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“LEUCISTIC” RED-TAILED HAWK

Last November, our Facebook friends were treated to photos of this Red-tailed Hawk with unusually light plumage. Game Warden Ritchie brought the bird to us from Jefferson Hills. This hawk is probably a second-year bird, and based on size, is most likely a female. She was admitted after being found on the side of a busy road. She probably had only been grazed by passing traffic, as it turned out that her injuries were minor.

This particular color morph of raptors is called **leucism**. Leucism in birds is a genetic mutation that results in a total or partial reduction of color in a bird's plumage. It occurs in many species of animal, with partial leucism creating a piebald effect.

Although sometimes described as a partial albino, there is no such thing, because albinism is the total absence of melanin, the pigment responsible for blacks and browns and other dark colors. Leucism causes white coloration,

white patches, spots, or splotches on the skin, fur or feathers. Leucism is also discernible from albinism because leucism does not affect the pigment cells in the eyes. Albinism is rare, while leucism is slightly more common. **Schizochroism** is also a term applied to an abnormally pale, washed-out bird whose paleness results from an absence of one of the pigments normally present in its plumage.

The red-tail was treated for generalized trauma and was given time to recover in a darkened carrier in our ICU. Once she was eating whole food on her own and was able to navigate a perch, she was first moved into one of the mews in our raptor barn, before being given free rein in the continuous flyway. By early December, this beauty of a raptor was packaged up and taken back to Jefferson Hills for release. Days like these are the best of days!

Below - Left Photo: Leucistic; Right Photo: Normal



RED-TAILED HAWK FACTS

- The Red-tailed Hawk, *Buteo jamaicensis*, is one of our largest buteos.
- Red-tails have only one clutch per season, with an average of two eggs laid, although the clutch size can range from 1-5. Both sexes build the nest, incubate the eggs and care for the young.
- Since 2002 we have admitted 348 Red-tailed Hawks.
- Red-tails live throughout North America in a wide variety of habitats.
- Red-tail territories range in size from half a square mile to over two square miles, determined by abundance of food and good nest sites.
- Pairs of red-tails can remain together on the same territory for years.



“IT’S RAINING LOONS AND GREBES...”

There are many species of waterfowl that spend their winters in the South and along the Eastern coast, only to migrate north into Alaska, Canada, Iceland and even the arctic circle to breed. Folks in SW PA can enjoy these birds only in spring and fall during migration. However, it is not uncommon for some waterfowl to be forced to leave the north before spring migration because food becomes scarce when large areas, like the Great Lakes, are frozen. These travelers often encounter heavy weather while trying to reach the East coast and are buffeted by high winds and precipitation. They can come to ground in large numbers. This phenomenon is called “fallout.”

WWI was a short stop for several fallout victims in 2023. We admitted two Horned Grebes on the same day from different locations and a Common Loon the following week. These two species, along with many other species of diving waterfowl, spend nearly their whole lives on water and are physically incapable of walking on land. They are foot-propelled divers, and their legs are designed for diving underwater to catch prey. If stranded on land, they will die.

With respect to the rehab process of diving waterfowl, it can be pretty straight-forward or excruciatingly difficult. In the least serious scenario, the birds are uninjured, or marginally so – sometimes some abrasions on the feet from the struggle to move on dry land. In these cases, we do a thorough exam to be sure there are no other issues, and after a day or two rest, we rush these birds back out onto open water. The reason

for the big rush is to prevent rehab complications. These birds are extraordinarily stressed in a captive setting. Prolonged stress can lead to a variety of illnesses and conditions that are difficult to treat – especially *aspergillosis*, a fungal infection of the respiratory tract that is nearly always fatal. These patients can be reluctant to feed. Any damage to their feathers, no matter how slight, can cause the birds’ waterproofing to fail, leading to hypothermia and death. If there is no open water locally, or the birds have sustained injuries requiring extended stays in rehab, we willingly transfer them to a facility with all of the proper housing and know-how to get these birds healthy and release ready. We’d like to give a shout-out to Tri-State Bird Rescue in Delaware for always helping us when we need them.

We’re thankful that three members of the PennDot Westmoreland County Maintenance Crew rescued the loon from I-70. The loon was on the center line of the westbound lanes near the Yukon exit. Special thanks to Jeremy Smith, Matt Shipley, and Jim Zorzi from the Bilo Shed. [Click here for article.](#)

In the case of the Common Loon and the two Horned Grebes, luck was with them and us. Except for a few minor abrasions on the loon’s feet, the birds were uninjured.

We released them on Greenlick Dam on sunny days just made for a quick snack before heading on their way. It was our pleasure to have them as “guests” and an even greater pleasure because all three birds had happy endings.



