

NEWSLETTER FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Volume 1

JUNE 2000

A quarterly newsletter produced by the Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina (WRNC). WRNC's mission is to share information and knowledge about wildlife rehabilitation for the benefit of native wildlife.

For comments or questions, write to:
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From the Interim President

As we gear up for another glorious baby season, or dreaded depending on how many of you are already tired from an early onslaught of orphans, or just plain too much to do and not enough time, I would like to welcome the many that have joined the Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina (WRNC). Personally I am very proud to be connected to such committed, hard working people, those that are and will be members of WRNC. Already, people from very diverse backgrounds, personalities, philosophies, and styles have worked effectively side by side to form what will be a great state organization based on sharing, supporting, and collaborating together.

Caring for animals is the overlaying fabric that binds us together. All of us share the experience of staying up late with a suffering animal, possibly missing a family function, or dealing with a difficult person, who may be reluctant in giving up an animal. Most of us share the frustration of having to euthanize an animal after putting our heart and soul into its possible recovery. Wildlife Rehabilitation, a passion for most of us, causes us to have to wear many hats: we have to be knowledgeable about the natural history of wildlife, somewhat knowledgeable in medical areas, diplomatic with people, educators all the time, skillful at fundraising (this ain't cheap!), and the list goes on. So with all the various skills required to be good rehabilitators, and the diverse species of people that we are, how in the world do we make this work?

Well, it's really up to us as a new, groundbreaking, grassroots organization. For one, our attitudes can make us or break us. We have a choice every day regarding the attitude we embrace. If we are cynical about what a state organization will do for us, we probably won't get much out of it. This organization is

About this newsletter

This is the first newsletter of the newly revived WRNC. At the last meeting it was decided to mail this issue to all 800+/- listed rehabilitators in North Carolina. We thought it might be a good way to encourage people to join and to give them a better idea about what this organization hopes to provide.

Starting with the September 2000 issue, the newsletter will be mailed only to paying members. We invite everyone to submit ideas, comments, stories, rehabilitation techniques, needs etc. This will be a newsletter for rehabilitators, written by rehabilitators, and can become an important line of communication among all of us throughout the state.

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Next Meeting of WRNC:

Where: NC Zoo, Educational
Center, in Asheboro, NC.

When: Sunday, October 15th,
2000, 11:00 am to 4:00 p.m.

A Comment about the last WRNC meeting

By Mathias Engelmann

At the WRNC meeting in March we played a game which involved sharing some personal information with other attendants. It seemed a little silly at first, but I think most people enjoyed it and it helped those attending get to know each other personally.

As rehabilitators we are spread out all over the state and don't see each other very often. We don't know each other and therefore don't necessarily trust each other's judgements or opinions. This applied to our small gathering, but it also applies to the entire state. Some of the comments we received from rehabilitators across North Carolina reflect the sense that rehabilitators don't know who we are (the people who have been meeting) and what our motives for revitalizing this organization are.

We are participating in WRNC to be part of an opportunity for education and guidance. Our goal is to raise our level of care for injured wildlife throughout the state and to share new knowledge. Lets face it – no matter how long you have been doing this, everyone can learn and improve.

From the Interim President (Continued from page 1)

what we make of it. If we honor each other's differences, and utilize each other's skills, it's a win-win situation. When Mathias Engelmann speaks about how the Carolina Raptor Center works, he refers to all the staff, volunteers and board members as a team. The rehabilitation department cannot operate without the volunteers, or the board of directors; the education department needs volunteers, the media, the members, and the rehabilitation department to do their work well. But the key element here is that their attitude is positive and appreciative of each other (with a little humor as well). This is a model to which we can aspire.

Wildlife Rehabilitation is hard enough alone. We all have skills of one kind or another to share with each other. We have the choice of our attitudes towards each other, and the ability to work as a team. We can climb mountains together.

Wanted (If you are looking for particular items, whether it is supplies or a piece of equipment, call in or write in your request)

Available (If you have items you are willing to give to other rehabilitators or want to sell, this is the place for it)

Carolina Raptor Center has the following items to give away: Alcohol prep pads, syringes (various sizes), feeding tubes (16 French), hemostats (not great quality, but they are free), plastic bowls. Contact Mathias Engelmann at (704) 875-6521 extension 108, if you can use any of these items. If we don't hear from anyone, we plan on bringing these items to the October meeting.

