

WELL-OILED CLEANING MACHINE

Wildlife Rescue Team Cleans 16 Ducks in Three Days

By Yolanda BrooksCommunications Manager

Wildlife Rescue was left to pick up the cleaning bill after a contamination incident at a pond in Surrey left more than 16 mallard ducks soiled.

The organization originally got a call to its Wildlife Helpline warning of an oily orange substance in a pond on the site of a rural RV park in Surrey just days before the Thanksgiving weekend.

With no outside agencies on hand to help, Wildlife Rescue sent out a wildlife responder on a reconnaissance mission. The next day, a trained capture team travelled to the site and picked up three birds but spotted several more soiled birds.

Twenty four hours later, the team managed to corral 12 ducks and transport them to the WRA Wildlife Hospital. A final bird was caught a few days later.

Extra volunteers were called in to help with the cleaning operation which lasted throughout the Thanksgiving weekend.

With so many birds it was full steam ahead and at some points three birds at a time were being cleaned. By the time the weekend was over, they were all dried, clean and many in outside enclosures. Most of the birds recovered well after



There was no time for a relaxing Thanksgiving weekend at Wildlife Rescue.

the wash, but five of them needed further treatment for burns suffered as a result of exposure to the mystery pollutant.

They spent a few extra days indoors until they were healthy enough to join their companions in the outdoor enclosures.

Eleven of the ducks were at the WRA Wildlife Hospital for 14 days. Because their original home was still showing signs of pollution, the ducks were released at Deer Lake in Burnaby.

"When wildlife get caught up in pollution incidents like this, there are often no agencies to help or funds available to save them," says Coleen Doucette, Executive Director of Wildlife Rescue.

"If we didn't step in and rescue these animals, they would just have been left to suffer a slow lingering death from hypothermia and poi-

soning. Wildlife response resources in the province are

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Wildlife Rescue

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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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BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Wings of Change

When an amazing group of individuals founded Wildlife Rescue Association of BC (WRA) in 1979, they never expected the number of wild animals impacted by humans to grow to the magnitude we experience today.

WRA has evolved from a Wildlife Care Centre to a Wildlife Hospital to provide the level of expertise needed for our community. We have cared for more than 80,000 animals in over three decades and during recent years the volume of injured wildlife has climbed at an unprecedented rate. In 2013, we were dealing with a common increase of 2%. At the end of 2014, the increase jumped to 8.5%. Our increase for 2015 will be 11% or greater.

This trend has had a significant impact on all aspects of WRA from staff and volunteers to facilities to business infrastructure. Due to years of sound hiring decisions, a great volunteer program and donors like you, WRA has the depth of skills and talents to implement the organizational change needed to navigate this extreme growth curve. We anticipate another increase of 3% to 4% by the end of 2016.

This makes your ongoing assistance critical to local wildlife survival! Through observing human development, I believe the increase of injured wildlife has a direct correlation with our population growth in our region. Therefore, WRA's donor base needs to mature



at the same rate as incoming animal cases. YOU can support Wings of Change at WRA by spreading your wings...and the word about WRA and what we do.

We ask that you help us increase membership and donations by talking to your friends and anyone you know who cares about wildlife. EVERYBODY makes a difference. Local wildlife is counting on all of us to find new ways of increasing the Wildlife Hospital resources by more than 15% to help balance growing human impact.

We THANK YOU for continuing to give generously and please consider increasing your donation by at least 15% during our annual winter campaign. Please encourage others to support WRA with a funding gift.

Holiday blessings to you all.

Coleen Doucette Executive Director

Express Delivery If you are a member of Wild-

life Rescue and would prefer to receive the newsletter via email, please send an email to: info@wildliferescue.ca or call the main administration line on 604 526 2747 to make the switch. The next issue of *To the Rescue* will be published in February, 2016.

Follow Us!









Ladies with the Lamps

Staff and patients at the WRA Wildlife Hospital endured 48 hours without power following the short but fierce windstorm which ripped through the Lower Mainland at the end of August.

With no heat or light, debris and power lines strewn across the access road and three staff cars smashed by falling trees, Burnaby Fire Department ordered an evacuation of the hospital on late Saturday afternoon.

Although the centre remained closed to new intakes, the site was declared safe and staff and volunteers returned the next day to feed, clean and provide the best care they could for the remaining animals in care. The team used flashlights, camping lanterns and headlamps to carry out exams, swaddled and held animals close to their bodies to keep them warm, covered freezers with blankets to prevent produce such as fish and berries from defrosting, and bagged dirty laundry that piled up while the washer and dryer stood idle.

