

Epic journey ends in Hope

Hitchhiking marmot finds new home after long road trip

By Yolanda Brooks

Communications Coordinator

A yellow-bellied marmot (*Marmota flaviventris*) hit the headlines in May after it hitched a ride underneath a fuel truck travelling between Kamloops and Burnaby.

The lost marmot was spotted dashing from the truck at the Imperial Oil depot in Burnaby. Unable to identify the mystery mammal, Imperial employees took a photo and sent it over to the WRA.

Care Centre staff identified the marmot and loaned out a live trap. Over the next few weeks, staff at the depot tried to lure it into the trap using everything from apple sauce to leaves with no luck.

In their natural habitat, marmots like to burrow under rocks and logs but this crafty critter quickly adapted to its new surroundings and was eventually found hiding out in pipes. Staff managed to block one end of the pipe, put a trap on the other and secure the animal before transferring it to the WRA.

"Despite spending hours on the underside of a truck and surviving for several weeks on an industrial estate, the marmot had no injuries and was in surprisingly good condition," said Lani Sheldon, the WRA's Team Leader of Wildlife Rehabilitation.

When a relocation site was approved by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations,



Photo: Paul Steeves

Stowaway marmot gains huge public support following media appeal

the marooned marmot was ready for release. But with no transport volunteers immediately available, the marmot was looking at an extended stay at the Care Centre.

Appeal for wheels

Following a media appeal for a volunteer driver, the WRA phone lines were flooded with calls from members of the public willing to drive to the planned release site at Skull Mountain in Barrier, 65km north of Kamloops.

In the end, a wildlife biologist with the Ministry, offered to take the marmot to

Barrier. But the story does not end there. On the journey to Kamloops, he had to turn around because the Coquihalla Highway was closed for construction. To spare the marmot from another extended road trip, it was released in the

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TO THE RESCUE

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WRA Wildlife Rescue Association of BC provides leadership in rehabilitating wildlife and in promoting the welfare of wild animals in the urban environment.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Meeting the needs of many

By Glenn Boyle, Ph.D.
WRA Executive Director

Burnaby Lake has sprung to life over the last several weeks and the WRA's site is swamped in a sea of green. This obvious change is mirrored in our wildlife admissions over the last month, with almost as many animals admitted in May (466) as in the preceding four months combined.

This is always our busiest period – as we become inundated with a seasonal wave of sick, injured and orphaned animals struggling to cope with the trials of urban life.

Our ability to take in so many animals – at an average of about 15 a day – requires a dedicated team of well trained staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide a high standard of care under difficult circumstances.

The Care Centre may have more than 100 patients at one time, which provides obvious challenges to having sufficient time and space to ensure every animal receives professional care.

Thankfully, we have again received a federal grant from Human Resources



& Skills Development Canada that will enable us to double the size of our summer rehabilitation staff. This, combined with a volunteer schedule of up to 100 people a week, will help to meet our pressing seasonal needs from dawn to dusk each day.

In addition to direct animal care, transportation of animals to and from the WRA is a crucial part of helping wildlife at this time of year, for which we rely on members of the public as well as our own transport volunteers.

The recent appeal for help with a marmot transport to Kamloops attracted the public's interest and help, and it showed how new people are willing to contribute to our mission when given the chance.

With an additional 1,500 or more animals expected to come to WRA this spring and summer, our work together has only just begun. 🐦

info

To The Rescue newsletter is only issued three times a year, but you can now get more regular updates on WRA rehab stories, news, events, advice and information when you sign up to receive a copy of the WRA electronic newsletter. The monthly newsletter will start publishing in early July and you can receive it in your inbox by sending your email address to info@wildliferescue.ca.





Photo: Courtney Lahue

A summer camper enjoys some fresh-air learning

Uncover nature's treasures Not so long ago, children spent carefree summers climbing trees, looking for frogs and playing freely with friends at neighbourhood parks. By exploring these natural spaces, we were given the opportunity to gain a respect for nature, to recognize its value on a personal level, and potentially, the value for wildlife.

