

Sponsor an AIWC Patient! Bohemian Waxwing

By C. Slade

There are three species of waxwings: the Bohemian waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*), cedar waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) and Japanese waxwing (*Bombycilla japonica*). The Bohemian waxwing has a wide distribution; their range includes the northern regions of both the Eurasian and North American continents. Their seasonal movements appear to correspond with the seasonal availability and distribution of fruit and berries. Waxwings commonly travel and forage in large flocks; this cooperation between birds is thought to be an essential part of their ability to locate scattered fruit crops. Waxwings are commonly spotted feeding on berries in urban parks and neighbourhood backyards.

Waxwings are primarily fruit eaters. Fruit, although rich in sugar, is deficient in other nutrients, so waxwings must consume large quantities of fruit and berries each day. During the winter months when fresh fruit is not available, waxwings will feed almost exclusively on a variety of berries. Rowan berries are a favourite, as are juniper berries, mountain ash berries, Saskatoon berries and rose hips.

This Bohemian waxwing was the 23rd patient admitted to AIWC in 2019. She was admitted on March 3rd, after a homeowner in Airdrie, Alberta discovered the bird sitting on her front porch seemingly unable to fly. As waxwings consume fermenting berries, they can become intoxicated and are prone to accidentally flying into nearby buildings and windows. It is likely that this waxwing had accidentally flown into the window of the residential property.

At AIWC, her examination revealed no significant injuries, although the waxwing did appear to be disoriented. She was placed in an indoor enclosure where AIWC staff could monitor her behavior for signs of head trauma. After several days in care, she was moved to an outdoor enclosure with the company of other waxwing patients also in AIWC's care. Once her behavior has returned to normal, she, along with the other waxwing patients, will be released in a rural wooded area for a second chance at life in the wild.

Sponsoring this waxwing, or any other current AIWC patient, helps with the costs directly associated with their care and rehabilitation. As part of your sponsorship, you will receive a certificate, a glossy 8×10 photograph of your patient, and a tax receipt for the full amount of the sponsorship. Thank you for helping us to keep them forever wild!



Bohemian Waxwing in outdoor enclosure



Bohemian Waxwing in indoor enclosure

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MISSION:

AIWC is committed to the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of injured and orphaned wildlife. We provide expert advice and education that fosters an appreciation of wildlife.

Volume 26 / Issue 2 / Spring 2019

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Update from the Executive Director

By H. Lillie, Executive Director

Did you know that for rehabilitation centres in the southern USA, their baby season can start as early as March? Thankfully we get more of a reprieve from the extremely busy baby season here in Alberta, with it typically starting in May, but in past years it has started in April.

From now until August, hundreds of wildlife babies will be admitted into our care. Some of them, such as baby birds, will require feedings every 15-minutes to every 3-hours, while others, such as baby mammals, will require formula feedings every 2 to 3-hours. Every day is busy at our wildlife hospital, but with your support, our volunteers, and our staff, we continue to provide excellent care to wildlife in need.

There are lots of ways you can help AIWC this summer, starting with donating to our Wildlife Baby Shower (see our newsletter insert). We will also be hosting 3 garage sale & bottle drives this summer (see page 5 for more information) and in August we will be holding our first ever fitness challenge (see page 4 for more information). Lastly, we are hosting our popular on-site talks each month, and for more info, you can visit our website at www.aiwc.ca

Thank you for your continued support of AIWC, you truly make a difference to the lives of wildlife in need. Thank you for all you do!

Have a lovely spring and we'll see you in August for our next issue of Recovery Review.

Sincerely,

Holly Lillie

Executive Director



AIWC has its Ducks in a Row

By J Kaiser

By the time March arrived, AIWC had already admitted six mallards into care in 2019. While seemingly unusual – since you’d expect most waterfowl to have migrated south for the winter – there remains a large population of ducks and geese who will remain in Calgary and the surrounding area year-round, as long as there is open water and a food source. Mallards are dabbling ducks whose diet consists of plants and insects. They prefer shallow water, where they can reach the aquatic plants at the bottom.

