

Wildlife Rescue
ASSOCIATION



TO THE RESCUE
newsletter



Endangered American White Pelican

A Leader in wildlife rehabilitation continues to rise above today's challenges

This special edition of *To The Rescue* is dedicated to all of YOU. Wildlife Rescue has treated over 125,000 patients to date and continues to provide leadership, education and a consistently high standard of care to support wildlife rehabilitation.

During these tenuous and challenging times, as we are faced with the reality of Coronavirus, you are all in our hearts. As a nation we are witnessing strength, hope, courage, and unity among communities, organizations and individuals.

COVID-19 has impacted all of us, wildlife included. This pandemic pushed Wildlife Rescue to find new and creative ways to work together as a community, to improve how we safely serve wildlife.

We have advanced our protocols and procedures to ensure the work that we do continues to carry forward with the strong foundation that began with a group of dedicated volunteers

40 years ago. We are reminded that YOU are the support system that insures care for all local wildlife. Due to the dedication you have shown, the team remains optimistic that Wildlife Rescue will continue to head in a positive direction through this current crisis.

Wildlife Rescue Association of BC was the first centre founded in Canada and continues as a respected contributor to the global rehabilitation community. In 1979 passionate individuals created the Lower Mainland Wildlife Rescue Association. As the organization grew, the new

Challenges

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

These recent weeks have changed all our lives with many new survival challenges to tackle every day. Wild animals live with continuous life-threatening challenges day after day because of the threat that humans create in this world. WE ARE THE SOLUTION to both living in harmony with wildlife and protecting our natural environment, as well as saving ourselves from COVID-19.

On March 16, Wildlife Rescue drastically changed the way we provide care and continue to adjust daily as we follow government guidance. Our committed team understands that COVID-19 is extremely serious and requires us to change the way we live. We are taking care of each other with sick and exposed people self-isolating, most staff are now working from home with minimized teams in the hospital. We are dedicated to observing hygiene protocols and all government regulations to stay safe and protect each other.

New systems have been put in place to continue working with you to save injured and orphaned animals. The Support Centre and Helpline teams are working from home with all calls diverted to a remote system. A Drop Off Hut is available for the public to deliver animals, fill out paperwork and radio hospital staff. Proper cleaning supplies are onsite.

Office staff are working from home using a virtual office to communicate, moving forward with important fundraising and administrative projects.

Volunteers, practicum students, and staff are working closely together to keep the hospital doors open for you and the injured wildlife you rescue. We will continue to modify activities, keep safe and do everything possible to stay in operation.

This newsletter is filled with many important stories that shine a light on why Wildlife Rescue should be around for another 40 years! Please enjoy this publication and share it with friends. Please remember wildlife during the difficult times. Choosing the FREEDOM PARTNER allows you to save lives monthly with the amount that works for you. With each monthly donation of \$20, one life is saved and released back to the wild! PLEASE help us help them.

~ Linda and Coleen



Co-Executive Directors
Linda Bakker and Coleen Doucette

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REGISTERED CHARITY# **131373490RR0001**

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Challenges

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name of WRA Wildlife Rescue Association BC was adopted.

As our 40th anniversary celebration come to a close, it's a pleasure to revisit our humble beginnings while recognising the role volunteers play as the heart of the organization.

We transitioned from a grassroots organization to a professional centre for rescue and medical care. As an organization we are grateful that through catastrophic events we can continue to be a voice for vulnerable wildlife when they need us the most

This year we expanded the former Helpline to advanced Support Centre services. We participated in outreach events with community and corporate organizations, while educating the public through seminars and press conferences. WRA teams work closely with biologists and government agencies to ensure optimal care is always provided.

Conservation that supports wildlife is one of our primary goals. This is a long-term investment in building community trust to ensure we are finding ways to mitigate human disturbances by contributing to education. We continue to shine a light on the evidence showing up in the hospital from the impacts of environmental disruption including wildfires, spread of diseases and shortages of food supplies effecting wildlife health.

Together this team of volunteers, donors and staff continue to implement strategies and systems to further benefit wildlife rehabilitation outcomes including some of the unique cases we encountered in this past year. One instance is the Endangered American White Pelican. Wildlife Rescue responded to a crisis call when a community member noticed a pelican on shore at Tucelnuit Lake in Oliver, BC. Based on the severity of its injuries, the single


pelican had been stranded for several weeks before his flock left to migrate south, leaving him alone. "In situations like this we want to encourage the public to call our Support Centre as soon as possible so we can prevent injuries and infections from escalating and start medical treatment before starvation, infection, and death occurs," says Janelle Stephenson, Hospital Manager at Wildlife Rescue. This Pelican was rescued just in the nick of time. Thanks to generous donors, the animal care and facilities teams were able to install both an

space and staff knowledge to handle this specialized care. Animals that live in water must be hospitalized in the water to avoid additional medical complications during recovery.