Parents are now more aware of inherent risks

with some activities and outdoor time is being lost to sedentary indoor activities. While they may be out of harm's way, the invaluable experience of being outside and the lessons gained are being overlooked.

Children will miss out on truly understanding nature's connectivity and they will be less likely to have a vested interest in our wild spaces as they grow up. In the short-term,

research has shown that outdoor play encourages personal fitness and decreases effects of many behavioural disorders.

To help reconnect children with the natural environment, the WRA is running its third year of summer day camps in July and August. Campers aged 6-12 will have fun participating in games and activities while they discover the secrets only nature can reveal.

Theme days include: A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Rescuer, It's for the Birds, Mammal Madness, Going Batty, Plant Paradise, A Bug's Life, Watery Wonders and WILD Recycling. As well as the take-home crafts such as bird, bee and bat boxes, participants will also leave with a greater understanding of our wild spaces and the animals within them.

Sessions cost \$25 each and run from 9 am to 3 pm on Tuesdays for children aged 6 to 8 and Thursdays for children aged 9 to 12. (See p 7 for the full list of camps.)

For more information, please call our administration line at 604 526 2747 or email educate@wildliferescue.ca

By Krystal Brennan Education Coordinator

Cast a vote for Wildlife Rescue



You can help the WRA raise thousands of dollars to support its wildlife rehabilitation and education work by taking part in the Call For The Wild! campaign run by Jamieson Laboratories.

Jamieson, which sells and manufactures natural minerals, vitamins, supplements,

herbs and botanical medicines, is donating \$100,000 dollars to the campaign which aims to raise awareness of urban wildlife.

The cash bonanza will be shared between five Canadian charitable and non-profit organizations that focus on wildlife conservation and rehabilitation.

To help us raise as much money as possible, we are calling on all of our supporters to vote early and vote as often as possible. The more votes we get, the bigger our share of the charity jackpot.

"This is an exciting opportunity for us because every chosen group will benefit," says Glenn Boyle, Executive Director of the WRA. "We hope our supporters can take a few moments each day to cast a vote in our favour. With their help, Call For The Wild! could be our biggest fundraising event of the year."

At the time of going to press, the exact voting dates were not available but voting is expected to start in mid-August and will run until early September. Each person is allowed to vote once every 24 hours. To check voting dates and to cast your vote, go to **www.jamiesoncares.com**

In deep water No one knows exactly how or why this American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) ended up in the waters around Spanish Banks in the Vancouver suburb of Point Grey, but luckily it was captured by the Vancouver SPCA before it began to suffer from the serious side effects of saltwater poisoning.

On examination at the WRA Care Centre, the beaver appeared to be suffering few ill effects from saltwater exposure but it showed the symptoms of a possible head trauma. Staff started the beaver on a course of treatment for the trauma and transferred her to a shallow, indoor pool where she was kept under close observation.

The beaver showed little interest in food and initially had to be hand-fed. After a couple of days in care, she began to feed by herself and was much brighter and alert.

She was then moved to the outdoor pool where her appetite and energy levels continued to improve. After a week under the care of WRA rehab staff, the beaver was ready for



release back to freshwater habitat.

The WRA prefers to release rehabilitated animals close to their rescue site but in this instance, Care Centre staff needed to find a new home for the beaver well away from the coast.

After discussions with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, the beaver was released in the quiet backwaters of the Harrison River, not far from the town of Agassiz.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Coordinator



Hummingbird escapes cat's claws

This Anna's hummingbird had a narrow escape after being pounced on by a domestic cat on the third-floor balcony of a Vancouver apartment back in December. He was a regular visitor to a feeder and was rescued when the cat's owner spotted his pet in the bedroom and managed to retrieve the stricken bird from the cat's clutches.

The hummingbird was immediately brought to the WRA where it was treated for bruising, a puncture wound and significant feather loss to its head and back. It was also given a course of antibiotics to prevent possible infection from bacteria in the cat's saliva that can be deadly for birds.

