



Wildlife Welfare, Inc
Giving Wildlife a Second Chance

Wildlife Observer

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Board of Directors

Tricia Hoover
Executive Director
1120 Gunnison Place
Raleigh, NC 27609
txhoover@nc.rr.com

Jan Jackson
Vice President
4216 Mountainbrook Rd.
Apex, NC 27502

Nancy Wiersma
Treasurer
211 Glenbuckley Road
Cary, NC 27511

Joy Wirt
1225 Sturdivant Drive
Cary, NC 27511

Newsletter Editor
Kim Ashby



A Note from the Board of Directors

It has been a few years since you have heard from us, but we opted to spend our membership and benefactor donations on our efforts to help animals rather than on copy and postage expenses. However, the time has come for us to let you know... **we are still here!!!**

It is hard to believe that we have been serving our community for 18 years! Many of you have been supporters of WWI since its inception in 1991. It is a joy to see such loyal support year after year. 100% of the funds we collect go to purchase formulas, food, medications, and needed rehab supplies. We have neither paid staff nor a center with overhead.

We do not receive any state or federal funding. For our financial support, we totally rely on people, like you, who believe in what we are doing. We hope that you will choose to continue aiding us in our mission of giving wildlife a second change.

We are proud of the accomplishments our group has made over these 18 years. We now have WWI rehabilitators in seven counties helping thousands of animals each year. Looking back to 1991 when a handful of rehabbers began this adventure, we realize what major accomplishments we have achieved seeing those early dreams realized. We offer classes

every year to continue building up a well trained and supportive group of rehabbers. This past year, we started a Yahoo group in order to stay better connected with each other and to provide on-going education for our rehabbers. All of this has allowed us to provide excellent care for orphaned and injured animals each year.

A special note to Ms. Bell- We can't thank you enough for your support over all these years. We appreciate all that you do in making it possible for us to help animals in need!

Our thanks to each of you as we look forward to many more years!

Our Favorite Vets!

Wildlife Welfare wants to thank the following veterinarians for all their valuable time and effort in helping injured wildlife!

Dr. Sandra Grant, Lake Wheeler Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Meredith Highsmith and Dr. Marty Edwards, Animal Kingdom Veterinary Hospital

Doctors Brown, McKinnish and Perrow, Dixie Trail Animal Hospital

Dr. Liz Cotton, Fuquay Veterinary Hospital

Dr Cheryl Hoggard

Jennifer Hummel, Rolesville Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Lee Darch, North Wake Animal Hospital

Bunn Animal Hospital

All The Vets at After Hours Small Animal Clinic

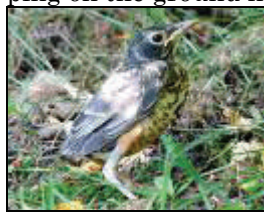
You've Found a Baby. What Do You Do Next? By Tricia Hoover

*A baby **bird** that has fallen out of a nest can be returned if you can reach the nest. If necessary and if the baby bird has feathers, you can make a nest using a small basket with soft bedding placed inside it. Hang this as close to the original nest as possible hiding the basket

in the leaves of the tree or under the eaves of your house. Be



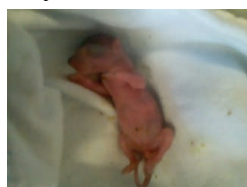
sure this new "nest" is beyond the reach of cats, raccoons and crows. The make shift nest may need to be brought in during bad weather and place back outside as soon as weather allows. If unfeathered babies cannot be put back in the nest, bring them inside and keep them warm-not hot (use a heating pad, hot water bottle or warm water in a Ziploc bag,) do not give anything to eat or drink and call a rehabilitator. **Fledglings** (young birds that have recently acquired flight feathers) may be found hopping on the ground not



able to fly, yet. These fledgling birds are still being cared for by its parents. If you feel the fledgling is in a dangerous area such as a street, shoo the bird to a better location. You can even put it up high in a bush to help protect him from predators. Be sure to keep kids, dogs and cats away so the parent birds can continue to feed and protect the fledgling.. Injured birds...especially ones caught by

cats....will need to go to a rehabber immediately.

*If you find a baby **squirrel** on the ground...then look for more. There are usually 3-5 babies in a nest. They make a very high pitched cry that is similar to a bird's chirp. This will help you locate any that may be hiding under ground cover. If the baby/babies look healthy and feel



warm, place them in a cardboard box lined with a small, dark colored towel--not

too deep but, deep enough to keep the baby from crawling. Fill a Ziploc bag with warm water and place under the towel to keep the babies warm. Nail it to the side of the tree just high enough for you to be able to look inside it from time to time. Wait several hours while watching for mom. Keep

kids, dogs and cats away allowing the



mother squirrel time to collect her babies. Call a rehabber after 3-4 hours if the mom does not return. An injured baby, a baby that has been found by a cat even if it appears uninjured, one that is weak, dehydrated, or flea infested must be taken to a rehabilitator. Place this baby in a small box lined with a towel, add a heat source (heating pad on low, warm water bottle, or place rice in a sock and microwave until warm,) do not give food or water and call a rehabilitator immediately.

