

Recovery Review

Quarterly Bulletin of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation

SPECIAL EDITION

AIRC needs your help...

Since its inception in 1993, the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation has been a safe haven and refuge for animals that have become injured or orphaned, most often at the hands of humans. Over the years the Centre has grown from a small operation with only an incredible vision, to a premiere wildlife trauma centre and the only wildlife centre to become accredited through the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA).

In order for AIRC to continue to provide the care and rehabilitation that it has done for its wild patients it needs your financial support by December 31, 2011 or essential programs and services will need to be cut. Sadly these programs and services will directly impact the number of wild patients that we are able to help leaving them without a refuge from their pain and suffering.

Complicated and costly surgeries, lengthy rehabilitation, increased need and a large number of patients requiring care over the winter has placed a tremendous strain on the operating finances and we are in desperate need of your financial support. Over the past 18 years we have done great things and will continue to do so, but we must have cash flow. And we need that cash flow now.

We have been good stewards of our funds and have stretched monies donated in the past, but have been hit hard due to a tight economy, especially when we rely solely on private donations. Our administration costs are less than 10% of our operational costs and we rely heavily on our dedicated volunteers who donate their time each day assisting staff with feeding, cleaning, wildlife rescue and administration.

This year saw a number of major steps forward in wildlife care and treatment, the most notable being the tremendously successful orthopedic surgery (provided by Calgary North Veterinary Hospital) that was performed on an injured and provincially endangered Ferruginous Hawk. Today this majestic bird is in the outdoor enclosure awaiting spring as unfortunately his injury interfered with his migration. Other patients at the Centre, including beavers, porcupines, squirrels, and hares all have specialized formulas that are very costly. And the list goes on.

We are optimistic about the future. More than 25 grant applications have been submitted since September, with another 20 to be completed by year end. We are continuing our Christmas adopt a critter program and food pledge fundraisers and we will be vigorously selling memberships. We are hopeful that 2012 will be easier financially. First though, we must get through the next few months. We won't be able to do that without generous support – from you.

Our need is immediate!

Much like our patients when they come through our door.

Only we can help them – only you can help us!



Diana Segboer
Executive Director

Please contact me with any of your questions.





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www.aiwc.ca

VISION: AIWC strives to enrich the lives of Albertans by nurturing a strong appreciation and respect for wildlife.

MISSION/MANDATE:

To contribute to wildlife conservation in Alberta by:

- Providing comprehensive and humane rehabilitation programs for injured and orphaned wildlife;
- Promoting awareness and encouraging greater stewardship of native wildlife through engaging education programs;
- Researching wildlife issues that improve rehabilitation protocols and support the broader scientific community; and
- Helping people co-exist with wildlife through a biology-based, humane intervention service.

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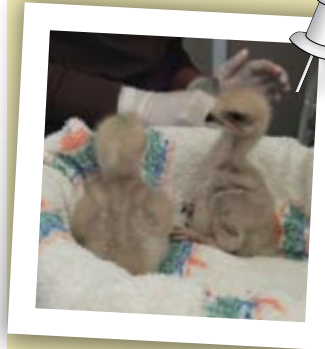
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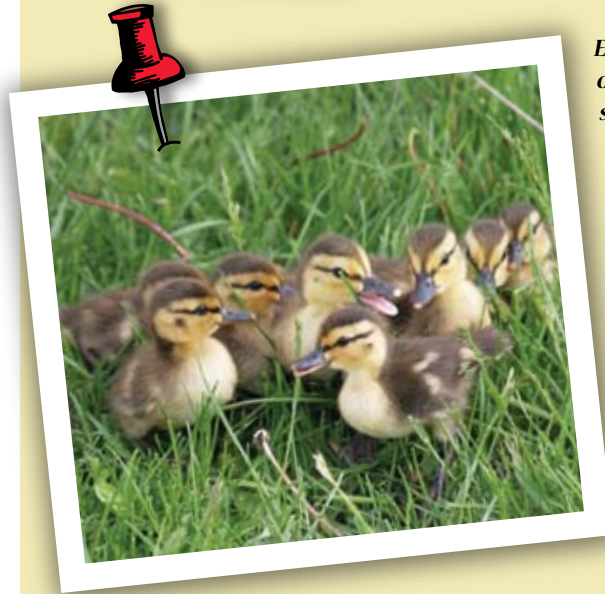
Submissions/Comments can be sent to the above address

As natural habitats are lost to urbanization, birds nest in locations that are not always ideal...

