

# Wildlife Tracks



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

## WINC'S MISSION: EDUCATION Summer Meet & Greet

There is something magical that happens when the sun shines down on the “winter people” of Wisconsin! The barbecue grills flame on, neighbors say “hi” to each other by waving a gardening tool, the baseball caps are donned (faithfully gathering fresh sweat on the brim), and families all over the state seek out community events! For a good time with the family, consider bringing them along to WINC’s Summer Meet & Greet!

Our Meet & Greets are the best way to meet all of our current Education Ambassadors at WINC at once. There will be volunteers stationed around the center who are handling, introducing, and interacting with every Ambassador—from our ornate box turtle Jewel, to our flying squirrels Acorn and Aspen! We will have an creative activities for kids to do, animal-themed photo opportunities, and sweet treats up for grabs at our bake sale table.

Sometimes Saturdays start with mid-morning cartoons, and sometimes they start by observing the real-life animal counterparts that those cartoons try to live up to! This is a great opportunity to Meet & Greet with Animal Ambassadors that represent for local Wisconsin Wildlife, hear some fun facts about their species, and pose in front of them. Show your loved ones a fun and educational time at WINC! The Event runs from 10am-12pm.

*Story by Sarah Kraemer*



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### 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

Tom DeMers	President
Christine Jeschke	Vice President
Mike Guzniczak	Treasurer
Dr. Jennifer Bloss, DVM	Secretary
Lynn Wilde	Director
Heather Merewood	Director
Gottlieb John Marmet, JD	Director



## WINC'S TEAM: ANIMAL CARE *A Finch's Recovery From The Brink of Death*

## Wildlife In Need Center Staff

Kim Banach	Executive Director
Lisa Rowe	Director of Operations & Advanced Wildlife Rehabilitator
Elisa Fosco	Director of Animal Care & Advanced Wildlife Rehabilitator
Dr. Jennifer Bloss	Staff Volunteer Veterinarian
Cherish Streit	Wildlife Care Supervisor/ Advanced Wildlife Rehabilitator
Sara Imperl	Wildlife Care Supervisor/ Advanced Wildlife Rehabilitator
Sarah Kraemer	Education Coordinator
Katie Cyr	Animal Care Staff/ Wildlife Rehabilitator
Kylie Kroscher	Animal Care Staff
Samantha Pieper	Animal Care Staff
Judy Dollhopf	Marketing Assistant
Terri Anne Ullman	Volunteer Coordinator
Sondra Prchlik	Marketing & Administrative Assistant

## Wildlife In Need Center Advisory Board

Holly Schlenvogt  
Dean Pipito  
Lou Banach

This American Goldfinch was found on someone's bird feeder with his eyes completely crusted shut. The finch's eyes were crusted shut because he had conjunctivitis, which is a bacterial eye infection caused by the bacterium, *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*.

Conjunctivitis affects the tissue surrounding the eyes causing it to become red, swollen, irritated, and even crusted or swollen shut. In most cases, swelling and discharge become so severe that birds can no longer open their eyes. This loss of their eyesight can quickly lead to starvation and increase their vulnerability to predators. Conjunctivitis can affect many songbird species but is most commonly seen in finches.

The bacteria is often spread at bird feeders, which is why it is very important to regularly disinfect your feeders. We recommend cleaning your bird feeders with a mixture of soap and water to remove any debris and feces, then use a diluted bleach solution to disinfect, and finish by rinsing and drying before refilling. We recommend doing this on a regular basis, approximately once

every other week, or allowing your feeders to empty and disinfect them before refilling. By doing this, you can help prevent the spread of this disease and ultimately save lives!

Our staff very carefully cleaned up his eyes so he could open them again. However, since he was unable to see, he was unable to forage for food and was extremely thin when he arrived. He also had a brain injury, causing neurologic symptoms, including impaired balance and coordination. He had an extremely bad respiratory infection, resulting in him needing supplemental oxygen for almost a week.

After a few weeks of treatment with antibiotics, and anti-inflammatories, his infection, brain injury and the swelling in his eyes had resolved. After spending some time in our "cold room" to re-acclimate to the weather. He was moved to an outdoor aviary to finish reconditioning, in preparation for his upcoming release.

