

Welcome to

INSTINCTS



MAY-JUNE 2025

Vol 14:2

"The newsletter helping you follow your Wild Instincts."

AGAIN?

Such is Rehab Time in Baby Season. One day slips into the next and pretty soon a month has gone by in the blink of an eye. That's how another May Newsletter has slipped into June.

Changes of the last few Springs have been stringing into what may becoming a pattern.

What we think of as a "usual" spring generally starts out with a few animals and then by the time Summer Interns start in mid-May we have a lot of baby squirrels needing hand-feeding. It works out very well because baby squirrels are wonderful for unskilled interns to start on learning skills they will need for their entire internships. And there are a lot of squirrels, so they get a lot of practice.

The last few Springs, however, squirrels have come fast and early. By the time the Summer Interns start, the squirrels are already mature enough to not need hand feedings. This means less opportunities for Summer Interns to learn, much less practice those basic skills.

It also means that staff has already been working overtime earlier in the year before the interns start. That means there is not only no time to update supporters with a newsletter or keep up with social media, but everyone is exhausted with no energy to be creative or to do anything but collapse. We're hoping that this isn't really becoming a pattern, but if it is, we hope to be in a better position to address these changes next year so hopefully the May newsletter will actually get to you in May!



Back row, L to R: Marna, Jacob, Elizabeth, Hunter
Front row, L to R: Clara, Isabelle, Amanda

WELCOME INTERNS!

Intern migration is complete. We have seven Summer Interns this year, a first. We generally have six, but with a vacant staff position, we decided to be a little creative with housing and try an extra intern. Their origins range from Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Wisconsin. Every year we rely on interns to help get us through the busy season. Not only does it help us, it gives people interested in future careers in animal care such as veterinary science, zoo-keeping, wildlife biology as well as wildlife rehabilitation invaluable hands-on experience.

By the time the Summer Interns start, Babies have already been arriving for a few weeks.

This means Summer Interns arrive to over 160 patients to care for with more coming in every day.

The first few days are absolutely overwhelming for them, but as the weeks fly by, they all get into a routine.

In an immersion program such as ours, it's impossible for them not to become a different person by the time they leave. Watching the growth and development of the interns is almost as rewarding as watching the growth and development of the patients.

Our interns come from all over the country so please be patient when you are talking to an intern on the phone. They often don't realize there is a community called Lake Tomahawk that is different than the community of Tomahawk.

We consider ourselves a "teaching hospital". You will also likely be asked to be put on hold a few times on the phone while they ask questions. There is a lot involved in wildlife rehabilitation and every situation is unique. We don't want to give out incorrect advice, so your patience will help them learn about our patients-and ultimately about themselves along the way.



Looks like the start of Baby Season!

KEEP ON KEEPING ON

While things on the human side of the world seem to be chaotic and uncertain, the wildlife side of the world is continuing with certainty.

We are still getting wildlife in need of our assistance. We are continuing to feed and help our wild neighbors. We are continuing to incur costs to provide that help.

Overhead costs such as electricity, garbage removal, phone, insurances, etc. not to mention special animal feeds, shipping, paper towels, produce, medications, etc. all continue to rise.

Due to the uncertainty mentioned above, non-profits everywhere are getting hit in the budget.

Our donations are down. Less monetary donations, less physical donations, less items from our wish lists.

We totally understand why people may have to rethink how and to whom they donate. As a non-profit, we understand better than some!

It is illegal for us to charge for our services, so we rely on people donating what they can.

Despite these uncertain times, our supporters have always come through for us and we are confident that will continue. We are always humbled and immensely grateful when we ask for something like paper towels, you always find a way to get us what we need.

And even when we don't come out and ask, local area businesses are generous with donation drives and financial support.

We are certainly blessed!

PETS AND WILDLIFE

By McKenna Brocco, Basic Rehabber

I'm sure that many of you have pets that provide companionship and bring joy into your life and may occasionally make some trouble as well. Our staff here knows very well the happiness and woes that come with pet ownership as we all have pets ourselves. We also see firsthand the impact that pets can have on the surrounding wildlife. Many of the patients that we admit have had some sort of interaction with a pet, and some of the patients we admit were even kept as pets themselves. Unfortunately, both of these situations are not uncommon and can have harmful effects on the wildlife. We can reduce the occurrence of these situations by educating ourselves on how to appropriately interact with wildlife.

