

# NEWSLETTER FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Volume 12

March 2003

A quarterly newsletter produced by the Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina (WRNC). WRNC's mission is to share information and knowledge about wildlife rehabilitation for the benefit of native wildlife. For comments or questions, write to: WRNC, 2542 Weymoth Rd, Winston-Salem, NC 27103.

## Continuing Education

- The following IWRC Basic 1AB classes are upcoming:
  - April 26-27 at Wildlife Rescue, Inc., Everett, WA
  - June 14-15 at Pacific Wildlife Care, San Luis Obispo, CAFor more information:  
[www.iwrc-online.org/Training/training.html](http://www.iwrc-online.org/Training/training.html)
- Wildlife Rehab, Inc. will hold their next 11-week wildlife rehabilitation class in Sept. 2003 at Forsyth Technical Community College. For more information: [www.wildliferehabinc.org/classes.html](http://www.wildliferehabinc.org/classes.html)
- The Piedmont Wildlife Center is offering a bird rehabilitation class on April 9<sup>th</sup> intended for their volunteers or those who will be part of the network of rehabilitators in the Piedmont area. For more information: [www.piedmontwildlifecenter.org](http://www.piedmontwildlifecenter.org)
- On April 27<sup>th</sup> there is a turtle rehabilitation class given by C. T. Ralston at the Orange County Public Library in Hillsborough. For more information: [www.piedmontwildlifecenter.org](http://www.piedmontwildlifecenter.org) or library phone (919) 245-2525
- The NC Wildlife Resources Commission offers a series of workshops called Project WILD in multiple locations across the state. Each workshop focuses on how to integrate wildlife as tools into the teaching of various subjects. Education credits and certification are available for teachers and scout leaders. For more information: [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org)
- The NC WRC also has multiple wildlife centers throughout the state where children and adults can learn more about wildlife in a fun environment. For more information: [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org)

### Disclaimer

The opinions, techniques, and recommendations expressed in the articles of this newsletter are those of the author(s) and do not imply endorsement by WRNC.

## Welcomes and Introductions

WRNC welcomes three new board members: Jason Wood, Mary Weiss and Linda Bergman.

### Jason Wood

Jason has been a wildlife rehabilitator and educator for 7 years. He currently works for the Roanoke Island Animal Clinic. He has experience with a variety of different species, including small mammals, reptiles, sea birds, shore birds, songbirds & raptors. He works with NEST (Network for Endangered Sea Turtles), the marine mammal stranding network, NOAA and the whale entanglement network. He has also assisted the North Carolina Aquarium, US Fish & Wildlife Red Wolf project and the US Park Service. In 2002 he ran a hard campaign for the office of Dare County Commissioner, which gave him valuable experience in diplomacy & working with public officials.

### Mary Weiss

Mary was a licensed nurse in New York, raised eight children and took care of many different animals, farm and domestic, while the children were growing up. She raised and showed Saint Bernards for thirty-five years and for the last five years has rehabilitated approximately 150 small mammals per year. Mary is a member of the NWRA and IWRC. She has attended many WRNC meetings and provided refreshments and snacks.

### Linda Bergman

Linda holds a Master of Science degree in Educational Psychology and teaches at Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville. Shortly after retiring from the Marine Corps in 1992, Linda began volunteering at the Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter in Morehead City and achieved her certification as a wildlife rehabilitator for the state of North Carolina. She is a member of WRNC and NWRA and continues to be an active volunteer at OWLS.

The board also welcomes back Jean Chamberlain and Dr. Bobby Schopler for another three-year term.

#### Website overhaul

NWRA has launched a new website. Same location but lots of new information! Check it out at:  
[www.nwrawildlife.org](http://www.nwrawildlife.org)

#### New editor

Your WRNC newsletter has a new editor, Sally Davis, NCSU CVM 2007, vet student. This newsletter is your tool for reaching everyone else in WRNC. Please feel free to submit comments, corrections, announcements and submissions for future newsletters to [wekaterrapin@hotmail.com](mailto:wekaterrapin@hotmail.com) or the address on newsletter header on page 1. **Next editorial deadline is Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.**

#### New directory

April 2003 the new state directory will be published. Carla Johnson needs any changes by 4/15. 24 hours a day you can make your changes online at [www.ncwildliferehab.org/wrncupdm.htm](http://www.ncwildliferehab.org/wrncupdm.htm). Alternatively, email Carla at [wildfeed2@aol.com](mailto:wildfeed2@aol.com) or mail WRNC at the address in the box to the right.

