

Welcome to

INSTINCTS



Feb 2017

Vol 6:1

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

2016 in Review

Now that we are a few weeks into 2017, let's take a look back at 2016.

We cared for 841 patients, a 27% increase from the 663 of 2015. No wonder it seemed so busy. It was!

Despite being busy, we still maintain our very high standards which resulted in a 70% success rate. Far above the national average of 50%.

Those patients were from 31 different counties and comprised of 110 different species. Our volunteer drivers put on 19,214 miles in getting some of these animals to the help they need.

This brings the total number of wild animals Mark & Sharon have treated on their permits since 1998 to 14,234.

In addition, we presented 25 educational programs to 1425 people.

We were also able to get some more enclosure construction done. We were able to erect a small mammal/porcupine enclosure thanks to an Eagle Scout Project.

We also were able to finish an outside aquatic enclosure for ducks and other aquatic birds such as herons.



More Review

On January 25, Wild Instincts celebrated its 6th birthday.

We still have a lot of projects we want to do in the future. It can seem very overwhelming so sometimes it's good to look back to see how far we've come.

We've only been able to accomplish this because of the support of people like you. Pat yourselves on the back as you stroll down memory lane. You deserve it.



In this issue:

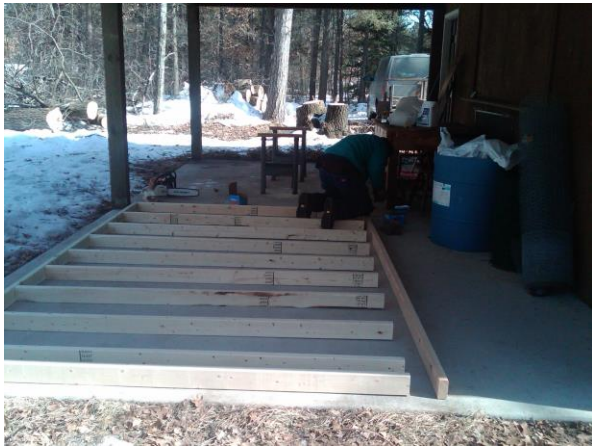
- 2016 in Review
- The Surprise Lunch Guest
- In Honor/Memory of
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- Bat News
- Turning 6
- Join our Ambulance Team
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- Upcoming Events



Insulating the garage...the only building on the property when it was purchased. Photo taken 2/8/11



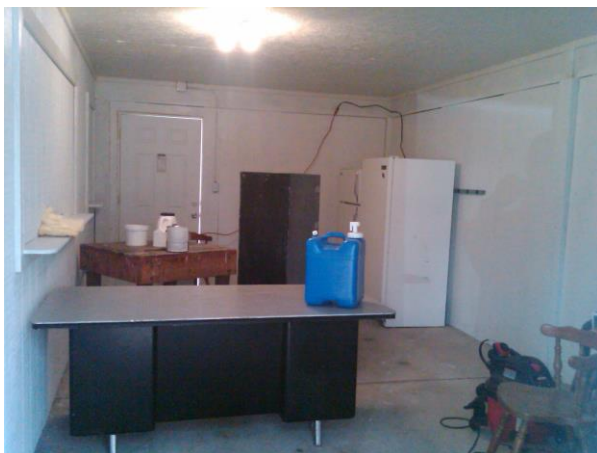
The shell of the main building is up. Photo taken 5/10/11



Making stud walls to enclose the patio of the garage for the temporary office. Photo taken 3/6/11



While this was going on here...



The temporary office after the stud walls were completed. Photo taken 4/10/11



Animal care was going on here. Photos taken 6/3/11.

Happy Birthday, Wild Instincts. Here's to many more!

The Surprise Lunch Guest

Wild Instincts is on-call for animal emergencies 24/7/365. This means we're never quite sure what will happen at any given time. It means that our plans change in an instance sometimes and we are always adapting. Generally, we plan for "what if". That means almost always if we go somewhere, we take separate vehicles. Always during Baby Season. Not always in the Off-Season.

Such was the case on January 9th, when we decided to take Sharon's dad out for lunch. For just an hour or so, we decided to take the chance and all piled in his van to go to the restaurant.

As soon as our food was in front of us, the phone rang. While driving on the highway, a woman saw what she thought might be someone's house cat on the side of the road. She stopped to make sure it wasn't hurt. It wasn't a house cat, but a bobcat kitten. And as soon as she stopped and got out to check on it, it ducked under her car! It didn't seem like a domestic cat. She got out her cell phone and called us. She didn't want us to come out if it was a domestic cat so she texted us photos.



A feline taking shelter under a Good Samaritan's car.

Oops. We lost gambling on the carpool. We would have to go back and get our van with all the rescue gear. It would take us about 30-45 minutes to get to her location. She said she would wait.

Sharon's dad, the consummate trucker with diesel in his veins, was a good sport about inhaling his food and getting us back to our van.

And the caller did wait; standing outside of her car on the side of the highway in the cold temperatures because she didn't want to get back in her car or start it and scare the poor thing away from getting help. When we pulled up, she was standing near her car, cheeks bright red from the windy cold. True to feline form, the bobcat who had huddled under her car, waiting for us to get there, went into the woods near the road when we arrived. But it was in really rough shape, so it didn't go far. A catch-pole, a net and Mark & Sharon trudging in the snow in the swamp had it rounded up and in a nice, warm vehicle within 15 minutes.

Bobcats cycle into estrus throughout the year, so bobcat kits can be born at any time of year. She obviously got separated from her mom somehow. She should have weighed close to 8 lbs., but was not even 5 lbs., very thin and very weak.



Out from under the car and the cold.

Yes. It certainly looked like a bobcat kitten.

She is now doing very well and making up for lost time in the dining room!



A much improved bobcat kitten.

In fact, she is doing so well, she was recently moved outside where she'll stay, growing and maturing until she's ready to be released in the spring.



Outside and ready to explore her new home for the next few months.

In Bat News

Possible WNS Vaccine?

Scientists from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the USGS National Wildlife Health Center, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have teamed up to develop and test potential vaccines to prevent white-nose syndrome (WNS), the fungal disease that is devastating bat populations in Wisconsin and elsewhere. While this is encouraging news, it is not without challenges.

Few vaccines have been developed for fungal diseases.

WNS occurs only in bats during hibernation and the fungus grows very slowly so traditional methods of developing and testing vaccines aren't useful.

