

The Ridgeline

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUE RIDGE WILDLIFE CENTER

ISSUE 49



Baby Season!

This baby fox was orphaned or abandoned by its family and was brought to the Center for care after a failed reuniting attempt.

BRWC Offers Opportunities to Learn and Discover



Do you remember the thing that sparked your love for wildlife? For me it was in elementary school when my friend and I rescued orphaned bluebird hatchlings so that her mom could take them to a rehabber.

It was after that experience that I began to notice and get excited about birds and frogs and turtles. That made me curious about wildlife and the more

I learned the more I wanted to get involved.

At Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, creating that spark is one of our goals. Maybe it will happen on the **Wildlife Walk** where you can see a falcon, eagle, and opossum up close; or it could happen for a child attending **Wildlife Discovery Camp** who's learning how beavers build dams; or maybe it will happen the same as it did for me—helping an injured or orphaned animal by bringing it to us for treatment.

That is why we are here, to be a publicly accessible place to help wildlife and to teach and inspire the next generation to be good stewards of the earth. This issue of *The Ridgeline* is filled with opportunities to learn and discover. I hope you can visit us soon to find or rediscover your spark!

With gratitude,

Annie Bradfield

Wildlife Walk Opening—Reservation Required!

We are so excited to announce our Wildlife Walk will be opening this spring! Come explore the wooded pathway where many of our Wildlife Ambassadors are housed. To ensure everyone's safety we will require groups sign up for time slots so check our website blueridgewildlifectr.org to reserve your time!



The Ridgeline

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Blue Ridge Wildlife Center is a 501(c)3 organization caring for native wildlife by integrating veterinary medicine, rehabilitation, education, and research.

BRWC is located in Boyce, Virginia on the Burwell van—Lennep Foundation's property on Island Farm Lane.

The Center relies on private donations exclusively. Contributions are tax-deductible.

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Newsletter designed by Dara Bailey Design

Rehab + Corner

Eastern Gray Squirrel



This baby **Eastern Gray Squirrel** was brought to us with the help of Pender Veterinary Centre and Wildlife Rescue League after it had fallen from a tree and sustained a traumatic abdominal wall herniation. Due to the injuries, reuniting attempts were not advised in this case. Our full-time veterinarian, Dr. Jen Riley was able to perform surgery and repair the herniation. This patient is recovering well!

American River Otter



This baby **North American River Otter** was found alone near a low-water bridge in Luray, VA. Reuniting attempts were made, but all attempts failed, so he needed to return to the Center for continued care. Whenever a wild baby is found alone, please call before intervening! Most healthy babies are able to be reunited with their parents, which is always best for them!

American Woodcock



We know Spring migration is in full-swing when we start getting calls about **American Woodcocks**. As nocturnal migrants, they often end up victims of window-strikes in urban areas, just like this well-camouflaged individual. Help migrating wildlife by turning lights off at night, drawing shades to block indoor light, and make windows bird-safe by using decals or markers to break up the reflections.

Red Fox

This Red Fox was brought to our hospital minimally responsive after a vehicle collision. He spent about two months in care recovering from head trauma and nerve damage to the right forelimb before being released earlier this month!



Salamanders!



These six **Eastern Red-backed Salamanders** were brought to the Center for evaluation after they were confiscated from an individual who was keeping them illegally. In Virginia, a permit is required to keep more than five non-threatened or non-endangered reptiles or amphibians. After 30 days in captivity (unless in the care of a permitted rehabilitator) they can never be released. Thankfully, these salamanders were in good health and were able to be released at their original found location.

Overwintering Reptiles and Amphibians

This year, the Center overwintered 13 turtles, six snakes, two frogs, and two toads, covering seven different species. Due to the size of the enclosures necessary to properly house these animals while awake, active, and healing, we've had to dedicate three different rooms to these patients. On May 1st, the first day of the year when overwintering reptiles and amphibians can be released, all of these animals will be returned to their found locations.



Hooded Merganser



Hooded Mergansers are common winter residents in Virginia. This immature male was found tangled in a net in a homeowner's backyard. With the help of Loudoun County Animal Services, the bird was untangled and brought to us for evaluation. Thankfully the bird had no major injuries and he made a quick recovery in just 48 hours! This patient was released back at his home pond, where he joined a small group of other Hooded Mergansers!

