



Photo: Paul Steeves

Returned to Sender

Banding helps the WRA track released birds over time

Banding program identifies goose that survived double dose of trouble

By Lani Sheldon B.Sc.

Team Leader of Wildlife Rehabilitation

When WRA wildlife rehabilitators release animals back into their natural habitats, the feeling can be one of excitement, relief and pride. Often this is the last time we will see this individual animal after pouring so much time, energy and expertise into its recovery. But in a rare turn of events, a long-lost patient returned for a second round of treatment at the WRA Care Centre.

The Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) was rescued in May 2010 by Volunteer Coordinator Linda Bakker while she was on maternity leave. The goose, which was found near the Mary Hill Bypass in Port Coquitlam, had a large laceration to its right leg and a bird band on its left leg.

We treated the wounds, likely caused by a fish hook, and reported the number of the band to the federal banding office. We didn't hear anything right away but the goose responded extremely well to treatment and was deemed fit for release after a few weeks in our care.

Return visit

Several months later, the banding office got in touch to let us know that the goose was a WRA patient back in 2007! After locating the case number for the bird, we were able to find its original medical charts from its first stay with us 3 ½ years earlier.

In 2007, the unlucky goose was admitted after being struck by a vehicle. It was suffering from partial paralysis in both legs and was emaciated. With intensive care at WRA, the bird was rehabilitated and banded by Animal Care Committee chair, Liz Thunstrom, prior to

its release in February 2007.

Its return to the WRA after such a long period of time provides valuable insight for wildlife rehabilitators. For this individual, rehabilitation was a worthwhile and effective process. An additional 3 ½ years of life in this difficult urban landscape is an extraordinary achievement, and with the latest round of treatment, we hope the goose has a few

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TO THE RESCUE is the newsletter of the Wildlife Rescue Association of BC and is published three times a year.

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PRINTING Colourtime Printing & Digital Imaging



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

A Year in Review

Community effort makes the difference

By Glenn Boyle, Ph.D.

WRA Executive Director

Today, the WRA site has been bathed in the bright light of a clear, crisp winter's day – an early prelude to the longer, warmer days ahead. It's hard to believe that spring will soon be here!

After three years as Executive Director at WRA, I have learned that there is always a new challenge (or two) around the corner and there is seldom time to reflect on what has happened versus what still needs to be done. This past year seemed to have come and gone even faster than the one before, and so I'm glad to be able to take some time, albeit briefly, to consider what mattered most at WRA in 2010.

Last year was another busy time for WRA. A total of 3,101 animals were received at our Care Centre, the highest annual admissions since 2004. In recent years, there has been a trend of small, successive increases in the annual caseload – up by 14% since 2006. Thankfully, this ongoing demand for our services was helped again in 2010 by more than 3,000 donations of money, supplies and services from the community.



These included important contributions from our Circle of Friends (p. 6), the Celebrate campaign (p. 7), and a variety of grants and community support (p. 3) throughout the year.

Of course, no acknowledgement would be complete without mentioning the more than 11,000 hours of time donated (that's the equivalent of more than five full-time staff) in 2010 towards animal care and transportation by WRA volunteers!

In receiving such generous support in all shapes and forms from the community, we were able to help thousands of wild animals last year.

This partnership will be needed again in 2011, as we continue to work together to provide wildlife with a helping hand.

info WRA Annual General Meeting

WRA Members, please join us on:

Wednesday, June 15, 2011 @ 7pm

WRA, 5216 Glencarin Drive, Burnaby, BC

Explore your neighbourhood

There are many amazing experiences your family can enjoy while wandering down a forest path. Even a small trail or park can be filled with opportunities to discover the secrets of wild animals.

One of the best places to look is a dead 'wildlife' tree. Woodpeckers hammer holes to eat insects in the soft wood, while many cavity nesting birds and mammals will later make a home in the hollowed-out section. Even a small hole on the outside of a tree can lead to a huge cavity nest inside.

When a dead tree falls, it creates habitat for bugs, salamanders and frogs and supports the growth of a fallen seed. You can look for these animals by carefully rolling over fallen logs to see what lies beneath.



Wildlife trees are excellent places to study wildlife

Many live trees will have strips of outer bark missing from squirrel runs, where squirrels will wear out this bark or peel it off for nest lining. You can

also look for tree cones that squirrels nibble all around to gather the seeds deep inside.

Discover what insects are crawling around the forest with a bug shake. Place a small white piece of fabric under a bush and shake the branches. You'll be surprised by the many different invertebrates that fall onto the cloth. Use a magnifying glass or bug viewer for a close-up look before gently shaking the cloth off.

