

# RECOVERY REVIEW

## A SNOWY SUCCESS STORY

by Katie Grant

On February 8, our team welcomed a majestic winter visitor under difficult circumstances. A female snowy owl was admitted to AIWC after being discovered near Drumheller. Based on her injuries, we suspect she had a traumatic encounter with a vehicle.

Upon arrival, our veterinary team performed a thorough examination. The prognosis was guarded, as she was dealing with a complex list of injuries:

- A large wound over her left humerus (wing bone) and another over her left hip.
- Significant bruising extending down her entire left leg.
- A left fibula fracture was confirmed via X-ray.
- A slight droop in her right shoulder, though luckily, no bones were broken there.



Snowy owl, not long after arrival at AIWC

To give her the best chance at healing, we immediately started her on a strict regimen of cage rest, antibiotics, and multiple pain medications. Her wounds were sutured and managed with bandages that were changed every other day. Because she wasn't yet eating on her own, our dedicated staff began tweezers feeding her twice a day to ensure she maintained her strength.

We are thrilled to share that after 4.5 weeks of intensive care, this beautiful owl has turned a corner! Her wounds have healed beautifully, and her fracture is stable.

She was moved to one of our large outdoor flight enclosures. This was a crucial step in her rehabilitation, as it allowed her to begin flight conditioning. Following this time, she was released back to the wild on April 4, 2026!



**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.

**OUR VISION:**

Preserving the legacy of wildlife.

AIWC plans to raise **\$1,500,000** this year through fundraising campaigns and initiatives. It will cost the organization approximately **\$65,000** to raise this amount. Funds raised will go to support AIWC's mission. For further information, please contact Robyn C. Dunlop at 403-946-2361.

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**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE**

Alberta's wildlife begins preparing for new life well before spring fully arrives. Even as snow lingers, temperatures fluctuate, and Mother Nature shifts between false spring and true spring, nesting is already underway, and we've begun to hear early signs of the season ahead, including the first wild babies of the year. We can all take note from our wild neighbours: even when winter feels endless, staying busy and preparing for warmer days makes all the difference.

Taking their cue, here at AIWC, we are beginning to feel that shift as well, preparing for what will undoubtedly be another record-breaking season. Even before spring has officially taken hold, our team has already admitted over 160 patients into care since January 1st, and by the time this issue reaches you, likely even more. This represents an increase of over 40% compared to this time last year.

In anticipation of the busy months ahead, AIWC is rising to the challenge by bringing on additional seasonal staff and training over 35 new volunteers to support our hotline, rescue efforts, and daily clinic care. These extra hands are essential to ensuring we can provide the best possible care for every animal that comes through our doors. Between May and August, we typically receive close to 80% of our annual patient intake, sometimes surpassing 500 admissions in a single month. With hundreds of animals in care at any given time, each with unique feeding schedules and needs, our team is about to have its hands full. You can only imagine how often pools need to be cleaned when caring for hundreds of mallard ducklings, not an easy (or dry!) task.

That's why we are so excited to launch our annual Wildlife Baby Shower, running from April 30th to May 30th. This year, our goal is to raise \$30,000 to support the care of the thousands of animals who will rely on us during this critical period. Every donation helps ensure we are prepared with the supplies, staffing, and resources needed to provide lifesaving care.

In addition to rehabilitation, we remain committed to supporting our community through education and outreach. Approximately 75% of our annual call volume occurs between May and August, with some days bringing over 60 calls about wildlife in need. Our dedicated hotline team is ready to respond, ensuring animals receive help quickly, and the public is equipped with the knowledge to act appropriately.

As we step into this busy season, I am continually reminded of the compassion that surrounds this organization. It is because of your support that we can meet the growing needs of wildlife across Alberta and provide them with a second chance. Thank you for standing alongside us during this important time!

With heartfelt gratitude,

*Robyn Cunningham-Dunlop*

Acting Executive Director



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## LONELY WARRIOR

by Heike Lippmann

Black bear in care



In January, a roughly one-year-old black bear cub, weighing 12.5 kg (half the normal weight for his age), was found alone and attempting to den on a deck near Slave Lake.

