

# Wildlife Tracks



Connecting People and Wildlife through Rehabilitation, Education, and Research since 1994

## 2020 Issue I

Wildlife In Need Center  
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[www.helpingwildlife.org](http://www.helpingwildlife.org)



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## WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

### *Meet Otis the Peregrine Falcon!*

We are excited to introduce to everyone the newest member of our education team! Otis is a Peregrine Falcon who will be sponsored this year by We Energies Foundation!

Otis was admitted to the Raptor Education Group up in Antigo when he was a juvenile. He suffered a broken left wing, possibly from colliding with a power line. The wing healed incorrectly on its own, severely limiting his ability to fly and therefore making his return to the wild impossible.

We're so excited to have Otis join our program because Peregrine Falcons are amazing birds. They are the fastest animal on the planet when stooping (hunting dive) and can reach over 200 mph. They are built for speed. They have teardrop shaped wings, incredibly keen vision and specialized tubercle in their nose to help break up the air flow when diving. They mostly hunt birds, and will take on starlings, ducks and many birds in between.

They are also a wonderful comeback story when it comes to conservation. By the 1960's, Peregrine Falcon populations in the eastern United States were wiped out because of the pesticide DDT. DDT affected the female's ability to lay healthy eggs causing the populations to crash.

In 1971, Wisconsin banned the use of DDT, and it later became federally banned in 1972.

Biologists used techniques developed by falconers to begin captive breeding programs with the intent to reintroduce them back into the wild. The reintroduction process for Wisconsin began in 1976, and in 1986 Peregrine Falcons began breeding in Wisconsin again.

Peregrine Falcons historically nest on tall ledges and cliffs, but in recent decades have adapted to nesting on ledges of tall buildings. We Energies has been an important part of the recovery of Wisconsin Peregrine Falcon populations. Over the years, many falcons have used their facilities as nesting sites. Currently there are five active nests at WE Energies and Wisconsin Public Service power plants, including one in Milwaukee, Port Washington and Oak Creek.

We are extremely grateful for the We Energies Foundation sponsoring Otis this year! Otis has been settling in and working with our education team, and we hope to be able to have him on programs soon! Welcome Otis!

**Story By Erin Toohy**



*Otis the Peregrine Falcon!*

## Mission Statement

*To provide wildlife rehabilitation to Wisconsin wildlife with the intent to release back to the native habitat, conduct research designed to further the positive impact of rehabilitation, and provide quality community education programs and service.*

## Wildlife In Need Center Board of Directors

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# WINC's MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

## *Wild-Fostering: Expanding and Formalizing a New Program*

The Wildlife in Need Center's primary goal for all patients that are admitted into our wildlife hospital is to release them back into the wild. For some patients, it is a matter of weeks for a wound to heal. For the orphans, it can be months to grow and become self-sufficient. During this season with reduced man-power at the wildlife hospital, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we began to seek ways to expand and formalize a new release program around wild fostering.

Wild Fostering is the act of taking an infant of a given species and placing it into the care of an adult of the same species that is not related to the infant. At the Wildlife in Need Center we have long practiced wild fostering successfully with infant goslings and infant raptors. Due to the success of our staff with the wild fostering program this season, as of June 2020, we do not have any infant goslings in our care, despite being one of our most commonly admitted waterfowl.

With just as many animals in need as any normal year but without the volunteer or intern support we typically have, our Animal Care staff started looking more at the Wild-Fostering of more species than just the Canada Goose as a way to provide care for the infants entrusted to us. With research while working from home and our homebound volunteers to scout for nests of Eastern Cottontails or song birds, we hope to perform educated and controlled wild fosterings of new species. In the first week of June while this article is being written a successful wild foster of four Wood Ducklings was completed, expanding the spectrum of species that Wild-fostering can be successfully used for as well as providing more evidence for the potential for this type of program.



*Orphaned Gosling successfully Wild Fostered*

*Story by Mitch Ruiz*



*Re-nesting one Great Horned Owl and successful Wild Foster of a Great Horned in the same new nest in 2015.*



*Successful Wild Foster of Wood Ducklings*

# FROM THE DIRECTORS

Kim Banach, Executive Director

*“One day you will tell your story of how you overcame, what you went through and it will be someone else’s survival guide.”*



WINC Donor Kay Leonard and  
WINC Executive Director Kim Banach



Great Horned Owl Re-nesting during the time  
WINC was closed to admissions

As we began our 26th year, no one knew of the impending pandemic on the horizon and the tremendous impact that it would have on the entire world—every person, business and organization.