A construction worker at a Calgary worksite discovered the nest of these magpies on the garage of a house under construction. Since the nest had to be removed, the seven nestlings were taken to AIWC. The nestlings were in good condition upon arrival, but required a lot of attention. They had to be placed in an incubator and fed mushy nestling formula every twenty minutes.



The parents of these red-tailed hawks nested on an airport tower at the Springbank Airport, consequently blocking radio signal communication. For safety reasons, the nest was taken down and the chicks were brought to the Centre. In this picture a volunteer prepares to hand-feed the nestlings raw meat items - a meal that most accurately conforms to their wild diet.



Every year, AIWC admits hundreds of ducklings, representing several species of waterfowl. Ducklings arrive for diverse reasons. Some are genuinely orphaned because their mother was killed when crossing a road, some are thought to be orphans (though they were simply resting while the parents were feeding nearby) and are removed by well-meaning finders, and some are located in nests that need to be moved from dangerous locations. Once at AIWC, ducklings are raised in a safe environment, and are released prior to migration.



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AIWC's Recovery Review can now be read as a colourful e-newsletter!

~ No trees will be harmed in the making of this product!

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Your information is confidential and will only be used to send information otherwise printed and sent via mail.

Not an AIWC member yet? Sign-up today through our webpage www.aiwc.ca



This porcupine baby was found grazing on plants in the backyard of a kind-hearted resident of the McKenzie Lake community (Calgary). Since the two week old porcupette's mother never returned, it was clear he was an orphan. Once at AIWC, he was fed the appropriate formula before he was truly able to devour his greens with gusto!

Increase the Impact of your Donation...

ask your employer to match your pledge!!

Many companies have a **“Matching Gift Program”** or **“Employee Giving Program.”**

Enquire with your Human Resources Department to find out more.



This great horned owl fledgling was discovered within a glassed-in balcony in a northwest Calgary home. He sustained multiple bruises, most likely because he hit the glass while attempting to escape. Following treatment, the owl was moved to an outdoor enclosure where he was able to hone his wild instincts.

Species Profile:

Great Grey Owl

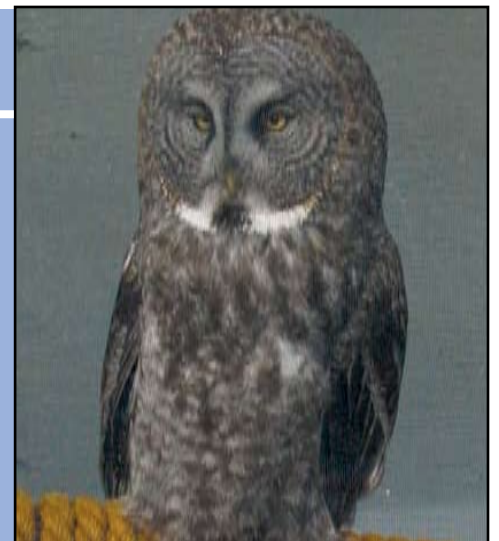
~ by A Tong

Imagine eating only one type of food day in and day out for most of your life. To most people this sounds like a form of cruel and unusual torture, but to many great grey owls (*Strix nebulosa*) eating this seemingly monotonous diet has allowed it to become a very successful bird of prey. In northern regions, great grey owls feed mainly on small rodents, with voles representing up to 90% of their diet. This means the migration and settlement pattern of these owls follows the population boom and bust cycle of voles. Individuals in southern reaches of the species' range have a more varied diet. Rats, mice, shrews, squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks, moles, and weasels are on that owl's menu. Birds are rarely captured by great grey owls and frogs, toads, snakes, and insects are taken infrequently.

