



THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

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

WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA TREATS RECORD-SETTING 90,000 WILD ANIMALS

90,000 wild animal, four decades, one mission -- *teaching the world.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Waynesboro, Virginia – June 17, 2022 During May 2022 a young Eastern Cottontail rabbit was admitted to the Wildlife Center of Virginia in need of care. The veterinary and rehabilitation staff anticipate caring for hundreds of cottontails each year, especially during the spring and summer months, but this specific individual represented an incredible milestone in the Center's history: it was the 90,000th patient admitted since the non-profit organization's founding in 1982.

Nearly 40 years ago, the Wildlife Center of Virginia was formed to provide quality health care, often on an emergency basis, to native wildlife. During the past four decades, their dedicated team of veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators has provided such care for more than 90,000 animals representing more than 200 species of native birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. From bullfrogs to Black Bears, the range and diversity of species treated at the Center highlight the inherent value that all wild animals possess, regardless of size, shape, or public perception.

Ed Clark, current Wildlife Center President, co-founded the Wildlife Center of Virginia in November of 1982. "It is astonishing to realize that the Wildlife Center of Virginia has been saving wild lives for nearly 40 years. It is even more amazing to consider that, during those 40 years, the Center has admitted more than 90,000 wild patients. The number includes a great diversity of wild species, from the very smallest to the largest, and the most common to some of the most rare and endangered. These patients have presented with a wide range of injuries and environmental problems, but the Center has always been here for them. The Center has been able to accomplish all of this thanks to the legions of dedicated professionals, students, and volunteers who help in this life-saving work, and through the generosity of thousands of caring and committed donors and supporters." Clark shared.

Each patient – from the Center's first to its 90,000th and beyond -- is an opportunity to uphold their guiding mission statement, *teaching the world to care about and care for wildlife and the environment.* Many of the veterinary and rehabilitation students who receive hands-on training at the Center are now found on the cutting-edge of wildlife veterinary medicine around the world, and through the Center's outreach and education efforts, the lessons that can be learned from these patients' stories have been shared with well over 1.5 million schoolchildren and adults.

"But, the Center is not resting on its laurels; the best is yet to come. Patients continue to come in at unprecedented rates, so there is much more to do; caring for and learning from each patient, and sharing our insights with policy makers, students, and the public." said Clark.

While it's not possible to predict what or when the next milestone admission may be, one thing is guaranteed: their staff, students, volunteers, and supporters will share its story and the valuable lessons therein, *teaching the world one wild life at a time.*



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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 wildlife 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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PRESS CONTACT

Alex Wehrung

Public Affairs Manager

awehrung@wildlifecenter.org

540.942.9453

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.