Remember to never feed or pet wild animals, for their safety and yours. When going out to any natural space, be great park stewards by remembering the old saying, "Take only pictures and leave only footprints".

By Krystal Brennan Education Coordinator

For more information on our education programs please call Krystal Brennan at 604-526 2747 or email: educate@wildliferescue.ca



Linda Saunders, Jo Shutek, Andy Shutek and WRA Executive Director Glenn Boyle celebrate at the finish line

Race records and recognition

In excess of \$2,200 was raised through the Rubber Ducky Half Marathon held at Burnaby Lake on October 17, 2010.

The money came from race proceeds donated by race organizer TRY EVENTS and through direct sponsorship of Team WRA Ducklings who ran the seven miler. WRA Treasurer Allan Dorff completed the race in under an hour to become the fastest WRA board member in the race's history and Andy Shutek, a veteran WRA volunteer, won a top-three placing in

the over 65 category. Volunteers Linda Saunders, Jo Shutek, and WRA Executive Director, Glenn Boyle also successfully completed the race.

Snap Happy

After five months of snapping, clicking and uploading, WRA supporters raised a magnificent \$7,775 from the KEEN Boots Give Back campaign. Thank you to everyone who took the time to upload the 1,555 photos on our behalf. We will keep you posted on the 2011 KEEN campaign.

COMMUNITY THANKS

Business

AAA Wildlife Control, Advanced Systems Integrators, Chevron Canada, Colourtime Printing & Digital Imaging, G.L. Williams & Associates, Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, KEEN Canada Outdoor, Redl Sports Distributors, Small Potatoes Urban Delivery, TD Bank Financial Group, Vancouver Condominium Services.

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Doreen & Bernard Crook Fund, Eden Conservation Trust, Ted Gorski Trust Fund, Della & Cam Grant Foundation, Greygates Foundation, Human Resources & Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), Beatrice & David Hunter Endowment Fund, Imperial Oil Foundation, Joan Milne Stewart Fund, University of Calgary.

All donations made in 2010.

Catch and release A glaucous-winged gull (*Larus glaucescens*) entangled in barbed wire high above a downtown Vancouver building was saved thanks to a daring rescue and immediate treatment at the WRA.

The gull (pictured right) was spotted in early November dangling 6 feet above a one-storey building. Despite the tricky location, Dave Stafford, the WRA's veteran transport volunteer, was able to rescue the bird using a little guile and derring-do. Armed with a ladder and wire cutter, he craftily subdued the gull with a towel using his left hand while cutting the wire with his right hand.

Once he had the bird free and under wraps, Dave transported the gull to the WRA where it was treated for lacerations to the right wrist. The wound was flushed and the gull given antibiotics and pain medication. Within two days, the swelling had significantly decreased and the gull remained infection-free.

Two weeks after the gull's ordeal, its wounds had completely healed and it was pronounced fit for release. Dave and the gull were briefly reunited when he took it back to Vancouver for release where it flew off "like a shot".

By Karen Becker Wildlife Rehabilitator



Photo: Dave Stafford

A gathering of grebes Five very notable aquatic birds graced the Care Centre in the fall of 2010. Four Western grebes (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) and one pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) were brought into the centre because they were grounded.

Grebes have legs set far back on their body which makes them speedy swimmers but unable to function on land. The reflection of the street lights on a wet road plays tricks on their eyes and grebes will often mistake a slick road for a waterway, landing and trapping themselves on the asphalt. All five birds stayed in care until injuries from their crash landings had healed.

Two of the grebes were transferred from other regions of B.C. to be treated at the WRA. One bird was found in Williams Lake and was cared for by a dedicated finder until a donated ticket from Pacific Coastal Airlines allowed the bird to travel to our facility. The second bird was



Photo: Lewis Kennett

initially cared for at a centre in the Kootenays before making its way to Burnaby. These two birds were housed together for company and stimulation. Fortunately, they were ready for release at the same time and were released together in Port Moody.

Aquatic birds always present a challenge to our rehabilitators as they cannot be housed on land and must be in a pool 24/7, making releases all the more exciting and rewarding!

By Mia Ciotto, RAHT Wildlife Rehabilitator

Seeing is surviving When a beautiful, red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) arrived at the WRA Care Centre in mid-December almost blind in its right eye, its prospects for release and survival looked slim. Hawks rely completely on sight to catch prey, and without good vision would not survive long in the wild.

The juvenile hawk (pictured right), which was found near the docks in North Vancouver, had a displaced lens. When the lens is out of position it can upset the fluid balance in the eye, causing inflammation, which can lead to scarring of the retina and ultimately blindness.

