



Wildlife Center of Virginia  
**2019** *Annual Report*



# 2019 Patients ...

During 2019, the Wildlife Center of Virginia admitted 3,345 patients – the highest caseload in the Center’s 37-year history.

*In 2019, the Center treated* 490 Virginia Opossums, 460 Eastern Cottontails, 220 Eastern Gray Squirrels, 136 Woodland Box Turtles, and 97 American Robins.

**During the year, the Center also treated far less common animals, including two unusual species admitted on the same day!**

***Peregrine Falcon.*** On May 14, a young Peregrine Falcon tumbled from its nest on the Benjamin Harrison Bridge across the James River and fell onto the roadway below. Several cars drove over the falcon before a registered transporter was able to rescue the bird.

Dr. Peach Van Wick, the Center’s veterinary fellow, found that the bird had sustained a keel [breastbone] fracture, damage to the lungs, and likely a ruptured air sac. Dr. Van Wick applied a body wrap to stabilize the fracture, gave pain medication, and placed the falcon in the Center’s oxygen chamber.

The peregrine’s condition improved quickly; the bird spent several months at the Center building up strength and stamina and did a rehab stint with Wild Bunch Wildlife Refuge. On September 10, Dr. Ernesto Dominguez released the falcon at JamesCrest Farm – within sight of the Benjamin Harrison Bridge.

*The Peregrine Falcon is a species native to Virginia. By the early 1960s, the falcon was believed to be extinct as a breeding species in Virginia and all areas east of the Mississippi River – a decline linked to DDT and other chemicals. There are now about 30 known breeding pairs of peregrines in Virginia.*



*Photo courtesy of Mike Marra*

***Bog Turtle.*** Also on May 14, the Center admitted an adult male Bog Turtle that had likely been struck by a passing car in southwest Virginia. The turtle had fractures on his carapace [upper shell] and left bridge [side of the shell]. Dr. Karra Pierce, the Center’s veterinary intern, applied metal bars to the shell to help stabilize the fractures.

*The Bog Turtle is on the federal government’s list of “threatened” species and is considered endangered here in Virginia. Bog Turtles are now found only in four counties in the southwestern part of the state; Bog Turtles are imperiled by the destruction of habitat [primarily draining of wet meadows and other wetlands] and illegal collection for the pet trade.*

Fortunately, the Center’s Bog Turtle patient recovered well from his injuries. By the end of June, the stabilizing bars were removed. On July 9, the turtle was taken to a wetland near his rescue site – and returned to the wild.



# 2019 *Patient Admissions*

## Mammals [1,713 patients]

2	American Beaver
13	American Black Bear
1	American Mink
60	Big Brown Bat
2	Bobcat
1	Brazilian Free-tailed Bat
44	Deer Mouse
1	Domestic Rabbit
11	Eastern Chipmunk
460	Eastern Cottontail
4	Eastern Fox Squirrel
220	Eastern Gray Squirrel
6	Eastern Harvest Mouse
1	Eastern Mole
1	Eastern Pipistrelle
7	Eastern Red Bat
1	Eastern Woodrat
1	Gray Bat
1	Hispid Cotton Rat
1	Hoary Bat
7	House Mouse
1	Little Brown Bat
1	Long-tailed Weasel
6	Meadow Vole
122	Raccoon
27	Red Fox
7	Silver-haired Bat
5	Southern Flying Squirrel
66	Striped Skunk
2	Undetermined Mammal
490	Virginia Opossum
127	White-tailed Deer
14	Woodchuck

## Reptiles and Amphibians [272]

2	American Bullfrog
1	Bog Turtle
1	Brown Anole
1	Common Five-lined Skink
5	Eastern American Toad
1	Eastern Copperhead
4	Eastern Gartersnake
1	Eastern Milksnake
26	Eastern Painted Turtle
17	Eastern Ratsnake
2	Eastern River Cooter
3	Fowler's Toad
3	Gopher Snake
2	Gray Treefrog
1	Grove Snail
6	Northern Black Racer
1	Northern Rough Greensnake
33	Ornate Box Turtle
1	Red Cornsnake
1	Red-bellied Snake
17	Snapping Turtle
1	West African Mud Turtle
136	Woodland Box Turtle
6	Yellow-bellied Slider

## Total Admissions

3,345

## Passerines [Songbirds] [745]

17	American Crow
16	American Goldfinch
97	American Robin
9	Barn Swallow
2	Black-throated Blue Warbler
1	Blue Grosbeak
32	Blue Jay
5	Brown Thrasher
3	Brown-headed Cowbird
69	Carolina Wren
11	Cedar Waxwing
7	Chipping Sparrow
37	Common Grackle
4	Common Yellowthroat
4	Dark-eyed Junco
20	Eastern Bluebird
2	Eastern Kingbird
1	Eastern Meadowlark
15	Eastern Phoebe
4	Eastern Towhee
87	European Starling
1	Fish Crow
24	Gray Catbird
2	Great Crested Flycatcher
3	Hermit Thrush
33	House Finch
43	House Sparrow
4	House Wren
1	Least Flycatcher
87	Mourning Dove
56	Northern Cardinal
15	Northern Mockingbird
2	Ovenbird
1	Purple Finch
1	Purple Martin
1	Red-eyed Vireo
3	Red-winged Blackbird
1	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
1	Scarlet Tanager
4	Song Sparrow
1	Tree Swallow
4	Tufted Titmouse
6	Undetermined Passerine
1	Veery
3	White-throated Sparrow
3	Wood Thrush
1	Yellow-rumped Warbler

