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## **THE MUCH MALIGNED STRIPED SKUNK**

Whether you pass one that's been hit on the road, or your dog has decided to get up close and personal, nearly everyone is familiar with the smell of our wild neighbor, the skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*).

It's not uncommon for us to admit Great Horned Owls that have a distinctive skunky odor, as GHOs routinely feed on them and are one of its few predators. But aside from them, as you may have guessed, we rarely admit adult skunks, as the average person is not going to pick up or even approach an injured skunk. We do, however, hand-raise many baby skunks. We are often asked if the babies will spray us. The answer is that, while the little skunks have scent glands and can use them, they tend not to spray their care-givers if handled gently. Once the juveniles start to emanate the skunky odor, we know it's getting close to release.

It's unfortunate that this interesting little wildling is thought of so poorly. They're quiet, gentle animals that won't spray unless threatened or cornered. If you ever surprise a skunk, calmly and slowly back away. Chances are the skunk will do the same. The problem

SKUNK SPRAY REMOVER ¼ C baking soda 1 C peroxide 1 TBsp dish liquid

arises when our dogs encounter skunks. If you have ever had a pet get sprayed by a skunk, you know what a pain that is. Using tomato juice used to be the method of getting the smell out of your dog's fur. Included here is the best recipe for washing your skunky canine.

Another complaint we hear is skunks digging up lawns. If that is occurring at your residence, the reason is your grass is infested with grubs that live in the soil. The skunks are unearthing them to acquire a tasty meal. The solution is getting rid of the grubs, then you'll get rid of the pesky striped excavator. Ask your local garden store about safe, natural ways to rid your lawn of grubs.

We appeal to our readers to give skunks a second chance. They are unique and beautiful, and have a special spot in the natural order of things. As always, let's willingly share our space with our wild neighbors.





#### **INTERESTING SKUNK FACTS**

- Striped skunks are easily recognizable by the unique color pattern and distinctive smell. They are a cat-sized mammal with long black fur marked by two white stripes meeting on the head and shoulders.
- They are also called polecats.
- They weigh 6-14 pounds, have a triangular head with short ears and black, beady eyes. The tail is long and bushy, usually with a white tip; on each foot of its short legs are five slightly webbed toes. The forefeet have long, curved claws for digging. Males are generally larger than females.
- Found across the US and southern Canada, skunks occupy a variety of habitats from forests to grassy meadows and even suburban backyards.
- Humans are the worst predator of skunks, as they will poison, trap or shoot skunks as pests. Automobiles are also a problem, especially in the spring, when it's mating season, and in the fall when the young are leaving the nest.
- Skunks generally become active at dusk and retire before dawn.
- They can travel 1-2 miles on any given night.
- Skunks can excavate their own burrows but do so only if no others are available. They prefer to use old groundhog burrows or crevices under buildings.
- Skunks are solitary in the warmer months but come winter, it is common for skunks to den together. Occasionally skunks may be found in burrows at the same time as groundhogs or rabbits but they are usually in separate sections of the burrow.
- Skunks begin their mating season in February and March, babies born April to June with an average litter of 5-7 kits.
- Skunks are omnivorous, feeding mainly on insects in warm months. While they commonly raid beehives, they also dig up nests of ground bees, apparently not harmed by bee stings. In the Fall, skunks are known to eat fruits, berries, nuts and other assorted vegetation. Their winter diet consists mostly of mice, shrews and chipmunks. Skunks are not opposed to eating garbage.

# **Enormous Snapper Hit by Vehicle**



It is common for WWI to admit waterfowl, like mallards and Canada geese, that have injuries to their feet and legs from snapping turtle bites. Tiny ducklings are often consumed whole by these snappers. And it is also common for WWI to admit injured snapping turtles.

Most of these injuries are caused by automobiles, and most happen in June when female snappers are leaving the water to travel over ground to areas where they know there is good soil for laying eggs. It's hard to imagine someone running

agine someone running over a snapping turtle that is three or four times the size of a dinner plate! These guys are incredibly tough and can recover from even the most serious injuries. Shell fractures are common, and we have devised a myriad of treatment options, depending on the severity of the injury. Turtle shells are an external extension of their skeletal system and will heal like a bone if the conditions are right.

Currently, we are over-wintering a rather large snapper that was admitted in September of last year. She was brought in by the distraught man from Somerset County who had hit her. Her shell was fractured near the front of her carapace (the upper part of the shell) with a significant compression fracture about two inches across and an inch deep.

Our vet, Dr. Robert Wagner, was unable to reduce the fractured shell and we were just going to have to give it time. As it turned out, time was the best prescription for this turtle. Her body is healing the traumatized area, building bone to cover exposed tissue. It's truly amazing to watch. Because she was not healed enough to survive her hibernation, she is currently spending her time in a pool in our hospital room. She's on a regular diet of mice, chicks, venison and plant matter. As soon as weather permits, we plan on returning this magnificent wild-ling back into her home territory, with a wish of luck and safe travels.



# **Snapper Facts**

- Turtles the order *Chelonia* are our oldest living reptiles and have gone practically unchanged in the 200 million years they have been in existence.
- There is only one species in PA, *Chelydra serpentina serpentine*.
- They are among the largest fresh water turtles.
- The snapping turtle's natural range extends from southern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, from the east coast to the Rocky Mountains.
- Unlike other turtles, snappers have long tails with large keels (ridges that run from the front to the back) on the upper side; the neck is covered with loose, warty skin and the strong jaws end in a hook. The carapace (the upper part of the shell) is dark brown, quite rough and has three rows of keels running its length – these keels may be difficult to see in older specimens.
- Snappers spend most of their time submerged in water and do not bask in the sun nearly as much as other turtles.
- While snappers are good swimmers, they seem to prefer walking across the bottom of their watery habitat, which can be small streams to large rivers as well as small ponds to the largest lakes.
- The snapping turtle hibernates beneath water, usually emerging in April.
- The female will lay 25-50 eggs in June, in a nest cavity, four to seven inches deep. Depending on the weather and locale, 9 to 16 weeks later, young snappers, barely an inch long, will hatch.
- While many snappers only reach 8-12 inches, WWI admits many that are regularly larger. (This snapper was enormous! See photo.)
- Snappers are omnivorous, consuming a variety of aquatic plants, fish and even birds.

