

# Burning B.C.: The Heat and the Wild

## Dehydration, burning homes, and the lasting impact of B.C.'s worst heatwave ever on the province's wildlife



**A baby Virginia Rail nests inside of a veterinary technician's hands at Wildlife Rescue during the summer of 2017.**

The greatest area of land the province has ever recorded lost to wildfires in a single season happened in the summer of 2017.

Fires scorched more than 10,600 square kilometres of timber, bush and grassland after April 1, costing the province an estimated \$510 million and torching land normally relied upon for animals to graze and feed themselves before the coming winter.

Thousands of people were forced to flee their homes and for weeks air advisories were sent out to residents of B.C. as record-breaking and harmful levels of greenhouse gas emissions were burnt into the atmosphere, amounting to a total of 190 million tonnes compared to the annual aver-

age of 65 million emitted from the entire province.

All anyone had to do to see proof was look outside and observe the haze of smoke permeating throughout Metro Vancouver which turned the bright, yellow sun into a dull orange.

As with all disasters the first focus was on the people. Evacuations, health checks, and damage calculations were quick to be made.

For hours on end firefighters worked tirelessly to ensure the fires were unable to spread in an effort to mitigate the reach of the flames as much as possible. Even so, the force of nature was strong.

With this much damage to the land, the lasting effect on wildlife has not yet

been understood and will not be for some time.

However, it has certainly been felt at Wildlife Rescue.

During the months of July and August nearly every animal coming

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## TO THE RESCUE

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**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

# Care for Wildlife Starts With You

Where would the communities of B.C. be without people who care about wildlife, without you, the person interested enough to pick up this newsletter and give it a read?

It is the rescuers, the volunteers, the staff and above all the support of the donors, that ensure the continued existence of Wildlife Rescue Association of BC.

In this spirit, I'd like to take a minute to address the rescuer, the person who found an injured animal and took time out of their day to ensure it had a place to go and heal.

You are the first line of caring support.

You are the first responder. Making the phone call to learn the best steps to take. The hand of comfort. The warm blanket on a cold night. A dark, warm quiet place to rest from the trauma just experienced.

The time you gave to an injured animal was a moment you stopped and extended your love beyond yourself. That was a magical moment.

It's hard to explain sometimes, isn't it? Why you chose to stop and help an injured animal? It just felt right, didn't it?



Doing the right thing sometimes doesn't offer an easy explanation other than the action itself.

When you stopped to help this animal, you chose to care.

It's easy to be cynical, and hard to say to yourself, 'Despite it all, I'm going to do what I can.'

It's because of people like you Wildlife Rescue is able to take in and help 5,000 animals per year. Animals who have all suffered, yet due to your actions have found comfort in a world that otherwise rarely offers such a thing, particularly to wild animals.

I just wanted to take a moment and say you're a special person, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you have done.

The healing of our environment, our animals, and our footprint starts with you.

Let's keep caring.

*Coleen Doucette*

*Executive Director*

## Get Involved

Interested in getting more involved with Wildlife Rescue? Our organization is on the lookout for several new team members including board positions, helpline volunteers, and more!

Follow Us!



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# Baby Birds Tackle Record Highs

Young birds jumped from their nests to escape the heat while the province suffered its worst heatwave in recorded history



**A Little Brown Bat at Wildlife Rescue during the heatwave in the summer. The unusually high temperatures affected animals across the province in various ways, and added more to care for at Wildlife Rescue.**

from pg. 1

through the doors of Wildlife Rescue has suffered from some degree of dehydration. During the heatwave's peak, calls were coming in daily from concerned citizens passing by wildlife showing the signs of distress often seen in animals low in water intake.

This complicated work in our hospital as each animal pen needed to be fitted with more water than usual, with several patients receiving hydration containing essential nutrients directly into their bloodstream.

A number of rare nestlings were brought into the hospital as well. According to Wildlife Rescue experts,

nestlings will jump out of their nests to try and escape the heat if they are sitting inside a hotspot. This led to several young animals such as a baby Virginia Rail coming to the organization with no signs of bad health aside from leaving its home.

Perhaps most unsettling were the young gulls who often nest on-high, several storeys up. As nestlings without the capability of flight they too leapt from their nests to escape the intense heat, breaking legs and wings as they fell to the ground.

Specialist predictions of the impact of the wildfires on wildlife are grim.

Wildlife experts at Wildsafe B.C. have cautioned residents of upcoming prob-

lems with bears as their usual harvest of berries and grasses they rely on for hibernation will be diminished from the wildfires torching their food supply.