Vaccinating free-living bats has not been tried before. How will it be administered? It's not like bats will fly into a clinic for a shot. Some wildlife vaccines can be put in bait for animals to eat. There are multiple reasons why this won't work for bats.

They are testing possible methods that take advantage of the bats frequent grooming of themselves and each other.

Then it has to work.

The results of the pilot study are very promising but maintaining bats in captivity under artificial conditions is not ideal testing.

This winter an abandoned mine contaminated with the fungus that causes WNS and that previously housed hibernating bats was used for a more real world test. A group of little brown bats were immunized with the most promising vaccine candidates and placed in the mine to hibernate. The mine was sealed to prevent the bats from exiting (and other animals from entering). The bats are being periodically checked through the winter. If the immunized bats survive hibernation with little or no effects, prospects for a WNS vaccine are very good and the next phase of development will proceed as quickly as possible. Finding a treatment for WNS is a

race against time as it is spreading rapidly across the continent.

Wisconsin's Newest Bat Species

In 2015, a new bat species in Wisconsin was discovered. In 2016, the news got even better as the new species — a beetle-eater called an evening bat — are found to be even more abundant in Wisconsin than first thought.

Bat biologists returned over the summer to the site where the bat species had first been discovered in 2015. They caught one evening bat in their mist net and radio-tracked the evening bat back to her roost and found her roosting with 60 other evening bats. Returning a few weeks later to the same area, they radio-tracked two other female bats and discovered a roost with 103 individuals.

The last time a new species of bat was documented in Wisconsin was in November 1954; the new species at that time, an Indiana bat, represented the one and only time an Indiana bat was ever found, despite repeated efforts in the 1980's and '90s to find the species again.

Finding multiple roosts with so many individuals means the 2015 was not a one-time accident.

Even better is that evening bats are not found to be susceptible to WNS!

Drivers Needed

Did you happen to see in the first article that our drivers put on 19, 234 miles? When you read that did you think Wow and then think, I could do that?

If you did, we'd like to invite you to one of our Raptor Rescue & Transport Driver Training Sessions. We will be having two in March. They are identical sessions we offer at 2 different times to make it convenient for you. One is on a week night, the other a Saturday morning.

A Raptor Rescue Driver is a volunteer we give basic raptor handling training to so they can retrieve/rescue raptors in trouble

and transport them to us. A Transport Driver is one who wants to help but may not be up to handling raptors. They pick up animals that have already been contained and simply drive the boxed up animal to us. We are desperately in need of drivers in the Ashland, Antigo, Eagle River and Merrill/Wausau areas.

Come to a meeting and see what it's all about.

It's an easy, but very important way to help us help them.

Call 715-362-9453 or email info@wildinstinctsrehab.com to let us know you're coming so we have enough chairs.



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

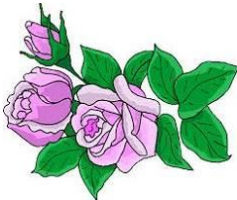
In addition to our Facebook page, Wordpress blog and YouTube channel, you can now follow Wild Instincts on Instagram. Our name is wildinstinctsrehab.





In Honor or Memory Of

- ~In Memory of Dr. Carl Heitz
- ~In Memory of John "Jack" Goossen
- ~In Memory of Mabel Vaughan
- ~In Loving Memory of "Orflaith" Zeibert
- ~In Memory of Ron Brekke
- ~In Honor of David, Kathy, Cathy, Dan, Indi, Megan, Gill & Quinn. Happy Holidays from Josh
- ~In Honor of Erinn Brogren
- ~In Memory of Karl Anderson, an instructor who helped fan the spark in Mark
- ~In Honor of Jill & Mike Bowles
- ~In Memory of Tim Muench
- ~In Memory of Aunt Alice Cebrowski
- ~In Memory of "Sammy" Nebgen, a wonderful canine companion



Baffling Bear

On December 23, we received a call from Lincoln County Sheriff about a bear approaching a vehicle. There was a squad on scene. The bear put its paws on the car window. When Mark arrived, the officer had encouraged the bear off the highway and into a yard. We had no clue what the bear had really been up to until the next day when the Sheriff's Department called to check on the bear. We were told to check out Facebook. We had no idea she had been approaching multiple vehicles for quite a while! It's not uncommon for bears to come of their winter sleep for short periods. They wander a short time and then go back to sleep. This is the first we've encountered that's stopped traffic presumably to ask for

hand-outs. It was so unusual, the Associated Press picked up the story and she instantly became famous.

Sometimes yearling bears are admitted in mid-winter for a variety of reasons, but she is a two-year old. The only other adult we can think of in our decades of rehab was one with porcupine quills stuck in its face-an obvious cause of abnormal behavior. This girl has no obvious cause of abnormal behavior-just speculation. Thoughts range from someone possibly taming her down by feeding her or worse yet someone who raised her and then turned her loose or a medical issue causing her sudden desire to peer into car windows on the highway. She was thin for this time of year, but she was not interested in the apple the officer threw to her while waiting for Mark to arrive but more interested in people. Everything else looks good.

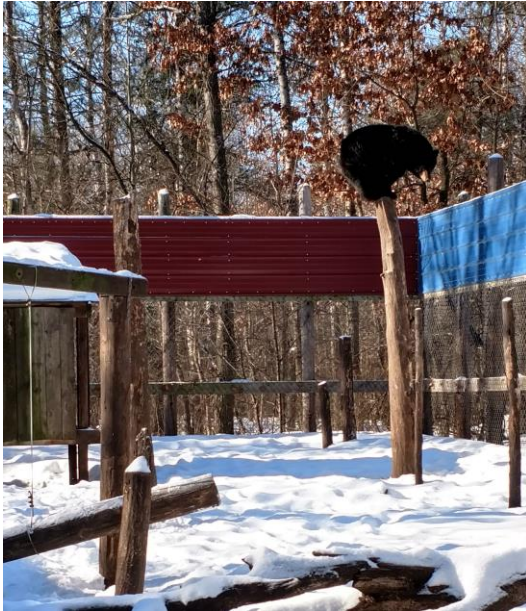


Two year old female bear that had been approaching cars.

We're trying to get her back into hibernation. The trouble is, like many two-year-olds, she doesn't want to take a nap. What's in her future? We are not quite sure yet.