Staff used their cell phones to coordinate with other rescue organizations and veterinary facilities that were accepting wildlife on our behalf, and posted emergency messages online to direct members of the public to alter-



Staff and volunteers continued to care for the animals using battery power in the aftermath of the storm.

native receiving centres.

With limited use of diagnostic equipment, no heating lamps or incubators combined with the inability to carry out surgery, rehabilitation staff were unable to treat a handful of animals that arrived in critical condition. Under normal circumstances, these patients would be treated but under emergency conditions they were humanely euthanized. Thankfully, most of the animals survived the power outage with no ill effects.

Apart from the three staff cars, which were declared write-offs by ICBC, the hospital itself, storage sheds, pens, aviaries and enclosures, survived the storm unscathed.

Forty-eight hours after the lights went out, the power came back on and life in the hospital, and the administration office, quickly returned to normal.

"The staff and volunteers were awesome," said Coleen Doucette, Wildlife Rescue's new Executive Director. "They immediately moved from their everyday responsibilities to emergency response mode. The actions that they took ensured the health and safety of both people and animals and I could not be more proud of the way they handled themselves."

While the hospital was closed to admissions, the Animal Emergency Clinic in Kitsilano, Richmond Animal Protection Society, Animal Emergency Clinic of Fraser Valley and Coast Mountain Veterinary Services in Whistler provided a temporary shelter and care for newly rescued animals until the WRA Wildlife Hospital was fully operational. We would like to thank staff at these facilities for coming to the aid of wildlife and the organization during the immediate aftermath of the storm.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager



New Faces

Wildlife Rescue would like to welcome Fiona Burness (left) and Rob Vandermey (right) to the fold.

Fiona, who originally joined the organization in February as an Animal Care and Wildlife Helpline volunteer, has taken on the new role of Human Resources Director.

As well as overseeing staff related

matters, Fiona will be coordinating our successful volunteer program.

Rob, who is our new Operations and Finance Director, combines a background in project and construction management with expertise in financial business operations.

Both Rob and Fiona will play an integral role in the organizational changes that will enable Wildlife Rescue to deal with the growing demand for its services.

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Seven young raccoons spent more than two months in care during the late summer. Two chose not to pose for the family photo!

We are family A blended family of seven raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) spent two months together during the summer, recovering, growing and roaming free range in the raccoon enclosure.

The most seriously injured patient, a male juvenile raccoon, arrived in late July. He had been spotted on a Vancouver lawn shivering. When he was examined by rehabilitation staff he was unresponsive, his limbs stiff, jaw locked and he was suffering from tremors.

Poisoning was suspected and he was given medication to reduce symptoms and fluids to help flush the suspected poison from his system. The day after admission, the tremors and stiff limbs gradually subsided and by the

evening he was able to hold up his head and respond to surroundings.

Day by day, his condition improved but he still needed a hand with feeding and was tube-fed daily with a specialized raccoon slurry diet. After a week in care, he was still occasionally unsteady on his feet and had some issues with limited vision. However, he was eating unaided and starting to climb around his enclosure.

He was also starting to exhibit normal behaviour — such as becoming more wary of humans, which was an extremely good sign.

After ten days, most of his physical symptoms were resolved and he was moved into the

larger enclosure where he was soon seen snuggling with a trio of orphaned raccoons.

The next raccoons arrived a week after the poisoned raccoon. They were orphaned after their mother was killed when hit by a car in North Vancouver. Another pair arrived from Maple Ridge in early August when their lives were endangered by a property owner. The final raccoon in the group was admitted a week later after it was removed unnecessarily from its family and was unable to be returned to the wild.

All seven were released at a rural location in Maple Ridge in mid-September.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager



Road Runner This sooty grouse (*Dendragapus fuliginosus*) escaped serious injury after wandering from its natural forest habitat onto a busy road in North Vancouver.

The juvenile bird was hit by a car and had to be rescued from further harm as it continued to run to-and-fro across the road after impact. The grouse was extremely stressed on arrival at the WRA Wildlife Hospital and its coordination and movement were poor. However, it suffered no broken bones and was put under

observation to see if its condition would improve with time and rest.

A day after arrival, it was still toppling sideways but within a few days its movement returned to normal. The grouse was released within a week in a mountain location well away from main roads.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager





Airborne Again Most of Wildlife Rescue's patients come from around the Lower Mainland but it is not unusual to see patients from further afield. In late summer, in the Thompson Okanagan town of Valemont, a Northern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*) was spotted curled up in the grass.