COMMON LOON



HORNED GREBE



LOON FACTS

- Unlike the name implies, in PA, Common Loons are anything but common. They only pass through here twice a year during migration.
- Common Loons, *Gavia immer*, are goose-sized, thick-billed water birds.
- Interestingly, loons arrive on their breeding lakes as soon as a few days after the ice breaks up. Pairs return to breeding spots used in previous years and begin to establish a territory on and around lakes that are deep enough for diving and have suitable spots for nesting.
- Nests are usually sheltered by surrounding vegetation at the water’s edge and are built of grasses, moss or floating vegetation, in which is laid two olive-brown, spotted eggs.
- Their principal food is fish but they also eat shellfish and aquatic insects.
- Their chicks may be seen riding on their parents’ backs for the first two weeks.
- Loons were once thought to be related to the grebe family, but it is now evident that loons show no relationship to any living order of birds.

GREBE FACTS

- Horned Grebes, *Podiceps auritus*, are the most common grebes in the East.
- Much smaller than loons, at 12 – 15 inches, they have short, pointed bills and very little tail.
- Grebe feet are some of the most unusual in the avian world, called lobate webbing. Their toes, instead of being covered in leathery skin as in other ducks, are fringed with stiff, horny flaps. Only three other bird families in the world, besides grebes, have lobate webbing.
- Grebes build a shallow nest of floating vegetation anchored to marsh plants.
- 4-7 whitish eggs are laid, and incubation is shared by both parents.
- Like loons, grebe chicks enjoy traveling in style riding on their parents’ backs. Horned Grebes are often solitary, but loose colonies of several nests near each other is not uncommon.
- Grebes have soft lustrous plumage. The breast feathers were once used in the millinery industry to decorate women’s hats. While their winter feathers are soft grays and whites, nuptial plumage is a riot of color – black heads with conspicuous puffy yellowish ear-like tufts along the side of the face; neck and flanks are reddish and the whole picture is topped off with bright scarlet eyes. See color internet photo on back page.

Metabolic bone disease (MBD) is the term for an entire group of diseases which occur as a result of defective bone formation, excessive bone resorption or some combination of the two, primarily caused by dietary & husbandry mismanagement. MBD is a serious disease, often resulting in severe crippling or death.

WWI has, unfortunately, seen many iterations of MBD occurring across all of the species we routinely treat. Every single one of these instances was the direct result of improper diet and husbandry provided by misinformed members of the public. You can imagine how difficult it is for us to euthanize these animals, when they might have been fine if only brought to us as soon as discovered. Birds come to us with fragile, deformed legs and horrible feather condition. Squirrels' legs break simply by jumping from one side of a cage to the other. Great Horned Owl chicks so horribly malnourished that their legs broke under my touch when I lifted them up. The list goes on.

The wildling that comes to us most often in bad shape from improper care is the opossum. Because their natural diet is so varied, so wonderfully complex, it requires strictly balanced captive diets and careful observation throughout the growing process. The most common dietary errors are related to providing the specific calcium to phosphorous ratio (CaP). This is not as simple as adding calcium to the diet. Too much is as bad as not enough. Common signs of MBD in opossums include weakness, anorexia, inability to grip, unable or unwilling to move, a bowlegged or "frog-like" appearance, brittle and easily fractured bones, bone deformities, swollen joints and a "rubber jaw." Basically, a low calcium diet can result in a decrease in the calcium in the blood. The body prevents plasma calcium from falling too low by increasing conservation of calcium by the kidney, enhancing the absorption of calcium from the intestine, and by stimulating calcium mobilization from the bone. This results in a release of calcium into the blood to maintain the blood calcium level but also weakens the bone as minerals are lost.

METABOLIC BONE DISEASE (MBD)

will have to keep these ducks until they molt out new feathers sometime this summer. If they had been brought to a rehabber when found, they would have been released last summer and now be getting ready to reproduce.

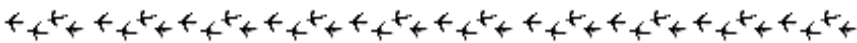
These radiographs are from two 8 month old opossums who came with two other siblings, all suffering varying degrees of MBD. Note the shortened and misaligned leg bones!

The person who found the opossums had "done homework" on proper care, and yet MBD still occurred. Two of the young possums had to be put to sleep, as our vet determined that they were in pain from the bone-on-bone condition of degenerating hip joints. The other two have guarded prognosis. If we can determine that they can have a quality existence, we would like to place them as educational ambassadors.

