



THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

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WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA BIDS FAREWELL TO THE BEARS OF 2022

Following more than a year of rehabilitative care, these bears are free and wild once more

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Waynesboro, Virginia – April 5, 2023 12 months ago, the Wildlife Center of Virginia began admitting [the black bears of 2022](#) from several locations throughout Virginia – young cubs that were orphaned, separated from their mothers, or had suffered serious physical injury. Since then, the bears – no longer helpless cubs, but sub-adult “yearlings” -- have been cared for by the Center’s team of wildlife veterinarians and permitted wildlife rehabilitators.

During February, Center staff began coordinating with biologists from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) to plan their releases scheduled for April -- near the typical time when they would soon be naturally dispersing from their mothers had they been raised in the wild.

On March 30, those plans began to come to fruition. Biologists with the Department of Wildlife Resources brought live bear traps to the Center’s two-acre Black Bear Complex and placed them – open, but not set – where the yearling bears could become used to entering them. Baited with the bears’ favorite foods, the goal was to allow them to get comfortable with the traps and want to spend time in them, so that the yearlings could be quickly and effectively caught on their release dates.

On Monday, April 3, the traps were set. In an ideal scenario, two of the five yearling bears will have been caught for DWR biologists to pick up on Tuesday morning. The remaining three bears will be caught and sedated on Wednesday, April 5, and the staff will complete a full physical examination of the bears before their departure and return to life in the wild.

As the sole wildlife hospital in Virginia permitted to provide long-term care for bears, the Center has been receiving bear cubs for many years; in 2013, the Center constructed its special Black Bear Complex, designed for bear cubs who need space in which to grow up. Since then, more

than 120 black bears have been admitted and received care at the Center.

The Wildlife Center of Virginia invites the public to [visit their website](#) to learn more about Black Bears in Virginia, 2022's cohort of rehabilitated bears, and how to help future bear patients during the coming year:

- Learn more about the five Black Bear cubs of 2022 and their histories on the Center's [Current Patients page](#). View a live-streaming video feed of the cubs until April 5 via [Cub Cam](#).
- The Center's [Frequently Asked Questions: Black Bear Cub Rehabilitation page](#) describes how bears are cared for during their time as patients, photos and blueprints of the specially-designed Bear Yard complex, and more.
- As a non-profit organization, the Center relies almost entirely on donations from the public to operate. It cost thousands of dollars to feed bears during their time at the Center. [Donate now](#) to help support the Center's work.

Press Availability:

Wildlife Center of Virginia outreach staff are available during regular business hours from Tuesday, April 4 through Saturday, April 8 for interviews about Black Bears at the Center and their education and outreach work.

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PRESS CONTACT

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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 90,000 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.