

RecoveryReview

Quarterly Bulletin of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife Conservation through Education & Rehabilitation

Snowies On A Plane

~ by K. Pederson

4 am on a warm summer morning: AIWC staff and volunteers bid a happy farewell to two of our patients, the snowy owls. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of Air Tindi and Northern Cross (Yukon), the



lovely owls that had been in our care since winter were flown to Inuvik, for a release near their natural summer meeting and mating grounds. Let me tell you how their journey began...

The first 'snowy' was found near Brooks in February. As with most of our patients, we will never know what happened to cause her injury, but radiographs revealed a double fracture in her right ulna. The second snowy was rescued on a chilly, windy April day in a field near High River. She could not fly; she could only hop along the stubble. Upon examination, this owl was found to have a fracture in her left ulna, as well as a very large scab on her leg. In both cases, it was deter-

mined that surgery would not be necessary; carefully wrapping and immobilizing the wings would be the best course of treatment.

The second snowy proved to be a feisty patient, and would not eat on her own until her bandages were taken off. (In an effort to entice her to eat, a live mouse was offered. She simply lifted her foot to let the mouse scurry by!) Once the bandages were off, both owls were given several months of physiotherapy and their healing progress was monitored. Their next step towards freedom involved flight conditioning in the outdoor raptor runway. Both owls ate heartily and, once their muscles were strong, the rest was up to

us. Thanks to the time and efforts of staff and volunteers, a flight was arranged to take the owls to Inuvik in early August.

Their release journey began at 3:30 am. Both owls were hydrated, their wings were wrapped in soft cotton to prevent injuries, and they were placed in separate padded crates. The first leg of their trip began with a car ride from Madden to Edmonton. At the Edmonton airport, the feathered passengers were boarded onto a Bombardier Challenger, a small business jet with room for seven people ... and two owls! The smooth flight to Inuvik arrived at 11:20 am. Local Fish and Wildlife officers

See Snowies continued on p6



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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 peacefully with wildlife by providing humane solutions for wildlife 'invasions' on personal and public property.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Volume 19 / Issue 1 / Spring 2012

It's A Skunk 3
 Calendar of Events 4
 Life, After All..... 5
 AIWC Responds to Oil Spill..... 6
 Thank You 7
 It's Baby Time!..... 8

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Submissions/Comments may be sent to the above address.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Dear AIWC Supporters...

It is a humbling honour to be on the AIWC Board of Directors. The Board voted in by AIWC Members at the May AGM for the 2012-2014 term is:

- Tammy White – Chairperson
- Bill McDougall – Vice-chairperson
- Kayle Paustian – Treasurer
- Liz Phinney – Secretary & Grants
- Berna-Dean Holland – Director of Media Relations
- Deborah Thompson – Director of Volunteer Relations
- Janna So – Director of Land
- Katherine Pederson – Co-Director of Fundraising
- Ted Gilson – Co-Director of Fundraising
- Terri Sinclair - Director of Administrative Services



One of Alberta's smallest owls, the saw-whet, recuperating after flying into a window.

More information about the individual members is posted on www.aiwc.ca.

Since being voted into office, our team has met every two weeks to guide AIWC through its financial difficulties and prepare the wildlife hospital for its upcoming move. At the same time, we have been diligently streamlining expenditures while maintaining the high level of professional care you have come to expect from this institution.

Numerous exciting fundraising efforts have been initiated and pursued by AIWC's incredibly dedicated volunteers, in conjunction with the Board (see the fundraising section on page 4). Additionally our generous donors, associates, and friends have given support in *so many ways* to guarantee that AIWC continues its life-saving work.

Looking to the future, we have explored several land options in our service area and are close to choosing the new AIWC site. Although the Madden site has served us well and will always be dear to us because it is the location where AIWC spent its fledging years, this move represents a wonderful opportunity to grow, expand, and re-envision how we serve both wildlife and our Alberta community.

Like you, we are tremendously proud to be part of this world-class wildlife institution, and we are looking forward to this new chapter in AIWC's history.

Thank you all for being a huge part of our success!

Book an AIWC Education Program

Ask about our corporate talks, workshops, and guest speaker topics. Guaranteed to entertain and amaze, AIWC can add flavour to your class, meeting, or special event.



education@aiwc.ca
403-946-2361
www.aiwc.ca



~ by C. Vavasour-Williams

"It's a skunk!" The discovery of one (or several) of these animals can be quite a distressing experience for many people. Skunks are highly adaptable, and their ability to co-exist with humans means the number of encounters in our expanding urban areas is on the rise.