As hunters, great greys adopt a “sit and wait” strategy, or will fly close to the ground, usually less than six meters high,

when hunting. The flight of these owls is slow, seemingly methodical and completely silent. What it lacks in flying speed, however, is more than compensated by its powerful and accurate strikes. These daring raptors have been known to penetrate snow pack strong enough to hold a 180 pound person when capturing prey and they will often dive into snow thirty centimetres deep.

Great grey owls are among the continent's largest owls. Females can be as long as 72 centimetres while males can reach a length of 67 centimetres. Despite their great size, great grey owls are outweighed by great horned owls and snowy owls. Unlike the former, great greys lack ‘horned’ tufts of feathers. Instead, they are distinguished by markings on their head and face that make it appear as though these birds have white ‘moustaches’ and black triangular ‘beards’ or ‘bow ties.’ As the name suggests, great



The great grey owl's majesty and beauty have not gone unnoticed. It is the provincial bird of Manitoba and Errol, the Weasley family's owl in the Harry Potter movies, is a great grey owl.

grey owls are mainly grey with streaks of brown and white.

Great grey owls have enchanted human imaginations across the northern hemisphere. Depending on where you are, a great grey may be known as the cinereous owl, spectral owl, Lapland owl, spruce owl, bearded owl, sooty owl, or the Grey Ghost of the Forest.

Marigold



JULY 2003 - SEPT. 2011



Following treatment for lymphoma, Marigold, AIWC's beloved striped skunk and Education Ambassador, peacefully passed away on September 30. We will forever cherish the memory of our dear friend from the wild. This is her story.

- by R. Maerz



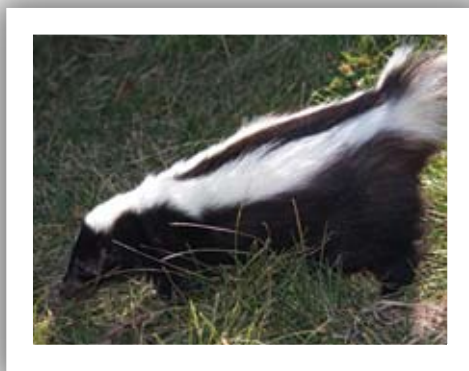
Destiny brought an orphan striped skunk to AIWC on a warm summer day in 2003. She was so tiny, about four weeks old, and definitely too young to be on her own. Her admission story was regrettably common; landowners had “removed” two skunks – her parents - from their property before they realized there was den of kits on site. This baby girl was the sole survivor. At AIWC, she soon found herself in the company of seven slightly older striped skunks who, initially, were the embodiment of sweetness and acceptance. At the time, it seemed her life would follow a predictable course: being raised to the age she would have been when she naturally left her mother in the wild, then released. But something happened that changed the course of her life: the other skunks rejected her. They picked on her, bullied her and eventually pulled out the fur on the top of her head.



Although growing up with con-specifics is best, the now-bald youngster had stopped thriving because of her interaction with the boisterous bunch. Other solo skunks had been successfully raised, and released, at AIWC in the past so staff members decided it was best to raise this orphan separately. Day by day she grew bigger and her fur grew back. Eventually she started eating solid food and was weaned off her formula.

Ideally, by this point, she should have developed a healthy wariness of humans. The seven others did, and it was common for them to let off a few noxious skunk

smells if people got too close. But this gal never did. If anything, it seemed she relished the company of people, and she did not show apprehension, regardless of whether a person was familiar to her or not. Her ease with humans suggested a separate path could be more appropriate for her future well-being. As it was, AIWC needed another educational animal and it seemed this friendly character might fit the bill. A rigorous ethical examination followed, and she was evaluated against a strict set of criteria testing her ability to cope with long-term captivity and exposure to various groups of people. She passed with flying colours!



comments as “Oh, stinky!” or “Ew, will she spray us?” But perceptions were quickly transformed. “Cool!” “Wow!” “I love skunks!” became the new mantra.