Just like our wild neighbors, our pets have "wild instincts" of their own that can lead to unfortunate interactions with wildlife. We admit many patients every year because of curious dogs and cats that find and interact with wildlife. Last year we admitted 129 patients because of interactions with dogs and cats. About 10% of the patients we admitted last year were the result of an unfortunate run in with a domestic animal. Already this year we have admitted more than 30 patients because of interactions with dogs and cats, meaning about 18% of the patients we have admitted this year were the result of an unwanted meeting with someone's pet. We have seen a wide variety of patients impacted by pets. We often admit bunnies, squirrels, mice, birds, and many other species, because of interactions with dogs or cats. We often admit young animals because a pet disturbed the nest and potentially harmed the young. Recently we admitted a porcupette that was separated from her mother because a curious dog thought she might make a fun toy. That situation was not very fun for the dog or the porcupine! Please be mindful of our wild neighbors

when out with your pets. We are lucky to share our environment with a large variety of wildlife, and we can help protect that wildlife by keeping a close eye on our pets as we spend more time outside this summer.



Porcupette admitted because of a dog.

Many people find wildlife very interesting and are often charmed by how cute they may be, and some people may try to keep wild animals they find as pets. We have admitted a wide variety of patients from situations like these. People have tried to keep anything from squirrels, bears, snakes, turtles, raccoons and much more, as pets. These situations often begin with someone finding an animal they believe needs help. Sometimes the animal is actually in trouble, but sometimes people will unknowingly take a perfectly healthy animal thinking that it needs help. Without knowing that deer and rabbits leave their young unattended for prolonged periods of time, they are often needlessly taken by members of the public who think they've been abandoned. Keeping an animal, either as a pet or with intent to eventually release it, without the proper knowledge and resources to care for it can be very harmful to the animal. Improper

care of an animal by the public is something we see very often. During the baby season we admit many young squirrels, bunnies, fawns, and more that are extremely compromised and close to death because they have been kept by the public and fed improperly. It is illegal to keep wildlife without proper permits, yet we admit many patients that have been kept for days, weeks, and even years. Recently we admitted two different turtles that had been kept as pets for multiple years. For each of these turtles there were signs that they had not received adequate care. Luckily for these animals the effects of their improper care are not life ending, and since they have proven they are able to find food for themselves they will likely be able to be released. Although these turtles will probably be okay, wild animals are not suited to be kept as pets and many can become fatally stressed from too much interaction with humans.

Our pets, as well as ourselves, have an impact on the wildlife around us. We are responsible for trying to ensure that the impact we have is a positive one. As summer approaches, keep a close eye on your pets and be mindful of any active nests you may know of or wildlife that frequent your area. As hard as we may try, our pets may cause some trouble with wildlife. If your dog or cat finds and disturbs an animal, please give us a call before doing anything. If you find an animal that you believe may need help, call us before doing anything. Information on Google can be misleading or inaccurate, so always call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator if you have concerns about wildlife. Every situation is unique, and by calling us first we can give those animals the best possible chance of success.



Young Virginia Opossum

WILD ScaVenture 2025

Do you love wildlife?

Do you love puzzles?

Do you love a challenge?

If you answered yes to even one of those questions, then you'll be thrilled to know Wild ScaVenture is back!

After a year off for Goose Chase to update their playing platform, Wild ScaVenture 2025 is on!

Over the years we heard lots of feedback from people who support our mission but couldn't get to local fundraisers because they weren't local.

WE HEARD YOU!

We developed the family-gearred Wild ScaVenture. The game's clues and missions are designed to be played from your smartphone wherever you are in the world provided you have a cell phone signal.

What is a Wild ScaVenture?

A ScaVenture is part scavenger hunt and part adventure (**Sc**avenger hunt + **Adventure**). It's also one of Wild Instincts' annual fundraising events.

Players complete missions using a free app downloaded on your smartphone.