Rehabilitation staff put the hawk on a course of antibiotics to reduce inflammation, and waited for the lens to reposition itself. Once its sight started to improve, staff began the process of getting it ready for independent living.

After a spell of being “a perch potato” and living on ready-made meals, the hawk was out of shape and so staff began to help build its

stamina by encouraging it to do laps around the pen. With its sight not quite 100 per cent, the hawk also had to re-learn how to navigate. “He had youth on his side, which made him much more adaptable so we were very hopeful that he would be able to adjust,” said Lani Sheldon, WRA’s Team Leader of Wildlife Rehabilitation.

The first couple of days were touch and go as the hawk flew into walls and missed its perch as it came into land. But after a few days of trial and error, the hawk’s brain began to adapt to its new signals and it was soon catching live prey and flying around the aviary with ease.

The hawk was released at a park in North Vancouver. It was already banded when it arrived at the WRA, and although we don’t know which organization banded the bird, we look forward to getting more information about its past in the next few months.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Coordinator



Photo: Paul Steeves

Calgary “snowbird” flies west An American bittern hitched a plane ride from Calgary to Vancouver after it missed its migration window due to injury.

The emaciated bird was originally admitted to the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation in mid-October with a fractured wing and foot. With supportive care and medication, the fractures healed, the bird regained its power of flight and was healthy enough for release.

Unfortunately, with winter in full swing, all the local lakes in Alberta were frozen, making release impossible. Instead of over-wintering the bird until the spring, staff at the Institute decided to try and get the bird to the milder climate of the West Coast where the WRA could prepare it for release.

Thanks to a complimentary pass from Air Canada, the bittern was flown from Calgary to Vancouver in early December.

The bird was in good shape when it arrived at the WRA Care Centre and staff set up an outdoor aviary to allow it to acclimatize before release. The aviary was stocked full of greenery



in an effort to mimic its natural habitat and provide hiding spaces to minimize stress.

After a few days, the bittern was successfully released at the Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Delta.

By Crystal Simmons Care Centre Liaison



Photo: Paul Steeves

American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*)

The American bittern is an elusive marsh bird in the heron family. This secretive, stocky bird is more easily heard than seen. When it is alarmed it will freeze with bill pointing straight up, blending into the dense marsh reeds. When camouflaged in tall vegetation, bitterns will sometimes sway gently holding position making it impossible to see. The bittern walks and moves extremely slowly, then strikes prey with a lightning stab. Its diet consists of fish, amphibians, reptiles, insects and small animals. Loss of wetlands is causing declining populations.



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



We would like to extend our thanks to all members of WRA's Circle of Friends. Their generous contributions will help to improve the lives of thousands of animals in 2011.

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Dorothy Joplin	Sidney & Michele Wain
Dr. Tonya Khan	Sonya Wall
Michael Lancaster	Dr. Karl Williams
	Junko Yamano

Our Circle of Friends members donated \$250 or more during 2010. We also thank those who did not give permission for their names to be published.

FAST FACTS

During 2010, our transport volunteers clocked up an impressive 22,000 km as they travelled the highways and byways, cul de sacs and dirt tracks of the Lower Mainland to pick up wildlife in distress and release rehabilitated animals.

IN *Memory*

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

Jennifer Atchison
"Hella" Cartledge
Janice McPherson
Phyllis Raeside
Robert R. Rourke
Nicola Tunzi

SPECIAL *Thanks*

QLT Inc. /Tina Tett:

Donated four boxes of medical supplies.

Bosley's Pet Foods, Delta:

Supplied birdseed, cracked corn, millet, oats, barley and wheat.

Burnaby Now: Delivered boxes of millet produce for our winter appeal.

Fraser Valley trout hatchery:

Donated a big batch of trout fry.

Ocean Fisheries: Donated salmon, white fish fillets and herring.

Pacific Coastal Airlines/ Miriam Lenting: Provided a complimentary travel pass for a Western grebe that was

flown from Williams Lake to Vancouver.

Rabbit River Farms:

Ongoing donation of eggs.

Teekay Corporation:

Donated a variety of office supplies.

Transport volunteer

Katia McIntyre: Handed over a cheque for \$500 from employer TD Canada Trust for her WRA volunteer work.

Vancouver Foodbank:

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

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 May and you can receive it in your inbox by sending your email address to info@wildliferescue.ca.



Thank you *for Celebrating Wildlife*

Thanks to everyone who supported our rescue, rehabilitation and education work this past holiday season by donating to the WRA's Celebrate Campaign.