Last year was monumental, as we celebrated our 25th Anniversary year. This year, operating during a global pandemic has been our most challenging year and like so many other organizations, businesses and families, we have had to learn and adapt to a new way of conducting our everyday life.

Since mid-March 2020, decisions were made by our leadership team for the safety of our staff, volunteers and the public. On March 27, WINC made the painstaking decision to temporarily close to new patient admissions. During that time, each of our animal care staff worked alone, caring for the existing wild patients in the hospital and our 15 educational ambassadors. As the weather warmed, overwintered patients including salamanders, turtles, toads and snakes were released. As other patients recovered from surgeries or injuries they too were released. As you can imagine, WINC rejoiced with each release!

During the time when the center was closed, the WINC’s leadership team developed a new COVID-19 operations protocol. When WINC re-opened to admissions on April 28, the center was limited to essential staff only, working in teams consisting of animal care staff and our education staff. In mid-May, interns were added to the teams and in early June, a few animal care volunteers were welcomed back. Currently animals are being admitted via no-contact and by appointment only.

In April, our annual in-person banquet was canceled. We instead held a successful day-long live event online featuring patient stories, educational ambassadors and releases, raising \$40,000! Face-to-face education programs have evolved to virtual programs and our office staff continues to work remotely. Needless to say, it has been a very busy four months. In an effort to keep our staff employed and sustain our mission, WINC applied and received a PPP loan through the CARES Act like many other non-profits.

One important aspect remains clear: A common passion for our mission shared by our staff, interns, volunteers, those that bring wildlife to WINC for care and all of you, our donors. Your steadfast commitment and loving support of WINC means so much more during these uncertain times.

The entire WINC team thanks you all!

Story By Kim Banach

## Delivering WINC’s Mission during the COVID-19 Global Pandemic

WINC joined the effort to support health care workers fighting COVID-19 donating 500 masks, N95 and other PPE to Froedert Hospital.



Tiffany Raatx, Animal Care Intern  
with Orphaned Virginia Opossum

# WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

*Educating Virtually? With Live Animals? Yes!*



## Welcome Erin!

Erin graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. in Biology and Animal Ecology, then began working as an avian technician at the Raptor Education Group. She worked in the rehabilitation department, but soon discovered her passion was in education. She has since worked as a seasonal naturalist, an AmeriCorps environmental educator and a tour guide before joining the WINC team. Erin is pictured below with WINC's new animal educational ambassador Otis the Peregrine Falcon in-training.

*Thank you to P4W for the 2nd year of funding for continuing education for Animal Care staff, equipment upgrades and more!*



*Some of the Wildlife In Need Center's Educational Animal Ambassadors (from left to right): Bella the American Toad, Meadow the Bullsnake, Jewel the Ornate Box Turtle, Marcy the Virginia Opossum, Chase the Striped Skunk, Chloe the Eastern Screech Owl, Antoinette the Western Painted Turtle, and Evie the Eastern Fox Snake*

Education plays an important role at the Wildlife in Need Center. Not only does connecting people with nature play a vital role in understanding how we can peacefully co-exist with our wildlife neighbors, but our program fees also help sustain our mission and work.

When the shutdowns began in mid-March due to the global pandemic, it quickly became clear that in-person programming would be on hold indefinitely. Our education team needed to get innovative and come up with ways to still be able to engage with people of all ages.

As a result, an entire lineup of virtual programming was created! Our programs still introduce groups to a variety of our animal Ambassadors, but what is especially fun is now participants are able to see them very up close and personal on the screen from their own home or office. We've even developed ways to make the programs interactive, and, of course, our educators are still able to field audience questions (which are always encouraged!). The best part is we are no longer limited by geographic proximity to our center, and are able to present programs anywhere you happen to be in the world. In fact, we recently gave our first program to a group in Washington!

If you are looking for a fun and educational program for any of the following, such as: a virtual school classroom; scouting or other community group; your next virtual office meeting; celebrating a special occasion with loved ones (including "just because"); or even a festive happy hour experience with friends, then we are ready to join you! For more information, please visit our website at [www.helpingwildlife.org](http://www.helpingwildlife.org) and click on the "Educate" tab.