Skunks are most active during the dawn and dusk hours. In cities, these resourceful mammals are often attracted to human garbage, an easy and plentiful food source. During the day they rest in underground burrows. Homeowners are often quite surprised when they discover a skunk has been living under their backyard deck, or in a hole under their front steps.

There are things we can do to co-exist with these amazing animals! If you are driving during dawn or dusk hours, remember to be on the lookout for skunks so you can avoid a collision. Make sure your home's foundation, including backyard decks and patios, are inaccessible to skunks. Keep your pets from disturbing any wild animals, including skunks. Finally, store your garbage in secure containers.

Further, AIWC maintains a Humane Wildlife Control Hotline, which provides non-lethal options for wildlife concerns. Regarding skunks, the Hotline's services range from preventative - making sure your home is "skunk-proof" - to proactive, such as providing exclusion techniques for skunks already established on your property. If you are concerned about skunks living close to home, call the AIWC Humane Wildlife Control Hotline (403-946-2361) and ask for an assessment of your situation.



Skunk adventures ...

Skunks have adapted to life in the city, but this ever-changing habitat can prove dangerous. Always an adventure, here are a couple of recent skunk rescues ...

- When a juvenile skunk caught in a window well was too scared to climb a homemade ramp to safety, the finders knew it was time to call in the professionals. Once on-site, an AIWC Rescue Driver delicately coaxed the skunk into a transport box. Meanwhile, the homeowners anxiously watched from a safe distance, ready to scatter at the first whiff of a warning spray. To their relief, the rescue was accomplished without incident. Since the skunk was old enough to fend for herself, she was released in a safe location nearby.

- A baby skunk (called a 'kit') was found by a crew completing trench work in a southeast Calgary neighborhood. When not actively trenching, the crew would place boards over the trenches as a safety precaution. Unfortunately, the kit had managed to squeeze underneath the board and had fallen into the pit. It was time to get help from an AIWC Rescue Driver! Digging the trench back a bit, the crew assisted the Driver, who crawled head-first into the trench to retrieve the trapped skunk. Carefully grasping the kit with her gloved hands, the Driver yelled to the crew above, who pulled her back out of the trench by her ankles. The youngster was taken to AIWC and raised with fellow orphans.



So far this year, AIWC has admitted twenty-three juvenile skunks. Unfortunately the majority of these orphans came from urban locations where homeowners and/or pest control companies trapped and relocated an adult skunk. Only when it was too late did they discover the adult was a devoted mother and that, by taking her away, they had orphaned a litter of kits. Although it was too late to keep these skunk families together, the homeowners are now aware they can call the AIWC Humane Wildlife Control Hotline for their future concerns. In the meantime, the kits will be raised at AIWC until the end of the summer. Then, a lucky Rescue Driver will have a joyous skunk adventure: releasing the rambunctious orphans into the wild, far from the hazards of urban living.

Fun with Fundraising!

AIWC is busy fundraising! Staff and volunteers, members and friends have contributed their time and ideas to support AIWC's life-saving work. We thank everyone involved for making these efforts fun and successful!

Bottle Drives

AIWC has had several bottle drives, with more to come. Bring your 'empties' to **Fish Creek Bottle Depot on Sept. 8** (9am-3pm). Check the website for more locations and dates. Can't wait for the next bottle drive? Now all Bottle Depots in Calgary (except Sunridge) and Airdrie are taking bottle donations on our behalf. Label your bags with "Alberta Institute For Wildlife Conservation," and let the cashier know you are donating them to AIWC. Country Hills, Southpointe and Chinook have AIWC bins, just drop and go! Look for our Poster!

Can't get to a Bottle Depot? Send an email to aiwcbottledrive@gmail.com and one of our drivers will be happy to pick them up from you.



An Evening for the Animals

A huge THANK YOU! to Heather MacEwan-Foran and her phenomenal family for hosting the annual 'Evening for the Animals' fundraiser. As in years past, guests enjoyed wonderful food and great entertainment while mingling and meeting new friends in a peaceful country location. The basket draw prizes were all top quality - congratulations to the many lucky winners! An astounding \$9,100 was raised for the care and rehabilitation of the nearly 2000 animals AIWC will admit this year. From all of us at AIWC, thank you Heather and family for continuing this most wonderful of traditions!

Calendar of Fundraising Events

• Now through to November 28

We are excited to announce our very first crowd funding project! Check out indiegogo.com/aiwcsaveswildlife. Let your network of friends and family know about the great work AIWC does, and why donations are so important to the animals. The more people who join in, the more money we make!

