



Photo: Paul Steeves

*Two rehabilitated trumpeter swans consider their next move as they check out their Delta location.*

## Weathering the Winter Storms

### Wildlife Rescue tends to its very own flock of trumpeter swans

**It was a white, waddling winter at Wildlife Rescue following the arrival of 16 trumpeter swans (*Cygnus buccinator*) over the course of the 2016/17 winter season.**

The birds, which are the largest native waterfowl in North America, started arriving at the Wildlife Hospital in early November and as one wave of birds was released, the next arrived.

With a wingspan of 185cm or more, these large birds kept staff and volunteers on their toes for several

weeks. In the run up to Christmas, 13 trumpeter swans, many of them adolescents, were admitted to the Wildlife Hospital in comparison to five the previous year.

November and December are usually quieter months at Wildlife Rescue but with so many trumpeter swans in need of treatment, our indoor and outdoor waterfowl facilities were running at full capacity.

Support from volunteers was also critical to ensure that enclosures were kept clean and meal-prep continued

throughout the day to feed the swans which needed to be fed two or three

*Continued  
on page 10*

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# TO THE RESCUE

VOL. 38 NO. 1 • WINTER 2017

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

**EDITOR** Yolanda Brooks

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE** Mike Maddison & Elaine Pope

**CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER** Paul Steeves

**DESIGN CONSULTANT** Norisa Anderson

**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.

## Wildlife Rescue Association of BC

5216 Glencarin Drive, Burnaby, BC V5B 3C1

**BUSINESS OPERATIONS** 604 526 2747

**WILDLIFE HELPLINE** 604 526 7275

**EMAIL** info@wildliferescue.ca

**REGISTERED CHARITY** #131373490RR0001

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## BIRD'S EYE VIEW



Photo: Paul Steeves

## Warm & Fuzzies

**Wildlife Rescue is a living, breathing organism: a community of people with diverse skills working together to rescue, rehabilitate, and release wild animals in need.**

It is the human relationships of the Wildlife Rescue operation that make our mission successful: a helpline volunteer connecting over the phone with a member of the public needing assistance, a good Samaritan working alongside a rescue volunteer to capture an injured animal, a Wildlife Technician pairing with an animal care volunteer to administer medical care, an office administrator reaching out to a donor to thank them for their support. We are all connected and could not do our jobs without the help of the community we have built.

Every week, we at Wildlife Rescue like to acknowledge these relationships with what we call "Warm Fuzzies", messages of gratitude and appreciation shared between staff and volunteers. Recently, a unique set of messages regarding a unique situation was able to capture one of these special relationships at work. The wildlife helpline received several calls regarding a dove stuck in an

abandoned building. With no tenants or access to the building, Rescue Coordinator Janelle was tasked with the job of finding the property owner. After some investigative work, she tracked someone down that had keys to the building. In the meantime, longtime Rescue, Transport, and Release Volunteer Perry monitored the bird's condition from the outside. Finally, two days later with a key in hand, he was able to rescue the dove and transport it to the Wildlife Hospital for treatment.

After the ordeal, Janelle wrote a "Warm Fuzzy" for Perry that read, "Thank you to Perry for checking on the dove that was trapped in a door of an abandoned building for two days so many times and for taking care of him overnight!" At the same time, Perry penned an email with praise for Janelle: "I'd like to draw your attention to the exceptional efforts of Janelle last week... The dove was clearly suffering from cold and dehydration at a minimum. Janelle made exceptional efforts over the next two days to identify and contact the current owner of the premises. Eventually a representative attended with a key and met me at the building. We released the dove from its prison and I held it overnight pending delivery to WRA the following morning."

Sharing our appreciation for each other gives us perspective and allows us to see events in a new light. The combined efforts and shared experience of two people, both in different but cohesive roles at Wildlife Rescue, saved an animal in need. Working in harmony with each other motivates us to work in harmony with our environment, and all the life within it, which of course is what we in the Wildlife Rescue community are here to do. 🐦

*Tonya Chyzowski Wildlife Technician*

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# Early Start Late Finish



For the third year in succession, Wildlife Rescue has admitted more than 4,500 animals. In 2016, wildlife technicians treated a total of 4,667, pushing the total number of animals admitted by Wildlife Rescue since 1979 over the 100,000 mark.