The hummingbird spent almost three months in care recovering from its injuries and waiting for its feathers to grow back. Full feather coverage is essential for hummingbirds to regulate their body temperature.

The rescued hummingbird made a full recovery in February, just in time for the start of the mating season. The cat owner, who has since moved the feeder to a more secure location, took part in the release held on the grounds of the WRA.

The hummingbird was later seen hovering around one of the feeders close to the WRA Wildlife Garden.

By Crystal Simmons Care Centre Liaison

Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)

Anna's hummingbirds are a year-round resident of BC unlike the more commonly seen rufous hummingbird which migrates here for nesting season. Anna's are territorial and intolerant of other hummingbirds and chases are frequent as they defend their territories. Anna's sport impressive flashes of brilliant, iridescent feathers and can often be spotted doing elaborate dive displays, in which they ascend 40 metres and then plummet towards their target to defend their territories.

When hanging a bird feeder, always remember to place it in a location that is not accessible to cats. Also, keep your own cat indoors whenever possible.

Predator becomes prey When a barred owl (*Strix varia*) in Stanley Park ignored the attacks of a group of crows, staff from the Stanley Park Ecology Society knew something was wrong. The female owl was perched quietly on a stump while being attacked by crows defending their habitat against a deadly predator.

Barred owls are a common sight at the park and usually they have no problem dealing with crows. But on this occasion, the owl seemed too weak to care.

Staff from the Society transported the owl to the WRA where she was immediately examined by rehabilitation staff. Her symptoms indicated CNS (Central Nervous System) trauma or possible poisoning caused by eating a rodent that was poisoned with a rodenticide.

The owl was treated for CNS trauma, a parasite infestation and mild anemia. A blood sample was also taken by staff from the Canadian Wildlife Service which is researching poison levels in raptors. However, the results showed that there was no cause for concern.

The owl perked up after a couple of days and ate all the food presented to her. She pro-



Photo: Paul Steeves

gressed well and was moved to an aviary with space to fly and fly she did!

Once her iron levels improved, she was released back into Stanley Park by staff from the Stanley Park Ecology Society, 11 days after

being admitted to the WRA Care Centre.

By Linda Bakker Volunteer Coordinator



Photo: Paul Steeves

Destination Alaska When a flightless trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) was brought to the Wildlife Rescue Association at the start of the spring migration season, lead poisoning was considered a likely culprit.

The swan, which was wearing a large, red collar around its neck, was found grounded in a field in Delta. It was lethargic and unable to hold its head up. It was initially tube fed, but within two days, it was eating on its own.

As well as the red neck collar, the swan also had a federal bird band on its right leg. The numbers from both bands were reported and staff learned that it had been banded back in 2002, the year it had hatched.

Over the last decade, thousands of trumpeter swans have died from lead poisoning. Environment Canada has been running a long-term

study on the flocks that gather around Sumas Prairie near Abbotsford. The swan is a part of this program, and during its treatment, a toxicologist from the Canadian Wildlife Service visited the WRA to gather blood samples to test for lead poisoning. Fortunately, the tests results came back negative.

Following its long layover in the Lower Mainland, the swan was finally released at Nicomen Slough to begin its long summer migration to its Alaskan breeding grounds with its head held high!

By Karen Becker Wildlife Rehabilitator

Special Thanks

A special thanks to the following sponsors for contributing to WRA's Annual Spring Celebration:

ColourTime Printing & Digital Imaging
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Paul Steeves Photography
PriceSmart Foods (Market Crossing)
Thrifty Foods (Coquitlam)



IN Memory

Our donors remember those who have had special meaning in their lives with a special tribute.

Lorne Auvache

Hannelore Frohloff

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Elizabeth Anne Wain



After rescuing a bird in distress, a group of students from Hazel Trembath Elementary School in Port Coquitlam decided to raise money to support wildlife rehabilitation. Through bake sales and other sponsored events at the school they raised more than \$500 for the WRA. The students who created the fundraising group, The Kids That Care, are pictured above presenting their second cheque to the WRA.