*If you or your pet destroy a **rabbit's nest**, return as much of the bedding material as possible back inside the shallow hole that is the nesting spot and is about the size and

shape of a pie pan, place the babies on the nest and cover them the



best you can. Drape two or three pieces of string making an "X" on top of the nest. Keep kids, dogs and cats away from the nest area and check on it that evening or the next morning. If the string has been disturbed, then the mother most likely returned to feed them. Keep all pets away from the area for several weeks and allow the babies time to grow. If the string is undisturbed, then the mother did not return. Call a rehabber for further instructions. If the bunny has been injured, including one that has been in contact with a cat, call a rehabber immediately. Be sure to place the baby in a towel lined box, add a source of heat to keep it warm and do not give any food or fluids.



Continued on page 4

You've Found a Baby. Continued.....

*If you find an injured or orphaned baby

opossum a rehabber must be contacted. Opossum moms will not return to look for lost babies.



If you should find a mother opossum dead on the road, check her pouch for babies and look for

any that may have been thrown out of the pouch during the accident.



If the mother was attacked and shaken

by a dog, babies may also be thrown from the pouch.

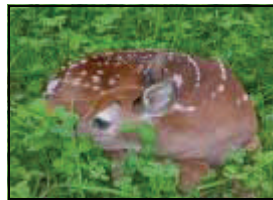


Pouch babies are attached to nip-

ples and will need to be gently pulled off. Place injured or orphaned babies into a towel lined box with a heat source to keep them warm. Never give food or fluids. Call a rehabilitator as soon as possible.

*If you discover a **fawn**, do not approach it and leave the area as soon as possible. Until a fawn is 2

months old and able to travel with the herd, a doe will



leave her young alone in order to reduce the chance that a predator will find the baby. Typically, the doe will have 2 fawns and she will leave them in separate areas. She may or may not move the babies during these two months. The mother will come to feed about 5 times a day but, will not stay. If the baby is lying down with its legs tucked under him and the head upright or its neck twisted and head lying on back with no

apparent injuries, the baby is not in need of rehabilitation. However, if there are obvious injuries or the baby is lying on its side with head and legs pushed straight from the body, this is a baby in distress. Please, note that a fawn will still have spots. Older deer are not allowed to be rehabilitated. Keep children and pets away from the area and call a fawn rehabilitator immediately.

*All **injured adults** need to go to a rehabber as soon as possible. When possible, remove the animal from dangerous area to reduce the chance of further harm. Remove an animal from the road if it is still alive only if you are able to do so without putting yourself in harms way. If your pet has injured an adult and it is still in your yard, then scoop the animal up with a baseball hat, a butterfly net or wrap a towel around the animal then place it in a pet carrier, cardboard box or a pillowcase (make sure the animal has plenty of air.) Call a rehabber immediately.

Need Help Locating a Rehabilitator?

Wildlife Welfare, Inc

Emergency Information and Rehabber Contacts:

(919) 387-1662

www.wildlifewelfare.org

CLAWS, Inc

(919) 619-0776

www.nc-claws.org

Piedmont Wildlife Center

(919) 489-0900

www.piedmontwildlifecenter.org

We would like to offer a very special thanks to Roberta N. for her loyal support of Wildlife Welfare, Inc since 1992. Thank you!

Wow! by Jamie G. (8 year old)

I wanted to write about what my family does because it is worth saying wow! My Mom and I rehab squirrels and I love it! People find baby squirrels in weird places like lawn mowers, garage doors, a six year old girl's bedroom. They are also found soaking wet in backyards, under trees, on driveways, in attics and in dogs' mouths.



make a new family. Squirrels do better in the wild as a family.

We hand feed them until they are eight weeks old. Then we wean them. At twelve weeks old they move into the outdoor release cage that Dad built.

Two weeks later we open the door and give them the world. They come back to the cage for about a week or two then move into one of the houses Dad built for our trees, or make a nest of their own with their family group. A few of them take the fluffy hamster bedding with them. Mom says they turn into typical teenagers - we don't know where they spend their days but they come home to eat.

If you find a baby squirrel, it is very important to call a vet or a trained rehabber. It's not an easy job to raise a squirrel and people are surprised by all the things that can go wrong, and the amount of time it takes.