This may lead to more human-bear interactions, particularly should residents react slowly to harvest fruit from their trees and gardens, and leaving unsecured compost outside for bears to reach.

Vigilance, wisdom and forethought by all of us can help ease the suffering of wildlife.

With the mindfulness and compassion towards injured and orphaned wildlife affected by this year's fires, we can all do our part in making a better future for our furry, scaled and feathered friends.



# Stuck Skunk Seeks Support and Salvation

## A skunk trapped head-first in a dumpster rescued

It's a smelly job, but someone has to do it.

An aromatic skunk had its head stuck inside a hole on the side of a dumpster in North Vancouver, and without help it would not have been a happy ending.

Luckily, Wildlife Rescue is around!

With the help of the BC SPCA, Wildlife Rescue staff and volunteers went out to the little one and got to work.

It was extremely, and dangerously, lodged in the drainage hole at the bottom of the dumpster.

Drains are required by law to be covered by mesh. Because it was uncovered, the skunk was able to get its head wedged into the open drain.

As the team deduced, the skunk smelled the food in the garbage, went in to grab a bite, and before it knew it it wasn't getting out.

When the response team arrived they brought special lubrication to dislodge the skunk's head.

Knowing the animal would be scared and possibly try and attack, the response team also had handlers on scene with proper equipment to ensure no further injuries would occur.

The removal of the skunk took time and expertise by all involved, but it eventually slid out after enough of the lubricant was applied around its neck and head, and the team was able to pull the injured skunk from this dangerous and potentially fatal location.

Despite having been stuck for an unknown amount of time, the skunk only spent a few days in care to ensure its condition was stable, and by the end of the week it was released!



As you can see, the skunk had its head trapped inside a small hole on the side of the dumpster.



It spent a few days in care to ensure no lasting damage was done.



After three days the skunk was released back to its home in North Vancouver!



# HERe-ON This Day a Great Life Was Saved

## From head trauma and growths to a beacon of health

Great, scott!

This Great Blue Heron arrived at Wildlife Rescue in poor condition. It had struck a window and suffered head trauma, clearly concussed. It was having difficulty finding its balance, and without help it wouldn't have been able to return to the wild.

When it arrived at Wildlife Rescue the technicians examined the beautiful creature, established a recovery plan and a set of needed medications.

In addition to the trauma, exams also showed there to be several wounds on its legs.

These skin tears were subsequently treated and over the course of its weeks in care they shrunk in size and no longer appeared threatening to its health and safety.

Finally, the heron's head trauma subsided over time. The damaged skin



**Great Blue Herons resting inside an aviary at Wildlife Rescue. The heron would spend weeks with us in recovery after suffering from a window strike.**

continued to shrink, and the health of the bird was deemed fit for release!

Without the care and attention of our wildlife technicians, the food prep and monitoring by our professional volunteer team, and the quick action by the

rescuers to bring the injured animal to Wildlife Rescue in the first place, the heron would not have survived long.

Now it's living its life, free and healthy again out where it was found in North Vancouver.

# From Nearly Frozen to a First Class Ride

## Bullock's Oriole gets first-class ride from Air Canada

What a ride.

A beautiful Bullock's oriole which came from the Ottawa Valley Wild Bird Care Centre was recently released!

The weather couldn't have been better. It was a beautiful, sunshiny day in Port Coquitlam where the bird was released at Colony Farm Community Gardens.

This bird's journey is nothing short of spectacular. It was first found by



**The Bullock's Oriole rests inside an aviary at Wildlife Rescue before release.**

a wildlife photographer in eastern Canada in December 2015, nearly frozen to death. Not only was this bird far off its normal migration path, but it was clearly not able to manage the

extreme cold.

That's when it was brought to the Ottawa Valley Wild Bird Care Centre.

It took them more than a full year to rehabilitate this animal. Afterwards, they reached out to Wildlife Rescue here on the West Coast of Canada to return the bird back to its native home. And it came in style via first-class on Air Canada.

After arrival, the medical team monitored its condition and acclimatized the bird back to the West Coast.

Finally, its freedom was returned to it on the beautiful, sunny Tuesday of August 22.

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# The Other Side of Volunteering

## Making a Difference: Graham Richardson works outside the animal care program, yet his work still saves the lives of wildlife

Volunteers make the world go round. Or, in the case of Wildlife Rescue, make quite literally everything happen.