Photo: Yolanda Brooks

A WRA volunteer gets ready for the Hats Off Day parade which was held in Burnaby Heights on June 5. If you are interested in helping out at future WRA events, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Linda Bakker on 604 526 2747.

Donor Thanks

Bees Knees Christmas

Trees: Donated 10% of the proceeds from a sale at Vancouver Christmas Farmers Market and gave a number of free trees to the WRA to sell directly to the public.

Noreen Brox: Paid for gravel supplies for use in the WRA Wildlife Garden and grounds.

Burke Mountain

Naturalists: Donation for a duckling brooder, catch pole, bird banding equipment and training.

Burnaby Rhododendron and Gardens Society:

Donation towards a comprehensive veterinary monitor and two duckling brooders.

Hop On Farms: Ongoing donations of produce.

Imperial Oil Foundation:

Donation towards a Care Centre facility upgrade and a comprehensive veterinary monitor.

POSitec Solutions:

Donated equipment to WRA administration and Care Centre.

Linda Saunders: Donated various Care Centre wishlist items.

T. L. Roberge Trucking Ltd:

Waived fees for two separate gravel deliveries.

Greater Vancouver Food

Bank: Ongoing donations including laundry detergent, toilet paper, garbage bags and food items.

Fast Facts

It was a busy month for ducklings in May, and the WRA Care Centre received 92 orphaned mallards. Staff are now preparing for the second wave of June ducklings which will start arriving any day now.

Wildlife Rescue ASSOCIATION

The Wildlife Rescue Association of BC presents its 2011 summer camp series for kids who are wild about wildlife, adore the outdoors and want to get closer to nature.



Theme weeks

A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Rescuer
It's for the Birds
Mammal Madness
Going Batty
Plant Paradise
A Bug's Life
Watery Wonders
WILD Recycling

July 5, 7
July 12, 14
July 19, 21
July 26, 28
August 2, 4
August 9, 11
August 16, 18
August 23, 25

Sessions for children aged 6-8 years will be held on Tuesdays and sessions for children aged 9 to 12 years on Thursdays. All programs* are from 9am-3pm. Camps cost \$25 per session per child or \$20 with a wish list donation.

Our interactive summer camps provide a safe environment for kids to have fun, make new friends and explore their natural world. For full program details* and a registration form, contact Krystal Brennan on 604 526 2747 or email: educate@wildliferescue.ca

*Please note: Camps do not include access to the wildlife rehabilitation facilities. The animals in our care need peace and quiet to aid their recovery. All camp activities will be away from the animals and/or on Burnaby Lake where there will be numerous opportunities for wildlife watching.

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- Baby food - chicken (and broth) with no other additives (Heinz or Beech Nut brand)
- Gift cards for local grocery stores
- Canadian Tire money
- Natural harvest chick starter (26% protein)
- Duck pellets (17% protein)
- Distilled water (jugs)
- Vitamin E oil
- Vitamin B1, B-complex tabs

Outdoor Supplies

- Hose nozzles
- Greenery (evergreen, cedar is best)
- Perennial plants & live trees
- Soaker hoses
- 55-gallon water barrel (2)
- Garden trowels
- Tarps
- Pool thermometer
- Lumber (2 x 4)

- Astroturf or "daisy door mats" for use as perch covers

Household items

- Chlorine bleach - 5 litre size (we use one 5L jug per day, on average)
- Laundry soap
- Heat lamp bulbs (ceramic)
- Garbage bags (industrial size)
- Mop heads (large industrial size)
- Strainers (metal or plastic)

Medical Supplies

- Endotracheal tubes without cuffs
- Hand-held blood chemistry analyzer
- Centrifuge for hematocrit and whole blood
- Veterinary ultrasound machine
- Cable ties (AKA as zap straps or zip ties)
- Lactated Ringer's Solution (sterile, unopened)
- Chain-mail lined gloves