The worried property owner called Fish and Wildlife Services, who then brought the little bear to our clinic.

It is assumed that he was orphaned before winter arrived. He possibly woke up early from hibernation since he wouldn't have enough fat built up to stay down.

The initial examination showed that he was dehydrated and thin and had some minor abrasions on his snout and paws. Those could have potentially been from trying to dig at the frozen ground to find food.

Our dedicated team treated him with fluids and slowly introduced solid foods back to him, mainly consisting of vegetables, fruits, and nuts.

He has since been doing great in care, and we are hopeful for his release in June. He will likely be brought back to his birth area, where lowlands and river valleys will offer food and protection so he can grow into a strong bear that will be beneficial for the population.

## BIRDS OF A FEATHER

by Carley Goodreau

Cedar waxwings in care

Fall 2025 was a busy season for cedar waxwing intakes at the clinic! Two adults and one juvenile were brought into care with injuries that were consistent with flying into windows. None of the injured birds were able to fly due to their condition, and the decision was made to keep all three patients over the winter.

With injuries preventing them from flying successfully, it was important to ensure the birds got proper rest. To do this, they are given cage rest, ensuring they can't move too far, and have time to properly heal. Combined with medication, the birds have made great progress towards release. Cedar wax wings are very social, and so they were all housed together, further promoting healing, recovery, and preparation for release.

We're looking forward to seeing these colorful critters spread their wings in the wild soon, with release scheduled for Spring 2026.



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## WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH 26-22

by Courtney Collins

This nuthatch was admitted to AIWC in late January after a suspected window collision. Although he had some minor head trauma, he was otherwise healthy upon initial examination. He was started on anti-inflammatory medication for head trauma and monitored for three days. After this period, the AIWC veterinarian completed a final examination and determined all symptoms were gone. At this time, the nuthatch was flying well and was released back into the wild.

This amazing species is an important part of the ecosystem. If you see an animal in distress, please give AIWC a call.

White-breasted nuthatch in care



Swainson's hawk indoors during winter

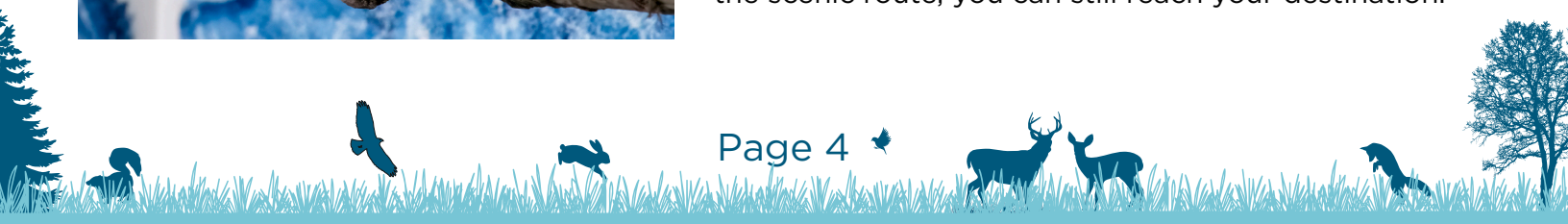


## A TALE OF TWO TUMBLES

by Roxanne Selkirk

The juvenile hawk arrived at AIWC in August 2025 with a fractured right wing. While we don't know the cause of this injury, we don't believe this hawk was intentionally trying to get out of the 10,000-kilometer migration journey to the pampas of Argentina - one of the longest migrations of any North American raptor. The first step in recovery was a wing wrap to allow the wing to heal. The second step was to let our patient stretch their wings in the Runway for flight conditioning. This unfortunately resulted in a keel fracture, which was discovered in late September, resulting in more cage rest.

Set back but not beaten, our patient waited until December to resume flight conditioning after both injuries had healed well. Thankfully, our Alberta chinooks offered enough mild weather for ample flight practice. The final step of this somewhat turbulent healing journey will be a release this spring, proving that even if you take the scenic route, you can still reach your destination.