BRWC is dependent on your donations to help us care for so many patients. The Center does not receive state or federal funding for wildlife rehabilitation. We are so thankful to those who have generously made it possible for us to help with so many animal emergencies! Please help us help them by making a donation online.

Let's Talk About Rabies!



By Jae Ross

Spring is finally here and summer is quickly approaching. With warmer weather around the corner, it's no surprise that most wild animals become more active. Most people, aside from medical professionals and wildlife experts, have never encountered rabies and oftentimes have a false understanding of how it spreads, what it looks like, and how to prevent it. So, let's spread more awareness and talk about this interesting, yet commonly misunderstood virus.

Quick Facts

- All mammals, including humans, can be infected with the rabies virus, and it's fatal once signs develop. While most animals pass from a rabies infection rather quickly, the virus can lie dormant in an animal's system for weeks, months, or even years before symptoms occur.
- In Virginia, the most common wild species to contract rabies are raccoons, skunks, bats, and foxes, while cats are the most common domestic species to contract and spread rabies. Virginia's Department of Wildlife Resources also considers large rodents (groundhogs and beavers) and all carnivores (including mink, otters, and others) to be "high-risk vectors". However, please be aware that any mammal, at any age, can contract and spread the virus.
- Rabies is found in the central nervous system of infected mammals and is most commonly transmitted via bites or scratches. Less common methods include contact with the saliva or brain tissue of an infected animal via exposure to the eyes, nose, mouth, or in an open wound.



This is one of multiple fox kits that is being raised at the Center this year after failed reuniting attempts.

- While humans can contract the rabies virus, it is indeed rare in our country thanks to diligent reporting of exposures and available post-exposure treatment. In the United States there are, on average, two reported cases of rabies in humans each year (compared to nearly 60,000 deaths worldwide each year). In Virginia, there have only been two cases of rabies in humans since 2009. Don't let this low number create a false sense of security—always take the necessary precautions when coming into contact with wildlife and seek advice from your local health department when needed.

Fact vs. Fiction

- Seeing a nocturnal animal out during the day does not mean the animal is rabid. Oftentimes, animals such as foxes and raccoons will forage for food during the day, especially if they have babies to feed. The most common differentiator between a healthy and sick nocturnal animal that is active during the day is a general lethargy and lack of fear of humans. Most animals are afraid of humans, regardless of the hour; however, be very cautious around animals that appear friendly or unphased

by human presence. This could indicate rabies or another illness, but it may also indicate that someone has been feeding these animals in your neighborhood.

- Aggressive and erratic behavior associated with the "furious" form of rabies is not the only sign of the disease. More common signs of rabies include slow, confused movements, drooling (caused by difficulty swallowing), incoordination, and hind end weakness or paralysis (this is referred to as "paralytic" or "dumb" rabies).
- While the rabies virus is fatal once signs develop, there are means to protect yourself. If you are bitten or scratched by a mammal (wild OR domestic), always clean the wound thoroughly with soap and water. Next, call your local health department and seek medical attention. Emergency rooms are equipped to administer rabies post-exposure vaccinations, but be mindful that these vaccinations are costly and are usually not entirely covered by insurance—it's far cheaper to avoid these exposures when possible. A pre-exposure vaccine series is recommended for those who handle wild animals regularly, and all



This abandoned Striped Skunk kit was brought to the Center and has since been transferred to another permitted rehabilitator to join others of its species!



This infant raccoon is being raised at the Center after multiple failed reuniting attempts.

staff and volunteers who work with rabies-vector species at BRWC are vaccinated.

- Again, all mammals are susceptible to the rabies virus. While rabies is more commonly present in a few specific species, this does not mean that others are immune, such as opossums—this is a common myth. In addition to wild mammals, pets and even domesticated livestock, such as cattle, sheep, and horses can contract the virus.

Protect and Prevent

- There are no valid rabies tests for live animals. In order to test for the presence of rabies in a wild or domesticated animal, the animal must be euthanized. There are no known or acceptable quarantine times for wild species as there are in many domestics. This is particularly unfortunate

when inappropriate human actions cause the exposures. Because human safety is the top priority, all reports of possible rabies exposures must be taken seriously. BRWC is required by law to report any exposures or we would risk losing their permits and be unable to treat any wildlife. Sadly, the Center has had to euthanize multiple clinically healthy animals due to inappropriate handling by well-intentioned finders.