Volunteers create a highly effective organization. Because of them we have teams available to rescue animals, help care for them by providing food, shelter and care, and finally the volunteers who transport and return them to the wild.

While volunteers involved in the animal care program can see their results clearly day-to-day, there are other volunteers who provide a massive impact in other ways.

One such volunteer is Graham Richardson.

Graham came to Wildlife Rescue in the middle of July with a work history of photography and videography, to name a couple of his interests.

With a go-getters attitude, Graham was set to work by the development department to make as many videos of the organization as possible during his valuable time with us.

Quickly, he was put to work. And work he did.

Before he inevitably had to move on, he made several high-quality and informative videos about the volunteer program, captured remarkable footage of rescues and releases, and helped

expand the organization's reach beyond its regular means.

Because of Graham's work, Wildlife Rescue is better understood than ever before. His work, although not directly caring for animals, has made a huge difference in their lives.

He's a true champion of wildlife and is always welcome back on our team.

Like Richardson, If you believe you can contribute to Wildlife Rescue in your own special way we want to hear from you. The administration team could use all kinds of support such as data organizers, grant writers, photographers and more!

## Join the Team

Wildlife Rescue hosts a variety of volunteers from all over the globe. From animal care volunteers to helpline to administration support, there are plenty of opportunities available for you to make a difference for wildlife in B.C.

The easiest way to learn about the program is to visit us online at [www.wildliferescue.ca](http://www.wildliferescue.ca) and go to "Get Involved" and then choose "Volunteering".

There is plenty of information available there including a

fantastic video about the program (made none other than by Graham Richardson as featured above!), a breakdown of the eligibility for volunteering, the benefits of the program, and an application process.

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**Call the Donation Hotline at  
604.321-2277**



**[www.charitycarprogram.ca](http://www.charitycarprogram.ca)**

## Stay in touch with Wildlife!

Sign up for our e-newsletter at Wildlife Rescue by subscribing on our website. You'll receive regular updates direct to your inbox.

To sign-up for the next issue, send an email with the subject heading, "This Is Wild Registration" to: [sam@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:sam@wildliferescue.ca)

**Donor**

*Thanks*

**Colour Time:** Printing Services

**Wild West Coast Seafoods:** Seafood donation

**Keeping It Green**

**Landscaping:** Greenery donation

**Save-On-Foods Market**

**Crossing:** Discounts on lettuce

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**Greater Vancouver**

**Laundry & Linen Service:** Laundry service discount

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**Otter Co-Op:** Regular discounts on animal feed

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Discounts

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Alberta - 403-991-2488





# Building a Better Foundation

## How monthly giving gives Wildlife Rescue legs to stand on

Monthly giving is a comfortable way for you to make a huge difference to wildlife!

It provides benefits to both the wildlife hospital and you, the donors who choose this popular method of giving.

By opting in to sustainable giving, donors help the organization achieve a more constant and predictable financial foundation to meet expenses for animal care.

In a non-profit organization where donations dictate whether or not we can keep the lights on, this is a very powerful tool.

Think about it. Non-profit organizations are constantly in search of donations from likeminded friends who wish to lend a helping hand.

Typically, these donation drives come in certain seasons a few times a year.

But what about the other months?

There are times throughout the year between funding drives when meeting the expenses for the hospital is a great challenge. This is where monthly giving shows its strength.

With the knowledge of guaranteed gifts coming in each month, it allows organizations and non-profits such as Wildlife Rescue to grow from this important foundation to meet community needs AND plan for the future of these growing needs.

It's also great for the donor!

A sustainable gift provides you with the ability to choose a monthly gift that fits your budget with much less



**Choosing a continued giving option ensures Wildlife Rescue is able to build from a stable foundation, providing better care and making smarter choices for the future.**

impact than an annual donation.

It is easy to set up, and donors receive a single cumulative tax receipt for the entire year in January of the following year.

With these facts in mind, it's no surprise to us why we see more and more supporters making use of this giving method.

You can help Wildlife Rescue continue its life-saving work by becoming a monthly donor. By choosing an amount that fits your budget, you give us the power to save lives.

To join this program, simply go to our website at [www.wildliferescue.ca](http://www.wildliferescue.ca),

click on the "Give to Wildlife" orange button in the top-right corner of the screen and select "Monthly Donation" from the selection screen and support injured wildlife immediately!

You can also fill out the form at the end of this newsletter with your information and payment details and mail your wildlife support in today!