2016 was distinguished by an early

start to spring - the first orphaned duckling arrived on March 28, 11 days earlier than the previous year; and an extremely busy end to the year that saw more than 70 patients in residence over the festive period.

Last year's intake included 221 Northern flickers, 82 hummingbirds, 51 Steller's jays, 49 red-breasted sapsuckers, 72 bats, 71 skunks and 40 great blue herons.

Unusual species admitted include a single Northern alligator lizard, a weasel and a Pacific chorus frog that had the misfortune to land in a toilet bowl in one of WRA's bathrooms and the good luck to be spotted by an eagle-eyed volunteer who raised the alarm.

## Notice of 2017 Annual General Meeting

The Wildlife Rescue Association of BC will host its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, June 25, 2017, at the Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion.

Wildlife Rescue members are invited to the AGM which will be held at 1pm at Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion, 6871 Roberts Street, Burnaby, V5B 3C1.



*Varied thrushes endured a particularly tough winter due to numerous snow storms.*

## In the Danger Zone

Sub-zero temperatures, snow and sunny skies proved to be a lethal combination for varied thrushes this past winter. Between November 1, 2016 and the first week of February 2017, the Wildlife Hospital admitted 65 varied thrushes. That compares with 59 varied thrush admissions for the

whole of 2015.

The majority were suffering from impact injuries caused by flying into windows. As the temperatures dropped in the mountains, the thrushes moved to lower elevations in search of berries, acorns, fruit, seeds and nuts. While the birds enjoyed

milder temperatures and easier access to food, navigating the urban environment presented a new danger - glass.

With the sun low in the sky, and snow on the ground creating extra glare, an unusually high number of birds were brought in for treatment.

Sunny days following snowfall were a particular problem and during one 24-hour period in early December, Wildlife Rescue admitted seven varied thrushes. Cold temperatures kept snow on the ground for extended periods of time, and thrush admissions became a daily occurrence.

If you see a bird strike a window, gently place it into a small covered box in a quiet warm place for 45 minutes without food or water.

After 45 minutes, take the box outside and open it away from any windows or busy roads. If the bird flies away, you have successfully rescued the bird. If the bird doesn't move from the box, close the lid, place the box in a warm, quiet place and call our Helpline at 604 526 7275 for advice.



*These post-capture and pre-release photographs of the young female coyote show how much progress she made at Wildlife Rescue during her six-week stay.*

**From Ragged to Rugged** This young female coyote (*Canis latrans*) became a bit of a cause célèbre for Wildlife Rescue staff, volunteers and residents living near a Burnaby park. The Wildlife Helpline received numerous calls about the skinny coyote, with the ragged coat and damaged eye.

Despite being the worse for wear, she managed to evade capture on several occasions. She was finally caught after a week of rescue attempts and brought into the Wildlife Hospital for treatment at the end of September, 2016.

She was severely malnourished with her

haunches visible through her skin. She was also suffering from the skin disease mange which left her with bald patches. With a high protein diet she soon began to put on weight and during her six-week stay she was fed a total of 45kg (100 lb) of meat.

The mange left her coat in really poor condition, but within a week of being given medication, new tufts of fur began to grow back in.

The most serious cause for concern was the ulcer on her left eye which blighted her vision. With partial sight she would be unable to forage and hunt and would be unable to survive in the wild. It took almost a month and the

daily application of medication for the ulcer to clear up and the scarring to disappear.

After four weeks, the coyote was moved to a larger outdoor enclosure where she had room to roam and forage for the food that staff had hidden.

The long-time patient was released in early November and she sprinted off under the cover of darkness back to her original hunting ground. Post-release, she was spotted hunting in the area and with a full, thick coat and her vision restored, she was in the best possible shape to survive the winter. 🐾

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*

**A Long Way from Home** It took a tag team of Wildlife Rescue and Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS), and an assist from Pacific Coastal Airlines to save this Leach's storm petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) which was found trapped in a building on Vancouver Island.