Nancy Aichberger
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Photo: Paul Steeves

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WISH LIST

Food Supplies

- Baby cereal - rice or barley
- Baby food - chicken (and broth) with no other additives (Heinz or Beech Nut brand)
- Fresh fruits and vegetables*: apples, potatoes, frozen mixed vegetables, pears, corn-on-the-cob, grapes, strawberries, romaine lettuce, carrots, bananas, sweet potatoes, sui (suey) choy and yams
- Gift cards for local grocery stores
- Canadian Tire money
- Natural harvest chick starter (26% protein)
- Duck pellets (17% protein)
- Distilled water (jugs)
- Frozen blackberries and blueberries
- Herring (frozen)
- Innova Evo no grain dry cat and kitten food (purple bag)
- Clam meat (frozen)
- Mealworms
- Salmon (frozen)
- Smelt (frozen)
- Trout (frozen)
- Science Diet Canine Maintenance Gourmet Beef and Chicken canned food
- Sterile red wriggler worms
- Suet feeder blocks
- Tri-V Beef and Vegetable canned dog food (green tins)
- Wheat germ oil
- White millet
- Nuts (unsalted, both in and out of shell): almonds, walnuts, filberts, and acorns (no peanuts please - we have plenty!)
- Frozen mice (for feeding of captive birds of prey)

***Note: please call first as the need for food items is dependent on the types of animals currently in care.**

Household Items

- Whiteboard grid, art tape
- Laundry soap
- Square laundry baskets
- Suction cup shower caddies/soap dishes
- Small/medium mirrors
- Digital photo frame

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WRA volunteers and staff jazz it up for the volunteer appreciation event Casino Carnivale

Volunteer Appreciation Event

The WRA recognized its wonderful volunteers at the "Casino Carnivale" event at the Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion on September 11. During a fun-filled evening of friendly games and competition, attendees enjoyed a variety of potluck food and refreshments, and won a range of fabulous prizes donated by local companies and organizations. Many thanks to our host and Volunteer Coordinator, Stefanie Broad, staff and volunteers for putting on such an enjoyable event for all!

By Glenn Boyle, Ph.D. Executive Director

We would also like to thank our generous sponsors who donated a range of great prizes for the event:

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Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre

Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Veneto's Cakes & Pastries

CARE CENTRE NEWS

Numbers tell a story In 2010, the WRA admitted 3,101 animals into care. The most common species seen were rock doves, Northwestern crows and mallards, while rare patients included two fringed myotis (type of bat), osprey, and the red-listed species snowshoe hare and Western painted turtle.

One of the most heartening trends at WRA is the increase in survival and release rates over time. Despite the fact that WRA receives many severely injured and small animals with low survival rates, our release rates continue to improve year on year and compare extremely well with other mixed intake rehabilitation facilities in North America.



Last year, we were particularly successful with our mallard intake and we released 68 per cent back to the wild. Northern flicker release rates have increased by 7 per cent since 2005. We've also seen improvements with rock pigeon re-

lease rates which have increased dramatically by 25% since 2005.

It is clear from the stats that cars and cats remain two of the major problems affecting wildlife in Metro Vancouver. Last year, more than 20 per cent of the admitted animals were involved in a collision with a vehicle while cat attacks accounted for 250 admissions.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Coordinator

Snapshot of 2010 admissions

Total	3,101
Birds	2,641
Mammals	446
Reptiles	8
Amphibians	6

Returned to Sender

Continued from page 1

good years ahead of it.

This rare case demonstrates that banding is a great tool for wildlife rehabilitators says Liz Thunstrom. "This is why we started banding at the WRA and I think this is very exciting," she says. "This case is a very good example of the value of high quality rehabilitation."

Research for the Future

The field of wildlife rehabilitation is a relatively new discipline, and information on advancing medical protocols, wildlife nutrition, and caging considerations is constantly evolving. The WRA stays abreast of current research and advancements in wildlife care through attending local, national and international conferences, networking with other facilities, and in-house research.

As with all new ideas, it is crucial that we have a way of measuring the success of our efforts beyond the moment when the animal flies off into the wild.

The WRA has been fortunate to have wildlife rehabilitators who hold bird banding permits and we have been able to band many of the birds in our care.

Our avian patients are outfitted with a unique federal band, and this information is collected in a central database so that if the animal is ever sighted or found dead, this information is then sent to the bander.

If we have done our job properly, post-release survival and longevity of rehabilitated wildlife should be comparable to their non-rehabilitated counterparts.

By identifying those areas where it is not, rehabilitators can develop targeted improvements in care.

