

Welcome to INSTINCTS

Mar 2013

Vol 3:2

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

Spring 2013!!

It's time to start gearing up for the babies. The eagles are starting to defend territories, great horned owl babies are hatched, gray squirrels are about to be born and interns are hired!

Another ritual of preparing for baby season each spring is Raptor Rescue & Transport Driver Training.

Our Animal Ambulance crew is an integral part of Wild Instincts. Last year our drivers drove over 6725 miles to help our wild friends.

We never know where an animal in need may be, but because we have such a dedicated group of drivers, we can send someone most places for transport. Because we have so many drivers, we have a better chance of being able to pick up the phone and find someone, preferably fairly close to the animal in need, who is available to go get it and bring it to us. Our intake last year was from 28 counties.

Having a team of volunteer drivers allows animals to get to help quickly without taking us away from the animals that need care on site.

If you're interested in more information on joining our team of drivers, attend one of the two driver trainer sessions coming up or call us.

Raptor Rescue & Transport Driver Training:
Thursday, March 21, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 23, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Meat Raffle

Many hardy souls braved the blustery sub-zero temps to get to Sackett's Bar in Rhinelander on Jan 19th for a meat raffle. Owners Chris & Bob Sackett generously decided to host a meat raffle to benefit Wild Instincts.



Despite sub-zero, blustery weather conditions, it was standing room only at Sackett's Bar



Ham, brats, pork loin, stuffed pork chops, shrimp and more made up a single prize one could win with a single ticket!

Because of the kindness of people, \$380 was raised for the purchase of tools off the wish list.



The tools from our Wish List purchased with the proceeds from the meat raffle at Sackett's Bar.

In addition, many big-hearted people went beyond and above and donated back items they won to Wild Instincts. Our Volunteer Pot Luck dinner was pork loin donated from this raffle. Thank you all!

Gus Hawthorne Foundation

The [Gus Hawthorne Foundation](#) is a group in Oregon passionate about animals and their well-being. They have come together to apply their talents and resources to support non-profit organizations that rescue and care for domestic animals and wildlife. Wildlife of the Northwoods is a benefactor of this incredible group's generosity. Wild Instincts was awarded one of their 12 grants for 2013 allowing us to purchase lead testing equipment so we may test for lead poisoning in house.



Our new lead analyzer made possible by Gus Hawthorne Foundation

Lead poisoning from lead sinkers, fishing lures, and even lead shot is a huge problem for eagles, loons, swans and other waterfowl. Read more about lead poisoning in wildlife [HERE](#).

Now we'll have no more delays waiting for lab results to return. We will be able to provide appropriate treatment immediately. Thank you, Gus Hawthorne Foundation, for helping us help them!

Lead poisoning is preventable. Use nontoxic shot and lead-free fishing tackle.

In Their Own Words

Jan Zindel & Carol Hartman
Long-term Raptor Rescue Drivers

Rescue and Transport Drivers are specially trained volunteers working under the authority of our permits. These volunteers play a vital role in our success by not only helping animals get here safely, but allowing us to concentrate on the animals already here in care. Let's hear from a couple of our Rescue Drivers.

You've been a Rescue Driver working under the authority of Mark's permit for a long time. How many years has it been?

Jan: You know I'm not sure, perhaps ten years or so, perhaps a bit more. I started out as a transport driver then became a rescue driver when training in catching/handling raptors became available. I go back early each spring for a "refresher" at rescue driver training. When the phone rings, and I see "Wild Instincts" on the screen, I never know what I'll be sent out for. It might be a songbird, rabbit, squirrel, chipmunk, bat, or perhaps an eagle, hawk, owl, goose, loon, turkey vulture, or fawn. Whatever it is, if it needs to get to the rehab facility, I go.

Carol: 13

In all those years have you ever thought about not doing it anymore? Why or why not?

J: Yes, I did have one year when I was very tempted to tell Mark I couldn't continue. That year, every bird or animal I was sent out for either died in transit, or had to be put down when it arrived as the injuries were just too severe. It was a very sad year for me. Most often though, there are many critters that are able to be treated and released, and some that are too badly injured. I had to remind myself that year that Mark, Sharon, and their interns have a wonderful success rate every year, and they really make a difference. Visiting the facility, reading the Wild Instincts Facebook page, newsletters, blog, and website enable drivers, volunteers, and supporters to see the many successes.

C: Never thought about quitting. If I get the call to rescue a critter in distress, I jump at the chance.

Tell us about a couple of your more memorable rescue adventures (funniest, most heartbreaking, craziest situation, weirdest people...whatever).

J: Looking back, the rescue of a Great Blue Heron was a bit comical, though it didn't seem so right then. It was over on Lake Minocqua, down at the lake level below the parking lot/commercial area along Hwy. 51. Something told me that day to take my kids with me, technically not allowed unless 18 or over, but I had a feeling I would need some help. And no, I never put my kids in danger; they were there to be extra hands, to bring the container, get the lid on, and on this particular day to help corral the critter. The heron had an injured wing and was not able to fly, but its legs worked fine and we soon found it could very handily climb a flight of stairs! Those stairs led up to parking lots of businesses along that

stretch of very busy highway. We quickly followed, and saw it was heading for the highway. No! We were able to "herd" it towards the back of the parking lot and it chose to take refuge inside a bit of decorative split rail fencing. Wouldn't you know? People in the realtor's office noticed us and came out concerned we were harassing the heron. I quickly explained why I was there and who had sent me, they went back inside, and I returned to our rescue effort. With the heron cornered, my oldest daughter dropped a folded sheet over it. I picked it up, tucked it under my arm like a football, and headed back down to the car to tuck it into a bin for the drive to Mark. The thing to remember with Great Blue Herons is keep that beak pointed away from you and your face!

Another time I was sent out to get a turkey vulture that had been on the ground near a shed for a couple days. After arriving, I got the bin out, had a container ready, gloves on. I quietly approached the bird, dropped a sheet over it, picked it up, and tucked it into the bin, all without incident. After arriving, Mark asked if there had been any problems. No, all went well. That was when Mark asked me if I knew what a turkey vulture's defense is. No, what? They PUKE on you, a lot and very stinky. LOL, that's when I told him it would have been nice to know that ahead of time! Mark has a sense of humor.

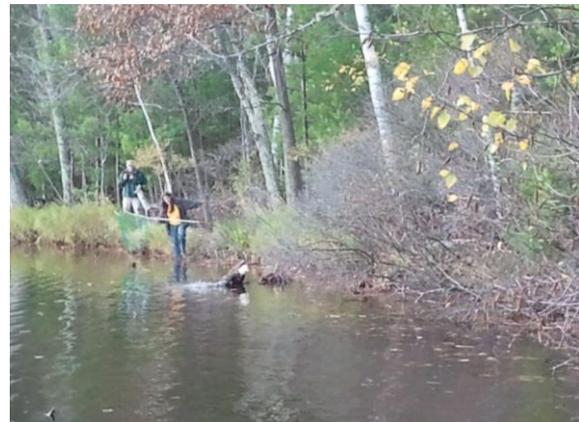
One of the saddest was when I was sent out for a fox, or coyote. When I arrived I found a fox, next to a little used road, totally drenched after 2+ days of rain. Its back was broken, probably hit by a car and left for dead. When I approached, it tried to crawl away using its front legs, the back legs paralyzed. The man who had called agreed to help me lift it into the bin. After covering its head with a sheet, I gave the man leather gloves to put on and asked if he would take the back end, put my

welders gloves on, and said I would take "the biting end," and we needed to keep the fox as flat and still as possible. The fox stayed calm and after it was in the bin I removed the sheet from its head, put the lid on, and prepared to leave. The memory of those big eyes watching me from inside the bin are burned into my memory; one of the sad endings.

Once in a great while you might be sent out to be diplomatic. An older couple was very concerned about an eagle that had been on the ground on their property for hours. Mark had explained that sometimes when an eagle eats, it gorges so much it can't fly for awhile. That explanation did not allay their worries, so Mark called and asked if I could go over and check on the eagle. I slowly drove up the driveway, spotting the eagle on the ground, got out of my car and quietly peered around the corner of my car. Well, the eagle was watching, too, and apparently decided it wasn't going anywhere with me! After some flapping, it was airborne and joined its mate overhead. The older couple invited me inside their home, telling me about the pair of eagles nesting in a tree at the edge of the lakeshore in front of their home, which gave me the opportunity to explain to them about eagles and their eating habits, and that the eagle would be fine. They were very thankful someone had made the trip over. I am always thankful there are people who care enough to call the wildlife rehab facility to report wildlife they think need help.

C: The call came in for a hummingbird caught in a window screen. Sure enough, there it was with its beak stuck in the screen and barely responding, with perhaps some leg injury. After carefully removing it, I wondered if I couldn't try giving it some sugar water to stabilize it before making the hour long trip to Wild Instincts. I called Mark and he said to do this. At first the

hummer didn't respond, but after finally receiving a few drops of sugar water on its tongue it slowly started to take more. I called Mark again and he said to put it in a shoebox with a screen over the top so it could see daylight and to continue feeding it every 15 minutes. It started to perch and was eager to take more food. Called mark again with the good progress report and he said to release it before it got dark. Although this rescue wasn't as exciting as some other more challenging ones, i.e. eagles, it gave me much satisfaction in knowing I gave "Ruby" a second chance. As a rescuer you will stop your car to help a turtle cross the road, drag a deer carcass off the road so an eagle might not get hit by a car, check a dead opossum in the road to see if it is carrying young, or see something else that alerts you a critter is in need of your help. Your knowledge of wildlife is enhanced with every opportunity to do a rescue.



This eagle rescue required wading with nothing more than tennis shoes and jeans...in October!

What's the most difficult thing about being a Rescue Driver?

J: When we are sent out we do not know what condition the animal is in until we arrive. It is heartbreaking to arrive and find a fawn or other animal so badly injured that, even without any medical training, you know nothing can be done to help it. In those cases, I have to remind myself that

putting it down is more humane than what could happen to it if left in the wild. The other is knowing or hearing an animal is in distress (such as having seizures) while being transported, and there is nothing I can do to help except get it to the rehab facility safely so the people with expertise and training can immediately give the help needed.

C: It is very frustrating to not be able to locate the critter once I get there. I hate leaving a needy animal behind. Also, knowing that sometimes it just isn't possible to give "MY" critter a second chance and the best thing to do is to let it go from this life.



This little porcupine is suffering from malnutrition after being kept by and improperly fed by someone for 3 months, then transported to us by one of our dedicated drivers.

What's the best thing about being a Rescue Driver?

J: I love the variety of wildlife we have here in this area, and being a Rescue Driver allows me help; to make a contribution to the sick or injured wildlife. We are so very fortunate to have Wild Instincts, Mark & Sharon, the interns, and the many volunteers in our area to give back to Nature, to our Northwoods, for all the pleasure I have experienced living in the WI Northwoods for the past 20 years!

C: Love the challenge of assessing and completing a successful rescue...knowing I can make a difference in the life of an injured animal. Enjoy interaction with people, sharing what I know about their particular animal's circumstance and introducing them to Wild Instincts.

How far to you typically go for a rescue?

J: I would estimate 85 miles (from my home, to the critter, then to Wild Instincts) is about average. I'm willing to drive quite a distance. Living in Conover, I'm sent to Land O' Lakes, Phelps, Eagle River, but have also been sent up into the U.P., and down to the Antigo area, when no one else in those areas has been available.

C: Living 65 miles North of Wild Instincts, I mostly cover areas to the Michigan border, Hurley, Mercer, Manitowish Waters, Presque Isle, Land O' Lakes, etc. heading down to Newbold. Travel time can be two to three hours.

Do you have any advice for anyone thinking about becoming a Wild Instincts Rescue Driver?

J: First, attend one or two driver training sessions.

If you're interested in rescue driving and not just transport driving, you'll need to be in decent physical shape. There are times when something doesn't want to be caught and you need to calmly pursue it. Other times you may be sent out to look for something and have to walk/climb up and down across less than ideal terrain, or through brush and woods to locate, catch it, and get it back to your vehicle.

You need to be calm when approaching the critters. I expect they can sense fear or nervousness. Move slowly; get their head or body covered with a sheet. They are less

likely to struggle or get away from you. Most of the time, the person/persons you are meeting up with are happy to see you, occasionally a bit upset because of their concern for the animal. Only once was a man angry when I arrived, because the eagle died before I could get there. I had to explain if the eagle was so badly injured it passed away before I could arrive, even if I had arrived 15 minutes earlier, it would have died before I could get it to Wild Instincts.

Practical advice would be to have at least 3-4 containers ready at all times, all with a lot of air holes. Clear plastic bins work well, did I mention LOTS of air holes in the bin and the lid, and bungee cords to keep them closed. I keep a bag packed with the bungee cords, leather gloves, welder's gloves, scissors, Germ-X, my Wild Instincts folder with forms and information. In spring and summer, I often keep a couple containers and my bag in my car so I can be on my way quickly when I receive a call.



An American Badger transported to Wild Instincts by a Rescue Driver.

Each year I pick up new Vilas and Oneida County maps from the chamber offices, and I have a GPS which has been helpful. Also a cell phone in case you need to reach where you are being sent to. You will also need a stack of bed sheets. The thrift store is a good place to pick them up inexpensively. A good flashlight is handy at

dusk or after dark. Wear good sneakers or boots, not sandals.

Every year Wild Instincts issues the drivers an ID card, something I always carry with me, but I always wear a Wild Instincts t-shirt or sweatshirt on every run I am sent on, as the shirts immediately identify me as the driver they are waiting for.

Being a Rescue Driver is a very rewarding experience and one I highly recommend.

C: If you enjoy a challenge, have a love and respect for ALL critters, then go for it. You will be rewarded in many ways.

Follow us on [facebook](#) for up-to-date photos and stories.

In Honor of/In Memory of

Donations have been received
~ In Honor of Geri Zeibert

MEET RUBY

On Aug 27, 2013, a first year red-tailed hawk arrived at Wild Instincts. Members of the public had kept her for about a week after finding her. She was malnourished and had an injury to her left eye. It soon became apparent she would lose that eye and her release was doubtful. We attempted pre-release training with her, but she was never able to feed herself without special concessions. She is not able to be released. She is, however, able to be a wonderful ambassador for other wildlife. She is now Wild Instincts first official education bird.

The scientific name of red-tailed hawk is *Buteo jamaicensis*. Her name is a twist of the combination of common & scientific names. She's a RED-tailed hawk and JAMAicensis is her species. A ruby is a RED

GEM. Yeah, stretching things a bit, but it's easy for everyone to pronounce.



Ruby, our Red-tailed Hawk used for education programs.

She is already turning into a very nice program bird. We think she'll be very popular.



Special thanks to the anglers continuing to donate fish. The Pine Lake Fire Dept donated the catch from their Department Fisheree and the USA Ice Team donated from several of their tournaments. Wild Instincts goes through about 2000 pounds of fish every year, depending on patient load.

If you like to fish, but hate cleaning them, our patients would LOVE to help with that problem. You catch them, bring them in to us and our patients will clean them off their feeding trays ☺

WISH LIST and AMAZON

We have a complete [Wish List](#) on our website and continue to be humbled by how many generous supporters we have out there looking out for us.

We get many requests for clarifications of things listed, however. To make it easier for all, including those who want to help but may not be in the immediate local area, we also now have an [Amazon Wish List](#). We will keep general things on the wish list on our webpage, but if you're looking for specific items we may need, our Amazon Wish/List Registry will link to more specific items to purchase and have shipped to us.



Items from either list will be greatly appreciated.
Thank you for helping us help them.

Some items from our wish list:
~Rubbermaid totes
~bench vise
~storage shed

Species 1/1-3/7/13	
American Badger	1
Bald Eagle	1
Barred Owl	1
Big Brown Bat	3
Black Bear	1
Bobcat	2
Common Redpoll	2
Eastern Cottontail	1
Eastern Gray Squirrel	1
Great Horned Owl	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1
Mourning Dove	2
Pine Grosbeak	1
Porcupine	2
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Snapping Turtle	1
Western Fox Snake	1
Western Painted Turtle	1
White-tailed Deer	1
White-winged Crossbill	1
Total	26

Early Spring Road Hazards

Now that the promise of spring is here in the Northwoods, well, the sun is higher in the sky and the days are longer, anyway; receding snow is exposing winter's long hidden road kill. This certainly isn't appealing to us, but it's very appealing to scavengers.

Eagles feed on deer carcasses along the road shoulders. Often they gorge themselves so much, it's difficult for them to become airborne. Many times they can't quite clear the lane of traffic and the oncoming car and are struck by vehicles. Be alert if you see dead animals near the roadside. There may also be live animals you need to watch out for.



Our new, awesome sign.



Look closely and you can see the deer hair stuck in this female eagle's talons.

On The Map

Let's hear a big round of applause to a very wonderful donor who donated the funds for our sign. We now have a sign on Highway 47 that will not only allow people to find us, but will spread the word about Wild Instincts to people just casually driving along the highway.

Thank You for Helping Us Help Them!