As we hope our readers understand, the care – no, the PROPER care – of wild animals is a very exacting endeavor not to be undertaken lightly. No matter how well-intentioned the finders might be, there are very real chances for suffering of the very animals they profess to care about. Please spread the word and leave wildlife rehabilitation to the well-trained experts in the field.



These photos are of a young Mallard, raised in improper conditions and not surrendered until severe issues developed. All 6 ducklings were runted, had extremely poor feather condition and severe bilateral bumblefoot, a condition that occurs when waterfowl are not kept clean and on an appropriate substrate. We



Fawns - Rescue or Leave Alone?

When to rescue and when to leave alone is the question.

White-tailed deer typically give birth May-June and can have 1-3 fawns. Finding a fawn curled up and alone, in a natural or unnatural setting, like sleeping by your garage door, does not mean they are abandoned. For the first few weeks fawns have no odor because their scent glands have not developed fully. Their spotted fur, and absence of an odor protects them from predators. Therefore, the less time mom spends around the baby, the less her scent remains where the fawn is bedded down. This is why you don't see the doe visiting the fawn. She will return for short periods during the day but mostly at night to feed the baby, then go back to hiding. You may see the fawn alone for days or weeks. Moms will leave their babies for up to 12-13 hours at a time if they have to.

The only way to tell if a fawn is orphaned is by its health. If you are able to approach the fawn, observe it for any injuries or illness. Know that fawns don't develop their "fight or flight" response until a few weeks old, so they may not run when approached. If you don't see injuries or signs of illness please leave it be and let mom continue to care for it.

Here are signs to know whether or not you should intervene.

- Obvious injury: broken bones, open wounds, etc.
- Ear curl does not always mean a fawn is dehydrated and needs help.
- If they are dehydrated their eyes will appear sunken.
- Ants, flies or maggots on/around the fawn, could indicate a condition that needs medical attention.
- Diarrhea usually means the fawn is ill or not being cared for by the doe.

Please be cautious if you find a fawn alone as they can die from capture myopathy. In layman's terms, they will get so stressed from being handled or chased that they can die. If you have to chase a

fawn to catch it, the fawn may not need as much help as you think. Remember, you will do more harm than good by chasing a fawn. If you do notice any of the above signs, please contact the PA Game Commission or find a wildlife rehabilitator.

PROTOCOL - When our fawns are admitted, if no life-threatening conditions are noted, we give them time to de-stress. We then weigh them and assess what treatments are needed. We start by giving them a rehydration solution and slowly introduce our special fawn diet. When they begin to feed and make it through our quarantine period, they are slowly transitioned onto soft food and introduced to other fawns that have completed the quarantine phase. A few weeks later, when they are weaned, the fawns are moved outside to forage for natural brush and food. Once acclimated and eating nothing but natural, solid food they are released back into the wild.

One fawn we admitted last year came in to us at less than a week old. Fortunately, the finders saw its mother get hit by a car and were able to scoop it up and transport to our facility. Once it arrived, we began our fawn intake protocol. When the fawn, a little female, was finished with her quarantine period, she was introduced to the other fawns in our care. They all began to play and socialize with each other, and she fit right in. After a few weeks, they were all moved outside together for pre-release. She was one of the seven we were able to release last year, and she still returns to our feeding station every now and again to say "hi."

- Submitted by Morgan Barron



PROFESSOR POSSUM



Dear Professor Possum,

Boy, do I like turtles! I've been fascinated by them since I was a kid. Of course, being a kid, I brought home box turtles and snapping turtles that I found while roaming the woods.

Now, as an adult, I still love turtles but have learned to look and love them where I find them. Lots of folks don't know much about our native turtles but one thing many say is that there doesn't seem to be as many turtles as when we were kids. I agree. Do you?

Loves Turtles in Trafford

Dear Turtle Lover,

We love turtles, too. All shapes and sizes of native PA turtles. And, yes there does seem to be less of some species of turtle. Included in the list of threatened and endangered PA reptiles are the Bog Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, and the Red-Bellied Turtle. In addition, the Eastern Box Turtle has become a vanishing species in the last 50 years. Habitat destruction and fragmentation are the major players, along with the illegal trade in all herps worldwide. Environmental pollution and toxins can have the worst impact on species like reptiles and amphibians. Non-native species, many released as unwanted pets from the pet trade, compete for habitat, food and nesting sites. Additionally, there are emerging wildlife diseases thrown in the mix. So, our turtle friends are struggling. Many turtles die on our nation's highways every year as they try to make their way across what has been their ancestral territory for 10, 25, 50 years or more.

If you find any species of turtle on a road or highway and it's safe to stop, help the turtle to get safely off the road in the direction you think it was traveling. NEVER take any turtle away from where you find it. If relocated elsewhere, it could spend the rest of its long life trying to get home and may die trying.