## Other Birds [251]

1	American Black Duck
2	American Coot
1	American Woodcock
1	Black-crowned Night-Heron
1	Brown Pelican
25	Canada Goose
32	Chimney Swift
1	Clapper Rail

3	Common Loon
3	Common Nighthawk
2	Domestic Duck
1	Double-crested Cormorant
8	Downy Woodpecker
2	Eastern Whip-poor-will
9	Great Blue Heron
1	Great Egret
1	Green Heron
4	Horned Grebe
1	Killdeer
1	Laughing Gull
51	Mallard
10	Northern Flicker
1	Pied-billed Grebe
8	Pileated Woodpecker
12	Red-bellied Woodpecker
1	Red-headed Woodpecker
3	Ring-billed Gull
8	Rock Pigeon
16	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
1	Ruddy Duck
1	Ruffed Grouse
10	Wild Turkey
1	Wilson's Snipe
14	Wood Duck
3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
10	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
1	Yellow-crowned Night Heron

## Raptors and Vultures [364]

4	American Kestrel
37	Bald Eagle
11	Barn Owl
45	Barred Owl
11	Black Vulture
9	Broad-winged Hawk
21	Cooper's Hawk
81	Eastern Screech-Owl
27	Great Horned Owl
10	Osprey
1	Peregrine Falcon
37	Red-shouldered Hawk
55	Red-tailed Hawk
6	Sharp-shinned Hawk
9	Turkey Vulture

*Includes animals confiscated as part of a law-enforcement action.*





# *The Wildlife Center marked the start of 2020 by:*

***Releasing a Bald Eagle.*** On January 1, Center President Ed Clark went to a campground just south of Leesville Lake to release an adult Bald Eagle. The eagle had been found on the ground by a farmer in Pittsylvania County on November 7. Our veterinary team found that the eagle had an abnormally enlarged heart, had subclinical levels of lead in its bloodstream, and might also have been exposed to pesticides.

The eagle was given fluids, anti-inflammatories, and atropine [for an irregular heartbeat] and was started on an oral chelation therapy to reduce the amount of lead in its system.

The eagle responded well, and after several weeks of rest, recovery, and rehabilitation was deemed ready to be returned to the wild.

In front of an appreciative crowd of 100 wildlife enthusiasts, several TV crews and reporters, and the farmer who rescued the bird from his pasture, the eagle flew off – back to freedom.



*Mark Wolfman Photography*

## *Admitting the first patients of 2020 ...*

including two Eastern Screech-Owls, a Red Bat, a Deer Mouse, and a Sharp-shinned Hawk.





# UNTAMED

In May 2019, Virginia Public Media launched *Untamed: Life is Wild*, a 13-episode series that offers an unprecedented behind-the-scenes look at the lifesaving work of the Wildlife Center of Virginia. Each 30-minute installment features Center stories, videos, and interviews with Center staff, and each episode has a unique focus:

- Black Bears
- Bald Eagles
- Turtles
- Owls
- Opossums
- Snakes
- Unusual Species
- Songbirds
- Bats
- Vultures
- Baby Season
- Waterbirds
- Hawks and Falcons

*Untamed* was broadcast by public television stations in Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, and Richmond; the entire season was rebroadcast in the fall and winter.

Each episode is available online. In addition, the Center has pulled together an extensive online compendium of materials that explore each episode of *Untamed*. Check out the Center's website for additional patient stories and videos, learning resources, and worksheets and activities specifically designed for younger viewers for each episode.

**Update #1.** The premiere season of *Untamed* has now been made available through American Public Television to public TV stations across the country. Please check with your local public TV station to see if they will be airing *Untamed* ... and encourage them to do so.

**Update #2.** Season Two of *Untamed* - another 13 episodes - will premiere on May 21.





# *A Hospital for Native Wildlife: teaching the world to care about, and to care for, wildlife and the environment*

## **During 2019, the Wildlife Center of Virginia:**

- presented 176 programs – at the Center, and in schools, libraries, and community forums – reaching 6,309 children and 4,296 adults. Integral partners in these programs were the Center's wildlife education ambassadors, including Lewis and Clark [Virginia Opossums], Buttercup [Black Vulture], Maggie [Peregrine Falcon], Wilson [Woodland Box Turtle], and, of course, Buddy the Bald Eagle;
- through Skype and Cam in the Classroom, presented an additional 107 programs, reaching 5,124 children;
- posted a variety of YouTube videos, drawing 1.5 million viewers;
- provided hands-on, in-clinic training in the ever-changing field of wildlife veterinary medicine to 69 veterinary, veterinary technician, and rehabilitation students from 22 states and Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Grenada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Philippines, Saint Kitts-Nevis, Spain, and Taiwan;
- hosted 215 participants at the annual *Call of the Wild* wildlife rehabilitation conference;
- provided online training to 287 individuals through the Wildlife Care Academy; and
- continued a dynamic website [[www.wildlifecenter.org](http://www.wildlifecenter.org)], including *Critter Cam*, a live online broadcast featuring Center patients – rollicking Black Bears, recovering Bald Eagles, and an orphaned Bobcat.

