



THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

P.O. BOX 1557 • WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA 22980 • 540-942-WILD • FAX 540-943-WILD

THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA “SHELL-ABRATES” WORLD TURTLE DAY

Learn about how to best help wild turtles, including when to call for help, and when to leave them alone on World Turtle Day, this Monday, May 23

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Waynesboro, Virginia – May 20, 2022 Every May, the Center releases a number of Woodland Box Turtles that have been recovering over winter back into the wild. This release happens to coincide with World Turtle Day on May 23. To celebrate the occasion Center educators will host a live-streaming virtual discussion with Certified Master Herpetologist Ana Sparks. Event watchers will learn about the natural history of Virginia's native turtles, the challenges they are facing in wild, and the conservation measures taken to protect them. Wilson, one of the Center's non-releasable Woodland Box Turtles, will also make an appearance during the program. The stream will take place on the Wildlife Center's Facebook page on May 23 at 2:00 p.m.

Wildlife enthusiasts can learn more about Virginia's turtles in other ways, too. S1:E3 of *Untamed: Life is Wild*, an award-winning television series co-produced by the Wildlife Center of Virginia and VPM, features discussions on the causes of admission for turtles, including vehicle collisions, swallowing fish hooks, pesticides, and more. The Center's hospital director describes how these injuries are treated, and host Ed Clark reviews how humans can change their behavior to help turtles. Each episode of *Untamed* is available to watch online for free, via wildlifecenter.org/untamed.

However you celebrate World Turtle Day, remember these tip to help turtles year-round:

- Assist turtles crossing the road by carrying them across in the direction they're headed. Many turtles crossing roads are egg-laden females looking for appropriate nesting sites.
- Do NOT relocate a turtle to a “better place”. Turtles have small home territories and should be left where they are found. Their survivability depends on it!
- Don't ever keep a wild turtle as a pet. If you truly desire a pet reptile and can make all of the commitments necessary to keeping a healthy, happy herp, please look into adopting. Captive-bred reptiles or rescued turtles are available for adoption in the state of Virginia through several different organizations such as Blue Ridge Reptile Rescue.
- Watch out for turtles and other wildlife when mowing lawns and doing other yard-work.
- If you find an injured turtle, put it in a box and contact the Wildlife Center of Virginia or a permitted wildlife rehabilitator. Make sure to record details of the rescue location so that the turtle can be returned there once it has healed.



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For more information and to arrange an interview, contact Public Affairs Manager Alex Wehrung. A collection of high-quality photographs of turtle species seen at the Center are available upon request.

Press Availability: To schedule an interview, contact Public Affairs Manager Alex Wehrung. Wildlife Center of Virginia staff are available Monday through Friday during regular business hours for virtual interviews about turtle patients, online events, and their education and outreach work. A collection of high-quality photographs of patients and ambassador animals are available upon request.

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The Wildlife Center of Virginia is an internationally acclaimed teaching and research hospital for wildlife and conservation medicine. The nonprofit Center has cared for more than 85,000 wild animals, representing 200 species of native birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The Center's public education programs share insights gained through the care of injured and orphaned wildlife, in hopes of reducing human damage to wildlife.