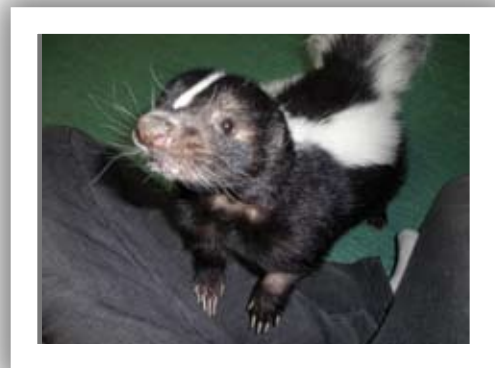
One volunteer recalled the pure elation her grandmother experienced when she spent time with such a gorgeous, gregarious animal. Another volunteer related the story of a landowner who was so impressed with Marigold’s friendly and laid-back personality that he vowed to educate his neighbours about how useful skunks are for mouse and insect control. Marigold was a fantastic teacher!

Like all skunks, Marigold was a master forager, adept at using her sense of smell and long claws to root about for a tasty morsel. Where there was food, Marigold was guaranteed to be underfoot, waiting to snatch any tidbit that fell to the floor. Ever the opportunist,

Mari also helped herself to a volunteer’s muffin placed too close to her transport carrier, and a mouse (intended for a hawk) in the hand of an unwary Centre volunteer who bent down to say hello. Oh, how she loved peanuts! With good reason, Miss Marigold was kept on a sensible diet!

In warm weather, Marigold enjoyed her walks outside where she was able to indulge her innate curiosity. Woe betide the person who let her get under the porch! Marigold loved it there and only intense efforts could coax her out. On the other hand, she did not relish the cold. Many volunteers could relate how, upon being invited outside on a cooler day, she would take one tentative sniff of the chilly air and march right back inside!

Sweet Marigold! You were one of the wild ones who came to live among humans and who taught us so much about your gentle kind. We will miss your pleading looks for one more treat, your claws clicking on the linoleum as you scurried about, and your warmth as you slept in a willing lap. Through you, countless Albertans learned that skunks, along with other less appreciated native animals, are incredible individuals and integral members of our ecosystems.



A contest was held to choose a name and she became “Marigold,” in reference to the beautiful and beneficial, albeit strong-smelling, flower. For peace of mind, her scent glands were removed. With some cameo appearances on local morning shows, Mari’s career as an AIWC ambassador had begun!

From pre-school kids to senior citizens, Marigold enchanted them all! In doing so, she changed the opinion of those who had the privilege to meet her. At first, her appearance generated such





An Evening for the Animals

~ by K. Pederson

On a warm mid-August night, long-time AWC volunteer Heather MacEwan-Foran and her family hosted a successful fundraiser. Embraced by the picturesque countryside, guests enjoyed visiting with fellow volunteers, making new friends, and, most importantly, raising money for AWC. The guests were wined and dined in style; a pianist played softly while scrumptious vegetarian finger-food was served. There were many “goody-bags” donated for the silent auction, the most popular being an original painting by AWC’s resident skunk Marigold. The surprise entertainment was an appearance by “Neil Diamond” (expertly channeled by Lee Shedden!). Enthusiasm and generosity were the style of the delightful evening. In the end, over \$5,700 was raised, every penny of which will be directed to the rehabilitation of the critters AWC assists. Thanks to all who attended this relaxing and fun-filled event! And special thanks to Heather and her whole family for organizing and hosting this significant occasion!





MUSICIANS GONE WILD

Success!

Fundraising is a keystone activity for AIWC. The majority of donations made to AIWC are used directly for the food, medications and other supplies necessary for restoring our wild patients to full health. So when a group of wildlife enthusiasts initiates a new, festive and successful fundraising event, an exuberant celebration is guaranteed. The 'Musicians Gone Wild' Benefit Concert was all that and a pint of beer!