#### Words from the Wild

In late winter, we received a call from a concerned citizen who had a small raccoon circling and wandering around their yard. It seemed to show little fear of humans. We put the caller in touch with one of our experienced capture and transport people, and requested that they not approach or attempt to capture the animal on their own. As rehabbers, our first concern with this abnormal behavior is the potential for rabies. Circling, listlessness, lack of fear and/or aggression, can all be signs of rabies. These symptoms, however, can be signs of other conditions such as distemper, head trauma or parasitic infection of the brain.

Once the transporter was able to safely capture and transport it to us, we evaluated the raccoon with extreme caution. Samples were taken to test for parasites. Upon further examination, we observed no other signs of rabies except that he could not walk in a straight line due to a severe head tilt. Head tilts can be caused by a number of things such as trauma or an infection of the inner ear. His fecal was positive for raccoon round worm, *Baylisascaris procyonis (Baylis)*. We began to treat the little 'coon with a de-wormer as well as an antibiotic just in case there was some kind of infection.

*Baylis* is an intestinal parasite that is zoonotic, meaning that it can be transferred from the host – raccoons - to humans via a fecal oral route. Local raccoons may be using areas in back-yards unbeknownst to humans, who can then contract it from gardening or from using play areas like sandboxes. Human exposure to this round worm can cause neurologic symptoms and

even blindness. In raccoons, Baylis may show no signs, but can attack the central system nervous causing symptoms such as loss of coordination, lack of attention to people and surroundings, loss of muscle control, and blindness. In Rabies Vector Species (RVS) like raccoons, it can make diagnosis very difficult. We therefore exercised an abundance of caution when dealing with this patient.



A few weeks after we started the raccoon on a de-wormer

1 of 139 Raccoons admitted in 2022

and antibiotic, we noticed improvement in his head tilt and coordination. He still has a slight tilt, but it is significantly improved to the point he can walk and climb in a straight enough line to survive in the wild. Although some of the damage from the presenting condition is probably irreversible, we are hopeful and optimistic that he will be able to thrive upon his release come spring.

- Submitted by Morgan Barron

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**DANGERS TO PEOPLE** We often get calls from individuals asking for help with the raccoon they "rescued a while back" and now they don't know what to do with it. While we understand folks want to help these cute little critters, this is potentially dangerous and against the law.

In PA it is illegal for anyone to care for any wild animal (see insert). Not only will this leave you with a hefty fine (not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$1,500), the animal will most likely be euthanized for human exposure. Members of the public do not have the resources or knowledge on how to care for these animals properly. Improper care and nutrition can lead to problems, including metabolic bone disease, which we see often. These animals are then nonreleasable and specifically for raccoons, does not end well.

Raccoons, in particular, pose many possible risks for the rescuer. Raccoons are a Rabies Vector Species which means they can carry the rabies virus without showing any of the typical symptoms. Rabies is a viral disease that is usually spread through the affected animal's saliva and enters another animal or person through a break in the skin or contact with the eyes, nose or mouth. From there, it spreads to the nervous system and, in almost 100% of cases, leads to eventual death.



# The Dangers of Keeping Raccoons

As mentioned in the article above, raccoons can have roundworm that can cause neurologic symptoms in humans. Raccoon populations are susceptible to canine distemper, of which there has been an influx of in PA recently. Other common internal parasites include tapeworms and spiny-headed worms. Raccoons are known to harbor fleas, lice, mites and ticks. The list goes on and on.

**DANGERS TO RACCOONS** While coons can be dangerous to us, we can be dangerous to them. Besides the health issues that can arise from improper care, raccoons raised by the public are so habituated to people that they have little chance to thrive in the wild if released. So there are three options:

- 1. Call the PA Game Commission and they will fine you, remove the animal from your care and euthanize it.
- 2. You can do a "Born Free" release and your former pet will become the neighborhood nuisance animal whose garbage raiding will anger some folks who might look for a solution. They may be able to solve the problem themselves in a violent way, or call PGC. (see #1 above).
- 3. LEAVE THEM ALONE!!! Before you take in baby raccoons, you need to immediately contact your local rehabber or a PA Game Warden. PLEASE resist the temptation to keep them. They don't make good pets, and there's the legal issue as well

WHAT YOU ARE TO DO Should you find a young raccoon, contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator first (pawr.com) or the PA Game Commission 1-833-PGC-WILD (742-9453) for instruction. NEVER touch them with bare hands. These kids often don't need our help but every situation is different. During baby season it is not uncommon to see young ones alone. The mom is likely nearby. Don't assume they have been abandoned.

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#### Words from the Wild

Winter/Spring 2023



#### HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) viruses can severely affect domestic animal, wildlife, and sometimes human health. HPAI cases have now been confirmed in both domestic and wild birds in numerous locations throughout Canada and the United States. The strain of HPAI now present in North America has caused extensive morbidity and mortality events in a range of wild bird species, as well as causing catastrophic losses at commercial poultry operations. There is no known cure in affected avians. HPAI is not contagious to humans.