• Now through to September 30

Enter to win quality pet services at **Springbank Pet Resort**: grooming, day care, boarding or a photo with your pet. All proceeds go to AIWC. Tickets available at Springbank Pet Resort (www.springbank-petresort.ca), in the AIWC annexe, or by emailing info@aiwc.ca.



• September 8

2012 Airdrie Fest - AIWC will be there! Come and enjoy a day of entertainment and good food, drop by the booth and say 'hello'. Visit www.airdriefest.com for more info.

• September 28 - 7 pm

Join AIWC for a casual evening of chocolate, cheese and wine at the Nose Creek Museum in Airdrie. The Home Vintner is hosting a **Wine Pairing Event**. Tickets are \$25; all proceeds go to AIWC. Hurry! Space is limited. Contact info@aiwc.ca for info.

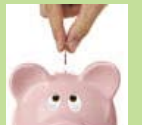


• Now through to October 31

AIWC can win \$50,000 at Shell's **fuellingchange.com** website. You can help us win by registering on the site, shopping at Shell, then cash in your receipts for votes. Any purchase counts, even just a pop! ... WE NEED YOUR VOTES!!

• Ongoing

Copper for Critters ~ Donate your pennies to AIWC! Singles, rolls, or 'buddies' (nickles to toonies) are welcome! Drop off at AIWC annexe or email info@aiwc.ca.



• November 17

Musicians Gone Wild ~ benefit concert at Calgary's Irish Cultural Centre, 6452 - 35 Ave. NW. Tickets \$25. Go to www.aiwc.ca for more info



Cyclists found this gorgeous garter snake on a path in Fish Creek Provincial Park. The back injuries she sustained were indicative of being run over by a bike, but the bones had healed well before her capture. After a short stay at AIWC for observation, she was deemed fit for release and returned to her territory.



~ by D. Hanna

For the third year in a row, AIWC raised and successfully released an orphaned beaver. This guy was happily released late this spring into beaver-appropriate habitat. The moment the door of his transport carrier was opened, the beaver made a bee-line for the water without even looking back! It was obvious to onlookers that this fella was totally ready to be back in the wild after almost a year in rehabilitation. For this young beaver,

originally found atop his dead mother's body in Big Sky Country, there could be no better resolution!

One might ask 'why spend so much energy and time for the rehab and release of one beaver?' For this writer, a few obvious answers come to mind ... the intrinsic value of his wild life, the beneficial wetlands his dams will create, the successive generations of beavers he will produce, and, quite simply, because at AIWC this is what we do.



Life, after all

~ by S. Sautner & B. Lee

It was a cold, rainy evening when I received a panicked call from a good friend. "Sandy, I've got a crow down in my yard and I don't know what to do!" Ruth exclaimed. I asked her if it could fly, and when she said "No" I knew the situation was critical. Those crafty corvids are impossible to catch, even when they are in rough shape. Since Ruth lives down the street, I ran over to rescue the bird.

The young crow was bleeding and had multiple fractures along her wing, so I called Bev, a fellow experienced AIWC volunteer, for back-up. Bev and I stabilized and cleaned up the bird, using the techniques we are trained to use when an animal needs emergency care. Bev returned home around 2 am, and I only had a few hours of rest before it was time to drive the crow to the wildlife hospital as a priority admission.

It does not matter what time, place, or species, there is always a person out there, with a genuine love for animals, who will put on the proverbial flashing lights and sirens to rescue injured or orphaned wildlife. "It" is a Life, after all!



FEED ME! This orphaned corvid is one of dozens admitted to AIWC for care.

AIWC Responds to Oil Spill



~ by J. So

A huge "WAY TO HELP WILDLIFE!!!" goes out to the AIWC volunteers and associates who offered their skills and valuable time to this front-line response.

The rupture of a Plains Midstream Canada pipeline on June 7, 2012 resulted in the release of 3000 barrels of sour crude oil into

Jackson Creek and Gleniffer Lake. While wildlife and habitat were affected, the quick response of patrol and deterrence teams (hired and volunteer) helped find the animals directly affected by the spill, and stop others from becoming victims themselves.

This disaster required AIWC volunteers to drive a fair distance - the main concentration of the spill was located on Gleniffer Lake, just west of Innisfail - and put in long hours, since patrol shifts, coordinated by Eco-Web Environmental Consulting, were either full-day (7am-7pm) or evenings (7pm-11pm). Despite these constraints, AIWC was able to send volunteers throughout a critical two-week response period.