Maintaining care for an American White Pelican through the winter in the north, been a challenge. Many man-hours, great teamwork and munificent donations have gone into this heartfelt endeavor. The Pelican will be returned to his BC breeding ground on Williams Lake once his flock returns. Everyone looks forward to this happy release.

“As an organization we are grateful that through catastrophic events we can continue to be a voice for vulnerable wildlife when they need us the most.”

indoor and outdoor pools. These important facilities have ensured space for this large bird to exercise, practice diving and hunting for fish, as well as promote healing in warm temperatures. This facility upgrade will serve to help many future seabirds during their recovery. Rehabilitating aquatic animals is very challenging and Wildlife Rescue is one of the few facilities in North America with the

Since the organization began, Wildlife Rescue has treated over 125,000 patients and continues to provide leadership, education and consistently high standards of care in wildlife rehabilitation. Positive outcomes and success continue to be possible due to the strong collaborative network, support and generosity of volunteers, staff, businesses, donors and sponsors. Thank you! 



American Pelican spending time in his outdoor pool facilities and practicing his diving.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Donors Paul and Rosemary with a commemorative WRA calendar

Led to a life of giving by an orphaned gull

After celebrating Wildlife Rescue’s 40th year, the effect that our generous donors play in helping wildlife is so obvious. Most funding comes from individual donations. This is such a team effort!

Donors support allows us to open many doors and avenues to help care for wildlife in need, which otherwise would not occur. We are grateful for all the passionate donors invested in taking a proactive role in supporting the needs of the animals in care.

Paul and Rosemary Pretorius made their initial contact with Wildlife Rescue Association more than 13 years ago when Rosemary rescued a gull at Vancouver General Hospital after it had been grounded for hours. Rosemary could tell this gull was orphaned, dehydrated and in immediate need of help. Fortunately, she found Wildlife Rescue.

Being new to the country from South Africa, Paul and Rosemary knew little about the local wildlife. “All I knew was this injured animal needed help and we felt sorry for

him. Our love continued to grow as we saw these vulnerable animals without a voice or access to help,” she explains. As time went on, their passion and interest for the care and support of local wildlife continued to grow and directly aligned with their spiritual values. As a result, they found themselves answering a calling to help vulnerable, injured and orphaned wildlife by generously donating regularly. Today, Paul and Rosemary are strong supporters of Wildlife Rescue Association, Owl, and Grey Haven.

The Pretorius’ are firm believers that when they provide for others, the reward is tenfold. This uncompromising core value allows them both to continue to help WRA do what we do best: saving vulnerable animals.

Paul and Rosemary take an active role in the wellbeing of the animals they bring to Wildlife Rescue Association for care. They diligently follow up on the progress of recovery, even during those difficult times when species must be euthanized in order to mitigate suffering when there is no chance for recovery.

Often, Wildlife Rescue Association will give donors and finders the opportunity to release the animals back into the wild as a gesture of appreciation and shared success. “I get a kick of endorphins when I have the opportunity to release a recovered animal back to the wild,” says Paul.

Ever since the couple stumbled upon an injured bird and played a direct role in its recovery, they have never looked back.

Taking a pivotal part in saving wildlife has shaped and impacted their lives in many ways. They share education with others in their communities and emulate healthy co-existing behavior with wildlife.

They provide financial help to some of the building and structural changes around the facility, and kindly donate on a monthly basis. Gulls hold a special place in their hearts,

Paul shares, because they are a species which are misunderstood by many and need help the most. Gulls also live in neighbourhoods where the population of these species has increased, and the availability of help has deteriorated due to a lack of education and awareness.

This amazing couple hope to continue assisting vulnerable animal populations by supporting their local communities’ shelters and by sharing their financial gifts as they can, so that animals may have second chance to be free when returned to the wild. They also encourage others to educate themselves and strengthen the work WRA does for communities in helping all species. In the end, for them, it is simply a matter of “humanizing,” each experience.