HPAI has had consequential effects on the rehabilitation community, as well. For those of us who rehab native birds, it meant accepting that every avian patient could be a potential carrier of HPAI, and if brought into our premises, could potentially infect all of the other birds in a facility, causing the operation to be put under quarantine. Biosecurity measures have had to be put in place and instructions correctly followed. This particular variant did not burn itself out over the summer, as some flus have, so we continue to take all necessary precautions.

One so-far fortunate aspect of HPAI (#?) is that songbirds are not affected. Major carriers are waterfowl, birds of prey and scavengers like vultures, ravens and crows. Here at Wildlife Works, we have set up an admission area in our back garage bay for these high-risk species. We can then do an oral swab and rapid test for the presence of avian flu virus before the patient comes into our main hospital facility. As we write this, we have had no positive tests, but other rehabbers have.

Bird feeders are unlikely to result in increased spread of avian influenza since the species of bird that tend to come to feeders are not commonly infected. However, feeders do concentrate passerines and increase the risk of transmission of other infectious diseases that do impact their health, including salmonella, E. coli and mycoplasma.

## EMERGING WILDLIFE DISEASES

#### RABBIT HEMORRHAGIC DISEASE

In early 2020, rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD) was detected for the first time in free-ranging wild hares and rabbits in the United States.

Rabbits and hares play a significant role in the ecosystem, both as herbivorous consumers of plants and as a source of food for carnivorous birds and mammals. They are also a valued game species. RHD has the potential to significantly reduce wild native rabbit and hare populations, disrupting that ecological balance. When RHD is introduced to a population of lagomorphs, intraspecific social behavior and viral persistence in the environment facilitates rapid and widespread disease transmission which could be catastrophic to small or geographically isolated subpopulations. While there are strategies that may be deployed for controlling or resolving outbreaks in captive populations, once RHD emerges in wild populations, eradication becomes nearly impossible and wild populations must often naturally develop immunity before populations can recover.

There is no cure for RHD-infected lagomorphs. The viruses that can cause RHD cannot infect humans. RHD can easily be spread amongst and between domestic and wild populations.

Locally, RHD was found in a commercial rabbit farm in Fayette County. Consequently, Disease Manage-

ment Area (#1) that encompasses Uniontown, Menallen, Georges and North Union will **preclude WWI from accepting cottontail rabbits from that area.** 



#### CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is an incurable, untreatable, always fatal brain disease caused by a misshapen protein known as a prion. It affects members of the cervid (deer) family and was first recognized in mule deer at a Colorado research facility in 1967.

CWD transmission can occur through direct animal-toanimal contact as well as indirectly through prioncontaminated environments. CWD-infected individuals shed prions through saliva, urine, and feces; and infected carcasses contribute to environmental contamination. Once in the environment, CWD prions may remain infectious in the soil for anywhere from several years to decades. CWD-infected animals may not show clinical signs of the disease for up to 18 to 24 months post-infection. During this period, animals look and act normal but are infectious and spreading the disease. Clinical signs of the disease include lowered head and, weight loss, rough coat, excessive salivation, thirst, urination, and behavioral changes including loss of fear of humans and predators. There is no known cure.

Surveillance for CWD began in 1998 in Pennsylvania, detecting its first case 2012 in Adams County. Currently, there are six active Disease Management Areas (DMAs). DMA 2 covers more than 8,300 square miles, and includes all or parts of Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Northumberland, Snyder, Somerset, Union, Westmoreland, and York counties. **Consequently, WWI will be unable to take fawns from this DMA.** 

## To Rescue or NOT To Rescue - That is the Question

**BABY BIRDS,** It's a fact, a large percentage of young animals rescued by well-intentioned people don't need help. Out of the thousands of baby birds we have admitted to WWI, many would've had a greater chance of survival if they were left alone or moved to a safe place.

Knowing the difference between a nestling and a fledgling is a key factor in determining whether or not to intervene. A fledgling is no longer a baby. It is a young bird in the process of learning to fly. These birds try, but don't quite get into the air. Instead, they end up on the ground, hopping and fluttering about. Nestlings, on the other hand, do not yet have flight feathers. They may be un-feathered or partially feathered with some skin visible.



Fledgling, If you see a baby bird on the ground that seems to have all of its feathers, but still looks a little downy, it is a fledgling. Unless you know of an immediate threat such as a dog, a cat, children, or a busy road, you should not approach the bird, but watch it from a distance. Watch and wait. Make sure the parents are checking on it every few hours. If the fledgling is otherwise healthy but there is an immediate threat move the fledgling to the safety of a

fledgling to the safety of a nearby dense shrub or tree. If the fledgling is wet or listless or if it is still where you placed it after several hours, call WWI for further advice.

**Nestling,** If you find a nestling, examine it carefully. If the bird is not injured, is alert, dry and warm, carefully pick it up and return it to the nest. Touching a baby bird will not keep the parents away, but do not handle the baby a lot. Remember, their bones are fragile. If you cannot re-nest the bird, or if you are sure the parent is dead



are sure the parent is dead or if the bird is cold, wet, and/or listless, place the bird in a small container lined with tissue, keeping the legs and wings snug to its body. Cover a heating pad (set on low) with a folded towel, then place the substitute nest on the towel and pad. Again, do not attempt to feed or water the bird as this could be fatal. Call WWI as soon as possible.



