



# Wildlife Tracks

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

### 2024 Issue I

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



Advisory Board Members Holly & Lou, Board Members Christine, Heather, Tom, Mike, Dr. Bloss pictured with Kim

### Celebrating Three Decades Of Compassion & Commitment

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For three remarkable decades, the Wildlife In Need Center (WINC) has been a beacon of hope for Wisconsin's wildlife. Over the past three decades, WINC has experienced continued growth and success in both wildlife rehabilitation and education, thanks to the dedication of our donors, staff, volunteers, and community members.

Our commitment to excellence in wildlife rehabilitation remains steadfast as we respond to the growing needs of our community. This year, on our 30th anniversary, we have witnessed a remarkable 40% increase in admissions compared to the previous year, with a striking 70% surge in admits in April alone. We have expanded our rehabilitation space with the new avian nursery, fledgling enclosures, and constructed three additional outdoor enclosures.

WINC continues to shine in providing engaging and informative education programs featuring our animal ambassadors. Our diverse programs cater to audiences of all

ages. Notably, in FY 2024, we reached an impressive 74,527 individuals through our educational initiatives. These educational efforts empower the community with wildlife wisdom, fostering a deeper connection to the natural world.

The extraordinary passion demonstrated by everyone involved at WINC – be it donors, staff, volunteers, or individuals seeking help for wildlife in need – has been instrumental in shaping WINC into the thriving organization it is today. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed to our success and look forward to continuing our mission of wildlife rehabilitation and education for many decades to come.

We hope to see you at our 30th anniversary Meet and Greet on July 27th! Details for this event are on the last page. Please enjoy this 30th anniversary edition of Wildlife Tracks.

*Thank you for your shared passion -  
Kim Banach, Executive Director*

### 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.*



## *Coyote Caught by the Saint of Animals*

In January 2024, we admitted a Coyote who had her head stuck in a statue for over 24 hours during the extreme cold. She found herself tightly stuck and unable to free herself after diving into the hollow statue in pursuit of her dinner (a wild rabbit). She was seen briefly, struggling, and dragging the large statue through the snow. Then, over a day later she was found barely moving, laying in the snow, exhausted from putting up such a long fight trying to free herself. She was finally able to be contained and brought to WINC for emergency help.

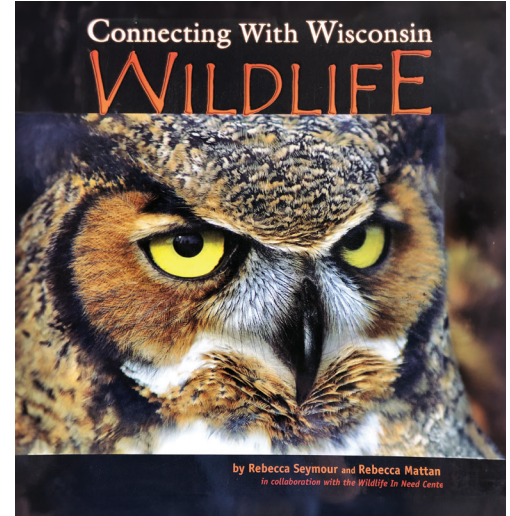
Once sedated, we were able to free her from the statue which ironically turned out to be one of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals! She was stabilized over the next few days and luckily X-rays confirmed that there were no fractures, just extensive soft tissue trauma. After about two weeks in our care, Francis aka Frannie was fully healed and ready to return home! (We don't typically name our patients, but felt this one was hard earned).

We were so glad we were able to get her back home just in time for her breeding season.



**The cost of care, which included medications, labs, x-rays, food and staff time, for 13 days was \$450.**

## Education History Part 1



The importance of helping people learn about the wildlife around them was a founding principle of the Wildlife In Need Center and is central to our mission. Not only was it important to give people knowledge of how to help local wildlife, it was also crucial to spread the word about the services provided at WINC.

Education efforts began at veterinarian offices, pet stores, local civic clubs, and festivals. As interest grew, so did the scope of our programs we offer.

Nancy Frank and Nan Calvert were the first staff members to help run the education department. Along with early staff members, volunteers played an integral role in giving education programs and running education booths.

From slide projectors to preserved bones and pelts, the early education team used what resources they had to get learners excited about

Wisconsin wildlife. Then, in 1999, the first animal ambassadors were introduced. These first animals captured the hearts of staff, volunteers, and anyone visiting the center.

