110,000 animals since its beginning. All of this was made possible because of the generous time, effort and resources of volunteers, donors, staff, businesses, community sponsors and collaborators.



1979: In 1979, members of the public had limited options if they came across a wild animal in distress. Recognizing the need, a group of individuals formed the Lower Mainland Wildlife Rescue Association. Some of the initial founders included Dan Mulligan, Jeff Lawson, David Jackson, Joley Aldam-Switzer, Linda Chandler and Rose McGavin.

1980: The Lower Mainland Wildlife Rescue Association opens its doors at the Nature House on the North shore of Burnaby Lake for the summer months, with three part-time staff and several volunteers. The number of animals admitted for care is less than 200.

1982: As word spreads, more people turn to Wildlife Rescue when they find animals in distress. The annual caseload increases to 800 animals, of which a large proportion are birds.

1984: The first full-time employee is hired, in the role of facility coordinator.

1985: The Association is renamed to Wildlife Rescue Association of BC and opens year-round.

- Wildlife Rescue treats 52 oiled birds, which represents the first oil spill rehabilitation response.

1987: Wildlife Rescue relocates to its current site on Glencarin Drive. Patients are initially housed in the administration building. The hospital building, and first aviaries are subsequently built with support from Chevron Canada Ltd.

1990: Wildlife Rescue hosts the International Wildlife Rehabilitators' Council (IWRC) conference. This was the first ever international wildlife rehabilitators conference held in Canada.

1992 – 1996: Several animal care buildings are constructed thanks to a volunteer building crew as well as generous support from donors in the community. Wildlife Rescue's capacity expands to include a two-story raptor recovery flight pen, a waterfowl rehabilitation pen, a swan pen, and a mammal pen.

1999: Wildlife Rescue Celebrates its 20th Anniversary.

2003: TD Friends of the Environment supports Wildlife Rescue's education initiatives.

2004: Annual hospital caseload has gradually increased to 3,300 animals a year. Wildlife Rescue receives approximately 12,000 public inquiries regarding wildlife. There are now six full-time employees, two part-time employees and approximately 100 are now working at Wildlife Rescue.

2007: With support from Vancouver Foundation and Chevron Canada Ltd., Wildlife Rescue adds a new songbird aviary in memory of Hal Finan – a Wildlife Rescue Volunteer. After a pipeline release in Burnaby that spilled 224,000 liters oil into Burrard inlet, Wildlife Rescue staff and volunteers are involved with the cleaning and rehabilitation of 20 oiled birds.

2009: Indoor facilities, including pools, an on-demand propane heater, and an air scrubber, are constructed in order to assist in facilitating the special care of diving bird species.

- Wildlife Rescue celebrates its 30th anniversary. 65,000 patients have been treated since 1979, which represent 292 different animals species.

2010: The first fledgling aviaries are built, which allow fledgling birds to strengthen their wing muscles and hone their flying skills before release.

2011: Installation of the radiology suite expands diagnostic capabilities so that staff can better assess and treat broken bones and other internal injuries.

2015: 531 garter snakes are rescued from their winter den at a Delta, BC construction site and brought to Wildlife Rescue Hospital. Three different subspecies are identified during further examinations. 14 snakes need medical treatment, whilst the others are kept in hibernation until they are ready to be tagged by provincial biologists and released back to the wild.

- The Marathassa oil spill at English Bay captures the public's attention, however has minimal impact on wildlife. Wildlife Rescue captures and treats three Buffleheads covered in oil.
- Gosling Rooftop Rescue program is launched in response to a high volume of concerned calls from the public. Rooftop goose nests are mapped, in order to streamline future rescues and outreach / education programs.

Photo Left: Wildlife Rescue Association of BC follows internationally developed and respected procedures and protocols.



Photo Right: The charming Wildlife Hospital building is slated for demolition and plans for a replacement facility are being drawn up.



2016: A case of 62 gulls covered in tofu in Eastside Vancouver, requires Wildlife Rescue staff and volunteers to rescue and rehabilitate gulls over a span of two weeks.