## MALLARD 26-46

by Jennea Frischke

Mallard in care



During a cold snap in Calgary, this mallard duck patient was brought into our care (on February 24, 2026). On the initial exam, he was cold, quite thin, missing his tail feathers, and had some discoloration on his feet and other symptoms, which pointed towards frostbite. We immediately started him on pain medications, as well as a medication to improve the blood flow to his feet to help with healing. Luckily, his injuries were not necrotic, and the damaged skin on his feet quickly began to heal. The treatment prevented him from losing lots of webbing on both of his feet. His weight was also monitored.

Frostbite on mallard's feet



When he was admitted, he was only 750 g (an average mallard weight is 1.0-1.3 kg), but fortunately, he started eating on his own right away. It was observed that he ate best when his favourite thing to eat, superworms, was on the water, so staff made him a special floating dish to eat from. His missing tail feathers didn't affect his waterproofing, and even though he came in with some minor waterproofing issues, he was able to heal on his own. He had pool access most of the time he was in care.

After a little over a month in our care, he was cleared by our veterinarian, with a healthy weight of 1.1 kg. On April 3rd, he was successfully released back into Calgary.

Mallard swimming in care



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## LONG-TERM RESIDENT READY TO LAUNCH!

by Vivian Hindbo

North American beaver kits are among the longest-term patients we have at AIWC. Because young beavers remain dependent on their parents for two to three years, they need to remain in our care for an equivalent time.

We welcomed a North American beaver kit to AIWC on May 29, 2024. It has been fascinating to watch her develop. Although only approximately a week old at intake, within a few days, she had already started showing characteristic beaver behaviours: munching on browse and diving. Beavers instinctively build with and store branches after just a few months of age! Careful placement of sticks, logs and mud is a vital skill she will need once she returns to the wild.

We move our beaver patient to an outdoor aquatic mammal enclosure in the spring and back to an indoor enclosure for the winter. The outdoor enclosure has deeper pools than the indoor, and a man-made lodge with water access beneath it. Other than pulling in a few new branches under which she stores food, she seems rather content with the outdoor lodge as is. Conversely, she has lots of opportunities to hone her building skills in the indoor enclosure. She is continually making improvements or totally rebuilding lodges after we take them down for cleaning.

Our beaver patient has started showing signs she is no longer bonding with her caregivers, which is a sign she is readying for independence. She will be released in May or June 2026, when the weather permits.

Although she will be missed, we are happy she will finally be back where she belongs.

Caring for an animal for two years is costly. To sponsor this adorable beaver in her final days with AIWC, go to <https://aiwc.shop/collections/sponsor-a-patient/products/north-american-beaver>.

Beaver kit in care in her outdoor enclosure



Beaver kit's lodge in indoor enclosure

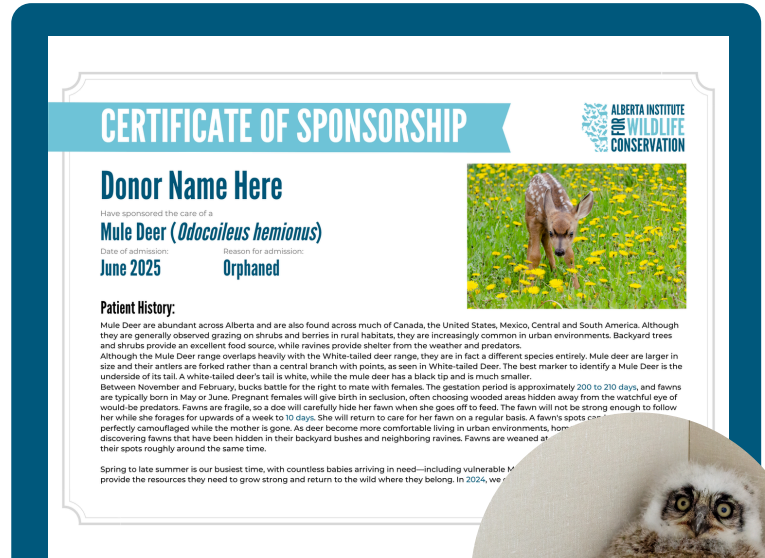


# SPRING INTO SPONSORSHIP - CELEBRATE SOMEONE WILDLY SPECIAL

Spring is a season of new beginnings, and at AIWC, that means an influx of tiny, vulnerable wildlife patients in need of care. From fluffy ducklings and curious fox kits to delicate nestling songbirds and gentle fawns, our nursery quickly fills with some of our most renowned patients of the year.