Band Aid

Sightings, or "returns" of banded birds worldwide are extremely low – hovering around 2%. In 2010, the WRA focused its efforts on tracking animals that are more likely to provide useful data.

This past summer, the WRA partnered with the Vancouver Avian Research Centre (VARC) which operates a banding station at Colony Farm Regional Park in Port Coquitlam. All hand-raised American robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and cedar waxwings (*Bombicilla cedrorum*) released at Colony Farm were banded with both metal and coloured leg bands allowing banders and park users to identify and report rehab birds. As these birds



Photo: Derek Matthews

A juvenile American robin alive and well at Colony Farm

were released in an area being regularly monitored by the VARC banding station, we are more likely to get adequate numbers over time to extract information on post-release survival.

Banding not only provides valuable information for wildlife rehabilitators, but also validates the work that we do every day. The WRA's work will continue to provide that second, or even third, chance at life in the wild. 🐦

Earth Fest

Family Nature Festival hosted by *Wildlife Rescue*

Saturday, April 16, 2011

11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion

Free activities include

- Bird and bee house building
- Canoe rides
- Nature trails & talks
- Prize draws
- Wildlife crafts & games
- Community exhibitors

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Foster Me: Big Brown Bats

Bats go back to sleep after rude awakening

By Yolanda Brooks

Communications Coordinator

Two big brown bats that were disturbed during hibernation are now resting up for the remainder of the winter after being brought in to the WRA.

The bats arrived in mid-February within a day of each other. One was rescued by workers from a construction site in New Westminster. On its arrival at the WRA Care Centre it was extremely lethargic.

The second bat was found on the ground in downtown Vancouver.



Photo: Linda Bakker

Big brown bats can be found in the cities, parks and forests of BC

After examination it was found to be slightly dehydrated but otherwise healthy.

Big brown bats go into a state of torpor rather than true hibernation, and when temperatures rise will waken to hunt for food. However,

when they are disturbed during this time, they are extremely vulnerable. They can lose weight rapidly as they burn increased amounts of energy in a short space of time. Because they are in such a delicate state, rehabilitation staff have to find a balance between disturbing them and giving them food and fluids to ensure they maintain their body weight.

The bats were closely observed for signs of distress and after a short stay inside a cold room in the Care Centre, they were housed together in a nest box in the grounds of the WRA.

It looks like their short rehabilitation has gone well as the box has been checked and both bats are back in a state of torpor.

Hands-on care for the bats has now ended, but Care Centre staff will be keeping an eye on the pair which are expected to come out of hibernation in the next few weeks once temperatures rise. 🦇

Winter 2011: Foster Fur and Feathers

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<input type="checkbox"/> Rufous hummingbird	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Pine siskin	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Northwestern crow	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Rock pigeon	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Varied thrush	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-headed grosbeak	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Violet-green swallow	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Steller's jay	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Douglas squirrel	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard duckling	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Western gull	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesser scaup	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern flicker	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Pileated woodpecker	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe hare	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Little brown bat	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Striped skunk	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed hawk	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Saw-whet owl	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Raccoon	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Great blue heron	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> American beaver	\$250

PLEASE MAIL A
PRINTED CERTIFICATE

PLEASE EMAIL AN
ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATE

By becoming a Foster Fur and Feathers sponsor, you are joining our efforts to save an injured or orphaned animal. Consider giving a gift of caring to yourself or to someone you know. Each fosterer receives a Foster Certificate with a photograph and educational information about the sponsored species. You may choose either a printed certificate – which will be mailed to you or your gift recipient – or an electronic certificate if you wish to save paper.

WRA is grateful for your support. Thank you.

NAME		
ADDRESS		
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

Wildlife Rescue Association of BC respects the support of all our donors. We do not trade or sell donors' names. Donations and Memberships are tax deductible. Registered charity # 131373490RR0001.



Wildlife Rescue Association of BC
5216 Glencarin Drive
Burnaby, BC
V5B 3C1

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



Wildlife Rescue Association of BC
5216 Glencarin Drive
Burnaby, BC V5B 3C1

I wish to make a donation:

One-Time	\$
Monthly	\$

I wish to become a member:

- ☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift Membership
- | | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Couple | \$35 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$15 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$250 per year |

Request for information:

- ☐ Volunteer opportunities
☐ Education programs
☐ Planned giving ~
Leaving a legacy for wildlife

WRA is grateful for your support. Thank you.

NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY	PROVINCE	POSTAL CODE
EMAIL	PHONE	

If this is a gift:

NAME		
ADDRESS		
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<input type="checkbox"/> American Express	\$	SIGNATURE

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