Miscellaneous

- Bird Puppets (e.g. raven, gull, mallard, goose)
- Digital precision scale
- Roladex
- Whiteboard grid, art tape

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Photos: Linda Bakker



Far left: Linda Saunders and Paul Steeves take a break from their Friday shift. Left: Mary Bruneau and Gloria Norton celebrate their WRA silver anniversary

Ninety years and counting Long-term volunteers are very special to the WRA. They have witnessed the evolution of the organization as it has grown in stature over many years. This year, we are celebrating some amazing anniversaries of volunteers who have gifted thousands of hours over a combined total of 90 years to care for wildlife.

Mary Bruneau and Gloria Norton started volunteering back in 1986 when the WRA was still located in the old Nature House. Mary, who is a resident of North Vancouver, was recently awarded a Community Volunteer Spirit Award by the North Shore Community Resources Society for her work at the WRA.

"Mary was a breath of fresh air, she saw what was needed and did it in an efficient and organized manner," recalls Animal Care Committee Chair Liz Thunstrom. "She is still an example for many of her fellow volunteers."

Gloria has put in countless hours at both the Care Centre and the WRA office and was involved in the administration of the Foster, Fur & Feathers program for many years. Lately, she has been a great help preparing materials for our outreach programs.

Linda Saunders and Paul Steeves, who have each clocked up 20 years of WRA volunteering, help to make the Friday afternoon shift a

breeze. As well as her regular Friday session, Linda has put in many extra hours to ensure that our laundry supply is always organized, sanitized and ready to use.

Paul is an avid wildlife photographer and his images of our patients appear in every issue of *To the Rescue*, on our website and in many of our publicity materials. Without Paul's expertise, much of our important work would remain hidden from view.

Over the years, our veteran volunteers have shown their dedication and resourcefulness and we are very lucky to have these amazing people supporting our work with wildlife.

By Linda Bakker Volunteer Coordinator

CARE CENTRE NEWS

Advancing veterinary care

For a small songbird undergoing a delicate surgical procedure to repair a laceration caused by a near fatal cat attack, general anaesthesia allows the WRA's wildlife rehabilitators to relieve pain and complete their work without causing further distress. However, as in human medicine, any animal undergoing anaesthesia must be monitored closely to ensure survival and prevent complications from developing during the surgery itself.

In the past, rehabilitation staff had to use time-consuming visual and manual monitoring techniques during surgical procedures to ensure that the patient was not suffering any possible side effects resulting



Photo: Paul Steeves

from the use of anaesthesia.

Thanks to the generosity of the The Burnaby Rhododendron and Garden Society (BRAGS), and the Imperial Oil Foundation, WRA patients undergoing surgical procedures can now be monitored with a comprehensive veterinary monitor.

The monitor which was purchased with grants from the two organizations allows staff to measure the vital signs of patients undergoing anaesthesia during surgery.

With this monitor, the WRA's wildlife rehabilitators and veterinary technicians now have one more tool in their belt to provide life-saving surgeries for the amazing variety of species in our care. From the American beaver having multiple abscesses cleaned (see pic left), to the dark-eyed junco undergoing wound repair, WRA's patients will benefit from this equipment for years to come!

By Lani Sheldon B.Sc. Team Leader of Wildlife Rehabilitation

Epic journey ends

Continued from page 1

Hope Slide area.

Heading west

The Kamloops marmot is the latest in a line of well-documented cases of stow-away yellow-bellied marmots.

In April 2010, WRA staff spent several hours retrieving a marmot from a minivan before treating it for burns.

In 2008, a yellow-bellied marmot snuck into a vehicle in Princeton and rode all the way to Port Alberni before being discovered by a Canadian Tire employee who had been asked to check out an "engine squeak".