*Story by Cherish Hutchinson Streit*



## WINC's MISSION: EDUCATION

### Education Interns Make The WINC Go 'Round!

Whenever a closet needs organizing, or an enrichment device needs building, or 50+ Owl Pellet kits need assembling for the gift shop... there is a team of heroes that WINC relies on to lead the charge! Those superheroes are our Education interns!

#### Meet the Interns:

##### Amelia "Mia" (Shown in Left Photo)

Mia was a stand-out candidate for the Education Internship due to her already-impressive resume of Animal Ambassador experience! She had volunteer experience at the Wildlife Center in Green Bay and she completed an Animal Husbandry internship at the Northeastern Wisconsin ("NEW") Zoo before taking on the role of our Ed Intern with gusto. Mia has core duties caring for the Mammal Team of Animal Ambassadors, but beyond that she has fulfilled every other duty for us under the Oconomowoc sun! She designed flyers that adorned the "WHOOO Loves Wildlife" Meet & Greet, she has co-presented at Education Programs, and her capstone work has been to put together an Education Intern booklet that will serve as a resource for all other interns that follow her. What a legacy to leave behind! Her superhero name is "Mia the Magnificent!"

##### Emma

Emma is a recent high school graduate who has plans to go to college at Steven's Point for Wildlife Education! She started off as

a Data Intern for the Education Team at WINC: meticulously digitizing the Animal Ambassador Care Charts and Behavioral Logs so that they can be referenced within WINC's database in perpetuity. Since then, she has been helping the Education Team with odd jobs that are incredibly important, time-consuming, and require her unique ingenuity. The pictures included show Emma helping to build a tee pee for enclosure enrichment (middle photo above), and deep-cleaning the flying squirrel enclosure for an entire day! Her superhero name henceforth is "Emma the Indomitable!"

##### Ella and Gianna (Shown in Right Photo)

Ella and Gianna are students at Kettle Moraine High School that have taken on WINC internship duties for class credits in Environmental Science! They are a dynamic duo who are compassionate about animal care, careful about diet prep, communicative about any questions they have, and most importantly, eager to spend enrichment time with all of our Animal Ambassadors. They both have a special love for our resident gray tree frog, Fergus. They find his antics endearing to observe, and that is endearing to the rest of the Education Team! Ella is hereby dubbed "Ella the Unyielding," and Gianna will be known forevermore as "Gianna the Astonishing!"

#### You can be a Super Intern, too!

If you are interested in an Education

Internship at the Wildlife in Need Center, reach out to our Education Coordinator Sarah Kraemer for more information via her e-mail: [skraemer@helpingwildlife.org](mailto:skraemer@helpingwildlife.org)! We currently have an opening for a Summer Education Intern and are openly accepting applications.

#### Story by Sarah Kraemer

*Want to do even more to support the Wildlife In Need Center?*

*Explore our Amazon Wishlist to see how you can directly help us care for our wild neighbors.*

*Simply scan the QR code below to view the list and make a difference today!*



## WINC'S MISSION: ANIMAL CARE

### *It Takes A Village (& A Tree Crew)*

Baby season has officially begun here at the Wildlife In Need Center! On February 28, we admitted our first Great Horned Owlet of the season!

Great Horned Owls are among the earliest nesters in North America, with the breeding season beginning in January and February. While Great Horned Owls are great parents, they are not the best homemakers. They do not build their own nests; instead, they use old, abandoned nests. This means sometimes the chosen nests are not the sturdiest, and sometimes this causes babies to fall out during strong winds or storms.

This little fluff ball was noticed on the ground at the base of the tree by a neighbor passing by during a walk. Luckily, they stopped to investigate and called us for advice. We advised them to carefully contain him and bring him in for an examination.

Upon examination, he was found to be in healthy condition aside from being a bit dehydrated and hungry. Our staff provided injectable fluids to help his hydration and supportive care and feedings until we were able to set up a plan to attempt renesting.



The following day, an amazing team of professional tree climbers assisted us with this renesting operation. They safely climbed up the tree where the old nest was, secured a makeshift nest, and placed the young owlet hatchling into it. Then, with the help of people from the neighborhood, we monitored the nest to make sure mom returned to care for her baby. Luckily, it worked! Mom was spotted back on the nest with her baby that same night and was spotted again the following morning!