The music was fantastic, catering to a wide spectrum of tastes. Magnolia Buckskin, The Ruminants, Ruth Purves Smith and the 581, Prairies Edge, Ralph Boyd Johnson, Jim McLennan, and the Berna-Dean Holland Band all lent their acoustic talents to make the event incredible. Thank you for your wonderful performances! Artist CD sales were brisk, an indicator that attendees were putting their money where their enjoyment was. The Good Earth Cafe supplied paninis, desserts and coffees, and the bar was stocked by Dianne Wittner. In total, almost \$4600 was raised to benefit AIWC and wildlife. Long time AIWC volunteer Dennis Hanna summed up the evening, "A great night...[and] great music from a bevy of bands that was enjoyed by all. And best of all, it was the animals who truly benefited from the evening as a whole!"

As performer and organizer Berna-Dean Holland shares, "I believe this event was definitely a success and could easily become an exciting annual event. I have already heard from other musicians in

Alberta, and beyond, who have asked about performing at the next

Musicians Gone Wild." Between the positive feedback and

money raised, this fundraiser was definitely a

success! AIWC is hoping

'Musicians Gone Wild' truly becomes an annual event we

can look forward to for many years to come!

The following people made Musicians Gone Wild possible: AIWC Staff and Volunteers; all the fabulous performers; Michael Platt for his amazing posters; The Good Earth Cafe; Dianne Wittner; Deb Oldfield for her outstanding Public Service Announcement distribution; Andrew Scott and KPMG; Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association; and most especially Brian Holland.

~ Much gratitude and many thanks!

The 'Musicians Gone Wild' event was all that and a pint of beer!

Third Time's a Charm

The third beaver kit in as many years to come to AIWC made his way to the Centre on the evening of June 6th. Coming from the Big Valley area, his finder discovered him on top of his dead mother's body which itself was on top of the beaver's lodge. The kit was very unstable, dehydrated and hypothermic when he arrived. Although he was administered fluids and put into an incubation unit, his outcome seemed quite dire.

As with other beaver kits that have come to AIWC, this baby did not immediately eat well. Constant vigilance was needed to imitate the care he would have received by his natural mother, and plenty of patience was offered during his carefully monitored, round-the clock (including - ooph! - 2 am) feedings. Slowly but surely, the kit took to the new methods of feeding, gaining strength with each sip. Once his condition improved and he was of age, he was transitioned to solid foods. He has shown constant weight gain as well as appropriate development in his overall personality. Now he has become quite contentious with his caregivers, a favourable attitude for an animal that will eventually fend for himself.

The young beaver has graduated from his original pen on the main floor of the Trauma Centre. In fact, he now has his own private room downstairs, complete with a "beaver lodge" and pool. This young guy will be with us over the winter, with a possible release in the late spring of 2012 when he can fully take on 'The Wild.' Once again, the caring volunteers and staff members have turned a very dour situation into one that is hopeful and brimming with possibilities! We will never truly know what tragedy befell our little guy's mom, but rest assured there will be subsequent generations of beavers that would not have existed had it not been for the intervention of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation!



- by D. Hanna



AIWC's corral is currently home to eight white-tailed deer. These fawns were admitted in the spring/summer, ranging in age from a few days to a few weeks old. Hailing from the Edmonton area (transfers from the Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton), Okotoks, and Calgary, the fawns' stories represent issues common to many babies admitted to AIWC: victims of dog attacks, genuine orphans, and 'kidnappings' by well-meaning finders (including one maternally-minded dog). Now nearly full-grown, the deer will be released in the fall.



*Please help us
make a difference in
the lives that follow.*

Planned giving is a way to carry forward your passion and concern for wildlife. It is a wonderful way to ensure AIWC continues its outstanding efforts to rescue, treat, and release Alberta's injured and orphaned wildlife.