These compact seabirds live their lives out on the high seas and are rarely seen close to land. At night they feed on krill and plankton and build nests on remote islands on the edge of the Continental Shelf. Possibly blown in to shore by a storm, the bird was found in a



building on the west coast of Vancouver Island in early November and was rescued by MARS.

The bird had abrasions on its foot and frayed

feathers. It was transferred to Wildlife Rescue because our hospital has specialized pools to treat seabirds. Due to waterproofing issues with its feathers, the bird was placed in an incubator between indoor pool sessions.

With regular pool sessions, preening and a little help from the warmth of an incubator, the waterproofing issues were soon resolved. The Leach's storm petrel was flown back to Vancouver Island courtesy of Pacific Coastal Airlines and picked up and released on the coast the same day by MARS staff. 🐾

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*





*These male and female wood ducks arrived at Wildlife Rescue separately but were released as a couple.*

**A Match Made in Rehab** This pair of wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*) was successfully released by Wildlife Rescue after both surviving challenging injuries.

She arrived on Christmas day suffering from serious lacerations to her shoulder that needed surgery and several weeks of wound management care.

He was rescued early in the New Year from Deer Lake in Burnaby by a member of the Wildlife Helpline who braved frigid waters to

scoop him up and take him in for treatment.

He had a severe head tilt and an intake exam revealed a fractured scapula, concussion and emaciation.

Wildlife technicians fitted a wrap to stabilize the fracture and initially fed him supplemental diet to boost his weight.

Staff sutured the wounds of the female wood duck and kept her indoors for several weeks until the lacerations had healed enough for her

to begin acclimatization in an outdoor pool.

While the injuries of the male healed well, his head kink did not completely disappear. However, he learned to compensate and he could fly and swim in a straight line and feed himself without difficulty.

The pair were released together in late January in Burnaby. The release was filmed and the video can be viewed via a January 27 post on Facebook.

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*



**Owls in the House** Sometimes a success story doesn't begin with a rescue and release. It begins and ends with some advice. Staff and volunteers deal with thousands of calls every year. Only a small proportion of those calls re-

quire rescues or further investigation. Most of the time, staff simply need to dispense advice.

In February, we received a call regarding two barn owls (*Tyto alba*) that had selected the rafters of an oversized warehouse in Richmond as their new home. The employees of the business were naturally concerned about their welfare due to the noisy and busy nature of the warehouse.

Barn owls typically build nests on the rafters of high, semi-open man-made structures such as barns and a pair taking up residence in a warehouse is not completely out of the ordinary.

Barn owls have a 'threatened' species status under the federal Species at Risk Act and it is illegal to kill, harm or collect adults and eggs,

or to destroy active nesting sites. We were able to reassure the finder of these two barn owls that while the warehouse may not seem like a friendly habitat to humans, the owls have found it to be suitable.

As well as providing access to an abundant rodent population, the warehouse offered safety from the weather and predators.

While the owls provide free pest control of the rodent population in the warehouse, employees will have the opportunity to observe these handsome birds on a regular basis, secure in the knowledge that they have played a role in sustaining the population of this threatened bird.

*By Lisa Rae Helpline Volunteer*

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## Wildlife Rescue ASSOCIATION

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.

**Email: [giving@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:giving@wildliferescue.ca)**

**Tel: 604 526 2747, ext. 502**

[wildliferescue.ca](http://wildliferescue.ca)

Help Us Help Wildlife





Photos: Paul Steeves &amp; Yolanda Brooks

*Like many staff members at Wildlife Rescue, Janelle VanderBeek was a great multi-tasker. As well as running the Wildlife Helpline, she carried out numerous rescues and releases and will be familiar to many as a regular TV spokesperson for Wildlife Rescue.*

## Frontline, Helpline, Lifeline

I have been connected to WRA's Wildlife Helpline in some capacity since 2013. Through these four plus years, I have encountered some of the best and worst sides of humanity and had the opportunity to work with people that I have never met and might never meet to help animals in need. Here are some of the more memorable calls that stick in my mind during my years of handling thousands of calls and dispensing advice and reassurance to callers.