- In the winter of 2016, Wildlife Rescue's 30-year old hospital succumbed to heavy snow and rainfall. The resultant wood rot and water damage forced staff to close the building. Generous support from the community enabled staff to renovate and convert other animal care units to serve as a medical exam unit, indoor rehabilitation unit, and other key animal care operations.

2017: Wildlife Rescue hits animal care milestone: 100,000 animal patients treated since 1979.

- Organization initiates a phased facilities plan – one that will meet Wildlife Rescue's future, as well as present, needs as a leader in wildlife rehabilitation.

2018: There is an increase of songbirds admitted with injuries from window strikes. Hazy air quality and reduced visibility stemming from wildfires throughout the interior of BC is likely a cause. Migratory birds may be changing their location and migratory routes, thereby ending up in the Lower Mainland.

2019: February cold snap and sub-zero temperatures result in more hummingbirds than usual brought to Wildlife Rescue suffering from hypoglycemia and hypothermia.

- Wildlife Rescue celebrates its 40th Anniversary.



Volunteers *and* interns humble *and* hard working

40 years ago, Wildlife Rescue started with a few devoted individuals who recognized a need within the community to help wildlife. Despite, humble beginnings and very few resources and support, hard work and dedication propelled the volunteer-driven team into the organization we know today.

From early beginnings in the Nature House, Wildlife Rescue has woven its way 40 years later as a reputable organization helping wildlife in BC. During the early years, the first few volunteers could not have imagined the scale the organization would eventually represent, and that their small efforts would influence and educate others to support the wellbeing and safety of wildlife for years to come. Students, retirees, working professionals, international students, Wildlife Rescue has taken

many leaps since its inception. However, one theme remains constant: Volunteers have and will always be the lifeline and heart of the organization.

We sat down with a few volunteers who played a vital part in the early days, Liz Thunstrom and Paul Steeves, both of whom have committed their time and loyalty to the growth and success

the day for things to come together, which they always did” says Liz. “I helped start the volunteer program and education program in the early days. It was important that rules were followed, and that no one felt as if a task was more important than any other. Every part of everything was important, even if it seemed menial; laundry, cleaning, feeding etc. Once we saw a volunteer’s commitment and identified their special skills, we would move them into a different role, shares Liz.

The procedures set in place early on continue to play a key role in the way the organization runs today. Each volunteer is provided training and skill development workshops. It is understood that every task is equally important as they all contribute to the bigger picture.

Today, we have 221 active volunteers in our roster. Approximately 9% of our volunteers are International Students,

Our volunteers play a vital role in animal care support, helpline and admissions, transport, releases and rescue, outreach and office assistance positions.



A volunteer assists with exam of a flicker

of Wildlife Rescue from the early beginnings and remain loyal to this day.

“There were a lot of middle age women during the early years, who were retired or able to devote 24/7 to taking care of the wildlife. Some of us brought these animals home during the nighttime to keep a close eye on them, or else it would have been a nightmare. We also did not have a program of international volunteers, Summer students only, when grants were made possible. Many of us had to wear multiple hats throughout

38% volunteers are working part-time or full-time, 11% of our volunteers are retired, and 31% are students.

Our volunteers play a vital role in animal care support, helpline and admissions, transport, releases and rescue, outreach and office assistance. We have volunteers in leadership positions who have been with the organization for some time and gained expertise and knowledge to share with others. These volunteers are crucial in helping to train new volunteers through one-to-one mentoring. Some volunteers move into assistant positions at the Wildlife Hospital

and complete specialized tasks alongside the wildlife technicians. Wildlife Rescue operations rely on the commitment, dedication and knowledge of our volunteers.

We have transitioned into using a volunteer database to manage and support our networking and communication with our volunteers. This helps track volunteer hours and schedules, whilst centralizing communication in a professional and organized manner. A Volunteer Coordinator has been in place over the past decade to oversee the volunteers. The coordinator ensures positions are filled and that special skills are being identified to help place people in roles that they are passionate about and good at.

Anne Brodie has been a volunteer since 2014 and successfully leads the database team and has helped update the database guide. “Since being at Wildlife Rescue, I have continued this role and added tasks. I thoroughly enjoy my volunteer work at Wildlife Rescue. I have learned new skills and continue to learn about wildlife and the environment. Working with the other volunteers has been rewarding, particularly the volunteer’s from other countries. Volunteering with WRA

has given me a chance to contribute not only to my community but to the environment.