“Gulls are a misunderstood species”



Dr. Mira Ziolo
Operations Veterinarian



Dr. Marjo Laurinell
Onsite Veterinarian

Two Vets divide and conquer

The Wildlife Rescue Association (WRA) is fortunate to work with two veterinarians who oversee the work we do to improve individual animal care at WRA and general wildlife health standards in British Columbia and beyond.

Mira Ziolo joined the Wildlife Rescue Association in early 2012. When she first moved to the Lower Mainland. With over 15 years of clinical veterinary and wildlife-human interface management experience, she knew she was searching for an organization that would align with her core values.

After sitting down with Co-Executive Director, Coleen Doucette near the end of 2011, Mira was inspired by the organization's approach and mandate. "Something felt different. It was clear that Wildlife Rescue is an organization that could see the bigger picture. I knew I wanted to be involved with the work they were doing," said Mira. Shortly after her initial visit, Mira was invited to join the Wildlife Rescue team as the clinical veterinarian.

Over the recent years, Mira's role has evolved to become the Operations Veterinarian. She works along with the hospital manager, Janelle Stephenson

on urgent and sensitive tasks. Her mandate is to address issues, improve protocols, planning and find solutions together. Mira oversees unique cases and provides input to align with wildlife regulations, wildlife-human interface health and public health. Working remotely, she misses a huge part of the connection with the wildlife on a day-to-day and the opportunity to teach and learn from others.

"The most important thing is to stay humble and realize that you too are learning from others. Also to be patient, allowing the team to grow and progress with confidence," she said.

WRA has provided Mira with the environment to gain an understanding of wildlife challenges on a ground level, and how to work through those challenges sustainably. "WRA is kind of like my little clinic, a touchstone for me and the bigger picture work that I do." She has learned the importance of early groundwork, through time and

experience at Wildlife Rescue.

As the human population grows, wildlife populations are decreasing. Her focus is directed to community-level approaches that help improve relationships between wildlife and humans. Such approaches stimulate changes that allow communities to engage self-directed stewardship of the world around them in a way that aims to be resilient and adaptable to the ever-changing present.

More recently, Mira is working to engage with BC's and First Nations Health Authorities as important stakeholders to integrate the health of wildlife in the co-creation of more comprehensive health care models for communities around our province.

Before her career as a veterinarian, Marjo Laurinelli was an Oceanographer studying whale vocalization. She has vast wildlife experience from her time with the Wildlife Center of Virginia, Columbus Zoo and Hope for Wildlife in Nova Scotia.

Today, Marjo is our In-house Veterinarian. She is onsite regularly to assess animals, provide guidance on medical cases, and to perform veterinary procedures. She also helps WRA with research and development for treatment plans based on up-to-date veterinary science contributing to Wildlife Rescue leadership in wildlife rehabilitation.

Marjo has been involved with the ongoing care for the Endangered American White Pelican and continues to provide weekly veterinary examinations until his release later this spring. Marjo participates in the monthly Animal Care Committee (ACC) meetings where animal protocols and treatments are revised to enhance the care animals receive.





Chickadees share their avery with several other types of small songbirds

A day in Animal Care is full of activity

The Wildlife Hospital is fundamental to our mission and drives volunteers, donors, communities and sponsors to continue to evolve and foster relationships between wildlife and humans.

The work by Wildlife Hospital teams includes diverse areas of animal care, medical treatments and rehabilitation practices. Staff is supported by skilled and dedicated year-round volunteers, as well as practicum and summer students.

Volunteers attend orientations and trainings to ensure they understand the importance of their responsibilities. The roles can be intense and range from

cleaning cages and aviaries, setting up indoor and outdoor habitats, assisting with training and guidance for students, cleaning and disinfecting equipment, inventory control, preparing diets and feedings for many different species, assisting senior staff with the medical

treatments, record keeping of individual patients, overall care for nestling and fledgling songbirds and reporting everything back to staff — just to name a few.

Wildlife Technicians describe their role as rewarding and equally challenging.

“Being a wildlife technician is a nonstop job, but a job I wouldn’t want to give up. I get to work hands-on with B.C.’s native species each day, helping them get back to the wild and educating not only myself on their behaviors and ecology, but educating the public on how we can co-exist with our wild neighbors too.” shares Emma Zinck, Wildlife Technician.

“Baby bird season is the busiest time of the year”

Baby bird season is one of the busiest times of the year for Wildlife Rescue. The sheer number of baby birds that are cared for require a dedicated program to raise and release them.

When the little songbirds first hatch, they are dependent on their parents for warmth, safety, and food. When devastating circumstances occur the animals end up in our care, so we need to mimic a natural environment with proper nutrition. It is thrilling and demanding.