Web Sites

The Lindsay Museum Wildlife Hospital
www.wildlife-museum.org/whospital.htm

Raptor Center at UC Davis
www.vetnet.ucdavis.edu/ars/raptor.htm

The Raptor Center in MN
www.raptor.cvm.umn.edu

Cornell Raptor Program
www.ansci.cornell.edu/raptor/

World Center for Birds of Prey
www.peregrinefund.org

NWRA
www.nwrawildlife.org

Tri-State Bird Rescue
www.tristatebird.org

Tufts University
www.wpi.edu/Projects/Tufts

WRNC is going to have a Website sometime in the future. Details to come...

Data collection

By Bobby Schopler, DVM, Ph.D.

One of the things that strikes me about wildlife rehabilitation is how much information is not known about the animals I spend so many hours caring for. Wouldn't it be great to know when to expect the first babies of the season? Or when the first coyote was cared for in the region? Or how many hummingbirds are rehabilitated in NC? Just the basics would be great. What animals are being rehabilitated, how many of them, and with what success.

As a rehabilitator, it is my legal obligation to keep records on every animal I see. This is part of both state and federal licensing. I would keep records even if they were not required because records are essential to the care of the animals. They help in the planning and monitoring of animals' care. Not only do records help me keep track of what is happening with a given animal, they allow me to sum up my work and evaluate trends. For example, I can objectively evaluate a new treatment or I can observe what prognosis accompanies a given presentation such as cat bite. If I had statewide data, I could also see what species are difficult to rehabilitate for everyone or I could see how new legislation impacts what animals we see.

For this reason, I am trying to organize a statewide database. I am willing to compile the information and distribute summary information through this newsletter. To this end I ask that all rehabilitators take the time to send me a copy of their year-end-of-year reports so that I can compile the records for the State and present them to rehabilitators of North Carolina. In order to combine data, it is essential that we all keep records as uniformly as possible. But to evaluate trends in the state we must all keep track of some essential information on every animal that presents to us. For those with federal permits, this would require sending a copy of their end-of-year report to me with an addendum for non-avian species. At this point, the information I need is: Species (scientific or common name), date of presentation, presenting complaint (a brief description, e.g. orphaned, hit by car, cat bit, broken wing), date of final disposition, and final disposition (D = died, E = euthanized, R = released, T = transferred for further rehabilitation, I = institutionalized/placed as an education or display bird, non-releasable).

All information will be confidential. If you want to, just send me the county in which you rehabilitate and you can remain anonymous. These statistics will be very useful for all of us. Your contribution is needed and appreciated.

Continuing Education

The IWRC (International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council) will hold its annual meeting in Montreal, Canada, Oct 25-29th. The meeting will consist of workshops, oral presentations, and discussion groups, along with field trips to nearby attractions, a social hour, and banquet.

The Wildlife Center of Virginia will hold its annual meeting in November.

The Kentucky Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (KWRA) is offering an IWRC 1AB Skills class October 7th and 8th, 2000. Contact Eileen Wicker at (502) 491-1939 or at raptors@aye.net for information.

KWRA's next statewide meeting will be in February 2001 – we'll keep you informed.

NWRA's next symposium is in Lake Tahoe, March 2001.

New Books

The Willowbrook Wildlife Index has been updated. It now includes 160 pages of medications commonly used by wildlife rehabilitators.

The Raptor Center in Minnesota is publishing a booklet on creance flying raptors for reconditioning.

Unusual Season Mathias Engelmann, Carolina Raptor Ctr

This winter has been a strange one, to say the least. In the Charlotte region we have had several "snow storms" (anything over 1" of accumulation qualifies), alternating with 60 and 70-degree weather. We have also received a number of unusual birds. It began with a Short-eared Owl, found in Cabarrus County back in October 1999. It suffered from a fractured wing and died shortly after surgery. In November we received a Northern Harrier with a fractured wing and fractured leg from Johnston County and a Northern Saw-whet Owl from Wake County, both of which we were able to release. December brought another Saw-whet Owl and January another Harrier. A Merlin, found in Greenville, SC, was admitted in February with a droopy wing and has since been released. The latest surprise was a Long-eared Owl with a fractured Ulna, found in Lincoln County on March 22, the first ever admitted to CRC in over 20 years! During the "average" year we may see one or two such rare birds. Certain northern populations are known to "invade" the south during particularly strong winters.