- To prevent your pets from rabies exposure, be diligent about their rabies vaccine and boosters and do not allow pets to come into contact with wild animals, including sharing food and water dishes. In Virginia, dogs and cats are required to receive a rabies vaccination. While farm animals are not required to receive the vaccination, it is highly recommended.

Supporter Spotlight: Ike Eisenhauer



We'd like to recognize and highlight one of our longest-standing volunteers, Robert "Ike" Eisenhauer. Ike, an active member of the Shenandoah Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists, came to the Center back in 2012, and noticed a repair was needed on the porch (of our previous, 800 square foot facility just down the road from our current hospital). He offered to help with the repair, and that was it—he was stuck with us!

Ike has helped us with a large variety of projects, ranging from repairing and constructing new caging, to volunteering during education events like our Annual Baby Shower (now WildFest) and Gala fundraisers, to building the locally-famous birdhouses from reclaimed wood with a variety of finishes and unique shapes, to now, volunteering as a Docent on our Wildlife Walk!

Even though he is not a rehabilitator, Ike gets great satisfaction out of educating the public and seeing the cages he builds go to good use for our wild patients. Ike has seen the Center change throughout his time here, and he's been a huge staple in helping us achieve everything the Center has become. Thank you, Ike—we couldn't have done it without you!



Want to become a volunteer? Check out the volunteer application on our website, now with **TWO NEW** volunteering opportunities! We hope to hear from you soon.

- Never feed or attempt to handle wildlife without first speaking to wildlife professionals. Providing a food source for wild animals promotes interaction and may increase the spread of a variety of diseases, including rabies. Please remember that feeding wildlife puts everybody at risk— other wildlife, your pets, and even you.

- While spring comes with an abundance of new baby animals, such as deer fawns and raccoon kits, it is illegal to raise wildlife in Virginia without a permit. And sadly, even the cutest baby animals are not immune from contracting the rabies virus. Attempting to "rescue", feed, and raise wildlife at any age may put you, your family, and that animal at risk.

When in doubt, reach out! Always seek guidance from wildlife and disease experts, and never take action without speaking to a professional first. Virginia's permitted rehabilitators, including those at Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, are wildlife professionals who can provide you with an abundance of helpful information if you have an animal emergency. Additionally, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are great resources for learning more about the rabies virus. ■

Educational Opportunities

The mission of the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center is to care for native wildlife by integrating veterinary medicine, rehabilitation, education, and research. We use our experiences in the hospital to educate the public on wildlife issues. Since 2008, BRWC has also been using our knowledge and our animal Ambassador team to educate a new generation of wildlife stewards.

Our education department leads over 100 educational programs each year in the community, in the form of school programs, helping Boy and Girl Scouts earn wildlife and nature-related badges, hosting tables at nature festivals, and running a series of summer camp sessions.

For as many programs as possible, our Wildlife Ambassadors are a key element. We currently have 20 Ambassadors, consisting of 13 different species of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Each of these Ambassadors is not only an important representative for their species, but also has a very important conservation or rehabilitation message to share with the public.

As with so many other organizations, COVID-19 required BRWC to make some changes for the safety of our staff,



Loudoun Classical School students were able to visit the Center for an outdoor educational program this past March.

volunteers, and community. While we were forced to cancel all of our in-person programs, we were able to continue to engage with the community through virtual programs. We developed a series of presentations that were featured on our Facebook page, many of them live, allowing participation from across the country!

With vaccination numbers rising, we have begun to offer small group in-person and outdoor programs again. We are happy to be engaging with the public again!

We are very excited to announce that our on-site public space, the Wildlife Walk, is finally slated to open this spring! Since our move into our current building in 2016, the space has been under constant construction, slowly building enclosures and pathways for the public to come and enjoy our Wildlife Ambassadors in a more natural setting. The space is home to about half of our Ambassadors, while the other half are housed in our classroom space, the Ronald M. Bradley Learning Center. Species-specific informational signs and interactive signs are in development to allow for self-guided walk-throughs. Open hours will be announced on our Facebook page and our website; in keeping with state and CDC health guidelines, reservations will be required to keep potential crowd numbers low.