I was first introduced to the helpline in the summer of 2013. We received three separate calls from members of the public regarding butterflies after two were attacked by cats and one was grounded. The fact that a child and two deep voiced men considered such a 'small' life worth making a phone call, pulled at my heart strings.

In 2014, I spoke at length over the phone with a woman who was concerned about a fledgling crow that was in her yard. The crow wasn't moving and no other crows were around.

I advised her to observe the animal for a few hours and put it in a box if no parents showed up and it didn't move.

Later that same afternoon, I called her back and was overjoyed to hear

that the animal she thought was in distress was not in fact a crow at all. "My neighbours downstairs," she explained, "just got a new black dog. They must have brushed the dog and left some of the hair out for the birds." Together we laughed with relief over the situation and she assured me that she would be making a donation to support the real crows that were coming into the hospital in need of assistance.

The lengths to which people will go to save animals in distress are astounding. In February of 2016, a woman jumped into the ocean at Jericho Beach (against my recommendation) for a bufflehead duck that was swimming upside down. She waited, soaked and freezing cold, in the public bathroom for our volunteer to pick up the bird from her.

I have spoken with thousands of people from all walks of life that will go to differing lengths to provide what help they can, especially when they learn that we are a charity organization run primarily by volunteers.

Before I worked on the helpline I was not a superstitious person. Now you will see me frequently knocking on my wooden desk. One example of why I am hesitant to mention certain things

lies with 500 brumating snakes. In March 2015, Wildlife Rescue admitted 500 garter snakes when their den was disturbed by construction in Delta.

Almost a year later, a rare conversation about the 500 snakes was cut short by a call from a woman in Abbotsford. I was speechless as she said to me "We're doing construction on a dyke, and we seem to have found a nest of snakes." "Snakes? How many snakes???" I said to her loudly so that the wildlife technicians in the exam room behind me would hear.

Luckily construction was halted immediately, and what she initially reported as "a lot of snakes" became a more manageable nine. You would think I would learn my lesson, but in January of 2017 I recounted this tale to Kristen Trudeau, our new Communications Coordinator on the helpline, only to get a call a short while later about a lone garter snake found in Langley.

I leave Wildlife Rescue this March glad for the experiences I have had, the people I have met, and the memories I will always hold, of chasing coyotes, washing soiled birds, and of giving animals a second chance at life. 🐦

*By Janelle VanderBeek* Rescue, Transport & Release Coordinator

## IN Memory

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

Bill Aichberger  
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Olga Hawkes  
Joy Lightbody  
Eva Rottmeister  
Denzil Rowlands  
John Sample  
Charles Desmond Snow  
Eric Wong

## Faithful Friends

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

Buffy Comeau  
Alf Fahrni

## Employee giving

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Laufer, Henryk	United Way Toronto & York Region
Molson Coors Canada	Vancouver Airport Authority
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*Thank you to all the companies and donors who supported Wildlife Rescue through employee giving schemes in 2016.*

## Subscribe to the Tweet

Stay connected to all the latest news at Wildlife Rescue by subscribing to our E-Newsletter, *The Tweet*. You'll receive regular updates direct to your inbox. To sign-up for the next issue, send an email with the subject heading, "Tweet subscription" to: [info@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:info@wildliferescue.ca)



## DOUGH GOODERS

Granville Island bakers, A Bread Affair, raised more than \$2,000 for Wildlife Rescue during a summer/fall fundraising campaign held on behalf of Wildlife Rescue.

Staff at the artisan bakery have run a number of community campaigns for local non-profits and decided to support Wildlife Rescue after a member of staff brought a sick mallard to the Wildlife Hospital in June. Within weeks, an in-store promotion was launched to encourage customers to make donations instead of giving tips.

As well as handing over a cheque for \$2,000, staff at A Bread Affair donated a batch of wholesome, organic cookies for Wildlife Rescue staff and volunteers. Both the cheque and the delicious cookies were gratefully received!