We are so happy we were able to successfully reunite this baby with his mom, thanks to this amazing crew and the caring neighbors. Sometimes it takes a village to make these success stories come true!

Shout out to Curt of Treetop Explorer, LLC and his climbing friends Tom and Bob for the awesome job helping with this, we couldn't have done it without your skills and passion for helping wildlife.

*Story by Sara Imperl*

### *Become a Hero for Our Wild Neighbors*

*Join our Wildlife Animal Champions — a special community of monthly donors who help save wild lives all year long.*

*Your commitment keeps our wild neighbors safe, healthy, and free.*

Learn more at [www.helpingwildlife.org/monthly-donor-wildlife-animal-champions-member](http://www.helpingwildlife.org/monthly-donor-wildlife-animal-champions-member)

*or scan the QR code below.*



SCAN ME

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### *A Season of New Life, Lasting Legacy, and Growing Care*



Spring has arrived, and with it comes the beginning of our busiest season at the Wildlife In Need Center. Each day, our team is welcoming the first wave of young wild patients: cottontails, Eastern Gray and Red Squirrels, Great Horned Owlets, Mourning Doves, and many more. These tiny lives remind us why this work matters so deeply, and why our community's support is so essential.

This spring, we were also incredibly grateful to gather with so many of you at our annual banquet. Thanks to the generosity of our guests, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and friends, the event raised more than \$31,000 to support our mission, education, and research. A special thank-you goes to our event sponsors, We Energies Foundation and Ixonia Bank, whose partnership helped make the evening possible. To everyone who attended, donated, bid, volunteered, or cheered us on from afar, thank you. Your compassion helps carry us into the busy season ahead.

We are also honored to officially welcome Durinda into our Dakota Society. Durinda recently shared why she chose to include Wildlife In Need Center in her will, and her words beautifully reflect the hope, compassion, and lasting impact a legacy gift can make.

"I chose to include Wildlife In Need Center in my will because the wildlife who arrive there injured, orphaned, sick, and frightened, and fragile all deserve every chance to return to the wild where they belong. Supporting this work ensures that long after I'm gone, a fox will run free, a hawk will fly again, and a life that might have been lost will live wild and free. This is the legacy I want to leave: hope for the wildlife who cannot ask for help themselves. I have such deep love and compassion for all birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. That's why at the age of 72, I'm a forever intern!! And I thank this organization for making my dream come true."

Thank you, Durinda. Your legacy is a powerful reminder that compassion does not end with a lifetime. It continues forward in every animal given a second chance. For those interested in leaving a legacy of hope for wildlife, please visit: [helpingwildlife.org/get-involved/dakota-society/](https://helpingwildlife.org/get-involved/dakota-society/)

As we prepare for the months ahead, we have also been hard at work improving the spaces and systems that support our patients. We recently installed a new dryer and a new pressure tank, and we are currently exploring options to increase our hot water capacity, something that becomes especially important during the busy season. We are also grateful to Partners 4 Wildlife for supporting several important enclosure projects, including a new opossum/songbird enclosure and the rebuilding and expansion of two enclosures that can now house raptors. Though many of these updates support the behind-the-scenes work of wildlife rehabilitation, they have a meaningful impact on the care we provide every day.

Story by Kim Banach



Dakota  
SOCIETY

*The Dakota Society is made up of generous individuals who have chosen to include WINC in their estate plans, ensuring their legacy helps protect our wild neighbors well into the future. For more information, contact Kim at [kbanach@helpingwildlife.org](mailto:kbanach@helpingwildlife.org).*

*A meaningful message from one of our cherished Dakota Society members: "Supporting WINC has been incredibly meaningful to me. By including them in my legacy, I know I'm helping protect our wild neighbors for generations to come."*

14<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Fine Wine & Dine

Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
from 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Westmoor Country Club



## CHASE'S CORNER: *A Final Farewell*

Chase lived here at WINC his whole life, since coming to us as a baby in 2016. His playful nature and love for toys and people captured the hearts of his caretakers and visitors over the years. Chase was a fulfillment of a dream for Leslie Kiehl, our Education Coordinator, and Lisa Rowe, Director of Operations to have a skunk ambassador. His life was dedicated to educating people about skunks. Since it is not legal to rehabilitate skunks in Wisconsin, his role as an educator was extra-important! We hoped to change people's attitudes about skunk so that someday the law would change to allow skunk rehabilitation in Wisconsin like some other states. There are wildlife rehabilitators in Wisconsin who would raise orphaned babies and treat adult skunks as we do other rabies vector wildlife, if we were allowed.