WINDOW ADVICE

When we think of negative human impact, easy examples come to mind - like our cats and dogs; our highways filled with our speeding vehicles; pellet guns and glue traps; cutting trees and yard-work that disturbs nesting wild animals. The list goes on.

Human actions can hurt wildlife. But what about passive ways humans and their environs can create negative impact? The lights that burn away the night skies in cities everywhere interrupt migration patterns that have been flown by birds for generations. Countless birds die every day from impacts with giant, windowed skyscrapers.

On a smaller scale, even the windows in our homes can be hazardous to birds. Anyone who has heard that awful thump, then finds the warm, still bundle of feathers, understands.

Birds hit windows for several reasons. One is seeing the reflection of the area in the window and trying to fly through. Another reason is the panicked flight of birds who have been attacked by a predator. Some of these window strikes can be prevented by breaking up the reflection of your windows using stickers, wind socks or wind chimes. There are specially made holographic stickers shaped like hawks to ward off the birds.

While we are on the subject of windows, another issue to address is that unwanted tap, tap, tapping on your windows every Spring by a deranged bird who just won't quit. Usual suspects are male Robins, male Cardinals, certainly Mockingbirds (those guys will attack anything!). The birds aren't trying to torment you, nor do they want inside. Once again, it's the reflection in the window that's the culprit. This time, it's the **male** bird who sees himself in your window and believes it's a rival that must be chased off the territory. This can go on for days. Sometimes, it's even the sideview mirrors on cars, and that's not as easy to fix as the offensive window. Again, you can try stickers and hanging things, but what works best is covering the outside of the window with newspaper or paper bags to break the reflection. Closing your drapes or covering the inside of the window does not work. After a few days or a week, the **male** birds will quit looking there to see if the interloper is still hanging around. After that, you can take down the paper. For the car mirrors, you might have to resort to plastic shopping bags on the mirrors when the car is parked. BTW – The **female** birds are too busy building nests to get involved in such nonsense!



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

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 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

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 well-being, 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 from 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 curiosity.



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 Welcomed!

Volunteer Testimony - Nicole Hinerman

I've been a volunteer at WWI for about ten years and I plan on being there many more! WWI is a special place. In my opinion, it's a privilege to be able to volunteer here. To me, it's an honor to serve the wildlings.

Working at WWI brings satisfaction on two levels – one broadly and one personally. The organization itself is so special because there are not many places for wildlife to receive the kind of care they get here (and so greatly needed). I work with other dedicated and compassionate volunteers, along with the community and public, whose generous support makes our work possible. It truly makes a volunteer's efforts become part of something bigger.



The other rewarding aspect is more personal. There are no words to adequately express what it feels like to see a hawk that was admitted with a broken wing be moved outdoors, spread its wings and take flight! Or seeing an opossum hit by a car and on death's door, go from barely alive to an animal fully healed and ready to get back to the wild! Taking care of our orphans is especially rewarding. Imagine taking care of a just-hatched baby bird – pink, naked, barely able to hold its head up – and watching it blossom into a fully-feathered, active and happily squawking fledgling that is ready to fly!

I truly mean it when I say that I am very lucky to be a part of WWI. If you love animals, give volunteering at WWI a shot. If you can spare 4 hours one day a week, I promise you will get much more in return. Together, we can make a difference – one wildling life at a time.

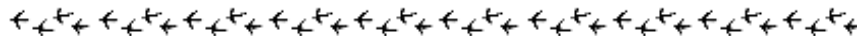
Special NOTE - After many faithful years as a volunteer Nicole joined WWI's staff in March 2023

AT-HOME VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - Are you interested in helping WWI but can't commit to a four-hour shift? We are looking for at-home "wildling chefs" to prepare diets for a wide range of patients. We supply the ingredients and the recipe, and you do the "cooking." There is a lot of slicing and dicing, especially from mid-summer to fall. During baby bird season, we can't keep up with the need for hand-cut fruits and veggies.

Interested? Call our office between 10-3, M-F for more information.

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.