In 2003, Leslie Kiehl was the first person hired at the Wildlife in Need Center specifically for the Education Department. During her time from 2003-2015, Leslie educated more than 100,000 people, sharing WINC's mission and message of respecting wildlife. In memory of Leslie, the Leslie Kiehl Education WINC Education Program Fund was created in 2015 to provide funding for groups who unable to pay the program fee.

In 2013 WINC published a book, *Connecting People with Wisconsin Wildlife* authored by Rebecca Mattano & Rebecca Seymour. This book is about Wisconsin wildlife while featuring several animal ambassadors and Dakota the Great Horned Owl.

### From Our First Ambassadors

- ➔ **Dakota** the Great Horned Owl
- ➔ **Digger** the Eastern Salamander
- ➔ **Slither** the Western Fox Snake
- ➔ **Ralph & Maggie** the Black-tailed Prairie Dogs

### To Our Current Team

- ➔ **Acorn & Aspen** the Southern Flying Squirrels
- ➔ **Chase** the Striped Skunk
- ➔ **Dakota** the Great Horned Owl
- ➔ **Evie** the Eastern Fox Snake
- ➔ **Jewel** the Ornate Box Turtle
- ➔ **Leucius & Lenny** the Virginia Opossums
- ➔ **Meadow** the Bullsake
- ➔ **Twiggy** the Midland Painted Turtle
- ➔ **Raenah** the Red-tailed Hawk
- ➔ **Willow** the Woodchuck



## *Barred Owl with Rodenticide Poisoning*



**The cost of care, which included medications, labs, food and staff time, for 17 days was \$575.**

This Barred Owl was admitted after he was found dazed in the middle of the road, after being hit by a car. He had a corneal injury (damage to the outer layer of the eye) and minor head trauma from the collision.

However, he had a more dangerous issue, not visible to the naked eye, he was suffering from rodenticide poisoning. This Barred Owl is one of so many wild birds who unknowingly ate a poisoned rodent. While poison is typically used to kill species that are considered pests, predators like this owl are often the unintended secondary victims, resulting

in a slow and painful death from internal bleeding.

Our staff worked quickly to provide emergency critical and supportive care and were relieved to see that he made it through the night and was standing the next morning. For the next two weeks he required extensive medical care to counteract the damage done by the rodenticide. After three weeks in care, he was fully recovered and released. We recommend using humane pest control options and avoiding lethal chemicals, especially outdoors where they can harm native wildlife, like this Barred Owl.

## *Volunteer History Part 1*



- Volunteers helped Nancy Frank plan WINC before it ever opened.
- WINC has a small staff and could not care for the 2,300+ wildlife patients admitted each year without the helping hands and caring hearts of our many volunteers or provide 100's of community out reach education programs.
- Volunteers work hands-on in Animal Care. Volunteers participate in the rehabilitation and day-to-day care of our wild patients.



- **Office volunteers** primarily aid in admitting wildlife patients and help answer our Wildlife Helpline plus help with office needs.
- **Education volunteers** help provide care for educational ambassadors and assist presenting educational programs.
- **Maintenance and Grounds volunteers** help with building, repairs and managing the gardens at WINC for the enjoyment of our patients, local wildlife, and people.

## *Virginia Opossum with Salt Toxicity*



This Virginia Opossum was found in a parking lot during a period of extreme cold, shivering and lethargic. She was very thin, lethargic, and was observed eating the rock salt off the ice around her. Besides being hypothermic, she had frostbite on her toes, ears and tail. Not long after admission she started showing signs of salt toxicity, which can cause irreparable damage to the brain if not caught and treated early.