*Story by Angela Nirk*

# WINC's MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

## *A Chance at New Life*

Every summer, the Wildlife in Need Center (WINC) admits dozens of turtles that have been hit by a vehicle either while the turtle is in route to or as they make their way back from laying their eggs. If you see any turtles crossing a road, and the situation is safe for you to move them, we recommend moving the turtle to the side of the road toward which they were walking so they can continue on their way. Although we are able to fix many shell fractures, we are unable to save all turtles hit by vehicles. Fortunately, we are able to save some life, even in the event of maternal death, by collecting any eggs the mother has not laid.

Once the eggs have been collected, they are put into a labeled ice cream bucket lined



*X-Ray of a female Common Snapping Turtle showing that she is carrying eggs*



*Top photo: Collected eggs in an ice cream bucket in an incubator  
Bottom photo: A Common Snapping Turtle hatchling from our incubator*



with a mixture of soil and vermiculite and put into one of our many incubators. For the months of June and July, staff check these buckets weekly. Weekly checks include spritzing the eggs with filtered water to ensure high humidity and examining eggs to ensure viability. Starting in August, weekly checks become daily checks to see who hatched overnight or we get lucky and see turtles actively hatch.

Once hatched, the hatchling turtles are moved to a small tub with shallow water where they can begin practicing swimming and eating on their own. Hatchling turtles only stay with us for a week or so while staff monitor their development. Then it is release time! It is vital that these hatchlings are released in the waterways that their mother was found near because if they are not, they will spend their time trying to get back to their home.

Last year we were able to collect and hatch over 100 turtle eggs and return them to their local waterways. Here at WINC, we take pride in nurturing wildlife back to independence. Caring for turtle eggs and new hatchlings is just one way WINC gives new life back to nature and more specifically our waterways.

*Story By Alexa Cushman*



## Welcome Rylann!

Rylann joined the WINC team in January of 2020 as the Education Assistant & Scheduler and Seasonal Animal Care Staff. In 2019, she graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and a certificate in Environmental Studies. Rylann has worked as a wildlife caretaker, environmental educator, and a bird bander prior to joining WINC. Rylann is pictured above Chloe, Eastern Screech Owl Educational Ambassador.

## Save the Date Fine Wine & Dine



*The Wildlife In Need Center's 8th Annual Fine Wine & Dine scheduled for October 17, is going Virtual. We will come to you live with patient and ambassador stories. Please watch WINC's Facebook, Website and your email for exciting upcoming details.*



# DAPHNE'S DISPATCH

I overheard Mandy say that we raised \$5000! And just in time I would say. For a few weeks, it was unusually quiet in the wildlife hospital but then it happened...Baby-Palooza! First came those cute little mallard and wood ducklings and goslings. Soon after, the baby cottontails, squirrels, opossums, chipmunks, raccoons and baby birds started flooding in.

It has been incredible to see how staff has been able to manage all those little ones with the care and species-specific diets they need with fewer people in the hospital. For some reason, I am seeing fewer familiar faces in the hospital, although it is hard to say for sure with all those face masks. I have also noticed something odd; they seem to be trying to avoid each, I heard one of the interns say it is called "social distancing". I am the social butterfly type, so you will still see me coming at you to share a friendly Daphne hello in the hallways. I do miss the regular volunteer teams and hope that this social distancing thing ends soon so I can get back to visiting with all my volunteer friends.

In April 2020 kicked off my 13th year as staff here at the Wildlife In Need Center! I have heard that the #13 can be bad luck but not for this Muscovy Duck. I have taken on a more supervisory role this year at WINC—sitting in on weekly Zoom staff meetings, to keep everyone focused on ambassador and animal care. I even had the starring role in WINC's first ever Virtual Banquet. I invited Kim Banach, our executive director, to help me kick off the event. Kim shared with me a few days later that the event was a great success, raising almost \$40,000!

This year has brought about many changes and a lot of "firsts" for our staff, like Virtual Programs. Did you know that you can invite me to join your company's Zoom meetings? We also held our first ever online Facebook Auction to help all the spring and summer babies in our care.

## What's the BUZZ? Remembering Special People

This year there has been a substantial outpouring of gifts from donors to WINC in honor or memory of special people in their lives.

Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to be taken to our "Remembering Special People" web page.



*A big thank you  
to the Kenneth  
A. Scott  
Charitable Trust!*

**KENNETH A. SCOTT  
CHARITABLE TRUST**

*In April 2020, WINC  
received a grant of  
\$7,500 for its  
education program!*

## How Can You Help?

Become a member!

Matching gifts - At no additional cost, you could double or even triple the impact of your gift! Many companies offer programs that match charitable contributions from their employees at rates as high as 2 to 1 or even 3 to 1. Double up your donation by asking if your employer offers a charitable matching gift program.