For more information please contact our Donor Relations department at [giving@wildliferescue.ca](mailto:giving@wildliferescue.ca) or call 604-526-2747 ext. 502.

Finally, fill out the form with your information and payment details and you can start supporting injured wildlife immediately!

## In memory

*With heartfelt appreciation, Wildlife Rescue would like to recognize those who gave "In Tribute" donations to us this past year.*

Olga Long  
Robin McKenzie  
Irene Murphy  
Yasmin Rashid  
Joanie Schwartz  
Phyllis Taje  
Raymond Tresidder  
Uncle Wally  
Lee Finch

## Faithful friends

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

Rusty Eliot

# Babies, Endangered Animals, and Us

## Summer 2017 at Wildlife Rescue chock-full of rare wildlife

The summer of 2017...

While other years have claimed to be as delightful and interesting, it was really 2017 that proved to be the dark horse, stealing the lead in the history of Wildlife Rescue for most “unique” year of all time.

From rare, endangered turtles from eastern Canada strangely ending up at our door via a would-be volunteer, to the Pelagic Cormorants crashing to the ground jumping out of nests to avoid the intense heat.

From Little Brown Bats weighing just 1.6 grams being put into detailed treatment programs after being found on the back of their mother who unfortunately passed, to fantastic, daring rescues of trapped river otters, night-hawks, poorwills and baby animals of all species.

As I said, 2017 has been one wild ride, and here are some of the high-lights.

Wood Turtles are a federally protected species native to eastern Canada. More often than not folks will find them in the wilds of Ontario and Quebec, far from our West Coast.

Yet somehow this endangered turtle ended up right down the street from us at Wildlife Rescue where a passerby, who was looking to sign up as a volunteer, spotted the animal scuttling dangerously close to the road leading to our organization near Burnaby Lake.

How it ended up in Burnaby isn't exactly clear, but the best guess comes from our friends at Dewdney Animal Clinic, who we handed the creature over to after initial intake examinations and preliminary care, as they are the reptile and lizard experts.



**Baby gulls stand and cuddle with their special stuffed animal inside of the Brooder Pen at Wildlife Rescue.**

They figure the animal was being kept illegally as a pet on the West Coast. They pointed to several signs of subpar domestic care such as the “pyramid” shaped cones on its shell, a symptom of a metabolic bone disease not normally found in the wild.

After receiving stabilizing treatment, it was shipped back to Ontario in July where it joined the Speaking of Wildlife sanctuary north of Barrie where it will be cared for and contribute to educating the public on the importance of the Wood Turtle species. While we here at Wildlife Rescue wish it could have returned to the wild, the fact remains if it was raised domestic, it wouldn't know how to survive in the wild by itself.

This story is one of several we see

here at Wildlife Rescue on a weekly basis. While we share these stories in this platform, we also put up daily photographs and videos of these instances online.

Check out our Instagram account (@wildliferescuebc) for daily posts, Facebook for longer form informative posts ([www.facebook.com/WildlifeRescue](http://www.facebook.com/WildlifeRescue)), and interact with us on Twitter during the weekdays (@WRAofBC).

In addition, you can sign up for our monthly e-newsletter where we highlight the most interesting cases of the past month and more!

You can do this by visiting us online at [www.wildliferescue.ca](http://www.wildliferescue.ca), scrolling to the bottom of the page and entering in your email address followed by your first and last name.



# Let Your Legacy Be Wild



The Wildlife Rescue Association of BC was established in 1979 to rehabilitate wildlife affected by human activity and provide education to the public on co-existing with urban wildlife.

As a non-profit organization the only reason we're able to do what we do is because of the generosity of our donors.

Donations provide us with the funding necessary to treat 5,000 injured, orphaned and pollution-damaged wildlife every year.

They also allow us to get the essential medical equipment and expertise required for proper care of the animals.

Since first opening our

doors to the public decades ago Wildlife Rescue has taken in and rehabilitated more than 100,000 animals - a national first.

As the busiest Wildlife Rescue centre in all of Canada, we are proud of the work we do here every day, ensuring animals which would otherwise be forgotten receive a second chance at a natural life.

It's never too late for anyone to make a plan. To ensure their vision of the future comes as close to fruition as they can, leaving a legacy they can be proud of.

We need to all do our part to make British Columbia, and Canada, a beautiful place to live.

## FALL 2017: Foster Fur and Feathers

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**Wildlife Rescue Association of BC**

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



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| <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        |

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