**BABY BUNNIES,** Wild cottontail rabbits "nest" in shallow holes dug in the ground by the mother rabbit. Nests are often found in lawns, gardens or under shrubs. The mother, called a doe, lines the shallow hole with fur pulled from her body and covers it and her babies with a mixture of dry grass and twigs to

of dry grass and twigs to hide it from predators. The doe feeds her babies 2-3 times a day, once before early morning (dawn) and a couple of times right after it gets dark (dusk). She squats over the nest so the babies can reach up and nurse her milk. The mother does **NOT** continually sit on the nest or stay with the baby bunnies. Doing so would signal carnivorous (meat-eating) birds and animals (like owls and foxes) as to where her babies are living. By staying away from the nest, the doe protects her young. If you know where a nest is, mow around, not over, the site. If you've made your discovery after the fact, re-cover the nest with the disturbed debris from the nest top or other suitable material such as dry grass and leaves. Baby bunnies that have been removed from the nest can be returned if they are healthy, uninjured, warm, dry, and no flies are present. Replacement should be done without the presence of children or pets. Cover the nest. Use twigs or short pieces of yarn and criss-cross the pieces over the cover. Use these as markers to identify the nest site for future mowings.

Remember, the doe visits the nest at dusk, dawn, and sometimes in the middle of the night, so watching for her during the day is futile. If the markers you left have been disturbed the next day, it is an indication that she has returned to feed, and all is well.

**FAWNS**, A fawn's mother leaves her baby for long hours while she forages for food returning only to nurse. The hidden fawn has no scent and remains motionless so it is safe from predators. Should you stumble upon a seemingly abandoned fawn:

- Do not touch or move it unless it is in imminent danger or is obviously injured.
- Watch with binoculars from a distance for several hours to see if the mother returns.
- If you have concerns about the fawn's safety or wellbeing, call a wildlife rehabilitator immediately.



Please remember that White-tailed Deer are very easily stressed by captivity and contact with humans. So, please, if you find a fawn, be courteous and respectful and do not try to touch or move it.

**RACCOONS,** If you find a baby raccoon with its eyes open, that can walk around without constantly falling over, it has most likely been separated form mom. Give the mom 2 to 4 hours to find their baby. Do not attempt to rescue unless:

- it has been sitting in the same spot for hours,
- It has been excessively crying for longer than 30 minutes. Note, they will cry to help mom locate them.
- It is in visible danger, is injured, or it is walking towards you looking for food, not just out of curiousity.

If the baby runs from you, it most likely does not need assistance.

#### PLEASE KEEP CATS INDOORS

Every year, WWI receives numerous calls from cat owners about animals injured by their pets. Many are admitted and most do not survive. Sadly, it is pet cats' instinct to hunt – not real hunger – that usually drives them to kill wildlife. It's a fallacy that cats need to roam outside to be happy, and the common strategy of putting bells on their collars has been found to be ineffective for alerting wildlife to their danger.

Allowing pet cats to roam outside is not just bad for backyard birds and wildlife, it's bad for the cats too. Outdoor cats are exposed to disease as well as the dangers of traffic, traps, poisons, abuse, and attacks from other animals. In fact, outside cats frequently don't live longer than five years, while indoor cats often live to be 17 or more.



# **Animal Care Volunteers Needed - Interns Welcomed!**

## WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A WWI VOLUNTEER

In 2017, I was in the early days of my retirement and looking for a place to volunteer. After contacting RSVP, the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program of WCCC, I was given three choices. One of them being, you guessed it, Wildlife Works in Youngwood. On August 30 I walked through their front gate, having no idea what experiences and opportunities awaited me.

On day one my training began on the outside area. One of the volunteers, Judi Wilson, showed me the basics of cleaning and feeding our wildlife, but she did so much more. She taught me *about* the animals. I was on a road to learn so much about our wildlife, from dedicated staff so willing to share their knowledge. I was so impressed.

Also eye-opening was the number of people in the community willing to help. I saw a couple who traveled from Johnstown to drop off an injured bird and a man who traveled from Somerset to drop off a duck that he feared was in danger. It just made me feel good.

I will never forget the first time I fed a baby bird from a tiny paint brush, or fed a little squirrel from a syringe. But the most memorable was the day I was asked to release a hawk in the area where it had been found (Rt 711, near Ligonier). Just watching him take off – that's the ultimate reward for what we do.

Well it's 2023, six years later, and I'm still here! That says something, don't you think? So, if you're looking for a place to volunteer, love wildlife and aren't afraid to get your hands dirty, why not give Wildlife Works a shot? I'm glad I did.



- Trish Jones



#### **\$\$ Funded Intern Program \$\$**

Each year, Wildlife Works offers internship opportunities to high school and college students with majors in biology, veterinary medicine or other environmental fields of interest. This year we received a grant (see page 7) to fund a paid intern program!

The ability to hire one or two interns for the spring/summer busy baby season will enhance standards of care while easing the burden on our core staff. We are looking forward to baby season 2023, knowing we will be better able to manage our patient load and our staff scheduling because of this generous grant.

# ANIMAL CARE VOLUNTEER DUTIES

- Priority is feeding, medicating, and treating all wildlings.
- Read log and charts prior to any care.
- Make diets and prepare food, documenting any food shortage in log. Morning shifts defrost food for raptors.
- Feed, medicate and treat all inside and outside wildlings per directions, refreshing and cleaning cages. Log your activities, being sure to document any behavior change.
- Do dishes and laundry, documenting any shortage of supplies.
- During "baby season" (April through Sept) nearly 70% of the work is indoor work.
- Almost 50% of your time will be spent cleaning and changing cages.
- There is written protocol for every facility usage, Intensive Care Unit, sinks, laundry, aviaries, cages, etc.
- At the end of the shift, if time allows, replenish food dishes for next shift.
- Novice volunteers will not be handling mammals or high risk wildlings. With demonstrated desire and aptitude, volunteers can increase hands-on skills over time.