#### So you'd like a state directory?

Of course, but you will miss out if your membership dues are not up to date! Dues can be mailed to WRNC, 2542 Weymouth Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27103. Make \$20 checks out to WRNC.

#### Upcoming regional meetings

Linda Bergman will organize upcoming regional meetings in the east, Mary Weiss in the west, and Carla Johnson and Jean Chamberlain in the central region. The west meeting will be at the Weiss' house from 10-2 on May 17, 2003. Further information updates will be at: [www.ncwildliferehab.org](http://www.ncwildliferehab.org)

## First WRNC Symposium

The Symposium Committee

WRNC's first symposium was a hit! More than 130 people participated in the symposium.

Two concurrent sessions meant that we were able to offer a wide variety of topics, something for everyone. On Saturday morning, there were popular sessions on critical care for squirrels and rehabilitation basics for opossums and cottontails. Meanwhile, bird rehabilitators learned about lead poisoning in waterfowl, tips on how to get songbirds to self-feed, identification of our various raptors, and detailed information on chimney swifts. Late morning, there was a session on zoonoses. In the afternoon, fluid therapy, parasitology, and care of waterbirds kept some attendees engaged, while others learned more about emerging diseases and regulations (see the article titled "Federal and State Wildlife Officials Speak at Symposium" on page 6). Some participants even rushed their lunches to take advantage of the opportunity to observe a demonstration on how to give a physical exam. A very entertaining presentation on wildlife education brought Saturday to a close.

Returning on Sunday morning there were sessions on avian caging, turtles and their shell repair, getting supplies for free, gardening for wildlife, and physical therapy. The morning wrapped up with a question and answer panel session. On both days many people took a tour of the zoo's wildlife rehabilitation center.

The speakers did a fabulous job. Everyone only had praise for the speakers as being knowledgeable and presenting well.

Many attendees commented that the days were so jam packed with learning experiences that there wasn't time to catch your breath. The most common suggestion was to schedule breaks into the morning and afternoon or to leave more time between sessions. Some of the other suggestions included requests to add more hands on sessions and for coffee and tea to be provided. Many respondents also requested a field trip. Finally, tours of the zoo rehabilitation facility should be available for more folks.

We want to thank the participants for taking the time to complete the evaluations. We will try to accommodate as many of these suggestions as possible next year.

On the evaluations 97.5% rated the symposium as either good or excellent. We plan to make next year even better. Mark your calendar for January 31 & February 1, 2004.

### One wrinkle in the silver lining

While the conference was a resounding success one black cloud marred it. One of the slide projectors loaned to WRNC by the zoo was lost. If anyone knows anything about it please contact Joan McMurray or any of the Board members. If the projector isn't located WRNC will have to replace it cutting into the funds generated by the conference. That money is needed for mailings throughout the year and next year's conference.

### Board member contact list (email)

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## Pinkie Squirrels

Jennifer Burgin

It is that time of year again, and for all of us suffering from baby withdrawal, the wait is almost over. The first pinkies of the season are arriving! The excitement may quickly turn to panic when those first ones arrive in a cardboard box lined with cold damp leaves, barely moving, barely breathing, pale, not the bubble gum pink they should be. You struggle to bite your tongue, wanting to blast the well-meaning people who presented them to you. Don't they have the sense to know that little babies are fragile, that they need to be kept warm? Then they proudly announce that they managed to get some milk into the babies this morning before they came, you know, the evaporated milk, egg yolk and Karo syrup formula that is supposed to be so good. No, they don't think the babies inhaled any, but one bubbled some out its nose, does that count?

Most of rehabbers have had similar horror stories, but remember, even healthy newborn squirrels that weren't fed, dropped, chilled, or carried in by the dog or cat, can be a challenge. It is easy to forget how small they really are, how fragile, with their translucent skin and umbilical cords that may still be damp. And how can anything, so little, scream so loud?