Our first choice as wildlife rehabilitators is always to return the animal to the wild. But only if it is able to act and truly be wild. She will be evaluated in the spring to see if that is possible. If we are not sure that under the stress of living in the wild she may

revert to trying to play traffic cop, we will not release her. We have three different possibilities of captive placement forever homes for her. The ultimate decision will be the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources'.



"I don't want to take a nap!"

WPS Foundation Grant

The Wisconsin Public Service Foundation awarded Wild Instincts a \$1500.00 grant in December. This will be used to make improvements in the bear enclosure feeding area and their swimming/bathing area. Wisconsin Public Service Foundation is separate from the utility group. The Foundation is funded by shareholders, not utility customers and provides charitable contributions to communities. Their donations average \$1.4 million annually to organizations involved in community and neighborhood development, education, environment, human services and health, and arts and culture. A great big THANK YOU to WPS Foundation for helping us help them!

Species	1/1-12/31/16
American Crow	10
American Goldfinch	7
American Kestrel	2
American Pipet	1
American Robin	37
American Toad	2
American Woodcock	1
Bald Eagle	41
Barred Owl	4
Beaver	1
Belted Kingfisher	1
Big Brown Bat	15
Black Bear	22
Black-capped Chickadee	9
Blanding's Turtle	1
Blue Jay	12
Blue-spotted Salamander	1
Bobcat	2
Bohemian Waxwing	1
Broad-winged Hawk	9
Brown Creeper	1
Canada Goose	11
Cedar Waxwing	5
Chimney Swift	3
Chipping Sparrow	6
Cliff Swallow	1
Common Grackle	3
Common Loon	4
Common Merganser	1
Common Nighthawk	2
Common Raven	3
Common Redpoll	14
Cooper's Hawk	3
Coyote	1
Dark-eyed Junco	4
Deer Mouse	45
Double-crested Cormorant	1
Downy Woodpecker	2
Eastern Chipmunk	12
Eastern Cottontail	116
Eastern Gray Squirrel	71
Eastern Gray Tree Frog	2

Eastern Phoebe	4	Ring-billed Gull	3
European Starling	10	River Otter	4
Fisher	1	Rock Dove	12
Flying Squirrel (northern/southern combined)	8	Rough-legged Hawk	1
Fox Snake	1	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	7
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	Ruffed Grouse	4
Gray Fox	6	Sandhill Crane	2
Great Blue Heron	2	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2
Great Horned Owl	9	Short-tailed Weasel	1
Hairy Woodpecker	2	Snapping Turtle	4
Hermit Thrush	2	Solitary Sandpiper	1
Hooded Merganser	6	Song Sparrow	2
House Finch	1	Sora Rail	1
House Sparrow	2	Striped Skunk	1
House Wren	5	Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel	5
Little Brown Bat	5	Tree Sparrow	2
Mallard Duck	28	Trumpeter Swan	5
Meadow Vole	12	Turkey Vulture	1
Merlin	4	Western Painted Turtle	14
Midland Painted Turtle	1	White-crowned Sparrow	1
Mink	1	White-tailed Deer	25
Mourning Dove	23	Wild Turkey	4
Muskrat	1	Woodchuck	1
Nashville Warbler	1	Woodland Jumping Mouse	1
Northern Cardinal	1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1
Northern Flicker	17		841
Northern Harrier	1		
Northern Oriole	1		
Northern Saw-Whet Owl	1		
Osprey	2		
Ovenbird	1		
Pileated Woodpecker	2		
Pine Siskin	16		
Pine Warbler	1		
Porcupine	4		
Purple Finch	5		
Raccoon	26		
Red Fox	3		
Red Squirrel	15		
Red-bellied Snake	1		
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1		
Red-eyed Vireo	4		
Red-tailed Hawk	8		

Upcoming Events

Raptor Rescue & Transport Driver Training

Thursday, March 9th 6:30-7:30 p.m.

OR

Saturday, March 11th 10:00 -11:00 a.m.

You only need attend only one of these sessions.

Sessions will be held at Wild Instincts, 4621 Apperson Dr. Rhinelander, WI 54501

Annual Membership Meeting

Friday, Feb 24th 6:30 p.m.

4621 Apperson Dr, Rhinelander, WI 54501

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INSTINCTS



May 2017

Vol 6:2

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First 2017 Patient

Most years we have a fun pool amongst ourselves on when the first baby of the year will come in and what it will be. Timing is most always weather dependent, but years of experience have us usually narrow the species down to bears or squirrels; sometimes a mourning dove may sneak in there.

None of us were expecting this year's first patient to be a fledgling Pine Siskin! Birds are generally admitted a little later than mammals in this area but not this year. No pinkie, eyes closed squirrels this year. A Pine Siskin was our first "baby" and it was even an older fledgling to boot!



First baby admission of 2017 was a fledgling pine siskin!

Overwintered Bear

On December 23, 2016, we received a call from law enforcement officials about a bear on the highway. The officer said it approached his vehicle and put its paws on his window. He managed to shoo it off the road while he waited for us.

We went and retrieved her without incident. She was a two- year- old, not the typical yearling that commonly gets into trouble. Her exam revealed no apparent injuries. This is where wildlife rehab gets challenging. Wild animals come with no history. When a pet goes to the vet, the vet can ask the owner all sorts of questions. Often times the owner may have even witnessed the event that caused the vet visit. That key element to getting to the bottom of things is missing in wildlife rehab so often we make educated guesses. This bear was on the highway. Was it possible she has some sort of head trauma? Did the weird weather mess up her hibernation enough to cause a metabolic condition? What was causing this abnormal behavior?

As more information became available the next day, another more likely scenario came into focus. We were alerted by the sheriff department to look at Facebook. She hadn't just approached their squad. She had

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- Upcoming Events

been some pre-holiday entertainment for lots of travelers! Photos went viral. News media picked up the story which made its way to the Associated Press. We were getting phone calls non-stop from across the entire United States.

Examining dozens of photos and getting more information from people in the area where we picked her up was leading us to the conclusion she was likely tamed by someone. Was she illegally taken as a cub and then released when she became too much? Was she simply habituated to people by someone who feeds wildlife in their yard and wanted to make friends with a bear? We will never know the answer to any of the questions about why she is the way she is.

We did know almost from Day One, however, her abnormal behavior would make her un-releasable. As wildlife rehabilitators, we are given three choices with patients that we admit: release, placement and euthanasia.

