

Welcome to

INSTINCTS



May 2016

Vol 5:3

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

SPRING!

The weather certainly can't seem to make up its mind. We hit 87 degrees here a few days back and now it's snowing. Despite this see-saw pattern out the window, the animals are telling us that is very much spring.



Clockwise from upper left: Flying squirrels, great horned owls, bear cubs, mallard duckling, river otter, Eastern gray squirrel

Here are just a few of the many babies we've already admitted in 2016 and it's not even May 15th!

Baby Season started about three weeks earlier than normal this year and is showing no signs of slowing down.

From January 1- May 12 last year we admitted 138 patients, during the same

time frame this year we've admitted 223; a 62% increase!

Among those admissions have been some early turtle injuries. It's the time of year when turtles are crossing roads and beginning to lay eggs on the shoulders. Please, please slow down and watch for them.



Examining the extent of injuries sustaining from a turtle after being hit by a car.

If you want to help a turtle in danger on the road, make sure you keep yourself safe first! If you get hit by a car, you will do the turtle no good at all.

Help the turtle across the road **IN THE DIRECTION IT WAS HEADED**, even if you don't think it knows what it's doing. It does.

In this issue:

- Spring Abundance
- Keeping Babies & Moms Together
- In Honor/Memory of
- In Their Own Words
- Scrip
- Fawns and CWD Changes
- Bad News for Bats
- RAFFLE!
- Admissions to Date
- Upcoming Events

As we start getting the gardens in, the landscaping done and just general mowing, remember to watch for baby bunnies.



Eastern Cottontail orphan

Eastern cottontails nest in shallow depressions in the grass. The mom leaves the babies alone and unattended other than to nurse a couple times a day, generally at dusk and dawn. That's so she doesn't draw attention to her babies. However, that means they are vulnerable to cats, dogs, lawnmowers, rototillers and other attackers. If you come across a nest of baby bunnies, don't assume they are abandoned. Here's a simple trick to help determine if mom is still caring for them.

Cross two pieces of grass or very light twigs in an X pattern over the nest. Leave the area and check the nest again in 14-24 hours. If the X has been moved, mom returned to nurse her young and all is well. If the X has not been disturbed, please call us for further instructions.

Baby bunnies are on their home and separated from their moms when they are the size of a woman's fist or tennis ball. According to the current policy, deer from CWD areas can only be rehabbed in facilities within CWD areas. Deer from non-CWD areas can only be rehabbed in facilities in non-CWD areas.

The discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in a captive deer in a deer farm in Oneida County, changed our designation from non-CWD to CWD and changed the criteria we can use to admit fawns.

However, since we were about the only rehabilitation facility left in non-CWD designation, this is creating a problem. Current WDNR policy is being changed and updated, but things work slowly. We know fawns are already on the ground, but at the time of this writing we still do not have a final policy change from the authorities. OUR policy will be not to admit fawns from counties where a wild deer has tested positive for CWD. We will accept fawns from counties where a captive deer has tested positive and, if allowed, from non-CWD counties.

Wild Instincts is trying to find the proper balance between the health of the population as a whole and the health of single individuals. This seems to be the most biologically sound solution. Please be understanding and patient as we wait for the notification of the policy updates from the WDNR.



Orphaned fawn

If you find a fawn, please resist the urge to get close or pet it. Mom is nearby but staying away to keep predators away from her baby. Don't become that predator! If you suspect a fawn is in trouble, CALL A WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR FIRST THING. They will talk you through the specific situation. There are many variables to consider before declaring a fawn in trouble.



BATS IN TROUBLE

The Winter 2016 Bat Survey conducted by the WDNR found that white-nose syndrome has spread to new bat hibernating sites in Wisconsin and is starting to decimate bat populations. White-nose syndrome causes hibernating bats to frequently wake, depleting their energy and causing them to die from starvation, dehydration or exposure to the elements. Forty two of 74 sites examined were found to house the fungus thought to cause white-nose syndrome. This includes the largest roosting sites in Wisconsin and six new counties. Surveys showed a 94 percent drop in bat populations at the Grant County mine where the disease was first detected in Wisconsin in 2014, and one site where the disease was first found in 2015 had zero bats. WDNR biologists worked with University of California-Santa Cruz researchers this winter to experimentally treat bats in one mine; results of those tests are still pending. Bats play an important role in Wisconsin's ecosystems and economy and our state has one of the highest concentrations of hibernating bats in the Midwest. With white-nose syndrome spreading, volunteers are critically important to collect information

about how the disease may be affecting cave bat populations. Volunteers are needed to count the bats emerging from bat houses and buildings in the evening several times during the summer and for the Great Wisconsin Bat Count, scheduled for June 3-5 and July 29-31. Information collected from roost monitoring volunteers have enabled the Wisconsin bat program to create a database of more than 200 roost locations and population estimates across Wisconsin, shed light on bat roosting behaviors, and fuel more research.

Volunteers also are needed to drive, paddle and hike along pre-set routes with bat detectors, listening for bat echolocation calls that can help identify bat species and locations. Such acoustic monitoring volunteers have enabled Wisconsin to identify ranges of species found in the state while also investigating relative abundances.