Current Animal Care Volunteers, Year Started

Brooke Baldonieri -2009
Tara Bajek -2021
Apryl Bambino -2023*
Dan Barron -2020
Melissa Barron -2023
Gretchen Baird -2023
Jennifer Bird -2022
Suzanne Borza -2011
Tiffany Bratton -2023*
Kristy Caldwell -2023
Eve Carter -2023
Allison Checkeye -2009
Isaiah Clark -2022
Yalena Craig -2023*
Gina Cottone -2023
Julie Cursi -2018
Carol DaRold -2005
Alaina Devlin -2023*
Anna Doelling—2023
Carol Durco -1995
Alyssa Emanuel -2023

Shane Emerick -2022
Courtney Geddes -2023
Cathy, Kayla, Laney,
& Mandi Gerdich -2022
Alyson Hallowich-2023*
Lauren Henschel -2022
Susan Hindman -2023
Nicole Hinerman -2015
Leah Howard -2023*
Cynthia Hrovoski -2020
Breann Hrvoski -2022
Trish Jones -2017
Emily Kalb -2023*
Stephanie King -2005
Morgan Kirk -2023*
Dylan Klenoshek -2022*
Nick Kozinko -2015
Crista Krivoniak -2022
Jill Leasure -2005
Monica Leuthold -2012
Julianna Lott -2022

Sherry Lloyd -2021
Courtney Lutz -2023
Joel Moore -2022
Olivia Moore -2018
Tina Moore -1996
Aislinn Morris -2022
Caiden Mullooly -2022
Vince Murphy -2020
Brawney Nicholson -2023
Marcia Osborne -2004
Breanna Peck -2023
Mary Pescatore -2018
Leslie Pierce -2023
Alexis Piovesan -2023
Crystal Piovesan -2023
Shane Piper -2022
Laurel Riley -2022
Jaime Rininger -2009
Shannon Sapolich -2022
Christine Santo -2022
Julie Simon -2008

Emily Schaible -2023
Cullen Shearer -2022
Katie Smeltzer -2023
Mark Smith -2023
Joanne Thornburg -2019
Pam Valla -1992
Lisa Vezzani -2022
Brenna Walz -2012
Sherry Weible -2023
Kathy Welsh -2016
Kelly Wentz -2021
Christine Wheeler—2023
Dana Williams -2020
Judi Wilson -2012
Carrie Yannacci -2021
Ron Yannacci -2009
Savanna Zerfoss -2021

* 2023 Summer Interns

2023 Annual Report (Pages 7-10)

Dear Friends,



Each year when I'm asked to put together this review, I feel at a loss. I mean, I could say, "Feed the babies, clean the babies, ...repeat." Or, "Feed the ICU patients, clean the ICU patients and medicate them, ...repeat." Or, "Feed the outside patients, clean their enclosures, ...repeat." And finally, "Win some, lose some, ...repeat."

In many ways, that is what wildlife rehab is like. One season melts into the next, and it becomes harder and harder to put dates on certain outstanding moments. Many of the patients we see each season are the same species we rehab regularly – robins, sparrows, bunnies, squirrels and opossums. And then there are the raptors – red-tails, screechies, Great Horned Owls.

Which is not to say that WWI is an assembly line and wildlings are simply shuffled through our system. Whether it's the first baby grey squirrel of the season, or the last goldfinch nestling of late summer, we put our hearts and souls into helping all of the wildlings that come into our care. There is nothing more important, more sacred, than releasing a wild creature back into its native habitat. So, as much as this endeavor costs us, we are rewarded in ways impossible to describe.

Work on our planned Nature and Education Center hit several large roadblocks in 2023, and absolutely nothing has been done, except to frustrate the heck out of me. But I am

not quitting. Establishing an outreach facility on our premises will be the culmination of my original dream to "rehabilitate and educate." Our plans for 2024 are to get dedicated housing built for our educational ambassadors. We also hope to prep the new property to make it more user-friendly for visitors.

Speaking of visitors, many of our friends have asked about a Spring open house. Unfortunately, because of scheduling, we won't be able to pull something together before baby season. However, we are planning a Fall Festival.

On a personal note, my husband and I celebrated 50 years of marriage in 2023. For 32 of those years, I've been rehabbing. Bill has sacrificed a lot for me to be able to do this. I get told all the time, "My hubby would never put up with....." strangers coming into our home at all hours, phone ringing off the hook, rarely a cooked dinner on the table during baby season, washer and dryer constantly full of rehab laundry, and NEVER enough hot water to take a shower, ...repeat!

I count my understanding husband as just one of my many blessings. I love my home, pets, friends and family. I am surrounded every day by a group of wonderful and compassionate folks who work as hard as I do to make a difference in the lives of individual animals. And finally, the love and support that WWI receives from our communities is what keeps the organization afloat.