Chances are, you already donate generously to us. Have you considered leaving a lasting legacy that will continue to make a difference after you are gone? Calgary's continuing development guarantees that the past trend of increasing human-wildlife conflict will mean a greater need than ever for AIWC's wildlife services. That is why your support is so important and why a legacy gift will help us prepare for the future. Bequests are mutually rewarding and allow us to initiate goals that might otherwise be out of reach.

You may want to give to a specific AIWC program or you may prefer to let us determine the greatest need. Planned giving can help your own financial picture while helping save wildlife you care about. If you think a lasting legacy might be for you, contact your lawyer and state your bequest using AIWC's full name and charitable registration number. You may also contact us at the Centre, at any time.





**Alberta Institute
for Wildlife
Conservation**

Adoption form

Eagle:	\$100 <input type="checkbox"/>	Songbird	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>
Large Raptor	\$60 <input type="checkbox"/>	Small Raptor	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Lrg. Mammal	\$100 <input type="checkbox"/>	Med. Mammal	\$70 <input type="checkbox"/>
Waterfowl	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>	Sm. Mammal	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>

*Please check one.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

P.C. _____ Ph: _____

Email: _____

If the adoption is a gift, please include name and address of recipient: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Please make cheques payable to: AIWC

OR charge my VISA MasterCard

Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

Copy & Mail this form to: Box 68, Madden, AB

TOM 1L0 OR Email: info@aiwc.ca

(tax receipts are automatically issued unless otherwise specified)

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Freedom for Fox Family

~ by D. Thompson



I could hear playful yowls, yips, and yelps as I walked along the downstairs hallway at AWC, but when I opened the door to 'Room O' there was no sign of life other than a floor littered with enrichment items. It certainly smelled as though something inhabited the room. The top half of a kennel sat upon a towel in the middle of the floor.

As I stepped inside and closed the door behind me, the kennel slid towards the back corner. A red face peered out and eyed me with suspicion. Then another

face. And another. I took a further step. The faces disappeared and the kennel scooted again. The red fox kits were curious, but too timid to leave their den.

These bashful babies had been brought to us by a Carstairs resident who had trapped the nursing kits under his shed after learning that a neighbouring farmer had shot their mother. Though dehydrated, the kits were still a healthy weight because of the swift rescue effort. AWC Wildlife Rehabilitation Technician Barb Kowalzik informed me that fox kits, like all our patients, need enrichment, so we give them opportunities through which they can perfect their future hunting skills as they play. She further explained that foxes require socialization, so we try to ensure babies are not raised alone. Arriving together as siblings, these kits are a thriving, independent, well-bonded unit.

In literature, foxes are often portrayed as cunning thieves, but in reality they are more shy than sly, and tend to avoid

interaction with humans. They are natural predators which can keep ground squirrel and mouse populations low, and are thus often appreciated by farmers plagued by these crop-destroying rodents.

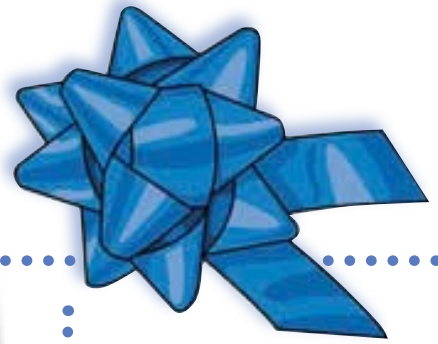
Once moved to our outdoor mammal enclosure, the red fox trio quickly dug an underground den and spent most daylight hours tucked up inside it; but during twilight, a lucky volunteer could catch a rare glimpse of rusty fur or a white tipped tail as the growing siblings emerged to hunt and play.

When the circumstances were right, the trio was transported to a safe location in southern Alberta for release. Although I will miss observing these cheeky canines, I know they will flourish, delighting in their new-found freedom.



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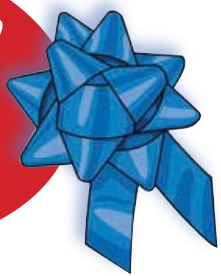
- our quarterly newsletter 'Recovery Review' hot off the press!
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