AIWC Oil Response Team: Berna-Dean Holland, Deb Oldfield, Liz Phinney, Kohl Phinney, Monica Kovacs, Paul Toews, Katharine Doyle, Marnie Ragan, Simon Harrison, Caitlin Vavasour-Williams, Brandon Sos, Tracey Beisel, Kari Phillips, Lorae Perdue.

AIWC is proud to have you all on our team!!

Snowies *continued from pt*

were standing by to receive the birds and the necessary permits. One of the owls was released a few hours after landing. The second owl needed a bit more time to acclimate and was successfully released later.

These snowy owls are now where they need to be at this time of year. Come November, they will start their migration south.

Rescue, Rehabilitate and Release. Mission accomplished!



No 'buckling up' for Alberta's birds

~ by A.Tong

Anyone who has ever been in a car accident, whether a major collision or a minor fender bender, knows the value of seatbelts and 'buckling up.' Birds, however, do not have the luxury of such an ingenious safety device. When flying birds strike windows, the results can vary from a few minutes of being stunned to neurological

damage such as swelling on the brain or spinal trauma, internal hemorrhaging, ruptured air sacs, and fractures to the wings, clavicle and other bones.

Every year, the Centre receives and treats dozens of window strike victims. We can all help reduce situations like these by following a few simple tips:

- Lower shutters, blinds or curtains.
- Break up a window's reflection by dangling flagging tape, or even a string with an old CD or lid as a weight. Decals only work sometimes but they are better than no deterrent at all.
- Add one-way transparent film to large windows. This film can be seen through from the inside, but is opaque from the outside.

- When placing a bird bath in a yard, either keep it very close to the window, or set it further away. A close bird bath (about one meter away from the window) will prevent birds from building up the speed involved for a serious collision; a distant bird bath (over three meters away) will give the birds space to avoid collisions entirely.



Birds that have flown into a window, like this northern flicker (left) and downy woodpecker (right), may suffer from trauma symptoms such as swelling along the brain or spinal cord, internal hemorrhaging, and bone fractures.



Our Thanks

AIWC gratefully acknowledges:

- Grant MacEwan Charitable Foundation
- Calgary Heritage Initiative Society
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- Ivanhoe Cambridge Inc.
- Women In Aviation
- Madden Lions Club
- Dennis Mahoney Trucking Ltd.
- 703325 Alberta Ltd.
- Image Creations Inc.
- Checkland Law
- Jackie Palmer Distributors
- PetroBakken Energy Ltd.
- PHH ARC Environmental Ltd.
- Porche Club of America - Wild Rose Region
- Wags Pet Salon
- Whitecap Resources Inc.
- Canadian Energy Research Institute
- KPMG
- EnCana Corporation
- Bears paw School
- Elbow Valley School
- Victory Plastics Ltd.
- Chestermere Lake Middle School
- Exova Canada Inc.
- Cenovus Energy
- Champion Technologies
- London Drugs
- Women In Aviation
- Boccavino's Lounge & Grill
- Springbank Pet Resort
- Time Travellers Car Club

Thank You to all the outstanding INDIVIDUALS who generously contributed time, effort and crucial funds to AIWC which aided Alberta wildlife in distress!!!

Last summer (July 2011) this endangered ferruginous hawk was found in Brooks with a broken leg. Veterinarians from the Calgary North Veterinary Hospital operated on her leg and a lengthy recuperation period followed. She had to wear the protective collar for a long time, since she kept picking at her bandage. Finally, in April 2012, this stoic raptor was released to her home stomping grounds. She took no time to look around and get re-acquainted: she lifted off and flew out of sight. A truly rewarding recovery!



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Name the Hawk

CONTEST WINNERS:

Dan Measor
Keilan Williams
Suze Detombe
Erica Patey
Gerry Boser
Ula Mergel



Ruby

Brewer's blackbird

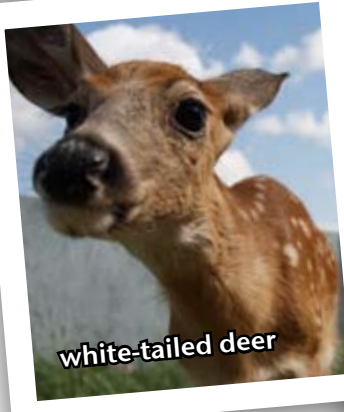


it's baby time!

Swainson's hawks



white-tailed deer



magpie



Virtually scalped, this porcupine was fished out of a dumpster. She made a complete recovery and was released mid-August.

This hoary marmot had climbed up in the engine of a vehicle, and was admitted with skinned footpads and hair loss along his back. Here, fully recovered, he takes a moment to get his bearings before taking off into the montane wilderness.