Some squirrels are so injured all that is left to do for them is love them. The first squirrel we lost

was Annabelle. She had fallen out of a big oak tree. We had picked up her sister, Maybelle, the day before. Annabelle was very dehydrated and had a broken leg. Mom stayed up all night trying to save her but, there was nothing we could do. She got to be with her sister one last time then we wrapped her in a blanket and I held her until she died.

We found Maybelle a new sister and a brother named Pirate. Pirate had been found by a little girl who had forced open one of his eyes. Maybelle, Dot and Pirate made a really nice family.

Everybody knows I am completely obsessed with squirrels. Sometimes they ask me why we bother for one little squirrel. I say, "Why wouldn't we?" Most people can't change the world but, they can change their little part of it. If everybody did one nice thing to change their part of the world, that would be something to say "wow" about.

"Most people can't change the world but, they can change their little part of it."

Surfing the Web

North Carolina Wildlife Federation

www.ncwildlife.ning.com

The NC Wildlife Federation advocates the conservation and enhancement of all wildlife and its habitat. Their website is full of informative articles, upcoming NC events, photos, videos and more. Be sure to check out their video page with information on a wide range of topics including reusing your eggshells, water conservation, using native plants in your yard, children and nature, hummingbirds, building nesting/roosting boxes and creating wildlife friendly habitats in your own backyard. Spring is here and this website may help you bring more wildlife into your own back yard.

Opossum vs Possum by Amy Ostrout

The Opossum (that's the correct way to say it) is the only species



of marsupials that is native to North America. The female opossum has a bifurcated uterus. Opossums give birth 13 days after mating. When an opossum is born, it is approximately the size of a kidney bean and is still very premature. They are born in groups of 5 to 20. During the birthing process, the mom licks a path to her pouch for the babies to follow. She has 13 nipples in a horseshoe shape with twelve teats around the edge and one in the middle. It is a first come, first survive. As the baby arrives in the pouch, it will latch onto a nipple which it swallowed into the stomach as opossum babies do not suckle. The nipple then swells preventing the baby from falling off. The baby will stay latched onto the



mother for approximately 60 days. When the baby is about 2 months old it is equivalent to other new born mammals. Mother and baby opossums stay together for many months. The babies stay with the mother until they can take care of themselves at about 5-6 months of age.

Opossums are omnivores and eat a variety of plants, reptiles, insects, eggs, carrion, and fruit. Their home range is approximately 12 acres which can be closer to 48 acres when food is scarce. They have 50 teeth, which is more than any other land mammal, and will display them in a big "smile" whenever they feel threatened. They have a prehensile tail which can be used as additional gripping power. The marsupial is capable of hanging from their tails only when young.

They are relatively easy going animals preferring to "play opossum" rather than fight. This is an involuntary response to fear. The opossum flops over, opens its mouth and drools which makes it look sick. The heart rate slows when a substance is released into the bloodstream causing the muscle to contract. A thin stool is

also released and a rotten smelling musk is exuded. A mother opossum with babies will not "play dead."

Though sometimes referred to as "dirty animals," they stay incredibly clean by licking and grooming themselves like cats. Opossums grow to be the size of an adult cat and can live as long as 7 years though in the wild most opossums live to be between 2-3 years old. Opossums use abandoned skunk and groundhog burrows for their homes.

FUN FACTS:

Marsupials lived 60 million years ago.

Indians called them "apasum" meaning white animal.

Captain John Smith (who settled Jamestown in 1607) was the first to use the word "opossum."

"Possums" live in Australia and are not related to the Virginia Opossum.

They have a natural immunity to snake venom.



Interested in becoming a Wildlife Rehabilitator?

Wildlife Welfare, Inc and the Piedmont Wildlife Center are offering mini training classes this spring. These classes are designed to provide seriously interested people with an overview of the knowledge and skills required for treatment and rehabilitation of orphaned small mammals (mainly squirrels,



rabbits and opossums). Those who feel that they have significant time to dedicate to this rewarding work and who understand the commitment involved will then be paired with an experienced rehabber in their area to receive hands-on experience. Later, you will be instructed on how to obtain your wildlife rehabilitators

license. Please note, classes are intended primarily for adults. Children aged 14 to 17 may be allowed to attend the training session with a parent, but the parent must plan on becoming the primary rehabilitator.

To pre-register and for more information contact

Lisa McCartney
Lisa@piedmontwildlifecenter.org

A Rehabber Moment.....

I thought I'd share a rather normal possum story with you.....

This morning, half asleep, I started my morning animal care routine. I usually start with the bunnies, then move on to the squirrels and save the possum babies for last since most of them are eating on their own now...with the exception of one little runt that still needs to be "topped off" with some extra formula.