Wildlife Rescue can raise tiny babies all the way from vulnerable nestling to a fully-grown bird to watch it fly free.

Throughout the year severely injured animals arrive at the hospital and make remarkable recoveries back to the wild! “Overseeing the animal care program, the medical program and the baby bird program is very rewarding. I wouldn’t be able to do it without the dedication of all the skilled staff and volunteers” shares Janelle Stephenson, hospital manager.

Wildlife Rescue took in 4,426 animals in 2019, with 89.4% being bird species.

Building support, space, and services for wildlife

There is something to celebrate when we measure the growth of wildlife served and expansion over the last 40 years. Wildlife Rescue has improved its services and facilities to provide injured and orphaned wildlife the best care for a safe return to the wild.

In 1979 Wildlife Rescue opened its doors at “The Nature House” which is situated at Piper’s spit on Burnaby Lake. “The room filled up quickly with volunteers working together and keeping up with a rapidly growing caseload” shares Liz Thunstrom, Past President of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Network of BC, and former Wildlife Rescue volunteer and staff.

The “Nature House” was open during the summer months with three part-time staff and several volunteers. The support in the early days was limited in terms of resources and donors, but as the need grew so did the volunteers. ‘In the early years annual admissions was 200 or fewer. Interestingly and astonishingly, during the last 40 years Wildlife Rescue has seen more than 125,000 patients.

In 1987 Wildlife Rescue relocated to its current site on Glencarin Drive located on the other side of Burnaby Lake. During this time all injured and

orphaned patients were housed in the administration building as this was the only building on site. Thankfully, support from the community attracted help from individuals and small business to support growth. A care centre and aviaries were built with contributions from the Chevron refinery in Burnaby. In the following years, volunteer building crews and donors in the community were able to expand its capacity to include a two-story high raptor recovery flight aviary, a waterfowl rehabilitation enclosure, as well as swan and aquatic mammal enclosures with pools.

By 2009 Wildlife Rescue indoor facilities included indoor hospital pools, heated by an on-demand propane heater, and air filtration equipment. These facilities were constructed in order to assist the rehabilitation of seabirds. In 2011 the installation of the radiology suite expanding diagnostic capabilities that allowed staff to treat

broken bones and a broader range of injuries.

In winter 2017, heavy snowfall and rain damaged the then 30-year-old hospital building. The situation forced Wildlife Rescue to close the worn-out hospital while retrofitting and re-purposing other onsite buildings to continue providing services. These challenges have made it difficult to provide care to diving birds. And our planners knew that with a goal in mind and continued community efforts we would rebuild a portion of the medical centre and indoor pool facilities, moving forward into the future of Wildlife Rescue.

This year, Wildlife Rescue embarked on an exciting project with a grant from TransMountain and donations from committed volunteers, and donors. We were able to convert an existing building into a new Medical Treatment Centre (pictured below) that provides care to over 5,000 animals a year.

The new Medical Centre is for primary activities such as examinations, treatment & stabilization procedures, in-house diagnostics lab, and personnel training. With this building conversion, the previous exam space has repurposed as space for fledgling care, another critical demand for the animal care program.

Thank you for supporting this growth!



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Wildlife Support Centre: Working together to help wildlife

Wildlife Rescue has always been surrounded with amazing people and that begins with you. Together, you and the rescue teams save thousands of lives every year. We would like to give you an inside look while introducing the talented staff who ensures animals receive the best achievable care.

Your experience often begins with finding an injured animal, so let's start there with a important story...

Oh no! A Great Blue Heron hit your window and is laying on the ground. The first thing you do is call for help. You contact the Wildlife Support Centre where staff members Sierra and Jackie, working alongside many volunteers, are available to talk you through the steps of assessing the situation and arranging for an experienced rescue volunteer to pick up the Heron. These highly skilled rescue volunteers know how to handle a bird with a long, pointed beak and will carefully transport it to the wildlife hospital.

At the hospital your heron will be cared for by the skilled Wildlife Technicians: Janelle, Emma, Meghan, Kimberly, Brandon, Seth and Breanna. After a thorough exam, a treatment plan is mapped out, while animal care volunteers set up a temporary housing especially for your Heron.

The successful treatment of this Great Blue highly depends on receiving the additional care provided by the cohesive team of expert volunteers. Super-organized Volunteer Coordinator Stephanie is staying on top of volunteer schedules, as well as recruitment, training and communications.