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Brooke Baldonieri -2009 Dan Barron -2020 Tara Bajek -2021 Jennifer Bird - 2022 Suzanne Borza -2011 Michelle Buzas - 2022 Allison Checkeye -2009 Evan Clark-Deaver -2018 Isaiah Clark - 2022 Jen Close - 2022 Julie Cursi -2018 Carol DaRold - 2005 Carol Durco -1995 Shane Emerick - 2022 Pat Fennema -2014 Cathy Gerdich - 2022 Kayla Gerdich - 2022 Laney Gerdich - 2022

Mandi Gerdich - 2022 Laura Grasso - 2022 Zac Haras -2021 Melanie Harvey - 2022 Lauren Henschel - 2021 Nicole Hinerman -2015 Alexandria Hollis - 2022 Cynthia Hrovoski -2020 Breann Hrvaoski - 2022 Abigail Jackson - 2022 Trish Jones -2017 Stephanie King -2005 Dylan Klenoshek - 2022 Nick Kozinko -2015 Crista Krivoniak - 2022 Diane Kuhns - 2022 Jill Leasure -2005 Monica Leuthold -2012

Julianna Lott - 2022 Sherry Lloyd - 2021 **Brian Martz - 1996** Joelle Miele -2016 Morgan Mizikar - 2022 Olivia Moore - 2022 Olivia Moore -2018 **Tina Moore -1996** Aislinn Morris - 2022 Caiden Mullooly - 2022 Caiden Mullooly - 2022 Caiden Mullooly - 2022 Caiden Mullooly - 2022 Mary Pescatore -2004 Kristy Pastore - 2022 Mary Pescatore -2018 Shane Piper – 2022 Laurel Riely - 2022 Elizabeth Ringstad -2016 Jaime Rininger -2009 Shannon Sapolich - 2022 Christine Santo - 2022 Julie Simon -2008 Cullen Shearer - 2022 Madeline Smith - 2022 Lexi Spears - 2022 Sandy Sten -2005 Joanne Thornburg -2019 **Pam Valla -1992** Lisa Vezzani Brenna Walz - 2012 Kathy Welsh -2016 Kelly Wentz - 2021 Dana Williams -2020 Judi Wilson -2012 Carrie Yannacci -2001 Ron Yannacci -2009 Autumn Zerfoss - 2022 Savanna Zerfoss - 2021

# 2022 Annual Report (Pages 7-10)

#### Dear Friends,



Just step outside and you know Spring is right around the corner. Crocuses and daffodils show off their faces to the sun. Birds are singing in that unmistakable, "come hither" way. Here at Wildlife Works, Canada geese are vocally arguing over nest sites, the males playing "keep away" with any other male that approaches their mates. It's almost time for baby season to begin.

2022 was a difficult year for me personally, and by extension, for Wildlife Works. I had travelled to Florida in April to attend a family gathering – a cousin was in hospice. What was meant to be a week or ten-day trip dragged into 6 weeks because I became ill and had to be hospitalized twice. During this absence, my wonderful, remarkable and steady staff navigated everything from animal care to operations and barely missed a beat. They won't tell you that. They'll say they were hanging on by the skin of their teeth, but it's just not so. When I finally got home, there were no fires to put out, no disasters to clean up. Quite the contrary.

My volunteer staff are simply top-shelf. I can't name you all, but you know who you are. My amazing Facilities Director, Carol DaRold, manages to plug up all the holes in the dyke, while continuing to be a Senior Animal Care Staff. Also an Animal Care Staff, Elizabeth Ringstad could pretty much pick up anywhere Carol or I left off. Finally, Wildlife Works is kept glued together at the seams by my superwoman office manager, Monica Leuthold. She is a multi-tasking organizer, without whom I could not keep it together.

My folks are just the tip of the iceberg if I'm going on a gratitude tour. Our board and advisory board, our friends, our veterinarians, and everyone in our communities who has helped a wildling along the way – Wildlife Works can't do it without you, and neither can I.

Wildlife Works has also enjoyed the support of several foundations through the years, and while it was our plan to start construction of our education facility last year, contractor problems and supply chain issues prevented start-up. Those dedicated funds are still "sitting in the bank," however, ready for construction to begin this summer.

The bad news is my health problems continued through year-end, and Wildlife Works had to completely close our doors from Oct. to Dec. The good news is we are open again, and I have been feeling better than I have in a very long time. It's my hope that with my new-found health and my "folks" to hold me up, 2023 will be better than good. It will be a great year, and I feel blessed.

Beth Shoaf, Executive Director & Sr Rehabilitator



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## 2022 Financial Report

(Unaudited) INCOME Animal Admissions General Donations Memorials & Honoriums United Way Education Programs Fund Raising Anthrocon Event 41,497 Appeal Letters 14,185 On-Line Giving 2,275 Calendar Sales 39,957 Raffles 9,928 Misc Fundraising 4,243 Total Fundraising Estate Donation Grants	31,388 63,089 3,344 718 695 112,085 87,713 21,050	
Miscellaneous Income Membership Dues	64 5.907	
TOTAL INCOME	326,053	
Expense		
Fund Raising Expense Insurance Land Purchase Miscellaneous Expenses Office Supplies & Postage Payroll Program	34,080 3,703 3,000 2,093 1,410 80,309	
Änimal Care 31,644 Public Education 6,747 Total Program Travel Utilities, Rent, Facility Main	38,391 2,263 22,512 5 <b>187,761</b>	

## Board of Directors

Beth Shoaf, Executive Director Marcia Osborne, President Jim Vaughan, Sec/Treas. Shannon Kozakiewicz Judi Wilson

