

Welcome to INSTINCTS

Nov 2014

Vol 4:4

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

Did You Blink?

...Because if you did you probably missed "summer" this year.

June, July, August and September are the only four months we didn't see snow in 2014.

We still are sorting out how the last couple years are affecting populations and species. Songbird admissions were down over 48%. While we'd love to think that was because people kept their cats inside, taught their dogs not to chase wildlife, drove with utmost care and never thought of using rat poison or lawn care chemicals, that's probably not the case. It's probably due to in large part to the weather.

This early Veteran's Day major snow coming on the back of record breaking winters, may not bode well for us or our wild friends.

We've already broken the record for the snowiest November, and it's not even half-over!

The Winter Severity Index is a tool biologists use to measure how deer specifically are affected by the winter. One of the parameters is snow depth over 18". Here, in mid-November, we already have 20+".

Another record breaking winter could wreck more havoc with our wild friends as well as the spirits of even the most hardy Northwoods residents.



2015 Calendar is here.

Calendar is Here!

The 2015 Wild Instincts calendar has arrived. It features great photos of some of the interesting patients from 2014. Get yours now in time for gift giving. Cost is \$20.00 (plus shipping if necessary). Look for it in our gift shop online soon.

We Need Venison!

Because of the large number of starving eaglets, a couple bobcat kits, a couple coyote pups and a few adult eagles suffering from lead poisoning, our venison stores are alarmingly low.

With fall upon us we know some of you out there may be cleaning out your freezers.

GRATITUDES

Special thanks to

-St. Germain Primetimers, St. Germain

-Presque Isle Lionesses, Presque Isle

For all the businesses supporting Wild

Instincts click [HERE](#)

In Memory or Honor of

Donations have been received

~ In Memory of Ruth and George Nance, animal lovers whose legacy lives on

~ In Memory of Chuck Faber, a kind, compassionate man who will be missed greatly

~ In Memory of "Ledum's" grace

~ In Memory of a much-loved father's birthday

In Their Own Words

Tawny Liebe
Graduate, BS

Wildlife Ecology, Research & Management
University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

During my short time as an intern here at Wild Instincts I have learned more than I ever thought possible coming in. While I knew there was a lot more to wildlife rehabilitation than just feeding and cleaning up after animals, I really had no idea exactly what I was getting myself into. I have smelled and touched things that I had never dreamed of getting so close to- from bullhead slime to mounds of bear poop, and who knew that eagles have their own specific odor? I loved every second of it! I learned that in order to rehabilitate wildlife you need to know about their natural history, not only about their natural history, not only what they eat, but when they reproduce, how long the parents care for the young, when they migrate (if they do), their natural behaviors, etc. You must also have a lot of the same knowledge that a veterinarian might have- such as knowing the signs of shock, head/spinal trauma as well as any other injury or disease an animal may be presented with as well as knowing how to properly treat each of these conditions.

While wildlife rehabilitation can be an emotionally and physically taxing- you are often working 12 hours or more a day and not every animal has a hopeful prognosis-

seeing the baby orphans grow up and watching many injured animal grow stronger daily and be released makes it all worthwhile. It is extremely rewarding to know that you have played a part in giving them a second chance, especially since most of these animals need to be rehabilitated due to some form of direct or indirect human-induced injury or poisoning. I really enjoyed learning the process of wildlife rehabilitation from admittance and initial examination to release and I have been fortunate enough to be able to learn all of these things during my internship from two very knowledgeable, dedicated and selfless people. I feel lucky to have had my first internship and introduction to wildlife rehab here with them!



Fall interns Ashley and Tawny

Ashley Wallace
Graduate, BS

Biology
Northern Arizona University

When I arrived at Wild Instincts at the end of the July it felt like I had never left although it has actually been an entire year since I went back home to Arizona. Since then, I got the chance to see a bit more of the world and some of the wildlife native to England but I fell back into the ole routine pretty quickly. The knowledge I acquired last year returned and I have even been

able to fine tune some skills that I was not able to get more practice with last fall. In particular, we did not have this many bald eagles. We have had so many we have been calling it the year of the eagle (one of our many theories as to why we are seeing so many is the past winter was very hard on wildlife and the eagles). I have been practicing picking them up and setting them back down for exams, tubing them past their crops and into their stomachs when they are starved or unable to eat by themselves and giving them subcutaneous or intramuscular injections (and I only sprayed Mark with food from the tube once!)

Last year, I got bit on the thumb by a bald eagle because I found them so intimidating and jerked my hand instinctually when attempting to grasp the head for a tube feeding (eagles prefer calm, slow motions and if you come from behind, you can control the head and mouth before they figure out what you are up to) and this year, I knew exactly how to correctly grasp and hold the eagle's head and beak to tube. It was a nice feeling to get comfortable doing it. Now I have to get comfortable picking up eagles when they get on their backs and try and foot you (grab with their talons). We have had a few of these uncooperative patients who refuse to allow us to grab them in the "usual" way. Instead, they get on their backs, feet thrust in the air and then I have to grab their feet first instead of their wings, use a one handed grip on their legs and then put my arm underneath them to pin both wings and get them up (why does it sound so easy in print?)

Coming back for the same time period is really familiar especially when we started seeing patients I could recognize easily such as young, American goldfinches. They are so clever, they learn to call to us usually on the hour when they know they are about to be fed. When I got the first one in, I knew immediately what it was because it was

talking a bunch (probably ordering me to get it some food immediately)! Strangely this year, I only had one goldfinch to care for and no cedar waxwings which are fairly common patients to see. You miss having old familiars around but new, never before seen patients (to me) are always exciting as well.

In particular, the great blue heron we received was absolutely beautiful and had the most interesting voice (I've never heard them call!). Herons are very unique in their anatomy even though they fish like the bald eagle which is indicative of how both species, who share a similar diet, hunt differently as well as why they eat totally different species of fish. The great blue heron has just as remarkable beak as a bald eagle (and they seem just as prepared to use it against you as eagles do!)



Great Blue Heron being gently restrained

Interestingly, we used the same length feeding tube that we use on eagles even though the herons do an impressive job of hiding exactly how very long their necks are by folding it into an "s" shape. They are also so much smaller than they seem up close! The trick to herons is to hold their head to your chest by making a circle with your forefinger and thumb around their beak so the heron cannot successfully jab at anyone. This one was particularly cooperative and neatly folded itself in a corner for restraint when we cleaned.

One of my absolute favorite patients this year has to be the bobcat kitten (although I have heard claims that I say that about all the patients.) I follow the Wild Instincts Facebook page and I was extremely jealous I missed hand feeding her (even though I was told it was quite painful as she was all claws, humans aren't really designed to be bobcat mamas but we try our best!) I was delighted she was going to be here when I arrived. I have been lucky to see an adult bobcat one time but it was so fast, the memory is quite fleeting. I was extremely excited to pull her chart and see her. She did not disappoint but I felt bad for her because she didn't have any playmates and we could not be her friends if she was to successfully make it in the wild. I asked about possibly doing an enrichment project for her when not two or three days later we were given the opportunity to get a second kitten from another rehabilitator to be her playmate. This kitten was close in age and much more wild than ours. It made not only a good friend but a good teacher of wild ways as well. Sometimes a playmate is more enrichment than creating a toy or interactive treat! As I end my internship, I was very much looking forward to her release since I have watched her grow and change. I am proud of her and I definitely worry a little bit about her, particularly about her first night back in the wild, but I know she has everything she needs inside her and my biggest wish is that her time with humans will wear off quickly and she will soon realize the joy in being a free and wild cat and huntress of the Northwoods. An example of another patient I have watched grow up but feel differently about is the eldest of our two coyotes. As the weather has gotten cooler, I have seen his coat fill in and change in color and when I look at him, I realize how equipped he is to survive in the wild and I am confident in his ability thrive wherever his paws lead him. Another new patient for me was a female belted kingfisher. I have never seen a

kingfisher in person before and they are stunning and VERY high strung. We had to hand feed her for weeks because she would not eat on her own and boy did she not like that! The day she began to fish on her own was a relief for everyone! Although her ability to feed unassisted improved, she never regained her ability to fly and had to be euthanized since she would not be able to survive in the wild without flight. The woodchuck, also known as a groundhog, was the cutest adult of the new patients I saw this year. A student saw him in the road struggling and skipped her class to bring him to us. We believe he had been hit by a car due to his proximity to the road and the trauma he was exhibiting (lack of coordination and rolling are all signs of head trauma). He slowly improved as we were able to feed him a smoothie of fruits and vegetables and nuts with a large dropper. Unfortunately, he never regained any coordination and appeared to lose his ability to be aware of what was happening around him. We made the decision to euthanize him as well.



Ashley feeding the woodchuck.

As a side note, it is always heart breaking when we lose a patient whether because they pass away from their injuries or illnesses or whether they never recover enough to survive in the wild and we have

to euthanize the animal. I do get attached to them in a way. I want them to heal and get back to the life they remember (or in the case of orphans, the life they have yet to know). I remember each one and certainly do not forget them because they are gone. I also think the decision to euthanize an animal is so very hard. You try to give them enough time to heal and realize sometimes that this is as far as their recovery will go and it hurts you. We do not take it lightly and it is a huge responsibility that weighs on all of us involved in their care and treatment.

On a lighter note, one of my final favorite patients this year (ok, I admit they are all my favorites) was the American beaver. I was not present when this beaver arrived back at Wild Instincts but I heard he was trouble. Apparently, we were trying to give him a shot of antibiotics and he protested to such an assault upon his person (or is it an assault on his beaverness?) He came in with some lacerations around his hindquarters but they were not too deep. He may have been struck by a passing boat but as for most of the patients we never find out for sure. Wrestling with a beaver every day to give it a shot without getting bit by its massive teeth turned out to be very difficult so we switched to an oral antibiotic that we crushed and sprinkled on his food. From then on he was an absolute model patient...well almost. He adores water and would splash and spill it everywhere and move his blankets every day but for some reason we didn't mind especially as we could often peek at him when he didn't know it and watch! He ate all his food and didn't try and avoid the ones with his medication, and other than making his enclosure a bit wet, he was pretty clean. His release day was the best. He stopped and posed for a few pictures and headed straight to the water for a swim! We released him where he was found because beavers tend to be territorial and its best for

them to go back to areas where their homes will likely be.

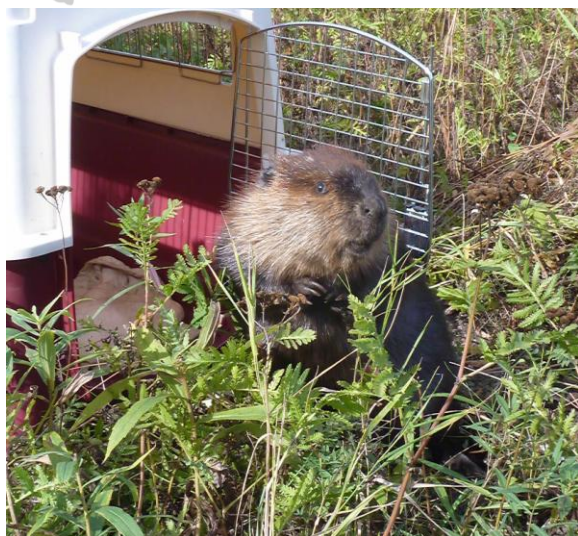
I also got to see ruffed grouse this year, both male and female, a rough legged hawk, Baltimore orioles, and a Swainson's thrush. I also got to go on an epic loon rescue.

Last year, I went on a few loon rescues and usually we just sit on the beach waiting for the researchers to bring us the loon in trouble. If the loon is lucky we can fix them up right there and let them go back to their aquatic bed, and if not they have to come back to the center with us for further treatment. This year we got to go on a rescue and get in the boat with researchers: Joel, Mike and Kristen. Rescuing loons is extremely difficult and best done at night. For one thing, if a loon hasn't beached itself on land they can be crazy difficult to rescue. Their unique anatomy lets them essentially soar under the water and they are excellent divers, using the depths to avoid predators and us well-meaning humans. Their tiny legs however fail to support their bodies on land and they are easy to grab if they can't escape back to the water. During the day, the loon can see us coming and quickly dives out of reach. When we go at night, they are often confused by our spotlights and lured in by calls. That doesn't mean catching a loon is ever easy. We spent about five hours from eight pm to midnight on the water in the rain and cold, searching for a loon chick tangled in fishing line. We found the adults, parents, the healthy chick, a curious duck and a floating tree. Ok, the tree was actually a beaver doing some housework. But we failed to find the loon chick that night despite following calls and checking all the places we did and did not expect them. The next night however was successful despite the fact that the weather was worse. It took over twenty-four hours and five dedicated people to successfully capture this loon chick and untangle it, not to mention all the hours the researchers put during the day time, tracking it and its

parents to see where they prefer to be on the lake, the gas to run the boat, charging the batteries for spot lights, and all manner of other things people do not think about when they call about a loon in trouble. While I didn't get to be there when the loon was caught, it sincerely was one of the best nights of my life and I really admire the researchers who care so much to come out and spend hours hunting in the dark and all kinds of weather for the loons in trouble. While, I miss raising some of the baby animals from the spring and the summer, the fall is a big release time. We had our big fawn and bear releases this year. The fawns were pretty funny as they try to figure out how their legs work again as the anesthesia wears off and they stumble around in their suddenly expanded world. The bear release was a big weekend this year. We had twelve bears to get packed up and out on their own (and twelve bears and months' worth of feces to clean up later!) Nolan Blair from Channel 12 came out the second day to see what a bear release was like and he asked me a question that I wish I had answered better so I will attempt to answer it for you here. (Click [HERE](#) for the video link).



Bear release



Beaver release

Many people, not just Nolan, are interested in how we feel when we release animals, especially if we raise them from babies and many people expect us to be saddened. I would say that it's hard to describe what it feels like to release a wild animal. There really aren't words for how I feel. Many people assume we rehabilitate animals because we want to own or keep wildlife as pets. This could not be further from the truth. I will readily admit that each new patient I get to see up close is very exciting but I also realize it is a privilege and a gift and that I must take responsibility for this being in my charge which very much includes making sure these animals stay wild. For me, I see animals who are hurt or sick and I want nothing more than to do something to help them and my greatest joy is when I am successful and that animal is returned to the wild. It is almost a feeling of pride similar to seeing your child graduate from school (it is bittersweet but it is not sad). I am pleased these animals get the chance to be their wild selves like you

would be excited that your child gets to start doing something great in the world. It's just that feeling inside you that says you know this is where they belong, that this is right and the world feels a little bit brighter on release day. This is particularly true when you know so many animals are disappearing in the world due to habitat loss, climate change, and other reasons that mostly have to do with how humans treat the planet.

I was thrilled to come back to Wild Instincts and I will forever be beholden to Mark and Sharon for the opportunity they provide for us interns especially when they allow us to come back more than once. I know that I am being taught by the best in the field. I see it in every patient we treat. I feel so lucky that they thought there was something in me that would benefit from a second term here. I know I learned so much more and I enjoyed working here and I cannot express my appreciation enough. I feel very privileged to see how Wild Instincts has changed in the last year and to see the evidence of all the hard work Sharon and Mark put into caring for animals here in Wisconsin. I very much want all their future plans and dreams for Wild Instincts to come true because no two people deserve it more.

I also want to say thank you to all the volunteers, rescue and transport drivers, the members, readers of the newsletter, and all who support Wild Instincts. You have no idea how much you help us and we appreciate each and every one of you and if we forget at the time to say thank you in person, then let me just say it now, Thank You.

WISH LIST

Some select items from our wish list:

- ~Paper Towels
- ~FISH, fresh or frozen, whole or fillets
- ~VENISON
- ~Toilet Paper
- ~Treated 2x6's (8' & 10' lengths)

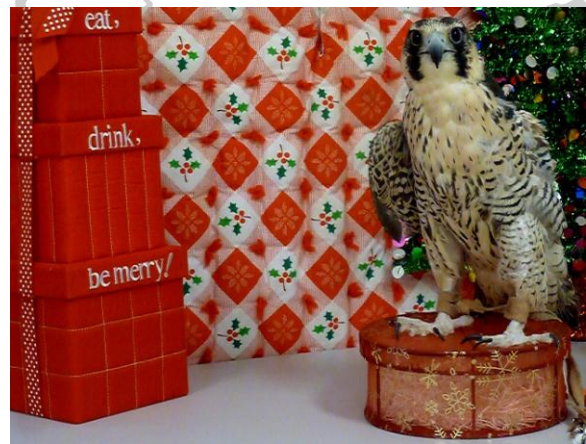
Holiday Shopping Season!

When you are doing your shopping this season (or anytime for that matter), don't forget you can support Wild Instincts while you shop!

Instead of signing in to amazon.com, sign into smile.amazon.com. All your Amazon settings are the same, work the same, even Amazon Prime is the same.

The only difference is Amazon donates a percentage of your purchases to Wild Instincts. A super simple way to support us! You can also support Wild Instincts when you buy or sell on eBay, with the eBay Giving Works Program.

Wild Instincts is a part of the eBay Giving Works External Link program. So, you can help us help them when you buy and sell on eBay.



Amelia gets in the holiday spirit.

First Holiday Auction on EBay

Many of you have mentioned your disappointment at not being able to participate in supporting us at our fundraisers because of geography.

We listened and being unable to travel to our local fundraisers will no longer leave you feeling left out.

From Friday, Nov 21st thru Sunday, Nov 30th, we will be having our first holiday auction through our eBay Giving Works.

This will allow us to be able to ship your items to you and still give you time to ship

them to your recipients in time for the holidays.

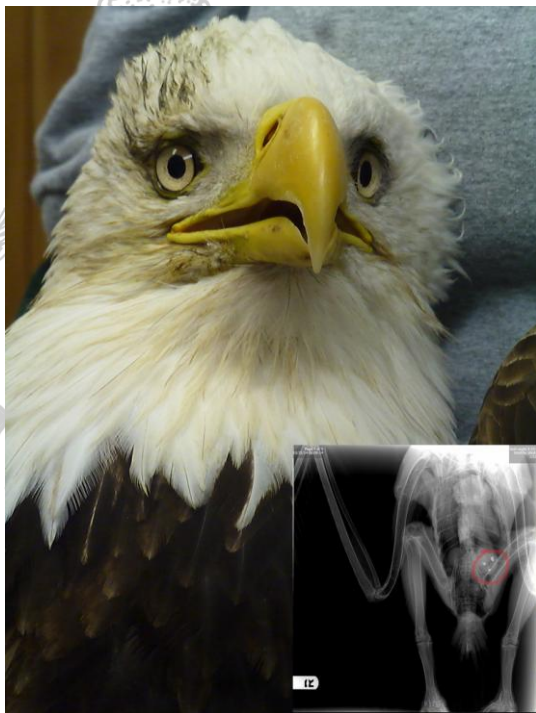
We have wide variety of things to fit different budgets.

Jewelry from recycled pop tabs, autographed books from renowned area naturalists, fine art photographs, and fine artisan handcrafted bead jewelry is a sampling of things you'll see.

Visit often and bid HIGH! Share the news and the links with ALL your friends. Be generous as all proceeds go to provide care for our patients.

You DO NOT need an Ebay account to bid/buy. You can sign in as a guest.

[SHOP NOW HERE.](#)



GET THE LEAD OUT

Hunting season is here for small game, waterfowl and deer season is just around the corner.

Make sure your hunting ammunition is lead free.

Just because you don't actually shoot an eagle doesn't mean you don't kill one.

If you injure your target, but don't retrieve it, a predator may and use it for supper.

If it has lead shot in it, it is a death sentence for an eagle.



Bobcat kitten being weighed upon admission, 6/13



Same bobcat kitten on left on 8/23 when another young bobcat (on right) recently transferred was added to the pre-release enclosure.



Same bobcat running to freedom on 10/27 when they were both released back into the wild.

Species	1/1-11/7/14		
American Badger	1	Pileated Woodpecker	1
American Goldfinch	6	Porcupine	1
American Robin	25	Purple Finch	1
American Toad	1	Raccoon	38
American Woodcock	3	Red Fox	4
Bald Eagle	34	Red Squirrel	15
Baltimore Oriole	3	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
Barn Swallow	1	Red-tailed Hawk	4
Beaver	2	Ring-billed Gull	2
Belted Kingfisher	4	River Otter	2
Big Brown Bat	9	Rock Dove	9
Black Bear	16	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2
Black-and-White Warbler	2	Rough-legged Hawk	1
Black-capped Chickadee	3	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	7
Blue Jay	2	Ruffed Grouse	4
Bobcat	4	Sandhill Crane	1
Broad-winged Hawk	6	Short-tailed Weasel	1
Brown Thrasher	1	Snapping Turtle	24
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	Song Sparrow	2
Canada Goose	11	Southern Flying Squirrel	2
Chipping Sparrow	6	Striped Skunk	1
Common Grackle	5	Swainson's Thrush	2
Common Loon	2	Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel	12
Common Nighthawk	1	Turkey Vulture	3
Cooper's Hawk	1	Unknown	5
Coyote	3	Western Painted Turtle	12
Deer Mouse	18	White-tailed Deer	33
Downy Woodpecker	4	Wood Duck	7
Eastern Bluebird	2	Wood Turtle	1
Eastern Chipmunk	5	Woodchuck	1
Eastern Cottontail	89	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2
Eastern Gray Squirrel	30	Total	585
Gray Fox	2		
Great Blue Heron	3		
Great Horned Owl	5		
Green Frog	1		
Green Heron	1		
Hairy Woodpecker	3		
Hermit Thrush	1		
Herring Gull	1		
Hooded Merganser	5		
House Finch	1		
Indigo Bunting	1		
Least Flycatcher	1		
Little Brown Bat	1		
Mallard Duck	27		
Merlin	5		
Mourning Dove	11		
Muskrat	1		
Northern Flicker	9		
Northern Harrier	1		
Northern Saw-Whet Owl	1		
Peregrine Falcon	1		
Pied-billed Grebe	1		

Events Calendar

Holiday Auction on Ebay

Friday, Nov 21st thru Sun Nov 30th
Shop [HERE NOW](#)

Christmas for the Critters

Friday, Dec 12th 7:00 – 10:30 pm
Pat's Tavern & Grill, 70 Brown St.
Rhinelanders
Renowned Northwoods Musician TUCK PENCE will be performing LIVE!! Come listen to the music, enjoy a few raffles, and buy some baked goods....all while helping us help them.

**Thank you for helping
us help them!**