Release is, of course, the first and foremost goal. If that is not possible, we will try to find a facility such as a zoo or sanctuary who may be interested in the animal. This can be hugely challenging for certain species, such as bears. It's not as easy as calling up a zoo and seeing if they want a bear. To protect wild animals from illegal wildlife trafficking and to preserve genetic integrity in some cases, most states have laws against zoos taking animals from the wild. That severely limits placement options of non-releasable animals. Each state has its own differing policies on different species which complicates matters even more.

We worked with the WDNR on trying to find a suitable placement within Wisconsin while simultaneously giving her every possible chance to change her behavior. We tried to trigger her into hibernation by withholding food for a period that would mimic wild conditions. She was admitted in December so she should have already been in her hibernation and easily convinced to go back

to sleep. She was like a typical two year old and refused to nap. Instead she became more agitated and anxious. We conceded she would not hibernate so resumed feeding.

As time went on she did exhibit a couple traits of wild bear behavior. However, not enough to convince us she wouldn't revert to old habits under periods of stress such as low food availability in the wild.

As part of the option of placing her in a facility, we were working with several governmental agencies. Recently, as we were planning and evaluating the logistics of HOW she may be transferred to a facility IF one was found, she exhibited some behavior that made bear experts from two different agencies uncomfortable. Not only could she be a danger to the public, but because of her unpredictability, she could also be a danger to a keeper/caretaker. In working with the WDNR, it was decided the best course of action in this case was euthanasia.

She was with us for 136 days. During those four months, we cared for her like we would any of our patients. We worked hard at getting the best possible outcome for her. This is not the outcome any of us had hoped for and it saddens us deeply.

If, as suspected, she was habituated to people, this was completely preventable. Wildlife should remain wild. One of the things you can do to help this from happening in the future is to help keep wildlife wild. Young wildlife is cute and sometimes cuddly. Often times orphans will latch onto or imprint to people that want to help it. Some species like bear, fawns, raccoons or even squirrels tug at people's heartstrings so much they want to try raising the animal themselves. This is illegal. This is directly harming the animal they are trying so hard to help. Orphans need to be in the care of licensed, experienced wildlife rehabilitators so they can receive proper nutrition and care that

allows them to be returned to their wild home.

People also like to try to hand feed wildlife in their own yards. They habituate all sorts of different animals to being around people and that food comes from people. These animals then approach neighbors who may not be impressed, or in some cases are petrified of a bear coming closer than it normally would. These people then call authorities who may come out and relocated the animal. Or sometimes the animal needs to be destroyed.

Simply because humans were trying to satisfy their own egos to make wildlife something it's not.

Respect wildlife. From a distance. Keep wildlife wild. If you see orphaned or injured wildlife, don't try to do it on your own. The greatest expression of your true love and respect for that animal is to call your nearest professional wildlife rehabilitator.

In Bat News

By now we've all heard White-nose Syndrome is endangering bats. They're up against it and we really don't know much to help at this point. In fact, there are a lot of things we just don't know about bats in general. One thing we all know is they eat lots of insects. With this in mind, hibernating bats were species feeling the effect of abnormal weather patterns. The warmer weather in November brought them out hunting, but there weren't hoards of insects to feast upon. Instead they used up energy vital for hibernation. With the delayed spring, they were forced to hibernate longer or venture out on the warmer days where again they found limited insects. This behavior uses up even more energy they don't have to spare. Almost every winter we overwinter/hibernate big brown bats that are disturbed from hibernation in someone's attic or out building. This year we had eight. We started waking them up and conditioning them for the return to their

home territories as normal. They were ready to return far before we could release them, however. They were also victims of the cool, wet spring. We couldn't release them until it warmed up enough to produce enough insects for them to eat.

In captivity, they are fed mealworms with vitamins and minerals added for better nutrition. This is something they wouldn't normally get in the wild so they have to learn mealworms are good food. That's not generally a problem. Then they are fed mealworms one by one from tweezers. Once they catch on, it's pretty easy, however it is time consuming for us. They can eat 40+ mealworms per bat. Some have quirky preferences about how they want their food presented and where they want to eat it. This winter one would stop chewing at the slightest sound which could be just the quiet rustling of the isolation gown we have to wear moving with our breathing!



Big Brown Bat eating from a dish of mealworms.

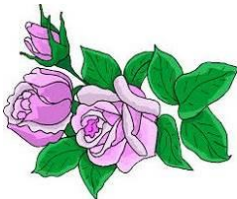
For our eight bats, it started out taking about 1.5 hours just to feed them by hand. However, we tried to transition them to eat from dishes. It's supposed to be effective about 50% of the time. Eating from a dish is not from something they do in their wild home so it can take some time to "train". The more they forage on their own, even if

it's from a dish, the less human interaction and the less stress for them. Before their release the first part of May, we had six of our eight bats self-feeding reliably which was better for them AND for us! Click [HERE](#) for a video of a bat self-feeding. Turn up the volume 😊! For a link to an update on White-nose Syndrome in Wisconsin click [HERE](#).



In Honor or Memory Of

~In Memory of "Smoochee" Hassel, feline extraordinaire
~In Memory of "Blackjack" Robinson, a very good boy
~In Memory of Sue Olson who was dedicated to helping the injured, lost and abandoned wildlife
~In Memory of Tim Muench, friend, volunteer and supporter of Wild Instincts
~In Honor of Bailey Nebgen's 19th birthday
~In Memory of Uncle Bill Mullally
~In Honor of my dad's birthday. Happy Birthday, Grant Birmingham.
~In Memory of Pat Krause, friend, volunteer and supporter of Wild Instincts



In Our Hearts

On April 25, Wild Instincts lost a friend, a volunteer and a supporter. Pat Krause lost a short battle with cancer. She was full of life and spirit and opinions and then she was gone.

She volunteered with Wild Instincts since the beginning, having volunteered with Mark & Sharon for decades before Wild Instincts.

Not only was she a weekly volunteer, she was a rescue driver, too. Rarely did she ever turn down the chance to help. She was a co-organizer of our annual Wild for Wine & Cheese Cruise.

Her passing leaves a huge hole but her presence is felt daily; even when doing dishes and emptying the sink strainer basket she got for the kitchen because she didn't like the fish scales getting stuck. She was always wanting to promote Wild Instincts and share our mission with anyone who would listen.

We miss you, Pat. Thank you so much for always helping us help them!