We will also be resuming our summer program Wildlife Discovery Camp this summer! Information and reservation forms are available on the website. Space is limited, and slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. ■



Our education manager, Jennifer, leads a tour of our Wildlife Walk for a group of students.

Help!

I found a baby animal!



In the spring and summer, the overwhelming majority of phone calls we take at the Center are about baby animals. Someone has found a youngster on its own and needs to know what to do next.

Luckily, most found babies are uninjured and typically they can be left where they are or you can assist them in reuniting with their parents. In the majority of cases, these babies DO NOT need to come into care.

For all species, **do not touch the babies with bare hands**. This is for their safety and yours. Despite common myth, no wild species will reject their baby due to human scent, but to prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases avoiding contact is best.

Never feed or try to put water in the mouth of a wild baby—especially if it is thin or cold. For many, feeding a hungry baby is the gut instinct, but this can lead to far more problems. Cold/sick babies cannot process food well, especially inappropriate diets like cow milk or puppy formula. When they are weak, it is especially easy to aspirate these babies (getting food/water into their lungs) causing potentially life-threatening pneumonia.

Keep babies in a warm, dark, and quiet area until you get in touch with a permitted rehabilitator.

It is not legal to care for an infant wild animal without a permit. Please contact a professional and do not attempt care yourself.

Read on for more details on specific species!



Virginia Opossums



Virginia Opossums breed from February through September in our area. They move into their mother's pouch after just 13 days of gestation and remain there for approximately two months. Unlike many other native species, mother opossums rarely return for lost babies, so leaving them out to reunite is not advised.



If you find an opossum that is less than 7" from nose to tail base, that individual is likely too young to survive on its own and a rehabilitator should be contacted.

Most orphaned opossums are found in the pouch of mothers that have been killed in vehicle collisions. Do not rip babies off the



mother (the entire body can be placed in a box with babies latched and brought to a rehabilitator). Opossums may have more than nine babies in some cases, so if older babies are seen wandering near a dead mother, take a good look around the surrounding area to ensure all babies have been recovered. If an injured mother is found, be sure to collect all nearby babies and bring them into rehab with their mother.

White-tailed Deer

White-tailed Deer fawns are born April through July. Though singletons are common, does may have twins or triplets. Does will leave their babies during the day while they forage and will come back to feed or move the young around dawn or dusk. Young fawns will not get up or run from you, even when approached and seeing them alone all day is normal. Many fawns are left in backyards or even up against houses—please do not interfere with these babies! If you see wounds, fly eggs, or other signs of trauma, contact a permitted rehabilitator.



..... Reptiles and Amphibians

Young reptiles and amphibians do not get the benefit of parental care—they are born ready to go! If they are not injured, please leave baby reptiles and amphibians exactly where you found them. If they are in a road way, you can move them across the road in the direction they were headed, but no further.



High-risk rabies vector species

High-risk rabies vector species, including foxes, raccoons, skunks, and bats are often successfully reunited with their parents. Please **DO NOT** handle any of these babies! If you believe one of these animals is injured or orphaned, contact a permitted rehabilitator and/or your local animal control right away.

If safe, you can cover such babies with a cardboard box or crate to keep them contained until you hear back from a rehabilitator or officer with further advice. Keep children and pets away until you get help. Even babies can transmit rabies!

Baby Birds



Hatchlings

- Naked, may have some small bits of down/fluff
- Need to be in a nest
- Must be kept warm
- Do not offer food or water

Nestlings

- Some pin feathers coming in, skin still easily visible
- Cannot stand or perch well
 - Need to be in a nest
 - Must be kept warm
- Do not offer food or water



Fledglings

- Mostly feathered—may still have some fuzz and wing feathers covered in a waxy coating
- Can stand, hop, and perch
- Can keep warm on own
- Will jump out of nest
- Can't fly fully
- Do not offer food or water



FOUND A BABY BIRD?

Baby birds are common in our area in the spring and summer months. Sometimes baby birds need your help, and other times they're okay to be left on their own!

START HERE



Is the baby bird any of the following?

- Bleeding or obviously injured?
- Lethargic or nonresponsive?
- Been in a cat or dog's mouth
- Covered in ants or fly eggs?

If YES to any



This bird may need immediate help!