We would love to hear from other rehabilitators if you have had a similarly unusual winter as far as admissions are concerned.

Tips from other rehabilitators

Nipples for feeding squirrels are available from a company called CATAC. These nipples fit onto syringes. To order, get on their website at www.catac.co.uk. Ask for item number ST-1.

Janine Perlman is the new NC representative to the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC). IWRC is one of the two (the other is NWRA) highly respected membership organizations for wildlife rehabilitators. One of its goals is to provide state-of-the-art knowledge and training in all areas of rehabilitation. IWRC has an outstanding website (www.iwrc-online.org) that bears frequent visiting, publishes a peer-reviewed journal, gives skills seminars, and holds an annual conference. IWRC believes that the animals in our charge deserve the most informed care. Please visit the website for information, or contact Janine at (919) 968-6133 or jpandjf@ix.netcom.com.

Lessie Davis is the NWRA liaison for WRNC. If you have any questions about that organization, contact her at the number listed on page 5.

Attention Eastern North Carolina Rehabilitators

This is a letter from a rehabilitator in Eastern NC to urge you to join our state organization. Why? That's for you to tell us. What would you like to see a state organization do for you?

You see, its intent is to help rehabilitation efforts for all state rehabilitators. It is not a club or group that will show all rehabilitators the way. The biggest item we can offer is to invite every rehabilitator to join and sign up as an active rehabilitator. We will then publish a directory listing names and numbers, supplies, animal preference, etc. That will greatly benefit you, not us. There is a cost involved to mail and print things. This is where your dues go. Need to buy formula with your money? Been there, done that. I will offer to the first 5 rehabilitators that call me \$10.00 towards your membership.

We are rehabilitating in a large area in a remote part of the state. We need to know each other. I could use your help and advice.

John Mark Ansley, President, Eastern Wildlife Center
(252)758-8719

The Hospitality Committee (Ed and Mary Weiss, and Donna Walin) did a great job preparing lunch and snacks for everyone for our last Meeting. Thank You. (In case you are wondering, everyone attending our meetings is asked to contribute towards the cost of the food. It is not paid for through membership fees.)

The By-laws Committee is still hard at work trying to find information about the original organization from the late 1980's. The original By-laws are being reviewed and modified to fit the current need and vision of the organization. The final draft will be sent to all members.

Treasurer's Report

As of May 4th, 2000, WRNC has \$ 4,224.86 in the bank. A large portion of this money is the result of two grants to WRNC obtained by Nina Fischesser. Recent expenses included \$ 109 for the mailing of the second letter.

The membership committee has been working with Randall Wilson at the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Starting in a few months, every newly applying wildlife rehabilitator will automatically get information about WRNC when they get their permit from the state. This will be an excellent way to let beginning rehabilitators know where they can get training, information and contacts.

Disclaimer The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author(s) and do not imply endorsement by WRNC.

Interim Board of Directors for WRNC

Nina Fischesser, President	Jonas Ridge	828-733-6142
Ed Weiss, Vice President	Candler	828-665-8625
Shirley Needham, Secretary	Kernersville	336-993-4560
Cathi Darling, Treasurer	Winston-Salem	336-924-8979
Mark Ansley	Greenville	252-758-8719
Lessie Davis	Denver	704-489-1322
Mathias Engelmann	Charlotte	704-875-6521
Mark Hufford	Columbus	828-894-2161
Carla Johnson	Winston-Salem	336-765-0858
Kathy Riffin-Grooms	Whittier	828-586-2961
Bobby Schopler, DVM	Mebane	919-304-2337
Barbara Tomlinson	North Wilkesboro	336-667-2009
Susan Wilson	Wilmington	910-791-1222

Response to the membership drive

Shirley Needham reports that as of April 20TH, 79 people have sent in membership forms (out of 809 letters mailed out). She is still collecting information for the first directory of licensed rehabilitators. A number of forms were not completed properly or copies of permits were not enclosed, so she is mailing out a follow-up letter.

Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter will be July 1st

Thanks to Mark Ansley with Eastern Wildlife Center for bringing boxes of supplies to the last meeting. Quite a few people walked away with some "goodies".

If you have interesting cases, innovative techniques or any other tips you would like to share with the readers, please send us the information.

All submissions will be edited for clarity and contents, and suggested revisions will be sent to the author for approval prior to printing.