Our **Wildlife Sponsorship Program** is a meaningful way to support these animals while receiving a special keepsake in return. When you sponsor a patient, you'll receive a personalized certificate with your name on it, species-specific information, a brief patient history, and a bonus 8x10 photo. Available in both digital and printed formats!

Whether you're treating yourself or searching for a thoughtful gift, sponsorships are a wonderful way to celebrate the season. With Mother's Day (May 10) and Father's Day (June 21) just around the corner, it's the perfect opportunity to honour the caregivers in your life while also supporting nature's newest parents and their young.



## What you will receive:

- A personalized certificate with your name.
- An 8x10 photo of the patient they're helping to support.



Starting at just \$25.00, every sponsorship directly contributes to the care of wildlife in need, helping provide food, medical treatment, safe shelter, and enrichment during recovery. You'll also receive a tax receipt along with a keepsake that makes a lasting impression.



Visit [aiwc.shop](https://aiwc.shop) for more info.



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### Become an AIWC Member Today!

Support local wildlife, conservation, and education through an annual AIWC membership. Flexible membership levels are available for individuals and families.

#### Membership includes:

- Quarterly Recovery Review newsletter (digital or mailed)
- Discounts on select AIWC merchandise
- Participation in AIWC's AGM

**Join or renew:** by mail using the attached insert, online at aiwc.ca, or by phone at **403-946-2361**.

### Want to Volunteer?

Join more than 145 volunteers supporting wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, outreach, and more. Volunteer recruitment opens twice yearly (January and September), with some remote roles available.

No experience required. Applicants must be 18+. Learn more and apply at aiwc.ca.

<https://www.aiwc.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>

### Go Green with AIWC

Help us reduce paper use by switching to a digital newsletter. To receive Recovery Review by email instead of mail, contact us at [info@aiwc.ca](mailto:info@aiwc.ca).

Charitable #: 14041 6140 RR0001

## HELPFUL AIWC RESOURCES

Review this page to learn more about reporting injured wildlife, volunteering, becoming a member, and other ways to support AIWC.

### SUPPORT AIWC THROUGH SKIPTHEDEPOT!

#### Turn Bottles into Lifesaving Care!



Your empty cans and bottles can help wildlife in need—just **schedule a pickup** through **SkipTheDepot** and select AIWC as your charity. It's free, easy, and supports our rescue and rehabilitation efforts!



Scan the QR code and use the promo code **'AIWC'** to give us 100% of the earnings. [skipthedepot.com/aiwc](https://skipthedepot.com/aiwc)

## OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

### THERE ARE SO MANY MEANINGFUL WAYS TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE BEYOND MAKING A DIRECT DONATION!

#### Double Your Impact

Many employers match charitable gifts, doubling your donation through workplace giving programs. Check our website to see if your employer participates. [aiwc.ca/support-us/matching-gift-programs/](https://aiwc.ca/support-us/matching-gift-programs/)

#### Shop with Purpose

Support wildlife by purchasing AIWC merchandise, shopping through our [Amazon links](#), or donating needed items through our [Wish List](#).

#### Give in Other Meaningful Ways

Support AIWC by voting through [MyGivingCircle](#), donating [shares and securities](#), or exploring our [Leave a Legacy](#) giving program.

**Every action helps wildlife.** Visit [aiwc.ca/support-us](https://aiwc.ca/support-us) to explore all the ways you can make a difference.

## AIWC HOURS

Our clinic is open to admit patients and accept donations/supplies at these times:

**May to August: 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM**

**Sept to April: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

*(Exceptions on select holidays)*



Please call our Wildlife Hotline at **403-946-2361** before dropping off an injured or orphaned animal.



**FOUND AN INJURED,  
ORPHANED, & SOILED  
WILD ANIMAL**  
FILL OUT OUR FORM