Call your local wildlife rehabilitator ASAP and contain the bird somewhere warm, dark, and quiet until you receive help!

DO NOT FEED OR GIVE WATER!



If NO to all



Does the bird have some feathers but cannot fly? (Hops/perches on the ground).

OR

Does the bird have downy fluff or pin feathers? Are its eyes closed? Is it unable to stand or perch?



This bird is too young to be out of the nest. Place bird back in the original nest, or create a makeshift nest (see instructions below).



Check on baby bird after 2-3 hours. Is the bird still bright and alert? After 24 hours still doing well?

NO



YES



CONGRATS!
You have successfully re-nested a baby bird!

How to make a "Makeshift Nest"

1. Find a plastic container with small holes for drainage in the bottom.
2. Fill with nesting material (leaves or straw) and make a small "cup".
3. Attach container to the nearest tree or structure to where the baby was found using tape, zip ties, nails, etc. Put it up as high as you can reach (at least 5' or more).
4. Leave the area. Check back in 2-3 hours and again in 24 hours.



Baby Squirrels



Infant — 2 weeks old



Infants — 4 weeks old

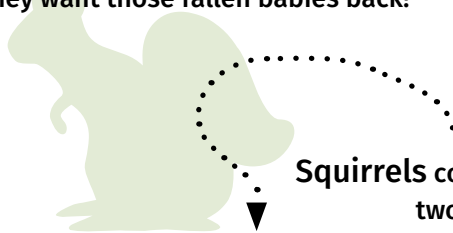


Juvenile — 8 weeks old

Reuniting squirrels can be as easy as placing a box at the bottom of a tree near where the squirrel was found (pictured right). If you are not sure from which tree the baby fell, place the box at the nearest tree within ten yards or so of the found location. If it is a hot day, avoid putting the baby in direct sunlight. If it is raining (or if you have concerns about predators nearby) consider using a plastic container (with holes in the bottom for drainage) and securing the container higher up on the tree where leaves or a manmade rain break can keep the baby from getting wet and cold (4' or so is plenty).

Mother squirrels maintain multiple nest sites. If a tree is cut down or a nest destroyed, they have options! Assuming she is healthy, mom should be able to find and retrieve her baby, carrying it up to an alternate nest site by the scruff.

A squirrel nest is called a *drey* (pictured right). These are built with dry leaves, twigs, and other natural materials in the forked branches of trees. Mom will make multiple nesting areas in case wind, predators, or humans trimming trees destroy one of them. Mother squirrels work hard 24/7 to raise their young and forage for enough calories to sustain lactation. They want those fallen babies back!



Squirrels come in a variety of colors—these two are still Eastern Gray Squirrels!



Look at developmental stage, not purely size, to determine if a young squirrel is an infant in need of care or a juvenile that can fend for itself. Eastern Fox Squirrels are much bigger than Eastern Gray Squirrels at the same developmental age!



FOUND A BABY SQUIRREL?

Squirrels are born in Virginia from February through April and again from July through September. Sometimes squirrels need your help, and other times they're okay to be left on their own!

START HERE

Is the squirrel any of the following?

- Injured or obviously ill?
- Lethargic or nonresponsive?
- A survivor of a cat attack?

If YES to any

This squirrel may need immediate help!

Call your local wildlife rehabilitator ASAP and keep the squirrel somewhere warm, dark, and quiet until you receive help!

DO NOT FEED!

If NO to all

Does the squirrel have a bushy tail?

YES

NO

This is a juvenile squirrel!
If it is uninjured/active, this squirrel is fine on its own. Squirrels this age have large teeth and can be dangerous.

Is the squirrel approaching people/pets repeatedly?

YES

This squirrel will need help getting back to mom!

1. Place baby in an open-top box with blankets/towels. Heat a plastic water bottle until warm (not hot!) to the touch and place inside blankets near squirrel.

2. Leave box next to tree where found for remaining daylight hours.

Keep your distance!
Mom won't return if you are nearby.

Did mom return for her baby?

CONGRATS!
You have successfully reunited them!

NO

YES



Baby Bunnies



Neonates



Infants



Juvenile

Most of the kidnapped, healthy, cottontail kits we receive come into care because the finder was certain there would be no way to protect the nest from their dog. This is **NOT** a valid reason to abduct babies! In many cases, moms choose to nest in a yard with a dog as that often prevents more likely predators (raccoons, domestic cats, opossums, foxes, etc.) from finding and eating their young. Your yard is the safe place!