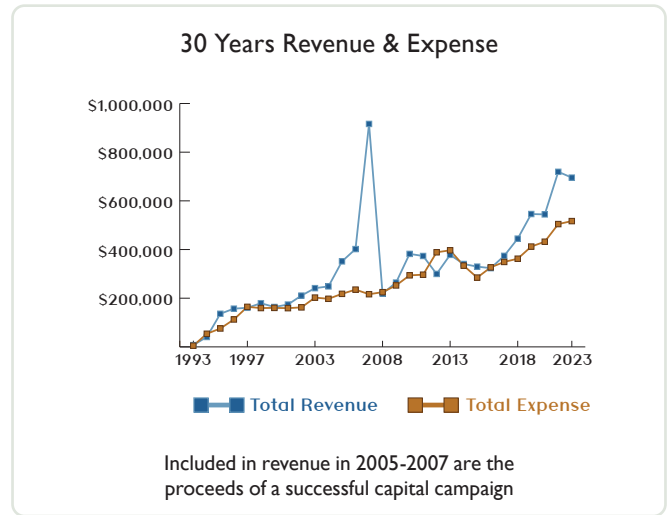
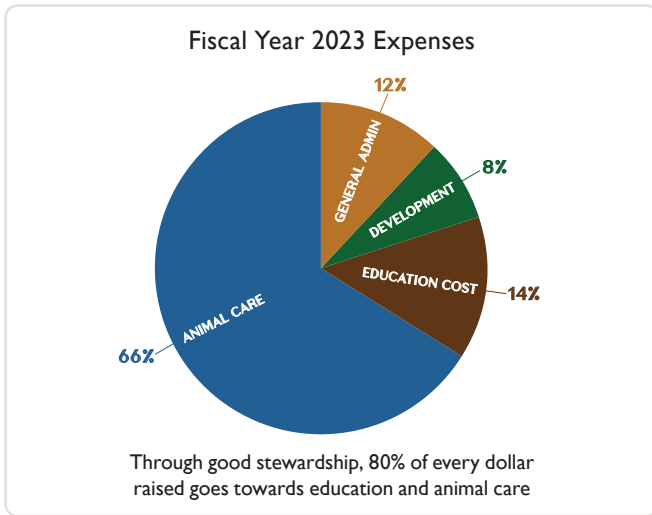
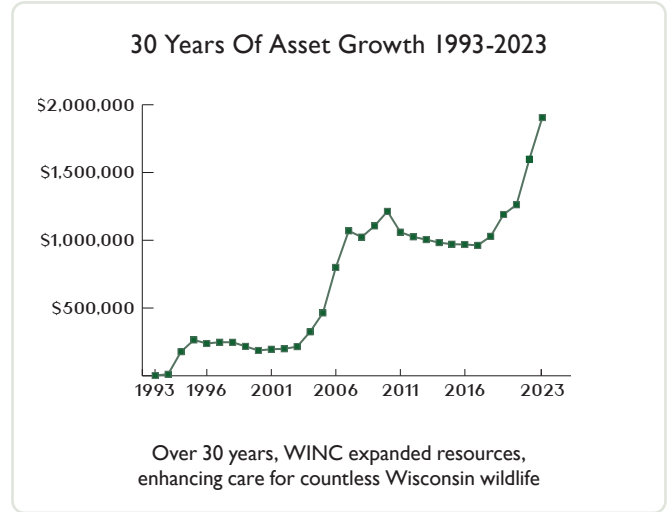
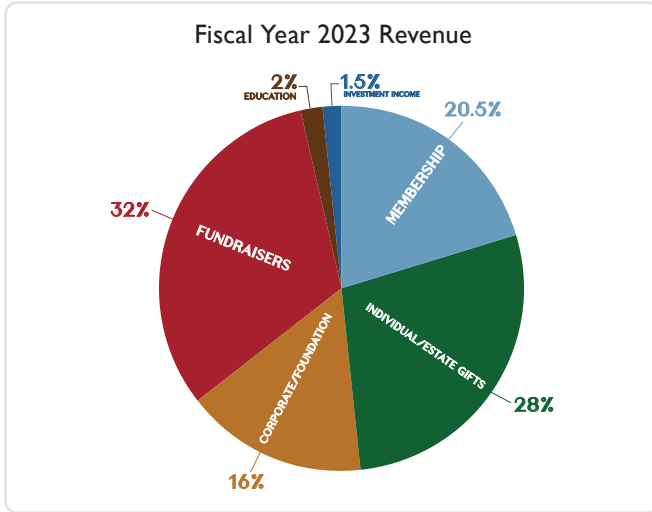
For the first 24 hours she required around-the-clock care, including treatments done in the middle of the night by our dedicated staff. For the next week we closely monitored her for any neurological symptoms and

continued providing supportive care. Luckily for this opossum, help had arrived just in time and there is no evidence of permanent brain damage. She received treatment for her frostbite and spent the winter in care while she recovered.



**The cost of care, which included medications, labs, food and staff time, for 70 days was \$1,100.**

## Financial Historical Data



### 30 Years of Growth

- In 1993, WINC's opening balance was \$30; by year-end, fundraising raised \$7,233. Today, the annual budget is \$675,900.
- 1994-1995: Operated out of a 1-bedroom house in Waukesha with monthly rent.
- Fall 1995: Purchased a farm on Highway C in Oconomowoc with a mortgage, paid off by 2007.
- 2011: Completed a capital campaign to build a 7,000 sq ft facility with no loan.
- 2022: Reorganized hospital, added a patient room, and expanded Avian Nursery by 50%. Phase 2 in 2024 adds an outdoor songbird enclosure.
- To meet animal care demand: 2022 added 4th staff, 2023 added 5th staff. Current staffing: Director of Animal Care, 4 staff, and seasonal staff.
- WINC operates year-round without government funding, supported by donors, fundraisers, and foundations, steadily building liquidity.