Most of these mallard patients were admitted in mid-February, when the winter weather was at its most extreme and open water was at its most limited.

Upon intake, most were found to be underweight and malnourished in addition to other circumstances that brought them into care: a window strike for one, suspected head trauma for others. Happily, AIWC reports these mallard patients recovered quickly while in care and three have already been successfully returned to the wild!



Male mallard in pool

A Happy Ending for Snowy Owl Patient Marks Great Start for 2019

By J Kaiser

AIWC’s first patient of 2019 was found in a field in rural Alberta, east of Calgary. She was unable to fly, and upon admission, AIWC staff discovered several injuries, including both old and new fractures at the clavicle (collarbone), coracoid (shoulder), and ulna (forearm). After almost two weeks in care, her condition improved enough to be moved to an outdoor enclosure, which was much preferred by this snowy owl and her appetite immediately increased!

She was an incredibly feisty patient the entire time in AIWC’s care, and about a month after being admitted, her fractures and other injuries improved enough to begin conditioning for release.

In mid-February, she was released back to the wild close to where she was originally found, and she will join the rest of her species for the migration back to the arctic sometime in March or April.



Snowy owl conditioning in outdoor enclosure before release



Community Engagement Update March 2019: Creatures Big and Small Event

By K. Jansen, Education and Community Engagement Coordinator

Who says you can't mix business and fun? Certainly not us! AIWC was recently invited to participate in Suncor's "Creatures Big and Small" event, which was designed to bring awareness to several different animal-related non-profits in the Calgary area. All Suncor staff were invited to come by during their lunch breaks and visit each of the different booths to learn about the organizations. The staff members were asked to make a donation upon entry, and the proceeds were split amongst the five non-profits!

Even though it was during work hours, this event had a great turn-out and led to many people learning about AIWC. Katrina and Karly (one of AIWC's MRU practicum students) had some fantastic conversations with attendees, including on how to deter geese from nesting in improper areas and the benefits of having skunks in your backyard. Most encouragingly, it was wonderful to hear how many people already knew about and supported AIWC! We were also thrilled to have the opportunity to chat with members of the other animal non-profits, including PAWSitive Match, the Calgary Humane Society, Canadian Water Resources Association (CWRA), and Alberta Animal Rescue Crew Society (AARCS). It is always wonderful to see the good work other animal-related non-profits are doing, and brainstorm how we can best help and support each other.

Do you want AIWC to come and spread the word about wildlife at your workplace or community? AIWC's Public Awareness team is always excited to head to events to let people know about AIWC. If you have an event coming up that you would like AIWC to be a part of, please email katrina.jansen@aiwc.ca!



Workout for Wildlife (WOW!)

On August 1st, 2019, we will launch our first ever fitness challenge fundraiser!

Workout for Wildlife (WOW!) will run throughout the month of August, encouraging registered participants to reach their individual fitness goals and collect pledges for AIWC. The fitness goal can be of your choosing, and we will be utilizing the popular fitness tracker app, Strava, to connect with participants throughout the event.

This is a fantastic event to support wildlife and reach a personal fitness goal. Registration opens on May 15th, 2019, Find out more info by visiting our WOW website www.workoutforwildlife.ca or email us at info@aiwc.ca.



AIWC's 3rd Annual Garage Sale & Bottle Drive!

Mark your calendars and come out to **AIWC's Garage Sale & Bottle Drive** events this year!



Due to the success of previous years, we are hosting three events:

- Saturday, May 11th, 2019
- Sunday, June 16th, 2019
- Saturday, July 20th, 2019

Drop in at any or all events, anytime between 10am and 3pm.



Bring your returnable glass & plastic bottles, as well as your pop cans, juice & milk cartons!

We look forward to seeing you – rain or shine. Cash and credit card
accepted for purchases

Directions to AIWC: <https://www.aiwc.ca/contact/>

Did you know we are accepting gently-used, saleable items for our garage sales this summer? If you have any items you would like to donate, we are accepting item drop-offs at our facility at these times:

Friday, May 10th and Saturday, May 11th from 10am to 3pm on both days.