#### Advisory Board

Pat Davis Paula Petrulak Dr. Robert Wagner, VMD

#### Staff

Beth Shoaf, Sr Rehabilitator Morgan Barron, Rehabilitator Monica Leuthold, Office Manager Carol DaRold, Facility Director & Animal Care Technician Elizabeth Ringstad, Animal Care Technician Sam Testa, Groundskeeper

## Volunteer Office Staff

Julie Cursi, Webmaster Melissa Morris, Office Assistant Sue Wiseman, Newsletter Editor

## Thank You to Grantors



WWI is once again pleased to announce our receipt of a grant from the **Avangrid Foundation**. This is the eighth year we have been awarded funding from Avangrid Foundation, building a partnership that has improved and

enhanced our ability to continue our important, life-saving work. This year's grant will be used to fund interns this summer (see page 6.) This will not only be a huge benefit to WWI this year, both financially and labor-wise, but it will also, hopefully help to assure the continued supply of experienced wildlife professions in the future.

We also owe a great big thank you to another wonderful grantor, the **Margaret Raphael Foundation**, for granting funds for pen repairs this year. Ms. Raphael dedicated her life to helping animals and was a longtime supporter of WWI prior to her passing. Some of those funds have already been put to use, installing concrete drainage around our waterfowl enclosure, as well as putting up a new metal roof.

Thank you is also due to WWI Advisory Board member, Pat Davis, for the donation of a used F250 pickup with a dump bed. We are very excited about the dump bed, as its use will facilitate many of our groundskeeping chores such as hauling mulch and gravel. Page 8

Winter/Spring 2023



2 of 61 White-tailed deer admitted in 2022

#### Mammals

Virginia Opossum, 133 Eastern Mole, 1 Eastern Cottontail, 217 Eastern Chipmunk, 17 Groundhog, 21 Grey Squirrel, 48 Fox Squirrel, 9 Red Squirrel, 16 S. Flying Squirrel, 11 Deer Mouse, 3 White-footed mouse, 4 Meadow Vole, 4 House Mouse, 22 Coyote, 1 Red Fox, 4 Raccoon, 139 Striped Skunk, 8 White-tailed Deer. 61

**TOTAL MAMMALS 718** 

## Native Birds

Canada Goose, 20 Tundra Swan, 1 Trumpeter Swan, 1 Wood Duck, 11 Mallard Duck, 21 Long-tailed Duck, 1 Hooded Merganser, 1 Common Merganser, 2 Ruddy Duck, 3 Ring-necked Pheasant, 1 Turkey, 1 Common Loon, 1 Great Blue Heron, 1 Turkey Vulture, 1 Osprey, 1 Bald Eagle, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 7 Broad-winged Hawk, 4 Red-shouldered Hawk, 2 Red-tailed Hawk, 13 American Kestrel, 5 Killdeer, 1 Rock Dove, 13

# **2022 REHAB STATISTICS**

Mourning Dove, 29 Black-billed Cuckoo, 1 Barn Owl, 4 Long-eared Owl, 1 Great Horned Owl, 8 Barred Owl, 4 Eastern Screech-Owl, 5 Chimney Swift, 6 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 2 Northern Flicker, 8 Pileated Woodpecker, 1 Eastern Phoebe, 1 Red-eyed Vireo, 2 Blue Jay, 8 American Crow, 4 Tufted Titmouse, 1 White-breasted Nuthatch, 1 Carolina Wren, 10 Eastern Bluebird, 8 Swainson's Thrush, 1 American Robin , 65 Northern Mockingbird, 1 Cedar Waxwing, 4 Chipping Sparrow, 2 Song Sparrow, 1 Scarlet Tanager, 1 Northern Cardinal, 13 Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1 Red-winged Blackbird, 2 Common Grackle, 5 Brown-headed Cowbird, 1 Baltimore Oriole, 2 House Finch, 14 American Goldfinch, 8 unknown hatchling, 4

**TOTAL NATIVE BIRDS 344** 

Introduced Birds

European Starling, 32 House Sparrow, 46 Total Introduced Birds 78

**Domestic Birds** 

Indian Runner Duck, 1 Khaki Campbell, 1

**TOTAL DOMESTIC BIRDS 2** 

## Reptiles

American Toad, 4 Northern Green Frog, 1 Snapping Turtle, 4 Midland Painted Turtle, 2 Eastern Box Turtle, 11 Eastern Garter Snake, 1

Non-Native Reptiles Red-eared Slider, 1

**TOTAL HERPS 24** 

# TOTALS

WILDLINGS ADMITTED, 1,166 WILDLINGS RELEASED, 435 Nontreatables, 424

RELEASE RATE 2022 – 59%\* AVG COST PER WILDLING, \$42.65

\*Does not include "nontreatable" vildlings that died within 24 hours.