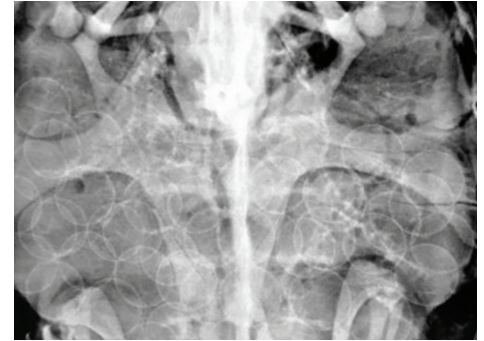
## *Healing of a Fractured Snapping Turtle Shell & Hatching Her Eggs*



Treating injured wild turtles is a very specialized area of wildlife rehabilitation and WINC admitted a record number of injured turtles in the summer of 2022.



Most of our turtles are admitted due to being hit by cars while making their annual trek to find a place to lay their eggs. This full-sized Snapping Turtle had very severe injuries resulting in the loss of a large amount of blood, and her shell was fractured in multiple places.



She was one of three injured snappers that we admitted that day, but she was the one with the worst injuries and she was carrying the most eggs.



After 72 days in care, the scars on her newly healed shell were hardened and she was fully recovered from all injuries. Unfortunately, she was not able to lay her eggs in the wild as she had planned to, but all 41 of her eggs were laid while she was in care.



She was released back to her home in the wild, and a couple months later some of her eggs hatched! We were able to release the hatchlings to mom's home territory!



**The cost of care, which included medications, x-rays, labs, food, staff time and electricity, for 72 days was \$980.**



## Volunteer History Part 2



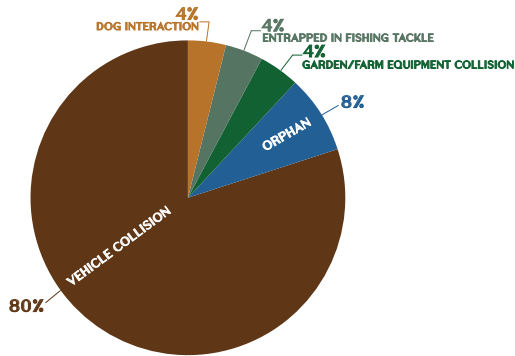
- ➔ **Fundraising and Marketing volunteers** help with fundraising events to pay for medical care and food for our wildlife patients as well as the Education Program.
- ➔ **Adult and youth Baby Bird Feeding** volunteers help care for orphan songbirds during the summer. Ages 12-14 can team up with an adult, ages 15 and up can volunteer on their own.
- ➔ WINC's **Board of Directors** are all volunteers who help govern WINC.
- ➔ WINC has **Internships** in Animal Care and Education for qualified individuals who are looking to fulfill their college internship requirements or who wish to expand their classroom knowledge to include hands-on experience.
- ➔ Community volunteers include Scouts, Oconomowoc School District & Generac.
- ➔ In 2023, WINC added a part-time Volunteer Coordinator staff position.
- ➔ In FY 2024, WINC volunteers donated **18,714.82 hours** equivalent of 9 FTE!

**2023 Volunteer Stats**

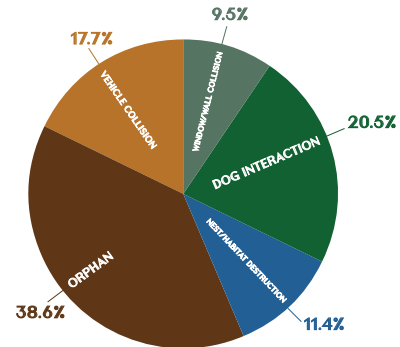
Animal Care	89
Baby Bird Feeders	52
Education	8
Events	2
Gardening/Landscaping	4
Maintenance	6
Office	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>