We are happy to accept the following items: tools, small furniture (side tables, for example), artwork, home décor, chairs, garden tools and equipment, camping equipment, and sporting equipment.

Please no: books, clothes, pet accessories, jewelry, magazines, large furniture, large exercise equipment, dishware, glasses, electronics such as box style TVs, children's stuffed toys, or child car seats.

All proceeds from our garage sale will go towards supporting wildlife. Last year we admitted over 1,000 wild animals and we need your help in order to provide them with necessary care.

Directions to AIWC: <https://www.aiwc.ca/contact/>

Call us at 403-946-2361 or email us at info@aiwc.ca if you have questions. Thank you!

Follow AIWC online!

Like us on Facebook and follow us
on Twitter (@AIWC) and Instagram
(@albertawildlife)!



SUMMER HOURS

Beginning Monday, May 13, AIWC will be open every day
from **9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** to admit wildlife in need of care.

For after-hours assistance, please refer to our website for
more information:

www.aiwc.ca/wildlife-hospital/after-hours-assistance/



Spring Wish List

By H. Lillie

Below are our most needed items to help us get through our peak season from May until August.

If you are able to donate any of the items below, it would be a huge help to us! Items can be dropped off at our facility throughout the month of May, any day of the week, from 9am to 5pm. When you arrive, please provide a copy of your receipt for the items purchased and donated, and we will send you an in-kind tax receipt for your donation!

If you have any questions, please contact us at 403-946-2361 or at info@aiwc.ca

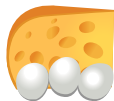
Produce:

- Fresh/frozen blueberries
- Mountain ash berries
- Saskatoon berries
- Oranges
- Apples
- Carrots
- Yam/sweet potato
- Lettuce
- Kale
- Corn-on-the-cob
- Frozen corn kernels



Meat/Dairy:

- Lean ground beef
- Smelt fish
- Eggs
- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese



Cleaning Supplies:

- Paper towels
- Kleenex
- Toilet paper
- Extra-large garbage bags
- Recycle bags
- High efficiency laundry soap (unscented and phosphate free)
- Dish-washing liquid
- Bleach
- Hand soap
- Mops
- Mop buckets
- Brooms and dustpans



Misc. Supplies:

- Gift cards for any gas stations, Costco, Walmart, Superstore, Canadian Tire, RONA, The Home Depot, Staples, and Co-Op. Long-handled butterfly nets
- Gas lawnmower x 1
- Pens
- Computer paper
- Hoses
- Hose nozzles
- Rubber boots (sizes 6+)
- Butterfly nets
- Scissors



Did you know?

Over 1,000 wildlife babies are admitted to our centre each year! These supplies will go to support their well-being until they can be released back to the wild. Thank you for your support!

GO GREEN IN 2019!

Receive the Recovery Review straight to your inbox, saving paper and postage!

To add yourself to the email distribution list, please send an email to info@aiwc.ca

Patient Profile: Saw-whet owl

By J. Kozak



The forests across North America are home to a species of owl, known for its tiny stature and big, bright yellow eyes. To the mice and small mammals, which are this owl's most frequent food source, they are seen as fierce hunters. This common species of owl are known as *Aegolius acadicus*, or more commonly, the northern saw-whet owl.

In January, a female saw-whet owl was observed in downtown Calgary flying into windows and was then attacked by a pack of corvids. A kind citizen witnessed the event and managed to come to her rescue, bringing her to the Calgary Animal Referral & Emergency (CARE) Centre, and she was then transferred to AIWC for treatment.

At the time of admittance, she required care for head and eye trauma, so she was given some pain medication and medicinal eye drops.

After 30 days in care, she was released back to the wild in Calgary's Fish Creek Park. Her new home is an excellent habitat with plenty of food to be hunted. Also, Fish Creek Park has a healthy population of resident saw-whet owls.