Nests can be hard to find—this is why your dog or cat is typically the first to find it! They are just shallow depressions in the ground, typically covered by grass and well-hidden (pictured right). Sometimes a spot of dry grass or even fur may be seen near the entrance. It is good practice to walk your yard before mowing to avoid accidentally hitting a nest. If you do mow over a nest and the babies are unharmed, simply mark the nest (with a flag or rock) to avoid mowing over it the next time!

Cottontail moms only feed 1-2x per day, typically at dawn and dusk. You can protect the nest during the day while your dog is out in the yard and remove the cover when the sun goes down. A hole (of at least 4-5" diameter) can be cut in the side of a nest cover to allow mom access so that she can feed babies with the protection in place. For small dogs, upside down laundry baskets (pictured right) with a hole cut out work great! For larger/stronger dogs, we recommend using an upside down wheel barrow, lawn furniture, or whatever else you can use to protect the nest so the dog cannot access it. You can also leash walk your dog in the yard for the few weeks that it will take for those babies to be on their own. A baby cottontail's chances of survival are **MUCH** higher with mom than they could ever be with any rehabilitator. Please let them stay with mom!



Cottontails will only be in the nest for 4-5 weeks and they are often already 1-2 weeks old by the time the nest is discovered. You don't have to protect the nest for long!



Young cottontails just leaving the nest respond to predators (like you!) by freezing—not running off. Just because you are able to contain a young cottontail, it does not necessarily need help. This 4-5 week old cottontail is doing exactly what it should by nature—hunkering down and attempting to hide in the grass!

FOUND A BABY BUNNY?

Eastern Cottontails are born in Virginia from March through July.
Sometimes wild bunnies need your help, and other times they're okay to be left on their own!

START HERE



Is the bunny any of the following?

- Injured or obviously ill?
- Lethargic or nonresponsive?
- A survivor of a cat attack?
- Cold?

If NO to all

Does the bunny have open eyes,
fully fur, and ears that stand up?
Is it approximately the size of a softball?

YES

NO

If YES to any



**This bunny may need
immediate help!**

**Call your local wildlife
rehabilitator ASAP and
keep the bunny somewhere
warm, dark, and quiet
until you receive help!**

DO NOT FEED!

**This is a
juvenile cottontail and is
old enough to be on its own!
At this age, they will remain
motionless to avoid native
predators. It will disperse
over time, but keep pets
and children away.**

Is it in a nest?

NO

YES

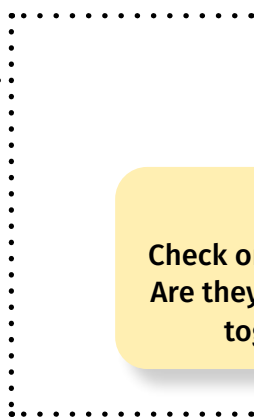


Leave it there!

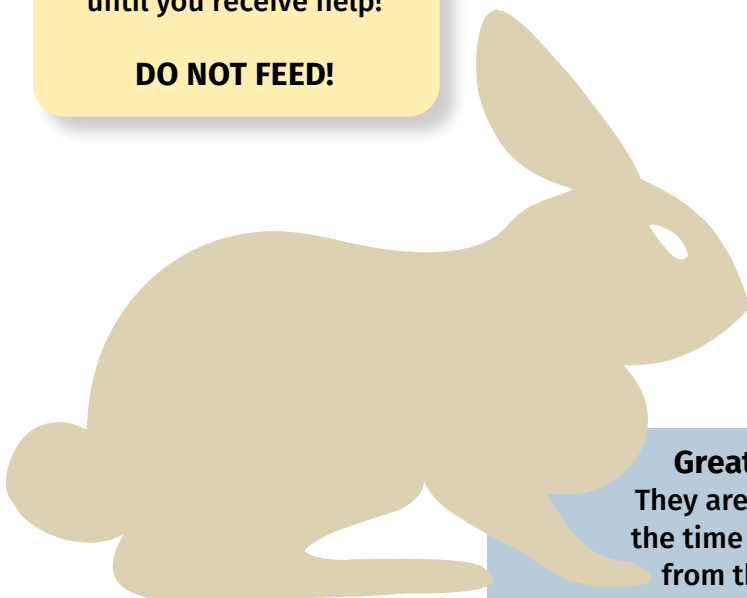
**Check on the babies in 24 hours.
Are they still warm and huddled
together in the nest?**

NO

YES



Great! Those babies are being cared for by mom!
They are only in the nest for 4-5 weeks (often much less by
the time you discover them), so keep pets and people away
from the area to give them the best chance of survival.