A Bread Affair plans to partner with Wildlife Rescue for future campaigns, so keep an eye on our social media channels for updates.

## Donor

**Buy-Low Royal Oak:**  
Supply of eggs.

**Hop on Farms:** Produce discounts.

**Keeping It Green Landscaping:** Regular delivery of greenery.

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**N. Jefferson Ltd:**  
Discount on sewing supplies.

**Pickering Safety:**  
Oxygen tanks.

**Purewal Blueberry Farms:** Bulk blueberries.  
**Save on Foods (Market Crossing branch):**

Weekly supply of lettuce.

**Semiahmoo Fish & Game Club:** Salmon.

**Tynehead Hatchery:**  
Salmon.

**Wild West Coast Seafoods:** Ongoing donation of seafood.



# Double the Gift

Employee giving programs are a great way for non-profit organizations such as Wildlife Rescue to raise funds.

When individuals donate through company plans, their gift has double the impact as employers match their generosity dollar for dollar.

Last fall, Vancouver International Airport launched an employee giving program for staff at its corporate headquarters. Wildlife Rescue was nominated as one of three charitable beneficiaries of the scheme. YVR has set aside \$1 million in matching funds for the program which will run throughout 2017.

Following a lunchtime meet and greet session to introduce employees to all of the charities involved, staff members were invited to choose one of the charities and make monthly donations through payroll giving.

In just a few months, staff and YVR have generated more than \$20,000 in donations for Wildlife Rescue, making it our most successful employee giving program to date.

YVR's community investment program Caring Beyond, Every Day,



Photo: Yolanda Brooks

**Linda Bakker of Wildlife Rescue attends a YVR open-house to introduce staff to the work of Wildlife Rescue.**

has benefited numerous community, accessibility and environmental causes over the years and this program is just one of several community engagement opportunities.

"We would like to thank YVR for being a proactive community leader by donating to local organizations and making it easy for their staff to give and make a difference," says Coleen Doucette, Executive Director of Wildlife Rescue. "We would also like to thank staff who have shown their appreciation for the work we do. This is a significant gift and it will enhance our ability to care for the increasing number of animals that need our help."

If you are considering an employee giving plan for your workplace, please

contact Development Coordinator Catherine Gwyer for more information at: **Tel: 604 526 2747, ext.506.** Or Email: [catherine@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:catherine@wildliferescue.ca) for details. 🐦

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*

**Several local businesses also support Wildlife Rescue through group volunteer days. To find out more about available opportunities, please contact our Director of Human Resources, Fiona Burness on 604 526 2747, ext. 508, or Email [fiona@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:fiona@wildliferescue.ca)**

## Sustainability

As a non-profit organization, Wildlife Rescue relies on the kindness of its donors to ensure that it has the resources it needs to rescue and rehabilitate animals in need. It is not always easy to predict the volume of animals being admitted from month to month but we must always be prepared to deal with whatever turns up on our doorstep.

December, for example, is usually a quiet time in the hospital but over the holiday period, the hospital had more than 70 patients in care. A perfect winter storm of trumpeter swans, varied thrushes and cold,

snowy weather sent our food, medicine and heating bills soaring.

Like the intake of wildlife, donations can come in at a trickle or a flood, making it difficult to plan too far ahead. Thanks to our growing number of monthly donors, who provide a steady, sustainable income, we are becoming less vulnerable to donation downturns.

When you make a sustainable monthly gift, you make it easier for us to plan for the future with confidence.

Once you've signed up for our sustainable giving program, the payments are made automatically from your bank account or credit

card. At the end of the year, you receive a single tax receipt. As a regular donor, you will no longer receive our semi-annual requests for donations, saving you time and saving us paper and postage.

You can join our sustainable giving program and support us year-round by signing up online at [www.wildliferescue.ca/giving](http://www.wildliferescue.ca/giving).

You can also set up a monthly giving plan by filling in the form on page 12 and sending in a void cheque. Alternatively, you can call our Donor Relations team on 604 526 2747, ext. 502.