Furthermore, your Heron needs a safe place to stay during his recovery. When building or repairing an enclosure is

needed, our skilled and creative maintenance person Don gladly makes that happen with frugal precision.

Food, medications and rehabilitation supplies are very important to your bird's successful care. Carla is on top of these resources, making sure there is enough fish in the freezer, as well as equipment and supplies to care for your big bird.

Full costs will be approximately \$223 for treatment and nutrition to restore the animal to full health. **All patients together cost over a million dollars every year!** Networking with wildlife supporters and raising this funding is a big job tackled by Wildlife Rescue's wonderful development team: Vindi, Sheila and Shantal, with added help from Carla and Emma.

Paying the bills for your Great Blue Heron's care, negotiating costs, as well as organizing and tracking financial matter is Rob, Ops & Finance Director. It takes two conductors to lead this magnificent orchestra. Taking responsibility for vision, inspiration, implementation and execution is Linda and Coleen, Co-Executive Directors.

Now that your healthy bird is ready for release, the Support Centre team will identify the best volunteer to assist you with returning him to his natural habitat.

In 2019 Wildlife Rescue provided care to 4,426 animals and the Support Centre responded to 21,398 wildlife calls. These experts work with community members to assess the situation, provide guidance and send rescue help as needed. 314 volunteers contribute their skills and expertise, while donating 24,767 hours of valuable time to power this organization.

I'm sure you now know how incredibly blessed we all are to work together saving lives.



**Volunteer Coordinator
with Volunteer Anne**



Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event

Become a Wildlife Sustainer

40 years ago, a group of people like you who value wildlife, took action to provide a solution for individual animals that need a helping hand. Today, your wildlife hospital is a leader in North America. With the new and evolving challenges facing all of us, it has become much more difficult to keep any business operating, most especially a charity.

Wildlife Rescue's goal is to carry on our important work for the next 40 years and beyond. This means strengthening sustainable capacity in bigger and better ways.

As a wildlife supporter, there are a variety of ways for you to contribute to a rock-solid foundation for Wildlife Rescue through sustainable giving.

Join The Monthly Freedom Partners.

As little as \$20 a month, provides complete care for one animal through release. Choose an amount that works with your monthly budget. You can sign up online through our website, send an email or give us a call. Your gift can be automatically deducted from the bank account or card of your choice. You will receive a complete tax receipt at the end of the year. It's easy, you won't even miss your budgeted amount and you are saving lives every single day!

Leave Your Wildlife Legacy.

An important way to ensure ongoing wildlife care for many years to come is to include Wildlife Rescue Association in your estate planning. We provide help and support for more animals than any other wildlife centre in Canada and

your long-term planning will continue that huge effort. Since 1979, we have treated over 125,000 animals, while helping hundreds of thousands more stay safely in their habitat. There are a variety of choice to ensure your core value of caring for wildlife continues such as donating securities, naming WRA as a beneficiary in your will and setting up an endowment gifts through Vancouver Foundation. Please connect with us, we are happy to provide support for your planning process.

Give An Endowment Gift.

Your major gift will be invested in Wildlife Rescue's endowment fund through the Vancouver Foundation. This endowment provides Wildlife Rescue with quarterly interest payment FOREVER! The bigger the fund grows, the more stable the organization becomes.

We are happy to connect you with our representative at the Vancouver Foundation to review the possibilities.

What is the most important thing you can do to save wildlife? Become a Sustainer!



The SUSTAINER PROGRAMS

As a member of any of the sustainer programs, you will receive monthly e-news providing you with amazing stories of the animals you have saved, a newsletter by mail twice a year giving you all the latest activities going on throughout the organization, as well as educational emails providing ways you can help wildlife in your own back yard.

Please join our team of SUSTAINERS who are saving lives everyday.



Nestling
Anna's
Hummingbird



Bewick's Wrens



Rufous Hummingbird



Duckling siblings take a shore break in their temporary wetland

IN MEMORY

Brenda Cherrington

Antonio Sierra Costosa

Clint Davy

past President of Wildlife Rescue Association of BC

Marjorie Lae

Terry Roberts

Harold Steenson

AGM MESSAGE

Wildlife Rescue virtual AGM this year will be hosted on June 28, 2020, 1:00pm to 2:30pm. We will continue to provide updates in our Wild Again Enews.

Charity Car Program Supports WRA in BC!

Donate your old vehicle and AA Wayne's (Wong's) Towing will recycle it for you.

You will receive a minimum \$50 tax-deductible receipt for the assessed value of your car and net proceeds donated to **WRA**.

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