The vital life-saving and life-changing work of the Wildlife Center would not be possible without the involvement, talent, and hard work of scores of dedicated volunteers. In 2019 these volunteers:

- prepared thousands of meals for Center patients;
- assisted veterinarians and rehabilitators in providing state-of-the-art health care to Virginia wildlife;
- drove thousands of miles, bringing animals in need to the Center's Waynesboro clinic;
- helped with outreach programs – at the Center and across Virginia;
- built special enclosures to house some of our resident wildlife ambassadors;
- helped to archive patient records, organize the auction room at the Center's Annual Gala, check-in participants at the *Call of the Wild* conference, and so much more!

## *Thank you!*





# 2019 Financials

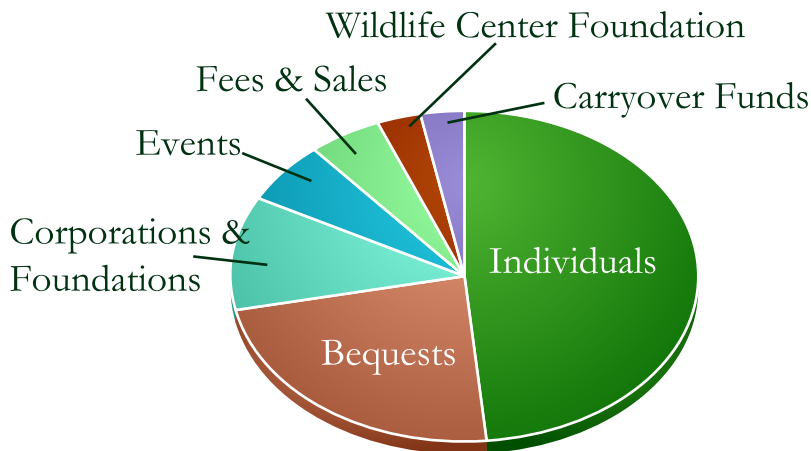
The Wildlife Center of Virginia is a 501(c)(3) organization that depends on private donations – not federal, state, or local government funding – for its programs and services. The Center works hard to be an effective and efficient non-profit – we strive to keep our administrative and fundraising costs to a minimum so that we can do the best job possible as a wildlife hospital and education center.

*Here's a snapshot of the Center's revenues and expenditures for 2019:*

## 2019 Revenues

Individuals	\$834,986	48%
Bequests	407,662	24%
Corporations/Foundation	182,298	11%
Events [net]	97,139	6%
Program Fees/Sales	92,336	5%
Wildlife Center Foundation	49,000	3%
Carryover Funds	67,256	3%

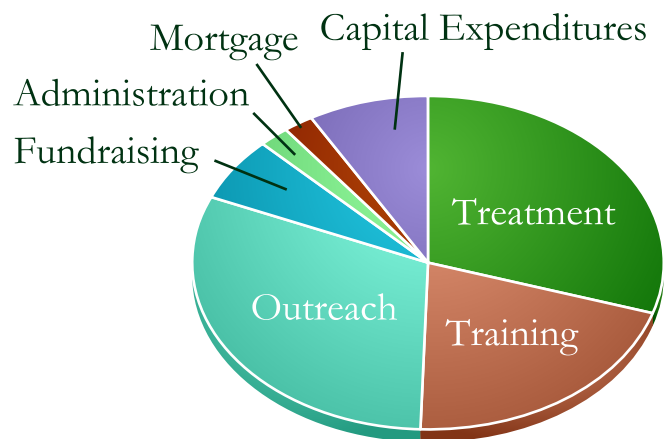
**\$1,730,677 100%**



## 2019 Expenditures

Treatment	\$494,342	29%
Training	336,712	20%
Outreach/Conservation	523,951	30%
Fundraising	97,006	6%
Administration	94,213	5%
Mortgage	41,712	2%
Capital Expenditures	142,741	8%

**\$1,730,677 100%**



*A financial statement for the most recent fiscal year is available upon request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond VA 23209, 804.786.1343. Financial statements are also posted on the Center's website.*





## The Wildlife Center of Virginia

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### *On the Front Cover:*

In April 2019, this Red-tailed Hawk was found by the side of the road in Washington County, VA – he had fallen out of his nest during a storm. The hawk sustained a fractured leg and a badly injured left eye, causing permanent vision loss and making the bird non-releasable. Center outreach staff began training the bird for a new career as a Wildlife Center ambassador.

Naming rights for this handsome bird were auctioned off at the Center's November 2019 Gala. The winning bidder's name choice? Rowan – an Irish/Scottish name meaning “little red one”.

*Above:* In 2019, we also welcomed new Education Ambassador Sheldon [Woodland Box Turtle].