For over a decade, Chase took his job seriously, always happy to travel to new places and to meet new people. Chase was an attention magnet. Wherever he went, people stopped, looked, and then came over to meet our skunk staff member. Over his career, Chase did a total of 604 educational programs, educating over 182,000 people. He has appeared on CBS 58 News, Fox 6, TMJ4 – The Morning Blend and WDJT-TV to name a few.

Last month, after several days of diarrhea, he stopped eating and seemed uncomfortable. We became concerned as this was very abnormal. With our vet, we sedated him to do x-rays and blood work and unfortunately, we found something we did not expect. He had a very large mass in his abdomen, and another one in a lymph node. Sadly, Chase had



metastatic lymphoma that had progressed and metastasized very quickly. Due to the size of the masses, and their impact on his health, comfort, and quality of life, we had to make the most humane and difficult decision to say our goodbyes. We take comfort in the fact that he was his loving playful self, right up until his final few days. Chase captured the hearts of nearly everyone he met, he will be dearly missed and never forgotten.

*Rest in peace, sweet boy.*

*Story by Elisa Fosco & Lisa Rowe*



## WINC'S TEAM: VOLUNTEERS

### *Behind The Scenes: Our Amazing Produce Pickup & Delivery Volunteers*

Every day at Wildlife in Need, our rehabbing animals and ambassadors rely on fresh fruits and vegetables as an essential part of their diet. From raccoons, opossums, squirrels and many ambassadors, produce helps keep our animals healthy and thriving. What many people don't see, however, is the dedicated group of volunteers who make sure that food arrives and is ready for the animals each day.

Our incredible volunteers work quietly behind the scenes but play one of the most important roles in the care of our animals. These volunteers travel to local stores and donors to pick up generous produce donations, transport them back to the facility, and help unload and organize everything once it arrives. It's not unusual to see boxes of berries, greens, squash, apples, and other fresh foods arriving in large quantities.

Once the produce reaches Wildlife in Need Center, another group of hardworking volunteers sorts, stores, and distributes it so that it's ready for other animal care staff to prepare daily meals. It takes teamwork, dedication, and a lot of lifting, organizing, and coordination to make sure nothing goes to waste and every animal receives the nutrition it needs.

This effort happens week after week thanks to volunteers who generously give their time, energy, and vehicles to help keep the system running smoothly. Their work may not always be in the spotlight, but it truly makes a difference in the lives of the animals we care for.

We are always looking for volunteers who would be interested in helping with produce pickup and delivery, animal care, education & care of our ambassador, office and phones. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Terri Anne at [volunteer@helpingwildlife.org](mailto:volunteer@helpingwildlife.org).

We appreciate every one of our volunteers! Thank you all for devoting your valuable time to the animals in our care.

*Story by Terri Ann Ullman*



### *What's the Hoot?*



Keep an eye on your inbox for our monthly *What's the Hoot!* Newsletter – featuring inspiring wildlife patient stories, upcoming events, and important updates.

Not on the mailing list yet? Email [Development@helpingwildlife.org](mailto:Development@helpingwildlife.org) to start receiving *What's the Hoot!* straight to your inbox.



# Wildlife In Need Center

Stay Connected & Mark Your Calendar

contact@helpingwildlife.org

W349 S1480 S. Waterville Rd  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

www.helpingwildlife.org

(262) 965 - 3090

## 2026

May 2026

### Baby Bird Feeding Orientations

Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026  
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM  
Wildlife In Need Center  
Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026  
3:00 PM - 5:30 PM  
Wildlife In Need Center

July 2026

### Summer Meet & Greet

Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Wildlife In Need Center

October 2026

### 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Fine Wine & Dine

Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
Westmoor Country Club, Brookfield, WI

December 2026

### Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026  
All Day  
Wildlife In Need Center

## 2027

April 2027

### 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Banquet

Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2027  
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
The Legend at Brandybrook, Wales, WI

What's the Buzz?



SCAN ME

Remembering special people through gifts of honor & memory  
Scan the QR code to visit our Remembering Special People webpage

Website



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