## Animal Care Statistics

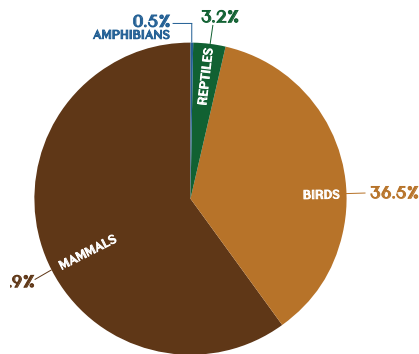
Most Frequent Circumstances of Admission: Reptiles



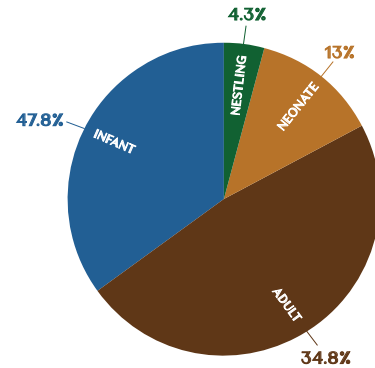
Most Frequent Circumstances of Admissions: All Taxonomic Classes



Patients by Taxonomic Class



Patients by Age at Intake



## Fiscal Year 2024

- ➔ Busiest Day June 13th, we admitted 48 patients representing 7 different species
- ➔ We admitted 2,241 wildlife patients representing 116 species from at least 88 cities in 22 counties
- ➔ Our busiest days are caring for over 300 patients in our wildlife hospital
- ➔ A dental and InnoVet X-ray machine was donated, greatly improving digital imaging of our wildlife patients

## Education History Part 2

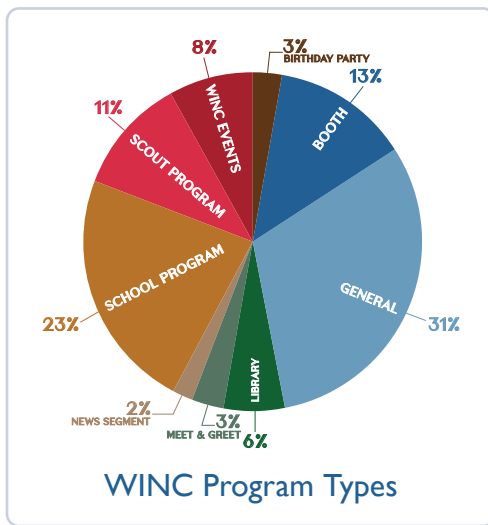
In 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic turned everything upside down, and WINC quickly developed a line-up of virtual programs. WINC event delivered virtual programs in Washington state and Canada. In 2022, Ellen Munshower, our current Education Coordinator, began her time at WINC, introducing state standards-based school programs. All our wonderful coordinators worked tirelessly to provide wildlife education programs from Madison to Milwaukee - and everywhere in between. Ellen has developed a year-round education internship and volunteer program. These interns and volunteers assist with care of our ambassadors and presenting ambassadors.



Today, WINC's Education Department does in-person programming in nine different counties. WINC's mobile education team travels frequently, reaching a wide variety of groups and people of all ages. With appearances on the news, visits to schools, local businesses, libraries, and all the visitors at our center, the education mission endures to connect people and wildlife through education. Since 1999, WINC's education team has reached over 700,000 people.



Acorn and Aspen



Twiggy



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# Calendar 2024

## September 2024

Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm  
Wildlife In The Park  
Cory Park, Dousman, WI

## October 2024

Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
12<sup>th</sup> Annual Fine Wine & Dine  
Westmoor Country, Brookfield, WI

## November 2024

Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm  
Spaghetti Dinner  
Dousman Lions Club, Dousman, WI

## December 2024

Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Holiday Meet & Greet  
Wildlife In Need Center

## April 2025

Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm  
31<sup>st</sup> Annual Spring Banquet  
The Legend of Brandybrook, Wales, WI

## 30 Years of Compassion & Commitment: Double Your Donation and Join the Celebration!

Wow! The Wildlife In Need Center is celebrating 30 years of compassion and commitment of caring for Wisconsin wildlife – because of our generous community! Every year, we rehabilitate over 2,500 wildlife. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, we have admitted our 1,615<sup>th</sup> patient this year and our 70,093<sup>rd</sup> patient since 1994!

You can help save wildlife and give a second chance at life – wild and free! Providing life-saving medical care for injured, orphaned, and sick wildlife is made possible thanks to generous donations from the public! In addition, you help us educate over 25,000 people annually by spreading wildlife wisdom!

Dollar for dollar, all donations will be matched up to \$30,000 by September 30<sup>th</sup>!

Scan the QR code below to be taken to WINC's Double Your Donation Page!!



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