Pat Krause plants the seed of wildlife rehab in her great-grand daughter, Lily.

Cellcom Green Grant

Last year we were awarded a Green Grant from Cell Com for a new mammal enclosure. We often have more than one species that need to be in our enclosures so there is a pressing need for another.

The weather delayed start not only last fall, but this spring as well. Just recently, we were finally able to get started.

We're working quickly to finish it because our patient load this year contains a few different mammal species who could use it immediately!



Trash vs Sandhill Crane

Recently we were contacted by a distraught Sandhill Crane lover. His family has had cranes coming to his yard for years and years. A crane they have been watching for nine years showed up with something stuck on his beak. It was interfering with the proper alignment of the beak. The bird was starving and in needed help!



There is definitely something not right with this beak!



The biggest problem was this bird could still fly. How could they catch it so we could help it? Sandhill Cranes can be extremely wary and flighty if they think something is different. They are one of the species that didn't get the memo that sometimes people really want to help.

We offered our standard advice which is usually met with disbelief and laughter. It's pretty similar to devising a Wile E. Coyote type roadrunner trap. But it works.

After several weeks of planning, building and letting the crane get used to the trap, the trap was triggered and we could begin to help.

What a predicament this poor bird found himself in!!



What in the world is this?

He had speared something with his beak. It looks like it may be weed barrier, plastic envelope or some such. Infection had set in making his bill fragile and unstable. In fact, two inches of the very tip was already dead. Birds bills are like our pet's toe nails. They are keratinous, grow and have a blood supply like a kwik.

The blood supply to the tip of the beak had been obstructed by the piece of litter. Working fast, we developed a plan. We cut the beak back to a place that would allow the beak to close properly so he could feed himself. We were happy to see it was also an area that still had a good blood supply.



This is NOT how a bird's beak is supposed to look...EVER!

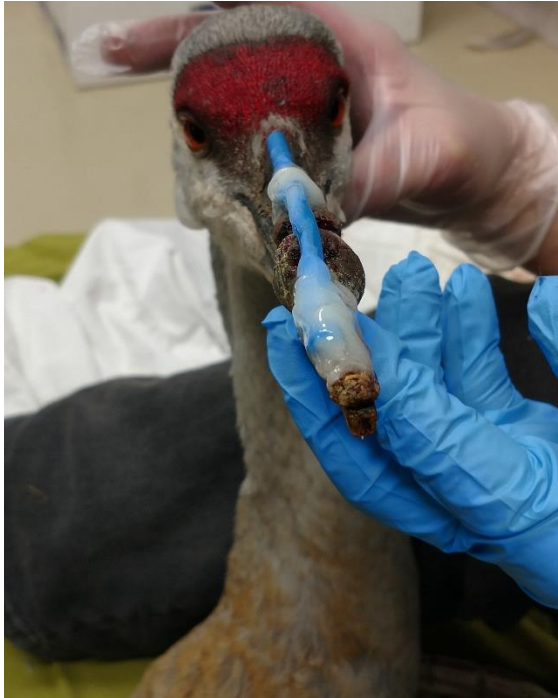


How can this beak function at all?



The end trimmed to at least allow it to close.

Next we had to figure out something to stabilize his weak and wobbly top bill while it grows out. But whatever we developed still had to allow air to circulate to the area of infection to help with healing.



Makeshift splint to stabilize but allow for air and healing.

So far so good. He is able to eat on his own and is still maintaining a standard feisty sandhill crane attitude. Now it will be a matter of time. It will take months for the bill to fully heal. IF it does. IF he can manage to keep the stabilizing splint on. IF it doesn't break.

Lots of IF's.

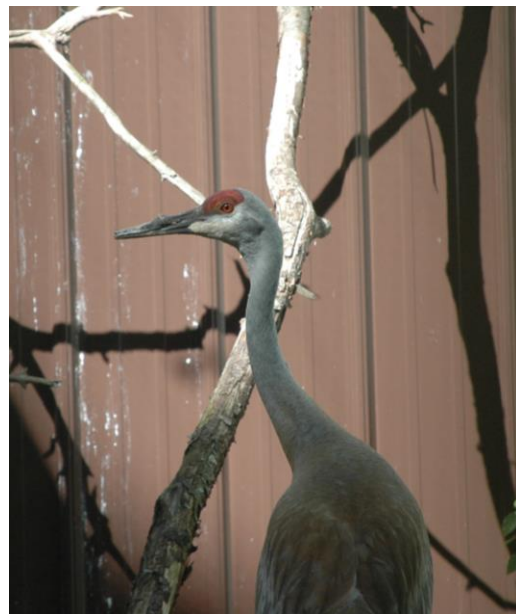
As always we will do our best. You can do yours. Reduce your use of plastic. Recycle. Pick up litter-even the smallest pieces. You

never know what a big impact they can have.



A quarter, a piece of aging plastic litter, and the tip of the beak it killed.

UPDATE: He had his "splint" on for 10 days before he removed it. The beak continues to be lined up properly but time will tell if our efforts will be successful. He eats well on his own. His lower beak is growing at faster rate than his upper so we may have to do a few more procedures before we know for sure. The people who alerted us to this have updated that his mate found another partner and started a re-nest.



What the beak looks like today.



Orphan porcupine found on dead mom's carcass on road.



Orphan Eastern Screech Owl.



Orphan fisher found by hiker.



Fawns: some truly orphaned, some kidnapped.



Young Southern Flying Squirrel

Species	1/1-5/31/17
American Goldfinch	1
American Robin	7
American Toad	2
American Woodcock	1
Bald Eagle	19
Barred Owl	3
Big Brown Bat	13
Black Bear	6
Black-capped Chickadee	2
Blandings Turtle	1
Blue-spotted Salamander	3
Bobcat	1
Canada Goose	2
Cedar Waxwing	1
Common Grackle	1
Coyote	3
Dark-eyed Junco	1
Deer Mouse	10
Eastern Chipmunk	1
Eastern Cottontail	47
Eastern Gray Squirrel	28
Eastern Screech Owl	1
European Starling	1
Fisher	1
Flying Squirrel, Southern	8

Gray Fox	9
Great Horned Owl	3
Little Brown Bat	2
Mallard Duck	4
Meadow Vole	6
Mourning Dove	2
Pileated Woodpecker	2
Pine Siskin	2
Porcupine	1
Raccoon	30
Red Fox	7
Red Squirrel	20
Red-backed Vole	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Ring-billed Gull	1
River Otter	1
Rock Dove	5
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
Sandhill Crane	2
Short-tailed Weasel	1
White-tailed Deer	9
Wild Turkey	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2
	278

Upcoming Events

We'll be at some area festivals & fairs with some of our education residents and Wild Instincts merchandise. Stop by!

June 10 Lupinefest Mercer, WI
 June 25 Presque Isle Country Fair

July 29 Hodag Farmer's Market
 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
 Pioneer Park, Rhinelander

Sept 23 Wine & Cheese Cruise
 Time to be Announced
 Wisconsin River Cruises,
 Rhinelander

Welcome to

INSTINCTS



Aug 2017

Vol 6:3

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

Hidden in the Weather

Whether or not you believe man is causing a change in basic weather patterns, we certainly are experiencing different weather patterns. While the predicted \$5.00 banana is not upon us just yet, there are some things that are affecting us here at Wild Instincts that you may not think about. Populations typically cycle up and down as the habitat reaches the number of animals it can support. Disease is one way nature controls populations. Canine Distemper is one of those diseases. We see outbreaks every seven to ten years so we were expecting an uptick in animals with symptoms. Canine distemper is a highly contagious disease prevalent in raccoons. The mild winter meant that raccoons suffering from canine distemper did not succumb to the disease as in a typical winter. Instead, we have a huge outbreak of canine distemper across the state. Almost 50% of the raccoons admitted this year have had distemper symptoms. And the number of raccoons admitted is up from last year. But canine distemper doesn't only effect raccoons. Gray foxes are extremely susceptible. Every one of the 11 gray fox we admitted this year displayed symptoms of distemper along with a coyote pup. We even had a nursing river otter with it this year.

There isn't a cure. Some may live through it, most will not. Because it is so highly contagious, we euthanize the animals exhibiting

symptoms to protect the others in our care. Following the mild winter, we have had a wet, wet summer. This means a bumper crop of mosquitoes. With mosquitoes comes West Nile Virus. WNV affects the nervous system. Crows, ravens and blue jays are highly-susceptible but we've also seen many broad-winged hawks



Great Horned Owl likely suffering from West Nile Virus

affected. We currently have a great horned owl in care that most likely has WNV.

The basic treatment is supportive care. Some will pull through. Many will not. Each individual is different. Just like when the flu virus goes through your household. Some members of the family get it worse than others. It might be something else that grounds the bird before they succumb to WNV. Because most wild animals hide out and hunker down when they are feeling poorly to protect themselves from predators, that puts birds on the ground in the vegetation where they are easy marks for mosquitoes. They are usually very sick by the time they reach us. As you may have guessed, this is difficult for us all emotionally. We do our best, but this is year there's a lot of feelings of helplessness and sadness. So indeed the weather can affect us daily here not just on the outside, but on the inside as well.



In Honor or Memory Of

- ~In Honor of Hope Carmines' 87th birthday
- ~In Honor of Elsie Thornton's 89th birthday
- ~In honor of family, both with us in body & those with us in spirit
- ~In Memory of A.W.'s mom, Mary K.
- ~In Memory of Sue Olson's birthday
- ~In Memory of Dale Ray
- ~In Memory of Jay Moynihan who taught me how to use binoculars

Summer Interns' Fall Migration

Each year we rely on interns to help with the influx of patients. These young people work their tails off at what is most likely the most demanding job of their life to this point. With this year's record-shattering numbers, they worked even harder than most. As is the case with most immersion-type programs, they will be different

when they leave than when they arrived. Even if it's just in the subtle confidence of being able to capture an eagle or knowingly tube feed a bunny. They arrive so excited, apprehensive and eager. They leave with mixed emotions about leaving animals still needing help and the call of a normal schedule with full nights' sleep. Their fall migration leaves us with mixed emotions as well. Will they take the lessons learned and apply them wisely to all aspects of their lives? Will they carry forward the knowledge of the need for rehab to ensure it's around for generations to come? Will they remember to take their toothpaste?



Katherine, Olivia, Kaitlin, Jordyn, Kyle, Paige

What's THAT Bat?

Each patient we admit is special, however some are more uncommon than others. Recently, we received a bat that had been hit by a squad car.

It turned out to be a Hoary Bat. Not only are they the largest bat species in Wisconsin, but they are by far the most visually stunning. They are in the tree bat classification so people don't find them roosting in caves or buildings which is how most people wind up interacting with bats.

In fact, most people have never even heard the name Hoary Bat before even though the hoary bat species is the most wide-spread species of bat in North America. Like all three species of tree bats found in WI, Hoary Bats migrate for winter. They cover large distances going even as far as Mexico. This species of bats prefers moths. Their echolocation calls are at a low frequency that allows people to hear them sometimes.



Eating a special formula from the tip of a plunger of a small syringe



A hoary bat's wingspan is about 15.5" and their body is over 5" long.

Trash vs Sandhill Crane Update

In our May 2017 newsletter, we had a story on a sandhill crane we admitted on May 4th that had some plastic trash impaled on its upper beak. It had been there so long the beak was actually dying, becoming unstable and making the bird unable to forage. We removed the plastic and came up with a sort of splint to allow the beak to heal. It was a Hail Mary play we weren't sure would work.

We're happy to report, it DID work. The crane's beak lined up properly, healed, and it was released 81 days after the evening we spent scrambling to come up with something that might work.



Makeshift splint to stabilize but allow for air and healing.



Eager to get back to being a wild crane.

Red-bellied Snake

We admitted a red-bellied snake after it sustained some spinal trauma after an encounter with a weed-eater. Three weeks after being admitted, she surprised us by giving birth! Some snake species are oviparous meaning they lay eggs. Red-bellied snakes are ovoviviparous, meaning they give live birth rather than lay eggs. The eggs are hatched within her body. We were quite surprised to find seven little snakes in her enclosure. Some even with parts of the egg membrane visible.



Left to right: mealworm, new-born red-bellied snake, adult red-bellied snake mom.

Bake Sale

Thanks to all who came down to Hodag Farmer's Market on July 29th for our annual bake sale. The weather was perfect. We had lots of yummy baked goods, Wild Instincts shirts and coloring books. Amelia, Ruby and Whisk joined us to add to the fun. Your support raised almost \$1550.00 for Wild Instincts mission of helping injured and orphaned wildlife get back to the wild.