Wildlife Discovery Camp!



Looking for some fun in the sun for the kids this summer? Registration is open for BRWC's Wildlife Discovery Camp! We offer camps for ages 6-9 and for ages 10-14. With two separate weeks each per age group, there are plenty of opportunities for young, aspiring naturalists to come learn about all things nature! Sign up for individual days, or for the entire week. Each day features lessons about an environmental topic, followed by games and activities, outdoor excursions in our woods and at our pond, and up-close encounters with our wildlife ambassadors! Visit our website for more information on how to register.

2021 Schedule

Age Group	Week 1	Week 2
6 - 9 years	June 14 - 18	July 12 - 16
10 - 14 years	June 28 - July 2	July 26 - 30

Visit our Education page on our website blueridgewildlifectr.org for full schedule of topics and activities.



Days & Times

Camp runs Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Drop-off may begin at 8:45 a.m. Before- and after-care may be available for an additional fee; please contact staff for details.

Cost & Scholarships

Each camp is \$60 for individual days or \$250 for the whole week. Each registration for a full week includes a camp t-shirt. Full and partial scholarships are available for the 2021 sessions courtesy of Crescent Cities Charities, Inc., Winchester/Clarke Garden Club, and Greenway Garden Club.

Camper Needs

Campers will need to bring a lunch, snack, and drink (water and a refillable bottle are best) every day. Most camp activities are held outside, rain or shine, so the camper should dress appropriately for the weather. We recommend wearing play clothes and sturdy, close-toed shoes for hiking. A backpack is best to hold these items and should include sunscreen and bug spray.

Programs

Every day will feature short lessons, games and crafts, and potential face-to-face interactions with BRWC's wildlife ambassadors. Each program is designed to meet some of the learning objectives of the Standards of Learning (SOL).



COVID-19 UPDATE: BRWC is committed to maintaining the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, and campers. As such, camp attendance will be limited and instructors will follow all state and CDC regulations. Campers **MUST** register for all desired days no later than one week prior to the start of the camp session; **NO WALK-INS** will be accepted this year. Changes to the camp schedule will be posted on our website if they should occur.

Rehab Intern, Sarah Street



The Center was pleased to have had a rehabilitation intern for the Winter/Spring season (in addition to veterinary and veterinary technology students)! Sarah Street is a resident of New Market, VA, and will be attending Lee's McRae College in the Fall. Sarah is interested in pursuing veterinary medicine after her undergraduate studies.

Vet Tech Intern, Madeline Graham



Madeline Graham is a veterinary technician student completing her last semester at Northern Virginia Community College. She has a strong interest in wildlife medicine and we were lucky to have her at the Center from January through March completing her preceptorship hours! Licensed veterinary technicians are highly-trained professionals and help out in our hospital by performing diagnostic tests, taking radiographs, obtaining blood samples, monitoring anesthesia, and so much more.

Meet Carly!



We are pleased to announce the newest member of our team—Carly Corbin, Administrative Assistant. Carly joined the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center team in February 2021. With our patient numbers growing every year, we needed help! We are very lucky to welcome Carly who will help respond to animal emergencies on the phone, facilitate admission and release of wildlife, and keep several key databases up to date. She also manages our online Gift Shop! Carly grew up in Aldie, VA, and spent her childhood riding and caring for horses on her family farm. She then spent over a decade as a successful hairstylist and ran her own organizing business. Carly has a great passion for nature and wildlife conservation, and we are excited to have her on our team!

Give a Gift. Become a Member. Help Native Wildlife. Online!

As a non-profit with no state or federal funding, Blue Ridge Wildlife Center members are what make our work possible.