## **2022 EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

WWI's "**Wild Neighbors**" education program is available to any group. The program may include rescue "do's and don'ts" and the natural history of our wild neighbors. Educational animals are sometimes included. Here were our 2022 programs: Cub Scout Pack #416 (25) Hutchinson Elementary Kindergartens (111) Simons Garden Club Porch Party (40) D.A.R., Aliquippa Chapter (27) Youngwood Library Children's Summer program (14) Delmont Library (50) Bugs & Birds Camp Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (36) Hempfield Park & Rec Summer Day Camp (65) Rostraver Elementary School (600) Norwin Public Library (43) West Point Elementary 1<sup>st</sup> Graders (90)



Total 1,101

Words from the Wild

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**GROUPS & BUSINESSES:** CARA: Crafters & Artisans for Rescued Animals Cub Scout Pack #416 D.A.R. of Faith Lutheran Church Daniel's Excavating Delmont Library Forest 2 Home Green Hill Veterinary Greenburg Lowe's Mariscotti Insurance Moon Veterinary Hospital Rostraver Elementary School UPG Science Seminar classes West Point Elementary School Wmld/Fayette C.A.R.T. Youngwood Public Library

INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES: Thea Allendorf Andrew D Batcheler Andrea Bianco Diana Callahan

Linda Conyette Sara Cremins Kathy Davi Pat Davis Katie Deglau Cindy Faulisi Sara Forry Sarah Foster Sharon & Steve Friedel Karen Garvey Heather Gembarosky Angela Giuffre Doug & Laura Hall Helen Hawkey Diane Henderson & Family Justin Herman David & Nancy Horn Gena Hover Cynthia Hrovoski Jimmy's Bait shop Devin Kelley Bonnie Kibel Brent King Georgia Knight Mary & Dennis Law

# Sandy Levandosky Wendy Little Wendy Little Sally Loughran Milito Family & Friends Kelley Moody Patti Morgan Andrea Morris Melissa Morris Deb Lori Mozina-Ogurchak Justin Olivia Marcia Osborne Lisa Shinn Betty Simons Linda Sippel-Lemmer Jill Smith Jill Smith Sue Sobolak Lisa & Doug Speck Sandy Sten Darcy Szymkiewicz Tara Truscott Olga Vitkin Carrie Yannacci

Savanna Zerfoss

#### In-kind Services Cramer Janicki Dr. Robert Wagner, VMD Green Hill Veterinary Chet Joseph Notary Rich Lawson Roy & Associates Todd Vezzani Maintenance

OTHER 2022 FRIENDS

Fundraising Volunteers

Kris Azzarello Lori Bell Linda Conyette Craftique Collections Rita Deblock Mike DiFranco Sharon & Steve Friedel Nancy Gaffron Greensburg Newstand Adam Kupec

B-day (niece)

Rita & Mike Dorobish

Adalie Bártosiewiz's

B-day

**Christina Eyth** 

Laura Grosso

Ward Ryan

**Rebecca Gardner** 

auren Henschel

74th B-day

State Police Troop A

Clerical Staff Angela Pompa

Gerald Quinn's B-day

Doug Replogle's B-day

Connie Scotti's 90th B-day

Melissa & Glenn Tunney

Walter Rooney Jordan's

**Carol Durco** 

Penelope's Natalie Peskie Platium Salon Elizabeth Ringstad The Pet Market Barb Urban Suzanne Weightman Carrie Yannacci

Special Projects Gbg Central Catholic 7th Graders Pitt Gbg Into the Streets John & Carol Durco Tom Donohoe Ron & Karen Rothrauf



# MEMORIALS

**Delmer Cole** Roberta Cole

**Gregory Cole Sr** Roberta Cole

**Robert P Crawford** inda & Gene Sasso

**Cathie Donohoe** Deborah Chedister Joyce Clohessy Sue & Dale Wiseman

**Michael Felice** Sandy Felice

**Dorothy June** Ferencz Jill Leasure

Robert Gourley Indiana HS Class of 1959 Kathrvn & William Tuscano

**Geraldine Haines** Debra Grant Zachary Haines Sharon Hribal Corinne Kallen Carole & Robert Malone Joseph & Amy Wingrove Justine Manski

**Donald Hayward** David Hayward Greensburg Kiwanis Club Sara & James Lynch

Gerald W Jackson Sr Deanna & David Kreger

> Paul Kepchia Lauri Aston

Jeffery King Sr Dental Surgeons & Assoc Nancy & Marquis Dove

> **Chuck Lowery** Janet Lowerv

Sonny Lowery Janet Lowery

Donald J. Martin Susan Martin Stacey Sabol Cindy & Paul Sargo

Napolean Jamie Seech Family

William E. Ofcansky Linda & Gene Sasso

Jack Persin Diane & Dennis Persin

> The Pert Janet Lowery

**Cherie Ramaley** Donna Roberts

**Raymond Sistek** Julie & Sarah Walz

**Dennis Smeltzer** Margaret Ackerman

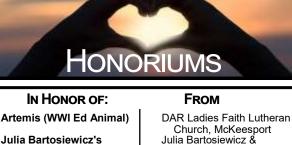
**Dennis Strosko** Patricia Strosko

**Betty White** Robert & Rhonda Simone Karen F. Stover

Dawn Wierzbowski Patti & David Morgan

Jay Woodward Bruce Tobin

Ron Zdrojknoski Mary Ann Zdrojkowski



Julia Bartosiewicz & Monica Olinger Monica Olinger (Aunt)

Dave & Gigi Patrignani Lisa Lendl-Lander Shenk Charitable Fund Marcella Sarson Angela Grasso Monica Leuthold Rocky Kremer

Tina, Missi, Kathy, Amber, Rose Cinko Lorraine & John Baith Gerald & Anna Quinn Sylvia, Harry & Doug Replogle Ryan Zlata Connie Haver Dave & Gigi Patrignani

Winter/Spring 2023

Words from the Wild

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# Ways to Support WWI

#### GENERAL OPERATIONS

#### ADOPT-A-WILDLING

- □ \$1,000, Eagle, Great Horned Owl, Osprey
- □ \$250, Barred Owl, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Blue Heron
- □ \$100, American Kestrel, Cooper's Hawk, Screech-Owl
- □ \$50, Gray Squirrel, Flying Squirrel, Woodpecker
- □ \$25, Canada Goose, Hummingbird, Opossum
- □ \$10, Box Turtle, Songbird, Cottontail Rabbit

#### MEMBERSHIP

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☐ Youth, \$5	Individual, \$15	
Family or Classroom, \$25	Sponsor, \$50	
Associate, \$100	Patron, \$250	
Sustaining, \$500	Lifetime, \$1,000	
Memberships paid after Oct 1 are good for the next year.		