When neonates first arrive, it is likely that they are both hypothermic and hypoglycemic, low body temperature and low blood sugar. Rub a small drop of light corn syrup or dextrose directly on their gums. This can be done as you begin the warming process, since it does not have to be swallowed, but will be absorbed directly through the mucus membranes. This approach can often revive an almost lifeless baby, so that once it is fully warmed; it is able to take oral fluids. Unlike like older babies, who can thermoregulate by moving to cooler portions of their enclosure, if pinkies move off a heated area they quickly chill and may be unable to move back. The best option is to find a way to maintain a constant safe temperature throughout the new nest (see box "Adapting a baby wipe warmer" on next page for a product idea).

Prolonged hypothermia can affect the immune system, leaving the baby vulnerable to develop "exposure" pneumonia. Rehabbers must weigh the risk of upsetting the delicate balance in the gastrointestinal system against the benefit of beginning prophylactic antibiotic treatment. Either Sulfamethoxazole & Trimethoprim (SMZ/TMP) at a dose of 25 mg/kg BID or Albon 50 mg/ml at a dose of 50 mg/kg are generally well tolerated by squirrels. However, make sure you monitor and maintain hydration throughout administration of this antibiotic.

It always takes time for any orphan to accept a new nipple. Remember that these babies may not yet have learned to nurse efficiently on their mother. Use a 1 cc O-ring syringe for maximum control and to minimization of the risk of aspiration.

Always rehydrate any animal before beginning milk replacer. To calculate the amount of replacement fluids required, multiply the baby's weight in grams by estimated percentage of dehydration to determine the # ml needed:

- 5-6% Mild: Tacky mucous membranes, decreased urine with darker yellow color, signs of vomiting, diarrhea or other fluid loss; skin turgor return time = 2-5 seconds.
- 6-8% Moderate: Weak pulse, depressed, lethargic, eyes sunken, skin turgor return time = 2-5 seconds.
- 10-12% Severe: General signs of shock; skin inelastic, no return of skin turgor, increased heart rate.

*Continued on next page*

Generally 1/2 of deficit (in addition to daily maintenance requirement of 0.06 ml/gm) is replaced in first 24 hrs and balance over following 36-48 hrs. Administer no more than 3% of body wt per hour and 10% per day. Administer fluids orally if possible, subcutaneous or IP if baby is unable to swallow. Tubing should only be done if experienced, never tube feed neonate flying squirrels their esophagus is too delicate.

After initial re-hydration, milk replacement formula should be introduced gradually. The generally recommended full strength formula is:

- 1 part of a 33/40 formula powder, e.g. Esbilac, Zoologic 33/40 or Fox Valley Day One 32/40
- 2 parts water

Pinkies can't tolerate a high fat content powder such as Multi-Milk or its equivalent. Formula should be reconstituted (mixed) with water per label directions then further diluted with Lactated Ringers Solution, Pedialyte or water as follows:

- 2-3 feedings 1 part liquid formula and 3 parts dilution fluid
- 2-3 feedings 1 part liquid formula and 2 parts dilution fluid
- 2-3 feedings 1 part liquid formula and 1 part dilution fluid
- Then full strength

Only increase the concentration, if the baby is tolerating the formula. If diarrhea or bloating occurs, back down a step for several feedings before increasing formula strength again. Remember, the maximum stomach capacity of squirrels and most small mammals, is 5-7% of their body weight. It is safest to err on the conservative side and limit to 5% per feeding until the baby is older. Pinkies should be fed approximately (8 times a day) every 2 hours. There is an excellent article about squirrel rehab in the current issue of Wildlife Rehab Today (<http://wildliferehabtoday.com>) with specific information on calculating baby squirrels nutritional needs.

### **Adapting a baby wipe warmer**

A baby wipe warmer is an actual product designed to take chill off a package of baby wipes. It is a rigid plastic tub resembling a small crock-pot with a heating element sealed inside. Remove the lid and line the bottom and sides with polar fleece or similar soft ravel free material to make an inexpensive, but efficient, incubator. Used warmers can often be found at thrift stores and resale shops for just a few dollars.

### **Did you like Jennifer's Article?**

Every rehabber has interesting cases, innovative techniques and other tips to share. Please send us the information.

All submissions will be edited for clarity and contents, and suggested revisions will be sent to authors for approval prior to printing. Please see page 2 for how to contact the editor.

### **Did you know?**

NWRA/IWRC minimum standard guidelines are available for FREE online along with a detailed checklist.