Getting set up for the annual bake sale.



Intern Katherine and Ruby enjoyed talking with the kids.



Five-day old Pileated Woodpeckers. Nest tree toppled in storm.

Welcome to

INSTINCTS



Thankful to ALL

This is traditionally the time of year to give thanks for all and to all who have graced this year.

As usual, our list is extremely long of people we are tremendously grateful to have on the Wild Instincts Team. We appreciate each and every one of all of you out there reading this. You all contribute to help us help them, even if it's simply by letting others know we exist.



What we'd like to do is make sure people are aware of the businesses and organizations that also support Wild Instincts. Some by donating proceeds from their own 50/50 raffles or games, some by donating expired items, some by donating labor or even brand-new items we find ourselves needing.

Personally, we like to support businesses that support causes dear to our hearts. In fact, on our website we have a link to businesses that have supported us. Here's a list of some of the businesses that supported us in some way in so far in 2017, in no particular order:

Furniture & Appliance Mart
C&M Concrete
Stein's Lincoln Street Liquors
Wisconsin River Cruises
Flyin Finn
Trig's Flea Market
Stevens Point Co-op
AmericInn
Lake of the Torches Resort Casino
Whitetails Unlimited
Stress Recess
Pelican Community Club
St. Matthias Thrift Store
St Germain Primetimers
Birch Lake Bar & Resort
Sayner-St Germain Fish & Wildlife Club
Farmer's Feed Store
Expera Specialty Products
Ray Rousseau VFW Post #3143
The Rhinelander Area Food Pantry
Russ Davis Wholesale
Northern Paws Animal Hospital
Animal Health Care Center
Northwoods Animal Hospital
Foster & Smith
Fun Factory
B&B Resale
Cellcom
WPS Foundation
Walmart
Sam's Rental
French's Homestead
Veterinary Care

In this issue:

- RELEASE Photo Album
- Sora Rail
- In Honor/Memory of
- Cellcom Grant
- Otter Documentary
- In Their Own Words
- Admissions to Date
- Upcoming Events

If You Haven't Seen It, You OTTER!

You may remember in 2016, the BBC came to Wild Instincts to film us as part of a documentary they were filming on otters.

Supercharged Otters was released on Natural World in the UK in June.

The program transformed slightly and made its way across the pond to be released in the U.S. in October.

To celebrate, we had a pre-release fundraising reception at the Rouman Cinema in Rhinelander which included a complimentary viewing of the *Supercharged Otters* episode and a bonus of some of our own outtakes.



It appeared to be a crowd-pleaser.

It was an experience of a lifetime to work with the BBC and have our efforts with otter rehab seen around the world.

We've heard nothing but good reviews.

If you didn't get to see it, don't worry, you should be able to track down two choices for your viewing pleasure.

The PBS version is called *Charlie & the Curious Otters* and can be found on PBS Nature website by clicking [HERE](#). The entire episode is available for free online, but only until November 22. Don't worry, however, if you click [HERE](#), you can find a DVD for purchase. However, it won't ship until Dec 19th.

The BBC version is called *Supercharged Otters* and should be available for download watching for a fee.

There are a couple small differences between the two versions. The BBC version contains a piece about the resident otters of Singapore where they roam a park like squirrels do here in the US. It also contains a few post release clips from the camera traps showing otter interacting with eagles and enjoying snow.

The PBS version does not have those clips, but still contains all the footage of Wild Instincts that the BBC version has.



Our name in lights.



Mingling & munching before the movie.

The Secretive Sora Rail

The sora rail is a small bird that prefers to live in freshwater wetlands with stands of cattail, sedges, and other tall wetland plants. Large, remote wetlands hosting dense stands

of cattail and other tall wetland plants often hold several pairs of breeding soras, yet many people have not even heard of a sora, much less seen one in the wild.

Like other rails, the sora is a secretive species, hiding in the dense vegetation of its wetland habitat. Startled individuals will sometimes flush to cover but more common is for a sora to slip quietly into hiding, long before you can see it.

They eat mainly seeds, insects and snails, picked from ground surface, or by probing soft mud and vegetation with its bill.

The tail is usually held erect while walking and flying.

Their body is suited for the marshy habitat that they live in. The shape of their body makes it easy for them to travel through dense vegetation. The sora has short, round wings which offer highly maneuverable flight through tangled vegetation. Strong legs, with long slender toes allow a sora to run & walk through tangled wetland vegetation with ease. Although they prefer walking to flying, their long-distance capabilities are evident in their migration, often crossing the Gulf of Mexico.



The Sora Rail's body shape helps it maneuver in its wetland home.

Colorful Camouflage

The common water snake is a medium to large heavy-bodied snake. Their body color is gray, brown or tan and is marked with dark brown, red-brown or black transverse blotches, which often fade with age. The underside is distinctive, white with bright red half-moons interspersed irregularly with dark gray speckling.



The colorful belly of a common water snake.

Common water snakes are usually found in or close to any permanent waterbody but they prefer clean rivers. Their diet includes crayfish, slow-moving fish and a variety of amphibians.

This interesting coloration helps keep them safe from any predator that may be above them, but also allows them to blend in better if seen from below by their prey as they are swimming.

This non-venomous water snake is often mistaken for a cottonmouth (also known as a water moccasin) and is subsequently killed. Cottonmouths, which are venomous, **do not** occur anywhere near Wisconsin.

Special Visitor

Snowy owls are migratory, but their migration is likely more related to prey abundance than seasons or weather. In general, snowy owls move nomadically, and breed when and where prey is abundant. About every four years, many snowy owls irrupt into the northern United States during

the winter because prey is scarce further north.

They are open-land hunters so often pass over the Northwoods for more agricultural fields further south. However, we may see them in open fields such as the area potato fields.

When they arrive, they are usually hungry or starved, dehydrated and sometimes injured.

Snowy Owls' main foods are typically lemmings and mice. However, they also take rabbits, seabirds, and even fish. One Snowy may eat more than 1,600 lemmings in one year.



Snowy Owl

These gorgeous birds are predominantly white with dusky brown spots and bars. Males become almost all white as they age, females tend to have more markings than males. Young snowy owls are generally darker and more heavily marked than adults. They have yellow eyes and their legs and feet are covered in white feathers that protect them from the cold weather.

They are the heaviest owl in North America, weighing about four pounds.



Close up view on the feathered foot of a snowy owl.



Such an impressive face!

Cellcom Green Grant

Last year we were awarded a Green Grant from Cell Com for a new mammal enclosure. We often have more than one species that need to be in our enclosures so there is a pressing need for another.

This year we were fortunate to get another Green Grant that will partially fund a much-needed aquatic mammal enclosure.

Cellcom gets their funding for Green Grants from their cell phone recycling program.

Anyone can donate their cell phones. You do not need to be a Cellcom customer to participate. That old phone in a drawer somewhere could help wildlife in need!



In Their Own Words

Kylie Boyd
Graduate Colorado
From Michigan
Summer/Fall Intern 2017

"I went into this internship not knowing much about wildlife or how much work went into caring for them. I knew that I had always had a passion for animals and knew that I enjoyed working in veterinary medicine, but I had no concept of how much I would learn from both Mark and Sharon. The first day and following few weeks after were a whirlwind of knowledge overload and lack of sleep; at moments I was unsure if I was going to be able to continue. Then weeks turned into months

and before I knew it, I was starting to get the hang of what I was doing and able to catch my breath and realize that I was a part of something that was changing lives. Even though waking up mentally and physically exhausting is part of the routine, walking into the center every morning excited to see all of the animals that were left the night before looking healthier and more alert is rewarding. Especially when it was the day of a patients release, makes it all worth it. This internship is one that will impact the rest of my life. In jobs, when they ask about hands-on experience, I can relate that I have nurtured squirrels from the dependence of infancy to the independence of young adulthood or that I have held a multitude of eagles for examination or that I have worked with raptors for educational programs. Not only have I enjoyed all of the experience with the animals, but this internship would not have been complete, or kept me sane, without the friendships of all of the interns, volunteers, and of course Mark and Sharon."



In Honor or Memory Of

~ In Memory of Ruth & George Nance
~In Honor of the 67th Anniversary of the Sept 29th Wedding of Frank & Hope Carmines and the Sept 29th Wedding Day of Laura Hope Carmines & Nathan DeHart
~In Memory of "Michaeline" (Licky Micky) Furda, much loved dog and family companion
~In Memory of George Bertoldi
~In Memory of "Bonkers" Nebgen, a special canine friend
~In Memory of Frank "Dan" Carlson
~In Honor of the birthdays of Toby, Jim, Karen & Zach
~In Honor of Madeline Lindgren
~In Memory of MP Jubinville, beloved mother and animal lover

RELEASE SEASON

Fall is a season we look forward to a lot here at Wild Instincts. Fall is when many of the orphans we have been raising are ready to go into The Wild.

Many people ask us if we are sad to see these animals we have worked so hard to bring to this point leave us and not look back.

The answer is no. This is a culmination of all the worry, all the endless formula mixing, food prepping and poop cleaning! This is The Joy to balance out The Heartbreak.

As we begin this season of joy we'd like to share some of what you've made possible by supporting Wild Instincts:



Badger release.



Young badger shortly after admission.



Coyote pup upon admission.



Coyote release.



Fawns.



Young bear cubs.



Fawn Freedom.



Bear release.



Young fisher.



Bear freedom!



Young fishers shortly before release.



Free raccoon.



Young raccoon.

While there are those leaving, there are a few who missed their window of opportunity for hibernation or migration and must be overwintered.

Among those are several big brown bats, a garter snake and a fox snake.

The bats will be hibernated in a safe, climate controlled artificial bat "cave". The snakes will be kept active throughout the winter.



Some of the bats in the Bat Cave

Species	1/1- 11/8/17		
American Bittern	2	Eastern Gray Squirrel	58
American Crow	17	Eastern Painted Turtle	1
American Goldfinch	3	Eastern Phoebe	7
American Kestrel	3	Eastern Screech Owl	1
American Redstart	1	European Starling	8
American Robin	43	Fisher	3
American Toad	3	Flying Squirrel, Southern	9
American Woodcock	1	Fox Snake	1
Badger	1	Fox Sparrow	1
Bald Eagle	40	Gray Fox	13
Barred Owl	6	Great Horned Owl	8
Belted Kingfisher	4	Hermit Thrush	3
Big Brown Bat	19	Hoary Bat	1
Black Bear	14	Hooded Merganser	1
Black-and-White Warbler	3	House Finch	4
Black-capped Chickadee	3	House Sparrow	1
Blanding's Turtle	1	Little Brown Bat	4
Blue Jay	9	Mallard Duck	16
Blue-spotted Salamander	3	Meadow Vole	6
Bobcat	2	Merlin	4
Broad-winged Hawk	15	Midland Painted Turtle	3
Brown Thrasher	1	Mink	2
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	Mourning Dove	15
Canada Goose	11	Mourning Warbler	1
Cedar Waxwing	5	Northern Flicker	9
Chimney Swift	4	Northern Water Shrew	1
Chipping Sparrow	9	Osprey	1
Cliff Swallow	1	Ovenbird	2
Common Grackle	7	Palm Warbler	1
Common Loon	4	Pileated Woodpecker	2
Common Nighthawk	2	Pine Siskin	2
Common Raven	3	Pine Warbler	1
Cooper's Hawk	2	Porcupine	3
Coyote	4	Purple Finch	2
Dark-eyed Junco	2	Raccoon	53
Deer Mouse	40	Red Fox	8
Downy Woodpecker	3	Red Squirrel	42
Eastern Bluebird	3	Red-backed Vole	1
Eastern Chipmunk	14	Red-bellied Snake	1
Eastern Cottontail	128	Red-breasted Nuthatch	7
Eastern Garter Snake	1	Red-eyed Vireo	3
		Red-tailed Hawk	3
		Red-winged Blackbird	1

Ring-billed Gull	2
River Otter	3
Rock Dove	11
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	7
Ruffed Grouse	1
Sandhill Crane	5
Short-eared Owl	1
Short-tailed Weasel	1
Snapping Turtle	10
Sora Rail	1
Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel	8
Trumpeter Swan	1
Tundra Swan	1
Turkey Vulture	1
Western Painted Turtle	16
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
White-tailed Deer	25
Wild Turkey	6
Wood Duck	5
Wood Turtle	4
Woodchuck	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	5
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Total	871



Male Wood Duck recovering from wing fracture.

Upcoming Events

Feb 16, 2018 CT's Deli FUNdraiser
5:00-8:00p.m.
CT's Deli, Rhinelander, WI