Why should I participate?

Wild Instincts is permitted by the state & federal government but receives no funding from them. Wild Instincts ONLY funding comes from generous people like you. This fun, family-friendly event helps raise funds for Wild Instincts to care for orphaned and injured wildlife by moving some gold coin from your treasure chest into our treasure chest while you have fun and learn things along the way.

How do I participate?

Gather a team of no more than 6 people. At least one needs to have a smartphone with a data plan.

Decide on a FAMILY FRIENDLY team name and choose a team captain.

Register (on-line registration is scheduled to open July 1st)

Cost is \$100/team.

Download the free GooseChase app to your phone. You will be given a game code.

Complete as many missions as you can.

What do I win?

You mean other than that warm fuzzy feeling for helping us help them while having a blast with your friends and family?

First Prize = \$100

Second Prize = \$75

Third Prize = \$50

Wild ScaVentures RULES

Safety first for everyone- This ScaVenture is fun for the entire family, but make sure any minors are supervised, everyone always wears their seat belt and no one runs with scissors.

Stranger Danger- Some missions deal with strangers. These types of missions have been changed to be COVID compliant.

It's very important to be kind and respectful with strangers, and with that said – always be on guard and stay safe, use your healthy judgment when it comes to people you don't know.

Play Fair- Have fun and try to win but don't let your competitive instincts drive you to ruin other peoples' chances to win. If you do, your team will be disqualified. That means no sabotaging, lying, cheating, stealing or copying other people's work.

If You Fight the Law (and the Law Wins)-

You're participating to have fun but do so legally. If you break any laws at any time during any portion of the ScaVenture, your team will be disqualified. This includes, but is not limited to, moving violations, trespassing, burglary, larceny, embezzlement, grand theft, petty theft, shoplifting, assault, plagiarism, blackmail, indecent exposure, decent exposure, recent exposure, bribery, forgery, perjury, fraud, computer fraud, mail fraud, telemarketing fraud, tax evasion, tax fraud, insurance fraud, securities fraud, halitosis and bad hair. Seriously, if you get so much as a speeding ticket, you lose.

Always be Humble & Kind- Teams must be courteous and respectful to their teammates and all the outside people involved in the ScaVenture (It doesn't hurt to be courteous and kind to all, whether inside or outside the ScaVenture).

NO harassing citizens of your town or even your galaxy, physically or verbally for items or photographs. It is their right to choose not to help you and you should respect that (even if you think they are lame for not helping you). NO harassing wildlife or disturbing landscape. Take photos, do not chase or interfere with wild animals and do not pick flowers, etc.

Tick Tock- All Missions must be completed during the duration of this specific

ScaVenture. Missions completed outside this time frame will be disqualified.

Ties-The game kind not the bow or Father's Day kind. The winning team will be the team obtaining the most points. In case of a tie, the winners will be determined by a Trivia Quiz Off.

Appeals-There is no appeals process in this scavenger hunt. There is also no crying. There's no crying in ScaVentures! All decisions by the judges are final. No exceptions.

Play hard until the end. Don't know who is penalized for what. Can get extra points for creativity.

Void where prohibited.