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*

# Swans at the lake

*Continued from page 1*



Photos: Paul Steeves & Yolanda Brooks

**Clockwise: The pit swan rescue; a lead-poisoned swan in the X-Ray suite, recovering swans acclimatize in an outdoor enclosure & intake exam.**

times a day.

Many of the patients were suffering from migration exhaustion and had to be tube-fed with a special liquid supplement, until they were strong enough to eat unaided.

One swan survived an attack by mute swans, while another showed signs of electrocution and had to be treated for burns.

In late November, one young trumpeter swan made the local news headlines when it was saved during one of WRA's most daring rescues.

The young swan crash landed onto a Vancouver construction site, which was undergoing environmental remediation. Believing it would take off once recovered, workers on site left the bird safe within the barriers on the work site.

The following morning they found

the bird paddling in a six-metre pit that was filling with rain water. The site was once home to a chromium plating factory and the rainwater turned a bright, mustard yellow as it seeped through the mud and collected in the pit. The steep sides of the hole made it impossible for the swan to gain the lift it needed to take off and Wildlife Rescue was called in to help.

The construction team spent several hours draining the pit to make it safer for an attempted rescue. Using a ladder, the experienced two-person capture team descended into the pit and quickly managed to corner the swan and catch it in a net to prevent further mishap and injuries. An initial examination by wildlife technicians revealed no broken bones, but the bird was under-weight and had some water-proofing issues. The swan was

released on New Year's Eve together with the swan that came in with electrocution injuries. (See front page photo).

Of the 16 birds admitted over the winter, 10 were released to the wild in time for their migration north. At the time of going to press, one swan remains in care.

"We always expect to see these migratory birds at this time of year but this season we have seen a much higher than usual admittance and it was pretty crowded in the hospital," said Karen Becker, Manager of the Wildlife Hospital. "It was a whirlwind of treating, feeding, cleaning and caring as teams of staff and volunteers did everything they could to ensure every animal received the care they needed to make a full recovery."

*By Yolanda Brooks Editor*



# Foster an Animal

Snowshoe hares (*Lepus americanus*) are one of the many animals that can be sponsored at Wildlife Rescue. This young hare was one of our long-term patients during the winter season. He arrived in the middle of January with badly singed ears and paws as a result of trying to find warmth and comfort too close to a car engine.

His wounds quickly healed but he had to spend an extended period of time in care while his fur grew back. The hare was successfully released in early February.

**Did You Know?** In 2016, Wildlife Rescue spent close to \$19,000 on food supplies. Due to the large number of animals that needed enhanced diets during 2016, the high price of lettuce and the large number of birds that required fish, the food bill was 45% higher than the previous year. When you foster an animal, you help support the costs of purchasing the right food for the species in care.



Laura Evans

## WINTER 2017: Foster Fur and Feathers

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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 become a member:

☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift Membership

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer       | \$20 per year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual      | \$35 per year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Couple   | \$50 per year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student  | \$20 per year  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Life | \$350          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business        | \$350 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Life   | \$2,000        |

## Request for information:

- ☐ Volunteer opportunities  
☐ Education programs  
☐ Legacy gifts for wildlife

You can help us save on postage and paper by giving online at:

**[www.wildliferescue.ca/giving](http://www.wildliferescue.ca/giving)**

Alternatively, you can pay by mail.

\* All tax receipts are now issued via email. If you would prefer to receive your tax receipt via regular mail, please check the box and include your postal address in the tax receipt information section. ☐

## WRA is grateful for your support. Thank you!

Please accept my gift of:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ Monthly: \$

☐ Enclosed cheque (payable to Wildlife Rescue) \$  ☐ Void cheque

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

CARD #  EXP. DATE

\$  SIGNATURE

TAX RECEIPT INFORMATION: NAME

EMAIL  PHONE

ADDRESS

CITY  PROVINCE  POSTAL CODE

## This is a gift for:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY  PROVINCE  POSTAL CODE

EMAIL  PHONE

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. **W2017**