Baby season is here as we embark on rehab year 2024. Let's hope for many happy endings,

Beth



2023 Financial Report

(Unaudited)
INCOME

Animal Admissions	\$14,277
General Donations	\$62,352
Memorials & Honoriums	\$6,893
Education Programs	\$1,443
Fund Raising	
Appeal Letters	\$11,441
On-Line Giving	\$748
Calendar Sales	\$40,303
Raffles	\$9,799
Misc Fundraising	\$8,923
Total Fundraising	\$71,214
Grants	\$39,100
Miscellaneous Income	\$1,125
Membership Dues	\$7,800
TOTAL INCOME	\$204,204

EXPENSE

Accounting	\$1,975
Continuing Education	\$2,283
Fund Raising Expense	\$29,155
Insurance	\$7,914
Land Purchase	\$3,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$1,344
Office Supplies & Postage	\$1,106
Payroll	\$90,455
Program	
Animal Care	\$29,155
Public Education	\$8,248
Total Program	\$37,403
Travel	\$823
Utilities, Rent, Facility Main	\$29,275
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$204,733

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 Sue Wiseman, Newsletter Editor

Special Thank-Yous

Our thank-you's would not be complete without mentioning **John and Carol Durco**. Carol has been a volunteer since 1995, and they have supported us in ways too numerous to mention. Carol handles our weekly shopping, keeps an eye out for needed items. And together they have given good advice and helped us with our outreach and developing community support.

Thank you also to **Ron and Karen Rothrauff**. For years, they have made our complex baby bird diet at home and delivered it during busy season. All we do then is take it out of the freezer saving us tremendous time and effort!



2023 REHAB STATISTICS



Mammals

Virginia Opossum, 140
 Eastern Cottontail, 207
 Eastern Chipmunk, 8
 Groundhog, 6
 Grey Squirrel, 48
 Fox Squirrel, 6
 Red Squirrel, 20
 S. Flying Squirrel, 6
 Deer Mouse, 2
 White-footed mouse, 2
 House Mouse, 9
 Red Fox, 2
 Raccoon, 103
 Striped Skunk, 8
 White-tailed Deer, 37

TOTAL MAMMALS 604

Native Birds

Canada Goose, 25
 Wood Duck, 9
 Mallard Duck, 30
 Lesser Scaup, 1
 Common Merganser, 7
 Ring-necked Pheasant, 1
 Turkey, 3
 Common Loon, 1
 Great Blue Heron, 1
 Turkey Vulture, 1
 Bald Eagle, 1
 Cooper's Hawk, 4
 Broad-winged Hawk, 2
 Red-shouldered Hawk, 2
 Red-tailed Hawk, 18
 American Kestrel, 1
 Common Snipe, 1
 American Woodcock, 4
 Rock Dove, 6

Mourning Dove, 18
 Barn Owl, 5
 Great Horned Owl, 7
 Barred Owl, 2
 Eastern Screech-Owl, 3
 Chimney Swift, 1
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 5
 Northern Flicker, 1
 Pileated Woodpecker, 3
 Eastern Wood-Pewee, 5
 Eastern Phoebe, 3
 Blue Jay, 5
 American Crow, 4
 Common Raven, 3
 Tree Swallow, 4
 Barn Swallow, 1
 Tufted Titmouse, 1
 Black-capped Chickadee, 2
 Red-Breasted Nuthatch, 1
 White-Breasted Nuthatch, 1
 Carolina Wren, 7
 Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, 1
 Eastern Bluebird, 7
 Hermit Thrush, 1
 American Robin, 36
 Grey Catbird, 2
 Yellow Warbler, 1
 Ovenbird, 1
 Chipping Sparrow, 3
 Scarlet Tanager, 1
 Northern Cardinal, 7
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 1
 Indigo Bunting, 1
 Red-winged Blackbird, 1
 Common Grackle, 2
 Brown-headed Cowbird, 3
 Baltimore Oriole, 1
 Purple Finch, 1

House Finch, 14
 American Goldfinch, 3
 unknown hatchling, 9

TOTAL NATIVE BIRDS 296

Introduced Birds

European Starling, 8
 House Sparrow, 18

TOTAL INTRODUCED BIRDS 26

Domestic Birds

Buff Duck, 1
 Khaki Campell, 1
 Swedish Blue, 1

TOTAL DOMESTIC BIRDS 3

Reptiles

Snapping Turtle, 1
 Midland Painted Turtle, 1
 Eastern Box Turtle, 5

TOTAL REPTILES 7

TOTALS

WILDLINGS ADMITTED, 936
 WILDLINGS RELEASED, 355
 NONTREATABLES, 321

RELEASE RATE 2023 – 58%*
 AVG COST/WILDLING, 47.40

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

2023 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 2023 programs:

Big Brothers Big Sisters STEAM Camp (35)
 Bugs & Birds Camp at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (40)
 Creepy Crawly Trick or Treat (100)
 Cub Scouts Pack 236 Blue & Gold Banquet (65)
 Delmont Public Library (15)
 Greensburg Head Start (30)
 Hutchinson Elementary School (92)
 Maxwell Elementary School (400)
 Nature Explore Camp at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (12)
 Norwin Public Library (40)
 Paradise Church VBS (75)
 Rainbow Connection Daycare (38)
 Redstone Highlands Nursing Home (60)
 Rostraver Library Summer Reading Program (55)
 St Paul—Greensburg Head Start (30)

2023 Totals - 15 Programs including 1087 Individuals



Special Thank You to our 2023 Financial Supporters

\$5,000-25,000

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Shermar, Estate of Pauline
The Patsy D Tiani Foundation

\$1,000-\$4,999

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 Harbison, Bob
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 Kaleida, Donna Gunther & Ken
 Klingensmith, Alan & Peggy
 Lavanier, Jeff & Marianne
 Levandosky, Sandy
 Mazza, Patricia
 Meltzer, Jane & Dr Richard
 Merlino, Jan
 Osborne, Marcia
 Palladino, Denise
 Perrino, Frank
 Poole, Marilyn & Bernard

Richardson, Priscilla
 Scrivo, Andrew
 Scrivo, Kevin & Christine
 Shusta, Denise & John
 Voss, Tom & Becky
 Zaucha, Bonnie

Patron (\$250)

Barker, Kenneth & Jennie
 Fordyce, Louisa & Ronald
 Kreger, Deanna & David

Sustaining (\$500)

Trico Welding Co Inc.

Lifetime (\$1,000)

Anderson, Louise '04
 Bail, Ethel Benzer '10
 Barker, Kenneth & Jennie '23
 Clawson, Milton '11
 Cramer, Linda & Bernie '08
 Gardner, George Socher & Rebecca '21
 Patterson, Ken & Jackie '21
 Powerex '17
 Smeltzer, George '06
 Stephenson, Charlotte '10
 Zaidan, Kathi '14

In-Kind Goods Donors

GROUPS & BUSINESSES:

A Capital Fireplace
 Arborview Tree Service
 CARA: Crafters & Artisans for Rescued Animals
 Caruso's Service Plus
 Daniel's Excavating
 Delmont Library
 Green Hill Veterinary
 Girl Scout Troop #16380
 Jimmy's Bait Shop
 Modern Enigma Society
 Monongahela Farmers Market
 Moon Veterinary Hospital
 Norwin Public Library
 St.Paul - Greensburg Head Start
 Tacos & Tequila

INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES:

Karen Acita
 Oktober Allison
 Lauri Aston
 Tammy Bailey
 Tara Bajek

Sandy Balling
 Kate & Kevin Bannon
 Lonya Bartosiewicz
 Andrea Bell
 Carla Berdink
 Carissa Berg
 Guiseppi Beta
 Julie Blair
 Karen Blumen
 Elaine Bohatch
 Ken & Lori Cam
 Rachel Campbell
 Vince Clemens
 Marilyn Daniels
 Becky Duxbury
 Beverly Ference
 Pamela Ferguson
 Bill Firmstone
 Heather Gembarosky
 Andrea Halfhill
 Arlene Haney
 Joshua & Heidi Harris
 Patrick Hubert
 Karen Iverson family
 Kimberly Jeffcoat
 Sandra Johnson

Tom Jones
 Bonnie Kibel
 Paul & Jane Kovacs
 Errika Kremer
 Crista Krivoniak
 Becky Kurt
 Mary & Dennis Law
 Sandra Leuthold
 Jocelyn Lewis
 Wendy Little
 Jim Long
 Julie Mathias
 Dale & Xina Matuza
 Jill McCauley
 Deb Milito Family & Friends
 Andrea Morris
 Melissa Morris
 Mike Obrien
 Marcia Osborne
 Terri Paskan
 Ryan Paulson
 Karen Petros

Sandra Quigley
 Anne Richardson
 Beverly Romig
 Christine Santo
 Betty Simons
 Elaine Smartnick
 Mark Smith
 Wendy Smith
 Steve & Amanda Tarpey
 Adrienne Troiani
 Annie Wilhelm
 Jessica Zerebnick

In-kind Services

Chet Joseph Notary
 O&O Electric
 Green Hill Veterinary
 Rich Lawson
 Roy & Associates
 Todd Vezzani Maintenance
 Dr. Robert Wagner, VMD

Fundraising Volunteers

Linda Conyette
 Craftique Collections
 Rita DeBlock
 Sharon & Steve Friedel
 Nancy Gaffron
 Greensburg Newstand
 Adam Kupec
 Leslie McIlroy
 Joelle Miele
 Melissa Nace
 Penelope's
 Natalie Peskie
 Petagogy
 Christine Santo
 Virginia Stefan
 The Pet Market
 Barb Urban
 Carrie Yannacci