For more information regarding volunteer opportunities, visit the [Wisconsin Bat Program](#) website or contact Paul White at 608-267-0813 or Heather Kaarakka at 608-266-2576.



In Honor or Memory Of

- ~ In Memory of Walter Wendt, an incredible life force and wildlife lover
- ~ In Honor of Bailey Nebgen's 18th birthday
- ~ In Honor of Sharon's mom
- ~ In Memory of James Kuehnl

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Spring Intern
Katie Fitzke,
Wausau, WI

When I applied as an intern my basic understanding of wildlife rehabilitation, as I'm sure is the belief of many, was simply the care of injured animals. Sharon and Mark discussed what my day to day routine would look like including feeding, cleaning, basic medical work, capture and release, record keeping, answering phones, long hours, how it could be physically and emotionally demanding, etc. As I listened I remember thinking this all sounds reasonable, it will be a great experience and I do get to deal with animals of course. It wasn't until I started that I began to realize just how true their words were and just how much work and knowledge went into everything.



Katie feeds her first fawn.

I admit the first couple of weeks were stressful and overwhelming, but of course interesting and educational. Learning where and what everything was, daily procedures and expectations and various other things of the sort was just the beginning. Learning about the natural history of numerous animals, different medical procedures, tools and types, how to effectively and safely handle animals, even how to competently

answer the public's questions could be a daunting task. Before I started this internship I had never handled an eagle. It's not easy and I have the bruises to prove it. I had never seen, held, or fed a newborn baby squirrel. I didn't know that many animals are lactose intolerant. You need to be able to identify an animal at all stages of its life. You need to know what, how much and how often an animal should be fed or medicated. The list is endless. The moral of my story is that there is so much more that goes into wildlife rehab than many realize. It requires an extensive amount of practice, patience, time and knowledge. Few people can say they've held or fed an eagle. Being able to say that I had a part in raising and/or caring for an animal, watching it grow or gain its strength back and then helping release it back into the wild is a great feeling. Watching a baby squirrel wag its tail while it's being fed or observing bear cubs wrestle and play is both entertaining and heart-warming. Despite the frustration, the stress and the long hours, it has been a rewarding and educational experience to say the least. Lastly, I would like to thank Mark and Sharon for this opportunity and all they've taught me. It takes a patient, knowledgeable and dedicated person to do what they do. It has been an enlightening and unforgettable experience, so thank you.



Baby Deer Mice found in a tackle box.

SPECIAL RAFFLE

Have you ever seen an eagle from afar and wondered how big it was really? Have you ever wanted to feel the rush of the wind from their wings in your hair? You could get your chance. We are raffling the chance to release an eagle!



Spring Intern Katie releases an eagle.

There will only be 500 tickets sold so there's a 1 in 500 chance of winning! Drawing will be on the Wild for Wine & Cheese Cruise on September 17th. You need not be present to win, but you must be 18 or older. Tickets are 1 for \$10 or 3 for \$25. We will be selling tickets at lots of different events and of course at Wild Instincts. Tickets will be on sale from May 1st until September 17th or while supplies last. Postal regulations prohibit moving raffle tickets through the U.S. Mail but that doesn't mean if you want tickets we can't get them to you. Email sharon@wildinstinctsrehab.com for more details.



Mallard ducklings and a gosling. Check out the video of the mallards hatching from their eggs by clicking [HERE](#).



Red Fox kit with mange.



A loon recuperating from an eagle attack gets some time in the pool.



Baby river otter
Check out one of my videos by clicking [HERE](#)



One of the many baby raccoons in care.



Orphaned Gray Fox kit.



Otter starting to be weaned. Asleep in his fish dish.

Species Admitted 1/1-5/14/16	
American Robin	4
American Toad	1
Bald Eagle	17
Barred Owl	1
Big Brown Bat	7
Black Bear	4
Black-capped Chickadee	3
Blanding's Turtle	1
Bobcat	1
Bohemian Waxwing	1
Broad-winged Hawk	2
Canada Goose	3
Common Grackle	1
Common Raven	2
Common Redpoll	13
Cooper's Hawk	1
Dark-eyed Junco	1
Deer Mouse	6
Eastern Chipmunk	1
Eastern Cottontail	24
Eastern Gray Squirrel	39
Eastern Gray Tree Frog	1
Flying Squirrel (northern/southern combined)	4
Great Horned Owl	5
Little Brown Bat	3
Mallard Duck	18
Mourning Dove	2
Northern Cardinal	1
Northern Flicker	2
Northern Saw-Whet Owl	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1
Pine Siskin	16
Porcupine	2
Raccoon	9
Red Fox	2
Red Squirrel	9
Red-tailed Hawk	1
River Otter	4
Rock Dove	3
Ruffed Grouse	1
Tree Sparrow	1
Western Painted Turtle	4
Total	223

Upcoming Events

Hodag Farmer's Market Bake Sale
 Saturday, July 30th 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 Pioneer Park, Rhinelander

Wild for Wine & Cheese Cruise
 Saturday, Sept 17th 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 Wisconsin River Cruises, Rhinelander

Eagle Release Raffle Drawing
 Saturday, Sept 17th
 1:00 p.m. during the Wild for Wine &
 Cheese Cruise



Details on Page 5