Julia B., who volunteers with the helpline, transport, animal care and outreach program, says her last five years have been worthwhile. “Wildlife Rescue seemed like a worthy place to give my time as a volunteer as I love wildlife. In the few shifts I cover as a volunteer I am able to work with the staff, other volunteers and the general public. These people show kindness and compassion, which inspires me each shift. I learn about the many ways in which I can support wildlife in an urban setting. Wildlife Rescue is a valuable support to orphaned and injured wildlife. It also serves as a great resource to the public for any conflicts regarding the wildlife and urban environments.”

Wildlife Rescue is grateful and proud to celebrate 40 years of time, service, dedication and passion that individuals, organizations, businesses and collaborator share with us. We are where we are today because volunteers have always dedicate their time rescuing, releasing and caring for injured and orphaned wildlife.



A group of volunteers assist in a release of gulls

Volunteer	Years	Hours
Mary Bruneau	32	527
Linda Saunders	28	16,207
Paul Steeves	27	3,482
Don Anderson	21	21,180
Gail Forbes	16	1,852
Sue Thomas	15	2,561
Deborah Markle	14	3,493
Nel Aird	13	5,024
Vivian Davidson	12	817
Sarah Parker	10	1,348
Margaret Hansen	8	1,375
Lynn Westwick	8	1,348
Kate Allen	7	1,478
Cathy Kenning	6	2,184
Carol Martin	6	1,257
Jessica Myroon	6	559
Anne Brodie	5	1,990
Tina Stehr	5	1,588
David Stafford	5	1,528
Dawn Rutledge-Brennen	5	1,184
Ann Marie Oktaba	5	703
Cheryl Siebert	5	592
Celena Wu	5	564
Liz Edmunson	5	536
Shannon Parker	5	428
Carolyn Ekman	5	327
Susan Mouat	5	263
Julia Bauman	4	1,493
Giselle Bonney	4	535
Maya Motyka	4	260
Kathryn Hughes	4	231
Janet Moreau	2	795
Shaunna Hynes	3	777
Cheryl Beaton	3	690
Janet Rigby	3	652
Jim Scribner	3	480
Brenna Rocliffe	3	478
Alice Chan	3	436
Louise Eckert	3	406
Angela Le	3	366
Beverly Robertson	3	349
Pat Boomhower	3	221
Jannik Woletz	2	329
Karen Ronka	2	511
Olga Savchuk	2	419
Linda Sherwood	2	249
Connor Griffith	2	231
Molly Willoughby	1	408
Adrienne Robson	1	278
Cathy Shevchuk	1	414
Celina Slaght	1	444
Henry Young	1	328
Anita Stjernberg	1	215
Michael Lee	1	205
Judith Wettengel		444
Ilaria Simone		256
Teresa Foley		238
Elizabeth Guinto		206
Helmi Hess		310
Kelly Ng		282

Volunteer hours only captured for the last 10 years

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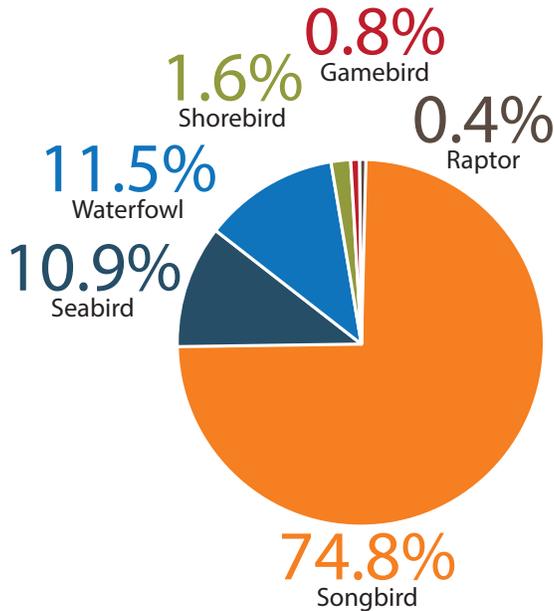
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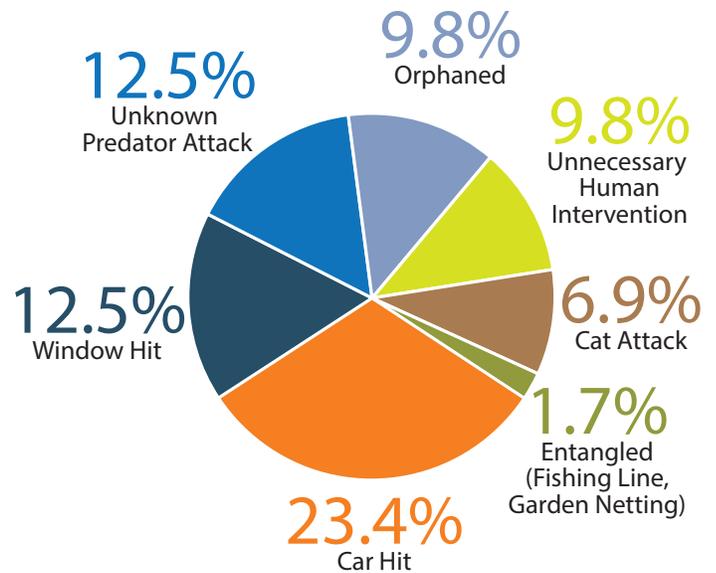
Talking About Results: 2018

An overview of our Impact Report

TYPES OF BIRDS ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL



REASONS FOR ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL



4,240 total intake

18,302 calls assessed

374 rescues of animals in at risk situations performed by WRA trained volunteers

1,046 animals transported to the hospital by WRA trained volunteers

35% of animals in care were successfully rehabilitated and released to the wild

Your Donations Supported:

2,312 DONORS GAVE \$711,677

277 VOLUNTEERS

240 MONTHLY DONORS



3% Community Outreach & Promotion

6% Animal Care - Facilities

14% Animal Care - Nutrition & Medical

28% Program Operations & Support

49% Hospital & Outpatient Care Staff

Your Legacy to Wildlife

Wildlife Rescue is blessed by the caring individuals who share this environmentally rich part of the world. Over the last 40 years, our Planned Giving Program has been the recipient of many heartfelt legacy gifts, which have been donated to ensure the professional care of over 110,000 animals.

More than 18,000 individuals and businesses contact Wildlife Rescue every year to seek assistance in caring for injured animals. As a result, we have become an international leader and the busiest wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre in Canada.

Legacy gifts enable our team to respond to the increased demand of wildlife impacted by humans and urban development encroaching on green habitats, allowing us to continue to rescue, treat and return wild animals to their natural habitat.

Does the health and wellbeing of local wildlife align with your core values? If so, then please consider leaving a legacy for wildlife. Here are some benefits of including Wildlife Rescue in your legacy planning:

- Your legacy is an opportunity to support a charitable cause with the most meaning to you.
- Your generosity allows Wildlife Rescue to provide the highest standard of medical care for many years to come.
- Gifts from our legacy program contribute to advancing our programs for a broad range of species.
- Our team is happy to support your estate planning with any information you may need including supporting gifts in memory of a loved one.
- You choose the way you wish to give. You can list Wildlife Rescue as a beneficiary to your insurance policy, donate securities or name Wildlife Rescue Association of BC as a beneficiary in your will
- All your donation information is always kept strictly confidential.
- If you wish our team would love to recognize you and involve you in a wildlife release.

By including Wildlife Rescue in your

estate plan, you ensure your assets will continue to help injured animals for the foreseeable future. Without a will, your property and finances are settled according to federal and provincial laws which may not coincide with your wishes. Anyone can leave a charitable gift from their estate, regardless of its size. Every gift helps to provide injured wildlife a second chance.

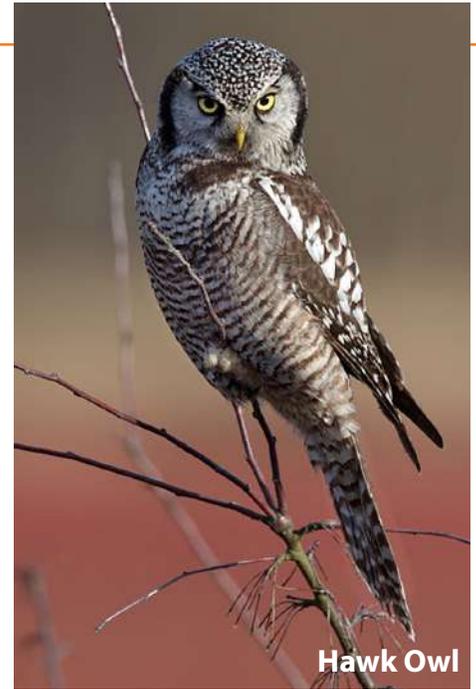
We recommend that you talk to your financial planner, lawyer, accountant, or life insurance expert to help you make the right decisions and walk you through your legacy planning process. These professionals can also talk to you about the tax benefits of these gifts that would mean so much to wildlife.

How to get started?

If you are considering a legacy gift to Wildlife Rescue and are uncertain how to begin, we would be happy to have a conversation with you. We can provide basic guidance on your options, and discuss the future needs of wildlife rehabilitation and how your gift will serve to ensure Wildlife Rescue continues its vital work.

We encourage you to discuss your wishes with your family members and make them aware of your intentions so they can support your charitable goals. Seek professional advice from experts to ensure the type and timing of your gift maximizes the advantages to you and Wildlife Rescue.

Please reach out to us with any questions you may have, or schedule a time to meet with us by contacting: giving@wildliferescue.ca or call 604-526-2747 ext. 502.



Hawk Owl



Anna's Hummingbird



American Robin



Western Tanager

Monthly donations provide urgent care for wildlife during their fight to recover

Monthly donations are the backbone to helping care for injured and orphaned wildlife. When you give monthly, you provide a steady stream of funds that we can count on to ensure that wildlife get the care they need. And, importantly, you give us the ability to set bold goals to improve the welfare of urban wildlife —because we know we'll have the resources to make them a reality.

You are the reason animals receive help. Wildlife in B.C. is blessed to have so many supporters out there willing to make sure that when the need for medical attention, they get the best care possible.

Giving to Wildlife Rescue provides animals with the expertise needed to recover from broken bones, malnutrition, losing parents at a young and vulnerable age, getting hit by cars, trees being cut down, loss of habitat, and much more.

While a single gift goes a long way, supporting wildlife all year round is an easy and effective way to make sure injured and orphaned animals have the tools needed to make a healthy recovery all year round.

The monthly giving program is one of our most popular, as it allows people supporting wildlife to align with your monthly budget. It also lays a foundation for Wildlife Rescue to plan for the future, knowing we have your support.

To become a monthly donor, you can cut out and mail in the form on the back page of this newsletter, or simply go online to www.wildliferescue.ca/give and select the Monthly giving option. Wildlife Rescue is a non-profit organization dedicated to relieving the suffering of the injured, orphaned, and pollution-damaged wildlife found throughout British Columbia.



"You may wish to join me and become a monthly donor. I chose an amount that's easy on my budget and I don't even notice the difference. Yet I am saving lives and easing suffering every month. I love it, it feels great!"

~ Coleen Doucette, Executive Director

Yes! I want to support wildlife rescue and rehabilitation in BC



I wish to make a donation:

One-Time \$

Monthly \$

I wish to become a member:

New Renewal Gift Membership

- Individual \$35 per year
- Family/Couple \$50 per year
- Senior/Student \$20 per year
- Individual Life \$350
- Business \$350 per year
- Business Life \$2,000

Request for information:

- Volunteer opportunities
- Education programs
- Legacy gifts for wildlife

*If you would like to receive your tax receipt via email please tick the box.

WRA is grateful for your support. Thank you.

NAME

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CITY PROVINCE POSTAL CODE

EMAIL PHONE

If this is a gift:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY PROVINCE POSTAL CODE

EMAIL PHONE

Payment:

My cheque payable to **WRA** for \$ is enclosed, or please charge my:

Visa CARD # EXP. DATE

MasterCard

American Express \$ SIGNATURE

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