Special Projects

Daniels Excavating

OTHER 2023 FRIENDS

MEMORIALS

JOSEPH BLAHOVEC

Marcia Osborne

NANCY BRIDGES

Sharyn Doyle
 Joyce Hudson
 Jill Leasure
 Antoinette Riffer
 Sherree Zemba

DELMER COLE

Roberta Cole

GREGORY COLE

Allie & Greg Cole

BRIANNA DESTEFANIS

Wallace & Denise Tobin

GOLDIE DURCO

Judi Wilson

ROBERTA M. FINDLEY

Mary Catherine Motchar

THOMAS E FLETCHER

Stephen Gingo

BOB GOURLEY

Kathryn & William Tuscano

ROBERT GOURLEY

Indiana HS Class '59

GERALDINE HAINES

Debra Grant

DONALD B. HAYWARD

David M Hayward
 Sara & James Lynch
 Barb & Jeff Stover

MARY PAT HENRY

Kaliope Kalamotousis
 Deanna & David Kreger

JEANNE IAMS

Ethel Keene-Barbus

GRACE ISCRUPE

Beth Luther

STELLA KALAMOTOUSIS

Deanna & David Kreger

ARDATH KAYNER

Kathy Jozefor & Tom Walton

TRUDY KIMMELL

Robert & Rhonda Simone

ALTHEA KING

Karen Pushic

JEFFREY KING SR

Lewis & Cleda Delgross
 Dental Surgeons & Associates
 Nancy & Marquis Dove
 Jeff King Jr
 King's Electric

BILLIE JEAN LINDSEY

David & Pam Perlick

CHUCK LOWERY

Janet Lowery

SONNY LOWERY

Janet Lowery

DONALD J MARTIN

Sue Martin

MOJO

Mojo's Wallet

SAM OFF JR

Linda & James Bennett
 Patricia Bogdan
 Holiday Childs
 Philip Davidson III
 Alexis Duncan
 William & Bonne Gurzenda
 Ann Hewat
 Sandra & Seward
 Prosser Mellon
 Mick & Cindy Pompelia
 Colleen & Marc Robershaw
 Jeannine & Nick Scigliano
 Harry & Jane Thompson
 William M Whetzel

MARCIA OSBORNE'S DOG

"CHARLIE"

Lori & Lisa Blahovec

CHERIE RAMALEY

Donna Roberts

THE PERT

Janet Lowery

NANCY WILSON

Joyce Hudson

JAY WOODWARD

Bruce Tobin
 Sue Woodward



HONORIUMS

IN HONOR OF:

Mary Ann Allman
 Adalie Bartosiewicz 's Birthday
 Julia Bartosiewicz's Birthday
 Bartosiewicz Family Christmas
 Rebecca Gardner's Birthday
 David B Hayward
 Beth Luther
 Angie Pompa
 Doug Replogle's Birthday
 Connie Scotti's 90th B-day
 Julie Simon
 Dawn Strosko (employee)
 Ron Wining's Birthday

FROM

David & Linda Zimmerman
 Julia Bartosiewicz & Monica Olinger
 Julia Bartosiewicz & Monica Olinger
 Julia Bartosiewicz & Monica Olinger
 Marcia Osborne
 David M Hayward
 Linda Chambers
 Lorraine & John Bath
 Sylvia Harry
 Connie Haver
 Sheila Jo Calderone
 Powerex
 Constance Tosh

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

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

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!!!!



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.

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

FIND A HOME FOR A WWI DONATION Can, WWI donation cans allow the public to donate their change. Since 2002, WWI received **\$4,499** 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 Wildlife 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.

YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE

Instructions for a donation button 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.

PAYPAL



WWI STATISTICS

12/93-12/23 Wildlings Admitted - 17,590
12/93-12/23 Released - 8,587

2023 Wildlings Admitted –936* Released 355
*Includes nontreatables (34.3% of admissions!)

Avg Annual Admissions (last 5 yrs), 1059
Avg Cost/Wildling (last 5 yrs), \$32.48
Avg Cost/Wildling 2023, \$47.40

2004-2023 EDUCATION PROGRAMS - 325
Estimated Individuals Reached through Ed Programs - 22,800

SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER 2024

WWI's First
Fall Festival
Sept 14-15
(tentative)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRID	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	

WISH LIST 2023

WWIWish List

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

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

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.

Email?
If you'd prefer a digital (full color) copy, rather than a hard copy, please let us know.



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 veterinarians 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 Westmoreland 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..



Internet Photo Horned Grebe - See article page 2.



Injured Bluebird—Treated and Released