These accidental passengers are believed to be a contributing factor behind the growing number of marmot sightings in the lower Fraser Valley and Metro Vancouver says Jack Evans who has been



Photo: Linda Bakker

Accidental tourist waits for a ride

collecting data on marmot sightings to try and establish if colonization is a natural occurrence or influenced by human activity. "There are certainly lots of sightings moving west and we have fairly good documentation that they come in on trucks," he says. "We don't know if they are seeking refuge or if they are going

into hibernation, but certainly, we started noticing expansion of the range 10 to 12 years ago."

In the 1980s a marmot colony was found at the north end of the Ironworker's Memorial Bridge in North Vancouver. The colony thrived and managed to live out a typical marmot existence by burrowing in concrete culverts, drainage pipes and under buildings before they were repatriated to Manning Park.

More recently, a colony has been spotted in Richmond.

Like the Kamloops marmot that got stranded in Burnaby, healthy marmots found outside of their traditional habitat are relocated whenever possible. But for every marmot that is discovered, there could be plenty more that got away and in 20 or 30 years, don't be too surprised if the marmot whistle becomes a part of our urban soundtrack. 🐹

Fest Thanks

Close to 700 people attended Earth Fest held in April at the Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion. We'd like to thank all of the volunteers who help set up and run the event, the donors who gave great prizes for the raffles and our sponsors. Without their support, Earth Fest would not be possible.



Gold Sponsors: BC Hydro, G & F Financial Group, KVOS, Ridge Wilderness Adventures. **Silver Sponsor:** Ethical Deal. **Bronze Sponsors:** AAA Wildlife, City of Burnaby, Colortec Screen Printing, Kid's Market at Granville Island, LAV & KUSH, Wild Whales Vancouver, Yoyo Mama.



Earth Fest Donors: Alpha Secondary School, **Backroad Mapbooks**, BCIT, BC's Wild Heritage Plants, **Brentwood Town Centre**, Burnaby North Secondary School, **Burnaby Village Museum**, Canadian Outback Whitewater Rafting Adventures, **Capilano Suspension Bridge**, Dick's Lumber, **Deep Cove Canoe and Kayak**, Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, **Galloway's Specialty Foods**, Garden Works at Mandeville, **Giggle Ridge Adventure Golf**, Grouse Mountain Resorts, **HR MacMillan Space Centre**, Hell's Gate Airtram, **Left Coast Naturals**, LFT Group, **Little Earth**, Maplewood Farm, **Mountain Equipment Co-op**, Museum of Anthropology, **The Natural Gardener Garden Store Ltd**, Paddle-wheeler Riverboat Cruises, **Powerhouse at Stave Falls**, Quince, **RONA**, Stanley Park Horse-drawn Tours, **Tree Canada**, Unity Yoga Tea House, **Vancouver Art Gallery**, Vancouver Canadians Baseball, **Vancouver Whale Watch**, Van Dusen Botanical Garden, **Zip Trek Eco Tours**.



Photos: Paul Steeves & Yolanda Brooks

Foster Me: Golden-crowned sparrow

Injured bird plays waiting game

By Yolanda Brooks

Communications Coordinator

A golden-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) is recovering in the Care Centre after surviving a cat attack in Coquitlam.

The bird arrived at the WRA in mid-May with missing feathers from its back and tail areas. Examination revealed that it had also sustained lacerations and bruising.

The wounds were treated and they began to heal, however it will take time for the new feathers to grow in.

Birds rely on their feathers for warmth and waterproofing and the sparrow would not have survived long in the wild without them.

To keep the bird safe from the



Photo: Paul Steeves

Golden-crowned sparrow survives cat encounter

elements, rehabilitation staff kept the sparrow in an outdoor aviary during the day and moved it indoors at night.

As temperatures began to rise, the sparrow spent more time outdoors

where it was able to re-tune its flying skills as it manoeuvred without the aid of its tail feathers. The sparrow will remain in our care for the next few weeks until its feathers have re-grown and its flying skills are restored. 🐦

Summer 2011: Foster Fur and Feathers

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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:

<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	CARD #	EXP. DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard		
<input type="checkbox"/> American Express	\$	SIGNATURE

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