Minimum standards document: [www.nwrawildlife.org/documents/Standards3rdEdition.pdf](http://www.nwrawildlife.org/documents/Standards3rdEdition.pdf)

Checklist: [www.nwrawildlife.org/documents/checklist.pdf](http://www.nwrawildlife.org/documents/checklist.pdf)

Free Adobe Acrobat software required to view these documents: [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html)

## **Raptor Rehabilitation Seminars at Carolina Raptor Center**

Mathias Engelmann

Since 1993, CRC has hosted seminars for beginning and intermediate-level raptor rehabilitators. These classes combine slide shows with hands-on demonstration and practice sessions. They serve as a good starting point for anyone interested in learning basic skills or as a refresher course for more experienced rehabilitators. Discussions throughout the day emphasize information and techniques used on a daily basis in the care of injured raptors. Sessions are highly interactive; participants ask questions throughout the day and share their experiences. In order to promote in depth discussion, only a limited number of topics are covered in detail during each seminar. CRC staff and experienced volunteers share their knowledge and assist participants during the hands-on portions, which usually involve practicing techniques on dead specimens or in some cases on live non-releasable birds.

During the 1990's, each seminar ran for two and a half days with lectures covering many aspects of raptor rehabilitation. This format proved overwhelming for both teachers and students. So for the past several years, there have been two independent daylong seminars offered annually in February or March. To date, over 120 people from 8 states have attended. Many of these rehabilitators have attended multiple seminars.

Our most recent seminars occurred this past February 22nd and 23rd. A total of 10 people from 5 states attended, some for only one day, most for both days. As always, attendees represented a wide range of experience levels, ranging from an environmental educator and several seasoned rehabilitators to a brand-new rehabilitator.

This year, dependent on response to a spring mailing, a summer class may be offered. For more information on these seminars contact Mathias Engelmann at Carolina Raptor Center, at (704) 875-6521, extension 108 or at [mathiasengelmann@birdsofprey.org](mailto:mathiasengelmann@birdsofprey.org).

## **Federal and State Wildlife Officials Speak at Symposium**

Jean Chamberlain

Randall Wilson from the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and Carmen Simonton from US Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the rules and regulations governing wildlife rehabilitation. One point emphasized by both speakers was that a federal permit is required in addition to a state permit for anyone rehabilitating any birds besides English Sparrows, English Starlings and Pigeons. Some rehabilitators in NC have incorrectly believed that only a state permit is required because songbirds are listed on their state permit in the box marked "willing to rehabilitate the following." However, further down the page the permit also states, "a permit is also required from the U.S.Fish & Wildlife Service for the rehabilitation of injured and orphaned birds" (see box on next page for an example).

Carmen also covered the regulations governing centers and sub-permittees. She emphasized that sub-permittees listed on a permit are only authorized to assist at the address listed on that permit. They are not authorized to care for the birds at their own homes or at any other location not specified on the permit.

The central focus of Randall's talk was Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), the reason for the recent termination of the deer rehabilitation program in North Carolina. The state's holding area for deer has been closed and all deer rehabilitation permits are being cancelled. More information on these topics can be found at the NC Wildlife Resources Commission's and USF&W's web sites are <http://216.27.49.98/> and <http://www.fws.gov/> respectively.

***Can I rehabilitate songbirds if I have a state permit?***

Your state permit may say the following:

**WILLING TO REHABILITATE THE FOLLOWING:**

SMALL MAMMALS  
SONGBIRDS

**Are you then authorized to rehabilitate songbirds?**

**Only if you also have a federal permit**

because your state permit also says the following:

“A permit is also required from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the rehabilitation of injured and orphaned birds. “

**Do I look familiar? Have you filled me out and mailed me?**

**WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS OF NC END OF YEAR REPORT FOR 2002**

REHABILITATORS NAME OR INSTITUTION NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_ REGION \_\_\_\_\_

	SPECIES/COMMON NAME	DATE IN	WHERE FOUND		REASON FOR REHAB	DISPOSITION*	DATE OUT
			TOWN	COUNTY			
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2							
3							
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**The importance of data**

The data you send us helps WRNC to assist YOU, the rehabilitator. Uses include:

- Acquisition of funds
- Focusing education efforts
- Connecting rehabilitators with common interests to each other
- Evaluation of statewide trends

Data is confidential and not used to check-up on rehabilitators or report at the state or federal level.

WRNC  
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED