

Welcome to

INSTINCTS

Spring 2011

Vol 1:1

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Instincts*, the official newsletter of Wild Instincts, Inc.

Wild Instincts was formed to address a need for quality, ethical wildlife rehabilitation in the area.

Having decades of professional wildlife rehabilitation experience in Northern Wisconsin, we suddenly found ourselves without a place to rehab. More disturbing, however, was suddenly the wildlife we had been serving was now left with nowhere close to get help.

We decided to step up and do something about it and formed Wild Instincts.

Baby season in the wildlife rehab business refers to the time of year when the orphan babies get admitted for care. Here in Northern WI, it generally starts in early to mid April and increases in earnest into June.

Looking at the calendar, we were reminded Baby Season wasn't going to wait for people or politics. We started doing our darnedest to be ready because no matter what the animals would be coming.

January 28th, we purchased 16 acres just north of Rhinelander for our new facility. We designed, planned and jumped through endless zoning meetings and hoops, all the while admitting wild patients. (We admitted our first babies of the season, Eastern gray squirrels, on March 24th.)

We "waited" for the never-ending winter to finally become spring. By "waiting", we

mean we took care of patients, we remodeled a garage on the property to work out of temporarily, we cleared a building site and completed mounds of paperwork including our nonprofit application with the IRS to mention just a few.

Building Progress

On May 11th, the shell of Wild Instincts' new building was completed. At the time of this newsletter, the plumber has just finished all the sewer and drain lines, the water lines will be completed early next week.

The mobile home to be used for intern quarters and temporary offices should be moved to the site next week.



Newly completed Wild Instincts Building shell

Work Day



Sunday May 1st Work Day



Monday, May 2nd Drain Field Work Begins

We want to thank all 22 who participated in the May 1st Work Day cutting and hauling brush so we could get the septic system and mobile home site ready on time. You guys are great and we couldn't do this without you!!!

Volunteer Opportunities

Rescue Drivers
Transport Drivers
Construction Volunteers
Animal Care Volunteers
Office Volunteers
Newsletter Volunteers
Fundraising Volunteers

Contact us if you are interested in volunteering in any way: 715-490-2727 or info@wildinstinctsrehab.com

Become a Member

Our tax-exempt status is currently being processed by the IRS. For now we are operating on donations with no tax write off. When the tax-exempt status is granted, it's generally retroactive to the date filed, but we technically don't even know if we'll be granted tax exemption.

Still, we could use whatever support you are willing to give. As long as you understand currently you cannot get a tax write-off with your donation. The animals still need helping and we still need funding to help them.

We are offering memberships at the following levels to start:

Wild Neighbor	\$35
Family	\$50
Sustaining	\$100
Silver	\$250
Gold	\$500
Platinum	\$1000

Of course you are always welcome to donate in amounts different from these levels.

WISH LIST

For a complete wish list, please visit our website: www.wildinstinctsrehab.com

Chain link fencing
Fence poles
Whole fish
Frozen venison
Dry dog food
Canned dog food
Unsalted walnuts
Unsalted pecans
Paper towels
Dish soap
Hand soap
Newspapers
Sheets/blankets/towels
Gas cards
Cash donations

A Few Wildlife Tales

~ On Feb 16, Wild Instincts received a call about a raccoon in a trap. It was stuck in a crawl space under a mobile home and in great distress. It was obvious it had been caught for a long period. It was frantic and in much discomfort.

Mark went to the site, sedated it, and determined the only humane solution was to end its suffering. The landowner is now rethinking using leg-hold traps as a solution to "nuisance" animals around his property. If you have animal visitors causing problems, box live traps can be part of a solution. Catching the animal unharmed and relocating it to a more suitable location can be an answer everyone can live with.

~ On Feb 22, a female Pine Grosbeak was admitted with a left wrist injury.

On Mar 19, she was released back at the recovery site before the flock she was hanging out with left the area for their breeding grounds further north.

~ On March 24, the season's first babies arrived - three baby gray squirrels.

~ On May 5, Wild Instincts admitted a female orphan red fox kit. She had been found in a window well. Attempts by the recoverer to locate her den were unsuccessful. Freeing her from the window well and placing her so she could go back to her den on her own resulted in her simply diving into the window well again.

So we admitted the first red fox of 2011. Fox are very social and having a buddy of the same species (called a conspecific) to be raised with is best. We put word out to other rehabbers in the area as normal protocol. If someone else has a singleton, they either take ours or we take theirs.

Add to the situation we are under construction. We could keep her for a while, but we don't have a pre-release conditioning cage completed at this time.

While we were contemplating how and when and where to transfer her, a wonderful supporter, wildlife advocate & wildlife photographer sent a note of encouragement to us. She knows we've been working inhumane hours and often having cold cereal for supper about 9:30pm. She had no idea we had admitted a fox kit but as a morale booster she sent photos of the fox kits playing outside their den in a corner of her yard.

For three years, they have had a fox including part of their yard as part of her territory. This year she had a litter of kits.

Fox vixens are reputed to be pretty accepting of others. While we routinely place orphan bear cubs with denning bear sows, we had never tried it with a fox kit. Mostly because it's rare to know exactly where a den is and how many kits are already being cared for. We certainly wouldn't place a foster with a mom if it would tax the resources available to all. This set up was perfect- a fox den that could be monitored daily from a safe distance, a vixen used to human activity in the area and a known litter size of 3-4. On May 10th, we decided to try to "wild foster" our fox kit into this den.

Because the vixen was already used to the landowners' scents and activities, it was decided she would be the one to place our fox near the entrance of the den. As soon as our kit was on the ground, she scrambled in the den to her soon-to-be siblings. A quick peek in revealed acceptance from the youngsters; the vixen was out hunting. When she came home, her new surprise kit would smell more like her den, increasing the chances of successful adoption.

We've received a couple updates with photos we'd like to share:

"Mark (friend and rehabber extraordinaire) from Wild Instincts brought a sweet little orphaned fox kit to today for introduction into our fox family. Since mama fox and

kits are used to my scent, he suggested that I do the release into the den. My husband was only able to get one picture (holding kit in my gloved hand) before I set him in with the others (mama fox gone hunting). No snarls or growls or sounds of any kind- good news! Later I sat behind the den, watched and waited. ALL the kits came out on the logs..... 1, 2, 3, 4, 5! (Indeed, there was an original 4th kit as I suspected.) The orphaned kit (a bit smaller) was very shy coming out at first, but when he did, one of his adopted siblings engaged him in some play. It was such a remarkable sight! And having the scent of one of the other kits will increase the probability of mama fox accepting him even more.



Checking out the new family member



A happy family with a new addition!

Wild Instincts Contact Info:

715-490-2727

www.wildinstinctsrehab.com

www.wildinstincts.wordpress.com

www.youtube.com/wildinstinctsrehab

Don't forget to check us out on
Facebook!

*Thank
you for
helping us
help the
wildlife!*