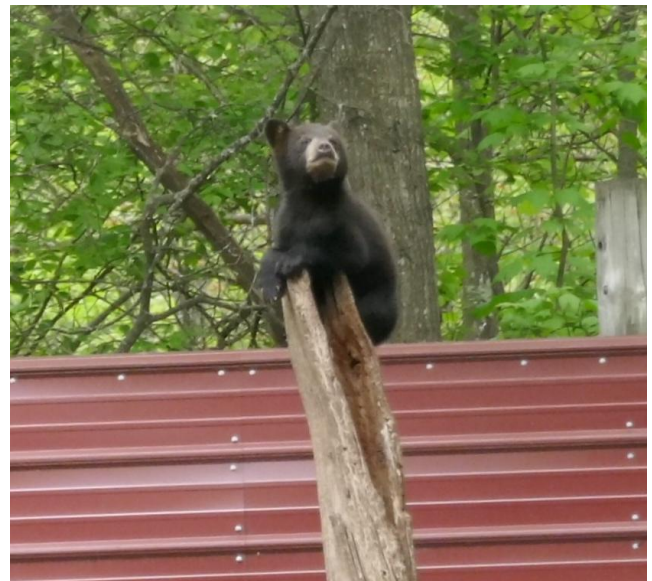


IN HONOR OR MEMORY OF

~In Memory of Elsie Marshall Thornton
~In Honor of "Lucy", English Shepherd Rescue
~In Memory of "Rissa" Larson-Naniot
~In Memory of Michael "Stubby" Thayer
~In Honor of Savannah Knipping
~In Memory of Dave Peterson
~In Memory of "Tilly" Larson
~In Honor of Erinn Brogren
~In Memory & Honor of Norman Moore, lover of all the Wild Things
~In Memory of Tim Muench
~In Honor of Trish Kirk
~In Memory of "Tragus" Larson-Naniot
~In Memory of Joe Eibl
~In Memory of our Mothers gone and in Honor of those still here
~In Memory of Bruce Kohn, dedicated wildlife research biologist



One of the fawns admitted in May. That is a men's size 10 Croc next to her.



One of the young bear cubs on a favorite vantage point.



Days-old short-tailed weasel.



Same short-tailed weasel now 5 weeks old.

Some photos of removing asphalt from a Rock Dove (commonly called Pigeon).

The bird had been found on an ATV trail in a pile of asphalt someone had dumped. It had already removed all its breast feathers trying to free itself.



It has a long recovery time to regrow feathers and still may have toxic effects from the petroleum-based toxins it has been exposed to and likely ingested.

Species Admitted 1/1-6/1/25

American Beaver	1
American Black Bear	7
American Crow	5
American Goldfinch	6
American Robin	10
American Tree Sparrow	1
American Woodcock	8
Bald Eagle	6
Baltimore Oriole	1
Barred Owl	1
Big Brown Bat	5
Black-capped Chickadee	1
Broad-winged Hawk	1
Canada Goose	8
Common Garter Snake	1
Common Grackle	2
Common Raven	1
Common Snapping Turtle	1
Common Yellowthroat	2
Coyote	2
Dark-eyed Junco	1
Deer Mouse	20
Eastern Chipmunk	7
Eastern Cottontail	112
Eastern Fox Snake	2
Eastern Gray Squirrel	53
Fisher	2
Gray Treefrog	1
Great Horned Owl	2
Hairy Woodpecker	1
Hooded Merganser	1
House Finch	1
Least Chipmunk	1
Mallard	5
Merlin	1
Midland Painted Turtle	3
Mourning Dove	4
Muskrat	2
North American Porcupine	2
North American River Otter	1
Northern Cardinal	1
Northern Flicker	1

Northern Raccoon	4
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1
Osprey	1
Ovenbird	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1
Pine Siskin	4
Purple Finch	1
Red Fox	9
Red Squirrel	9
Red-headed Woodpecker	1
Rock Dove	1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	6
Ruffed Grouse	2
Screech Owl	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Short-tailed Weasel	1
Southern Flying Squirrel	7
Tree Swallow	1
Virginia Opossum	32
Western Meadowlark	1
Western Painted Turtle	3
White-breasted Nuthatch	1
White-tailed Deer	13
White-winged Crossbill	1
Wild Turkey	1
Wood Duck	16
Wood Thrush	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Total	418



Red-headed Woodpecker hit by car. It recovered and was released.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pizza Ranch Community Impact Night
Monday, June 21 4:00-8:00 p.m.
Pizza Ranch, 275 Eisenhower Parkway,
Rhinelanders
20% of sales benefit Wild Instincts

Wild ScaVenture
July 25th-27th
Played with your smartphone from wherever
you are!

Bake Sale
Saturday, August 9 8:00am-1:00pm
Hodag Farmers Market
Pioneer Park
Rhinelanders

For the Wild 5K/10K
Saturday, Sept 20 8:00 a.m.
Newbold Outdoor Recreation Area
(Start/Finish)
6954 Ole Lake Rd
Rhinelanders



Young hungry crow

Growth of a Red Squirrel:



From this newborn



To this adolescent