AmazonSmile - Did you know that when you shop on Amazon, the Wildlife In Need Center can benefit through the AmazonSmile program? There is no cost to charitable organizations or to AmazonSmile customers. Customers will have access to the same products, features, services, and great low prices as on Amazon.com. The shopping experience is identical to Amazon.com with the added benefit that the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from eligible AmazonSmile purchases to charitable organizations selected by customers.

Grocery Receipts - Save up your grocery receipts every time you shop at Piggly Wiggly or Sentry. Mail them in to WINC or drop them off at the WINC office. The Wildlife In Need Center (WINC) will receive 1% of the total value of the receipts.

Become a Wildlife Animal Champion by donating a set amount monthly, quarterly or annually.

Good Harvest Market will reward you for being eco-friendly by bringing your own bags when you grocery shop. You can select WINC as your designated charity to give your Eco-Tokens to.

You can elect to donate your Kwik Trip Rewards to WINC. Kwik Trip will donate 10% of all eligible in-store purchases and 3 cents per gallon on every gallon of fuel you purchase.

Donate your time as a WINC volunteer. There are so many options for volunteering and not all require a weekly commitment, such as helping at our events, donate your art or crafts for our raffles and auctions, help with our fundraising letter mailings or volunteer your property as a release site.

If you donate to United Way through your employer, you can designate WINC as the recipient of your United Way contributions.

# VOLUNTEERS

*We love our Volunteers & Teams!*



One of WINC's three Animal Care Teams. Team B is pictured above.



One of WINC's three Animal Care Teams. Team C is pictured above, and Team A is pictured in the top right corner.

Volunteers have always been a huge part of our mission at WINC – in 2019 volunteers donated 21,862 hours! To protect Animal Care staff and volunteers, volunteer activities have changed in recent months because we have not had volunteers coming into the building. We decided to cancel our summer Baby Bird Feeding program for students under 18 years of age to protect the families who normally help care for the baby birds all summer at WINC. Several people made face masks for use at WINC to help protect those working inside the center. Other volunteers helped with patient releases, produce pickups, gardening, and outside maintenance. Some volunteers who normally help in the office volunteered from their homes to pick up phone messages, return calls, schedule admission appointments from the public, and give advice about animal situations. In June we began to cautiously bring volunteers back into the building with all staff and volunteers wearing masks and gloves to keep everyone as safe as possible. We started with our summer Animal Care interns who joined one of our three Animal Care teams. Summer interns volunteer full days several times a week to gain experience in wildlife rehabilitation and to enhance their college studies in related fields with hands-on experience. Other volunteers are helping in the office to schedule admission appointments and to admit patients. We are not back to normal volunteer levels yet, but look forward to having all our volunteers back at WINC. We miss them and their helping hands and caring hearts!

Story By Lisa Rowe



Pat Adams, Office Volunteer answering phones remotely, pictured below.



WINC Volunteer Judith Neal made masks for all of WINC's staff. She is pictured in the top photo below with her husband Richard in masks she made. WINC volunteer Helen Best making masks for WINC, pictured below in the bottom photo.





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## Calendar 2020 - 2021



### October, 2020

Saturday, October 17th

8th Annual Fine Wine & Dine

Virtual Online Celebration—Facebook

Saturday, October 24th, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Hallo-WINC, Wildlife In Need Center

### November, 2020

Saturday, November 7th, 4:00-7:30 pm

Annual Spaghetti Dinner, Dousman Lions Club

235 N. Main St., Dousman WI

### December, 2020

Tuesday, December 1st, All day - Midnight

Giving Tuesday, Wildlife In Need Center

Saturday, December 5th, 10:00 am – Noon

Holiday Meet & Greet, Wildlife In Need Center

### March, 2021

Sunday, March 14th, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Pancake Breakfast, Dousman Lions Club,

235 N. Main St, Dousman, WI 53118

### April, 2021

Saturday, April 10th, 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Annual Spring Banquet, The Legend,

1 Legend Way, Wales, WI 53183

### May, 2021

Saturday, May 15th, 1:00 pm - 3:00pm

May Meet & Greet Baby Shower Event

Wildlife In Need Center

Stay tuned to your email, WINC Facebook and Website for Event Updates

Exciting news and events at WINC can be found on our website.  
Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to be taken to our website.



Friend us on WINC's Facebook!  
Scan the QR Code below with your smart phone camera to be taken to our Facebook page.