Become a Member

With your donation, you will play a critical role in protecting our native wildlife. In addition, you'll receive member benefits, including:

- A one-year subscription to *The Ridgeline*, BRWC's quarterly newsletter;
- BRWC branded membership gift—received when you join and with each annual renewal;
- Discounts on BRWC Education programs and merchandise; and
- Free admission to BRWC's online Education Series.

Minimum amount to receive membership benefits: \$40 one-time gift or \$5/month recurring gift.

Give a Gift Membership

Share your love of wildlife with your friends and family.

Send a BRWC gift membership to a loved one and they'll receive all the benefits of membership. This makes a great gift for birthday and holidays ... or just whenever!

Gift recipients will receive a package with a notification of their gift and a message from you, the latest issue of *The Ridgeline*, and the annual membership gift.

Gift memberships are \$40—but you are always welcome to give more!

blueridgewildlifectr.org

Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork!

Did you know that April has two very important appreciation weeks? Animal Care and Control Appreciation Week is April 11-17, 2021 and National Volunteer Week is April 18-24, 2021.

Our rehabilitation volunteers outnumber our staff by more than 6:1—they are essential to what we do! But our transportation volunteers are just as essential and rarely photographed as their volunteer efforts are mostly completed on the road. Below are just a few of our amazing volunteer transporters that get wild animals in need to our hospital for care!

Animal Control Officers are such an important part of wildlife rehabilitation! These hard-working and compassionate professionals respond to animal emergencies in their counties and help to safely rescue wildlife in need. Most are extremely knowledgeable about the laws pertaining to wildlife, the safety precautions that must be taken, and even about how to reunite certain species with their parents. There are simply not enough permitted rehabilitators to respond to every wildlife emergency so these officers play the crucial role of rescuing these animals in need and ensuring they get proper care. **Thank you!**



David and Marilynn Pickett have logged more than 80 hours of transporting since they started volunteering in 2019. You guys are amazing!



Greg Brummet, Transporter.

Interested in becoming a volunteer transporter? Email us at info@blueridgewildlifectr.org for more information.



Lisa Ference, Transporter.



Humane law enforcement officers Henry and Taylor assist with the rescue of orphaned Virginia Opossums.



Officer Sales of Winchester City Sheriff's Office assisted local homeowners with the removal of this Eastern Ratsnake that had gotten into their home. Though this snake did not come in for care, Officer Sales has rescued over 30 animals since 2018 and have brought them to the Center for care!



Loudoun County humane law enforcement officers have assisted in the rescue of dozens of wild animals over the past few years. In the above photo, Officer Stacks and Officer Powers assisted with the release of a lead poisoned Bald Eagle they had saved a few weeks earlier!



Officer Hepperle of Stafford County with a rescued Red-bellied Woodpecker.



DIY Binoculars for Kids!



Materials Needed:

- 2 Toilet Paper Rolls (or 1 Paper Towel cut in half)
- Tape or Glue
- Hole Punch or Scissors
- String or Ribbon
- Colored paper, markers, stickers (optional) to decorate!



Directions:

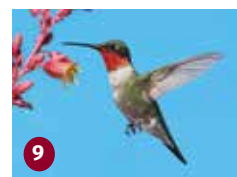
1. Glue or tape the rolls together side by side.
2. Decorate however you want!
3. Using your hole punch or scissors, cut small holes on the side of each roll (about an inch up from the bottom).
4. Cut your string or ribbon about 20 inches long and tie each side to your rolls (creating the binocular strap).
5. Try them out! What birds can you see out your window?



Backyard Birding

✓ Check list:

- 1. Northern Cardinal
- 2. Blue Jay
- 3. American Robin
- 4. Northern Mockingbird
- 5. House Finch
- 6. Mourning Dove
- 7. Carolina Chickadee
- 8. American Goldfinch
- 9. Ruby-throated Hummingbird
- 10. Tufted Titmouse



Send a photo of your DIY backyard birding adventures to us at info@blueridgewildlife.org and you may be featured on social media!

FOLLOW US



BRWC HOTLINE: 540.837.9000 | www.blueridgewildlifectr.org | info@blueridgewildlifectr.org

Beaver Makes it Back Home!

This American Beaver was likely the victim of a vehicle collision and he came to the Center with weak hind-end use. Thankfully, with just a few weeks treatment, this beaver made a full recovery and was released back home!

TAIL END