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# More Ways To Help

**CONSIDER A LEGACY,** Please consider remembering WWI in your will. Future bequests can be invaluable for WWI to help us continue to grow to meet the ever-increasing numbers of wildlings in need and to assure the future of WWI.

**AMAZONSMILE** Amazon discontinued AmazonSmile in February 2023. Thank you to all who participated. Since we began in 2015 WWI received \$3,516!!!

**SHARE WWI WITH A FRIEND,** A main source of support is individual donations. Please share this newsletter with others.

**FIND A HOME FOR A WWI DONATION Can,** WWI donation cans allow the public to donate their change. Since 2002, WWI received **\$4,382** from donation cans. If you know a business or an event that would support WWI, please call us.

**BIRTHDAY AND CHRISTMAS GIFTS,** If friends and family insist on buying gifts you really don't need, suggest a donation to WWI in your name. We'll gladly send them an acknowledgement.

**MEMORIALS AND HONORIUMS,** Remember and honor those you love through a gift to help wildlife. Families and individuals will be sent an acknowledgement card and individuals and donors will be recognized in our Winter/Spring newsletter (see page 7).

**RECYCLE INK CARTRIDGES,** Drop off your empty ink cartridges today. Since 2005, WWI has earned **\$1,319** by recycling these items.

**FUNDRAISING,** We are always looking for volunteers to sell raffle tickets, calendars, and other fundraising items.

**UNITED WAY** – Participate in the United Way payroll deduction campaign at your workplace by writing in #223-199 Wild-life Works Inc.

**EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS,** WWI is happy to accept Eagle Scout projects.

**STOCK DONATIONS,** WWI has an account set up to receive donations of stocks that we can turn over to help increase our income.

**FACEBOOK DONATE BUTTON** - Instructions are on the internet. Be sure to select Wildlife Works for your charity. No fees are deducted! And it is a great way for others to honor you on your birthday or special occasions. You will know who donated, but Wildlife Works will not. So we cannot recognize their gift or add them to our mailing list and you would have to let us know if they want to be added to our mailing list.

To make a donation, complete this form and send it with your check or money order, payable to Wildlife Works, Inc., to PO Box 113, Youngwood, PA 15697. Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone(s)

Email

All contributions are tax deductible. *Thank you for your support!!!!* 







SAVE THE DATE - APRIL 29 1-4PM

Open House Baby Shower Come Meet Your Wild Neighbors

Admission: Adults \$5, Children under 12 \$2

#### WISH LIST 2023

If you, your school or organization would like to donate supplies or have a "Collection for Wildlife," it would help tremendously. Purchase the items below and deliver them to us or purchase from our wish list on Amazon and have them shipped directly to us (QR code on right).





Unsalted peanuts in the shell Bird seed Black oil sunflower/Scratch feed Cob Corn Paper towels Unscented facial tissues Chlorine Bleach Laundry detergent Dishwashing Detergent Gift Cards (grocery, office supply and pet stores) Postage stamps



WILDLIFE WORKS, INC. P.O. Box 113 Youngwood, PA

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED** 

IMPORTANT We are continually updating our mailing list. If we have not heard from you in the last 6 years your contact info will be removed unless you contact us.



**WILDLIFE WORKS MISSION** is to rehabilitate injured, ill and orphaned wildlife and educate the public on how to better co-exist with wildlife. WWI primarily serves Westmoreland County but also accepts raptors from surrounding counties.

**VOLUNTEERS** - There are 50-60 WWI volunteers, the majority of whom are animal care volunteers. Animal care volunteers are active every day of the year. In peak baby season, volunteers contribute approximately 50 hours daily!!!!

Additionally, the volunteer base includes several veteranarians and other professionals greatly adding to the high level of professionalism of WWI. In addition to caring for animals and educating the public, volunteers also raise a significant portion of the budget through events, sales, solicitations and program income. Without the dedication of these individuals WWI would not exist.

**STAFF** - There are currently five part-time paid positions at WWI: an Office Manager, one Facility Director, one Animal Care Technician, one Groundskeeper, and one Senior Rehabilitator. These positions provide essential support for year-round uninterrupted operations. Beth Shoaf, the senior rehabilitator, and rehabilitator Morgan Barron are licensed by the PA Game Commission and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**FACILITY** - WWI operates from the Youngwood home-based facility of Beth Shoaf, a facility in Mt Pleasant and several other satellites in West-moreland County.

**ADMISSION HOURS** - Are by appointment only and are dependent upon availability of staff. The office is open 10AM-3PM Monday through Friday. Please leave a message during off hours. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

**Notice of Non-Profit Status:** WWI is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit. The official registration and financial info of WWI may be obtained from the PA Dept of State at 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

All photos are WWI photos unless otherwise noted..

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Greensburg, PA Permit # 1091



These 3 kits were admitted and nurtured at the WWI Mt Pleasant facility then transferred to another facility that could teach them to hunt prey.

WWI STATISTICS 12/93-12/22 Wildlings Admitted - 16,654 12/93-12/22 Released - 8,232

2022 Wildlings Admitted -1,166\* Released 435 \*Includes nontreatables (35% of admissions!)

Avg Annual Admissions (last 5 yrs), 1013 Avg Cost/Wildling (last 5 yrs), \$32.38

2004-2022 EDUCATION PROGRAMS - 310 Estimated # Individuals Reached 21,700