Prior to her release, AIWC also ensured she received federal banding. This allows for the potential of post-release data to be collected if she is caught during a NSWOW monitoring project.

A Common Muskrat

By C. Bogstie

Easily and often confused with the North American beaver, the common muskrat is an aquatic rodent and the largest member of the rat and mouse family in Alberta.

Musk rats are quite small, as they only reach an average weight of a few pounds; however, despite their small size, these fuzzy creatures can be very feisty, particularly during breeding season. Musk rats are most remarkable in their ability to build lodges in ponds or marshes under a meter of snow and ice, where they then literally chew their way out of the ice to create an access hole. It's an amazing skill; however, it can leave them vulnerable if they find themselves unable to get to their lodge via the access hole.

This February a juvenile male muskrat was found outside of a house in Okotoks in an emaciated and dehydrated state. Juvenile males can get frozen out of their lodge access holes, leaving them subject to the harsh winter elements, unable to seek shelter and food.

Once admitted to AIWC, the fragile critter rested in an incubator and was fed dense nutrient slurries via syringe as well as subcutaneous fluids to fight the starvation and dehydration respectively.

While he rested, blood work and a thorough exam were conducted to provide further information on his condition. After a few days, once he was stable enough, he was moved to an indoor pool enclosure containing a muskrat lodge where he has been thriving ever since! Once the weather is favourable to give him the best opportunity for success, he will be released back to his home area to resume life in the wild.



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AIWC MEMBERSHIPS

Buy Your Membership Today!

By purchasing an annual membership, you support local wildlife, conservation, and education at AIWC for a yearly fee of \$35 per person or \$45 for a family.

Your membership fee entitles you to:

- A mailed, paper copy of The Recovery Review, our quarterly newsletter;
- Our emailed ENews;
- Discount prices on select AIWC merchandise;
- Discounts at local businesses; and
- The opportunity to participate at the AIWC Annual General Meeting.

There are three easy ways to purchase or renew your membership:

- Complete and mail in the membership section of the insert attached;
- Complete the secure online form at aiwc.ca; or
- Call 403-946-2361

The Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC) plans to raise \$500,000 this year through fundraising campaigns and initiatives. It will cost the organization approximately \$25,000 to raise this amount. Funds raised will go to support AIWC's mission. For further information, please contact Holly Lillie, 403-946-2361.

WILDLIFE HOTLINE: 403-946-2361

Conjunctivitis in House Finches

By K. Pederson

Mycoplasmosis is a disease that causes conjunctivitis in birds' eyes. According to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, this disease was first identified in house finches in 1993-94 in the USA and has since spread into Canada, infecting not only house finches but American goldfinches, purple finches, and evening grosbeaks.

Early in 2019, AIWC admitted three house finches with conjunctivitis. They were found separately but close to the same area in south Calgary which indicates that there was an outbreak of the disease in a concentrated area. Mycoplasmosis is highly contagious but the bacteria does not live long without a host. Research indicates that incidences of this disease are found where susceptible birds congregate, most commonly bird feeders.

To prevent transmission of mycoplasmosis in your yard, once a week remove the seeds from your bird feeders, disinfect the feeder in a 10% bleach solution, and refill with new seed. Also, be sure to keep an eye out for any birds with swollen eyes, and give AIWC a call right away if you observe any birds who may be ill or injured.

The house finch patients were treated with a topical eye treatment for three weeks and once their eyes cleared up, they were released back into the area where they were found. Whenever possible, we try to return the patients to where they were found; they are familiar with the food sources and may have family ties and or partners.

On a personal author's note, this very scenario with a house finch is what first introduced me and my husband to AIWC back in 2005. I was able to pluck this (pictured) blind finch from our birdfeeder and called AIWC. Happily, he was successfully treated and released. Fourteen years later, AIWC continues to treat injured wild birds and animals with the best and knowledgeable care!



House finch with conjunctivitis in 2005



House finch patient recovering in AIWC's care, March 2019