The squirrel tried to hide under its tail and then it tried to run but would get no further than a few feet before collapsing. The finder, who was heading back to Vancouver, put the ailing mammal in a box with bedding and gave it water. When its condition hadn't improved the next day, she drove it the 660km to Burnaby.

When the young male squirrel was examined by staff at the Wildlife Hospital, its breathing was erratic, its movement sluggish and it was very easy to handle; not a good sign for animals that shy away from human contact.

Sky Fall A cedar waxwing (*Bombycilla cedro-rum*) which escaped the clutches of a hawk in late July has become the star attraction of a new Wildlife Rescue Christmas card.

The fledgling bird and its sibling were grabbed from the nest by a hawk only to be dropped in mid-air. The pair landed on the hood of a car. While one sibling succumbed to its injuries, the other escaped with a small abrasion on its beak.

When it arrived at the WRA Wildlife Hospital, the waxwing was still gaping and initially had to be fed every 30 minutes by rehabilitation staff. It took another two weeks before the fledgling was able to feed itself.

As it started to fly, it was moved to a larger aviary with other birds where it was able to socialize, forage for food and get used to outdoor temperatures.

The waxwing that fell from the sky was



The squirrel ate well and its condition improved daily although its movement remained slow for another five days.

After a week in care, it began to climb around the walls of its enclosure and after two weeks

it was judged fit for release.

A Wildlife Rescue transport volunteer was able to make the long trip to Valemont to release the rejuvenated squirrel.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager



released a month after its traumatic scrape with death.

For more information on Wildlife Rescue's 2015 collection of Christmas cards, please see the story on page 11.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager

Five Thousand and Counting

On October 14, the WRA Wildlife Hospital received its 5,000th patient of the year.

This is the first time that the organization has treated so many animals in one year. An estimated 450 animals are expected to be treated between now and the end of the year.

Intake during this incredible year includes:

517 Garter snakes 186 Flickers 138 Raccoons 78 Hummingbirds 65 Owls 2 Flying squirrels







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Call the Donation Hotline at 604.321-2277



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Legacy gifts from our supporters help us to sustain the important work we do in caring for wildlife.



Contact Wildlife Rescue today to find out how you can make a heartfelt gift that will become a living reminder of your love for animals.

Tel: 604 526 2747

Email: info@wildliferescue.ca

wildliferescue.ca

Making a Difference for Wildlife





*Zeg Hallo

Linda Bakker is Wildlife Rescue's longest serving full-time member of staff. Originally from the Netherlands, she settled in Vancouver in 2006 after meeting and pairing up with a local guy she met on the West Coast Trail.

Linda, who had previously worked two part-time jobs as a surgical nurse and an environmental consultant, was unable to take paid work due to her immigration status. To keep busy, she took on a number of volunteer positions with local non-profits. It was Wildlife Rescue however, that really piqued her interest.

"I remember going to the information session and getting really excited. I was just ready to go," she recalls. "Like a lot of volunteers, I was just in awe of what I saw. I told the Volunteer Coordinator at the time that I just want to start tomorrow."

The next day she arrived for her first shift and quickly became an indispensible member of the Wildlife Hospital animal care team. Two years later, following the success of her immigration application, she started working as a wildlife rehabilitator staff member full-time. She was also persuaded to take on the role of part-time Volunteer Coordinator.

In 2010, following a year on maternity leave, Linda returned to work as the Volunteer Coordinator. Less than a year later, she became the Team Leader of Wildlife Rehabilitation, managing staff and overseeing standards of care of all the animals on site.

After several years of making the most of her surgical and clinical skills, Linda will also be using her experience and knowledge from her days as an environmental consultant in her new position as Programs Director. As well as overseeing the WRA Wildlife Hospital, she will be responsible for the education program and the upgrade of the care facilities.

"I am looking at things more long-

term and strategically, she explains. "Before, I was only able to look at it day-to-day and react to whatever we had in care. It was really difficult to get an overview and a long-term vision. I am really excited about the changes that are happening now and I really feel we are moving forward."

Like many Wildlife Rescue staff, Linda has an extra talent that is useful when working for an organization operating on a shoestring. Her interest in photography has flourished over the past few years and her photos of wildlife patients have appeared on the front page of *To the Rescue*, in the Wildlife Rescue calendar and in various news outlets around BC. (Her photography skills are also in evidence on the website vancouvertrails.com which was created by the aforementioned West Coast Trail guy who is now her husband.)