I start by pulling out the nesting box in their bin in order to change their blankets then clean the bin and add fresh food and water. With fresh blankets back in the nesting box, it's time to add possums, then it's time to get me ready for work. Since there are eleven of babies, I count them as I put them back just to be sure everyone is where they are suppose to be. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.....

Ten? Ten? Uh oh, maybe one is

clinging to the dirty blanket....Check it once, nope, check it twice, nope...Uh oh, check it a third time!!!! Nothing. No sign of a possum baby anywhere. Quick check behind the bread box....Nope, not there either....Oh boy, maybe I didn't count them right....Count them again...Not as easy this time as they are now eating, moving and climbing all over the bin ... No, still just 10....Um, maybe I should count them one more time, I mean they are moving around and I am half asleep!!!!

ONLY TEN BABIES!!!! Oh boy! I run into the room where I keep their bin and start chuffing...making that chuff chuff sneeze noise that they make when they are calling to Momma Frantically, I note the pile of clean linens on the floor and (sadly) some

dirty ones that need to be washed....I start sorting through the pile of blankets when all of a sudden up pops this adorable little face with bright black eyes and twitching nose!



"Hello! Did I miss breakfast???" Oh good grief! Finally, there's my little escapee!

I left them that morning, as I headed off to work, with not only the normal three latches on their cage door firmly secured

but, with three twisty ties and a couple of bungee cords added for good measure! It will probably take me a good 10 minutes to open the cage door this afternoon but, my little Indiana Jones will be where he is suppose to be safe and sound!

Gina Tkach has 16 years of experience working with exotic animals and rehabilitating wildlife.

Recipe Corner

Eagle Nests

Dessert: Candy for the humans in your life

Ingredients:

1, 16 ounce bag of either butterscotch, chocolate or peanut butter morsels

1 bag of Chinese noodles

1 can of salted peanuts without the skins (peanuts are optional)

Place the morsel chips into a microwaveable bowl. Microwave until melted and smooth, stirring frequently. Add Chinese noodles and peanuts. Mix until noodles are well coated and mixture begins to stiffen. Spoon large portions onto wax paper and cool in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Enjoy!

Bird Feeders and Disease by Ann Rogers

There have been many reports this winter and spring of dead pine siskins and goldfinches. Some people have reported finding dozens of dead birds in their yards. This is possibly due to salmonellosis, but is apparently a different strain from the one in the tainted peanuts. There has been a huge eruption in the population of pine siskins this year, and goldfinches tend to flock with them.



This may be nature's way of reducing the population, but to help prevent the spread of the disease, it is recommended by experts that bird feeders and bird baths should be disinfected regularly with a 10% bleach solution. Also, move the feeders so that seed and feces don't collect under them. It might be a good idea just to take the feeders down for a while.

Another communicable bird disease is conjunctivitis, which affects the

eyes of house finches and some goldfinches. Tube feeders should also be disinfected regularly, since the birds pass the disease to other birds when they eat seeds from the small openings, and their eyes come in contact with the feeder. Another preventive measure is to switch to platform feeders.

Your Support Is Invaluable!

Wildlife Welfare, Inc depends on financial support from private benefactors and members. We **invite you** to join us in our efforts to rehab and release orphaned and injured wildlife.

Membership Form

Make Checks payable to : **Wildlife Welfare, Inc.**

Send your request for membership to:

Wildlife Welfare, Inc
c/o Nancy Wiersma
211 Glenbuckley Road
Cary, NC 27511

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Individual | \$ 15.00 |
| Family | \$ 25.00 |
| Patron | \$100.00 |
| Benefactor | \$500.00 |
| Other donation | \$ _____ |

(Last name-please print) (First name) (Date)

(Address)

(City) NC, (Zip code) (Phone number)

(Email Address)

All memberships are renewable annually and are tax deductible.



Giving Wildlife a Second Chance

We're on the web!
www.wildlifewelfare.org/

Wildlife Welfare, Inc is a not for profit organization dedicated to the rehabilitation and release of orphaned and injured wildlife. Formed in 1991 by licensed wildlife rehabilitators and wildlife lovers, Wildlife Welfare continues to support home-based rehabilitators in Wake County and the surrounding area.. Local rehabilitators are involved in helping over 2000 animals each year including Gray Squirrels, Virginia Opossums, Cottontail Rabbits, Flying Squirrels, Chipmunks, Groundhogs, and other small mammals as well as a variety of songbirds, waterfowl and fawn.

Our rehabilitators devote unlimited time, energy and personal resources to nurse and nurture the injured and orphaned animals placed into their care. Wildlife Welfare, Inc receives no institutional nor governmental funding. Funds for purchasing formula, feeding supplies and medications are obtained solely through private donations and membership fees.

Wildlife Welfare, Inc
1120 Gunnison Place
Raleigh, NC 27606