Even when she was volunteering, it was never Linda's intention to work at Wildlife Rescue. But she enjoyed the company so much, she just never found a good reason to leave. She says: "I love the non-profit atmosphere, I love the cause and I love working with volunteers and staff because they are so passionate about wildlife. I guess people who care for wildlife are my kind of people." (* Dutch for "say hello")

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager

Network & Learn

For the first time since 1991, Wildlife Rescue will be co-hosting the Wildlife Rehabilitators Network of British Columbia (WRNBC) annual conference and AGM. The event, which attracts rescue organizations from across BC, will be held in Burnaby on the weekend of March 4-6, 2016.

The event which features expert speakers, continuing education seminars, workshops and round-table

discussions, provides an opportunity for staff and volunteers to network with other rehabilitators, enhance their understanding of wildlife care and mingle with Wildlife Rescue staff outside of a hospital setting.

As well as the information and education program, Wildlife Rescue staff will be hosting a series of tours and social events for conference attendees.

Members and non-members are invited to the event which provides a rare opportunity for Wildlife Rescue volunteers to meet other rehabilitators close to home. Karen Becker, Assistant Manager at the Wildlife Hospital,

has attended the conference both as a volunteer and as a staff member. She says: "The workshops and presentations are very informative, you learn about other rehab centres and you get to meet other rehabbers and people interested in wildlife."

Registration for the 2016 BC Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference costs \$50 for members of WRNBC and \$60 for non-members. For registration and conference details, go to www.wrnbc. org/conference-registration or visit the conference Facebook page at

www.facebook.com/WRNBC which will carry regular updates of speakers and events.



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

> Suzy Grass Wanda Snyder

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Our donors say a fond farewell to the companion animals that have had a special place in their hearts.

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seafood.

Volunteer Appreciation Event

The following organizations and individuals donated gifts, tickets and gift certificates as prizes for our event to honour the work of our volunteers.

Backyard Bird Centre, Newport Village Charlie's Chocolate Factory, Burnaby **DAVIDs Tea.** Brentwood Town Centre

Gordon White Grouse Mountain Joey Burnaby June Hunter Images

DONOR PROFILE

WILD WEST COAST



With hundreds of herons, gulls, cormorants, kingfishers and the occasional pelican or osprey in care every year, fish is one of the big ticket items on the Wildlife Rescue grocery list.

Over the last two years, the organization has been able to reduce the costs thanks to significant donations of frozen fish from the Burnaby-based Wild West Coast Seafoods.

The company, which is a founding member of the Canadian Groundfish Research and Conservation Society, is also a regular presence at local farmers markets.

As well as donating hundreds of dollars in fish, operator and manager Ron Gorman Jr has also donated his time, muscle and transport to help out staff.

In the summer, Wildlife Rescue received three incubators that were retired for human baby use by the Children's Hospital in Vancouver. With no staff or volunteers with transport big enough to deliver the incubators, the organization was looking at paying a premium in rental fees to pick up the free donation.

Ron stepped in and cleared his delivery truck to make room for the three incubators which were delivered in time for the busiest stretch of the baby bird season.

Wildlife Rescue would like to thank Wild West Coast Seafoods for their ongoing regular donations and support.

E-Newsletter Registration

Stay in touch with all the latest news at Wildlife Rescue by subscribing to our E-Newsletter, *The Tweet*. You'll receive monthly updates direct to your inbox featuring the latest photos, campaign details and event information.

To sign-up for the next issue, send an email with the subject heading, "Tweet registration" to: info@wildliferescue.ca

Education Update

The Wildlife Rescue education program which includes school programs, community visits and Pro-D days, spring break, and summer nature camps is currently in hiatus. The program is being refreshed and re-developed with plans for a return next year. Please look for updates in the Winter 2016 newsletter which will be published in mid-February.





Winter Campaign

Look out for our Winter Campaign which will be arriving in your mailbox at the beginning of December. Our traditional winter campaign is our biggest fundraiser of the year and it enables Wildlife Rescue

to fund important projects that enhance the care of the animals and aid the smooth running of the organization.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we were able to install a new phone system to replace a creaking and decades old system that kept breaking down.

This year, our Christmas wishes are focused on raccoons, Rescue Volunteers and a new Electronic Registration System.

So far this year, Wildlife Rescue has received 138 raccoons. To better accommodate the special requirements of these fiesty mammals, the rehabilitation team are planning to build a separate raccoon intake, recovery and rehabilitation enclosure.

We are also looking to create a full capture kit for our rescue volunteers who perform the trickiest animal rescues and an Electronic Registration System to replace our paper-based intake and tracking system.

For more information about the projects that need funding, check out our Winter Campaign online at www. wildliferescue.ca

We thank you for your continued support.





When WRA Rescue Volunteer Cathy Kenning (left) wears her Arc'teryx jacket she's not acting the part like actor Jeremy Renner (right), she's the real deal.

Ready for Animal Action

In the 2012 action movie, The Bourne Legacy (see picture, top right), the hero is seen jumping from snowy mountain crags, dodging air-to-surface missiles and grappling with wolves while clad in a tough yet attractive Arc'teryx jacket.

Arc'teryx, a high-performance outdoor clothing and equipment company based in North Vancouver is now supporting outdoor action of a different kind with the generous donation of six Beta SL jackets worth worth more than \$2,000 in total to

Wildlife Rescue for use by our Rescue Volunteers.

These volunteers go out in all weathers and have had to climb trees, commandeer boats, negotiate barbed wire, hike through dense vegetation, stick their hands down drains and scale fences and walls to save animals in need.

The donation of the jackets will allow our dedicated team of Rescue Volunteers to perform their duties with greater protection, comfort and style.

Thank you Arc'teryx!

Monthly Donations

Join our growing club of monthly donors and help Wildlife Rescue build a sustainable financial base to continue its life-saving work.

Monthly donations by credit card or pre-authorized bank payments are often a more convenient way to give to Wildlife Rescue.

To find out more about becoming a monthly donor and joining Wildlife Rescue's Donor Circle, please contact our administration office.
Tel: 604 526 2747. Email: info@wildliferescue.ca



Well-oiled Machine

Continued from page 1

severely limited and Wildlife Rescue is stepping up and filling a huge gap in services. More needs to be done by official agencies."

It costs Wildlife Rescue \$35 a day or \$245 a week to house, clean, feed and care for a single duck.

Wildlife Rescue launched a campaign to raise \$7,000 to help meet the costs of extra food, propane gas, medicine and testing kits purchased during the operation to rescue, clean and care for the ducks.

If you would like to help, go to: http://wildliferescue.ca/wildlife-stories/donate-now or call our administration line on 604 526 2747.

At the time of going to press, five ducks were still in care and the source and cause of the pollution remain unknown.









Top left: An intake team assess the condition of the ducks upon arrival; Top right: Three teams clean three birds; Bottom left: Staff and volunteers prepare for release; Bottom right: The clean ducks converge moments after release. Photos: Linda Bakker and Paul Steeves.

Foster Me: Northern Pygmy Owl



According to a 2014 report carried out by researchers at Oklahoma State University, between 365 million and one billion birds die in North America each year after hitting windows.

The numbers spike during the migratory spring and fall seasons.

So it is no surprise that Wildlife Rescue has recently seen an increase in the number of patients that have flown into windows.

Typically these patients suffer concussion and bruising as well as broken beaks and bones and other internal injuries.

This Northern pygmy owl (Glaucidium gnoma) was brought into the WRA Wildlife Hospital in late October after hitting a window in North Vancouver.

When it arrived at the hospital within two hours of impact, it was still suffering from a concussion.

It had no broken bones but it was

unable to perch or stand and its eyes were unable to focus.

The owl is currently in an indoor enclosure and will be monitored for several days to ensure that it has no internal injuries. Once its symptoms improve, it will be assessed for a move to an outdoor aviary.

This year, Wildlife Rescue has provided care for 179 birds suffering from the effects of a window collision. Species treated include hummingbirds, pine siskins, northern flickers, a hawk, a belted kingfisher, dark-eyed juncos, varied thrushes and bushtits.

By Yolanda Brooks Communications Manager

The young female skunk featured in the spring/summer Foster Me article was successfully released. The skunk was left bruised after getting caught in a body-grip trap in Delta.









Cards and Calendars for a Cause

Amazing! Fantastic! Beautiful! These are just a few of the comments we've heard from people who have seen the new Wildlife Rescue Christmas cards and calendar collection.

The 2016 calendar (see pictures above and centre) which has a flying squirrel on the cover, features rescue animals in the hospital as well as local wildlife photographed in their natural setting.

The 13-month calendar costs \$15 to purchase but we are offering an early

bird discount of \$12 for calendars purchased before December 1.

We also have three Christmas card designs this year, (two are pictured right,) and our third card design is a pair of cranes walking through snow. The cards cost \$7.50 per five-card pack.

Cards and calendars are available for sale from the administration building. Please call our administration line on 604 526 2747 for the mailing costs and discounts on multiple copies.



The 2015 Wildlife Rescue card and calendar collection would not be possible without the use of images donated by Paul Steeves, Tracy Riddell and William Murdoch.

FALL 2015: Foster Fur and Feathers

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Wildlife Rescue

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