

2020 Instructors

Dr. Anna Allen

(Zoonotic Potential and Disease Control)

Dr. Anna Allen is the Southeast Region Emergency Programs Veterinarian for the Emergency Programs Division at the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. She has been with the Department since December 2012.

Dr. Allen was born in Chapel Hill and grew up in the Triangle area. She received her undergraduate degree in Biological Sciences from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA, where she competed as a member of the Varsity Equestrian Team. She received her DVM from NC State University College of Veterinary Medicine and a MPH from UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health. Dr. Allen has worked in private small animal practice, a large private equine practice, and as an instructor in the Veterinary Technology Program at Miller Motte College in Raleigh. In 2013, she became a certified Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician after completing the training course at Plum Island, NY. Dr. Allen lives in Raleigh with her family. She has a 5-year-old son, one cat, and two dogs. In her free time, she enjoys reading, yoga, running, hiking, traveling, and movies.

Cindy Bailey

(Rehabbing Squirrels 101, Rehabbing Squirrels 201, Release Protocols for Small Mammals)

Cindy Bailey was raised and educated in Durham. She graduated from NC State with a degree in Animal Husbandry and also has a master's degree in criminal justice. She began her career in animal welfare working as the Executive Director for the Animal Protection Society of Durham. Later, she transferred and worked as the animal control director for Durham retiring in 2010.

Her volunteer career in rehabbing began over 38 years ago when she took her first rehab classes with Pat Sanford at the APS of Orange County. The classes were 8 weeks long and covered squirrels to snakes. Her early years of rehabbing were with songbirds and fawns and then she moved to raccoons. When she could no longer rehab raccoons (because of rabies) and fawns (because of law changes), she worked solely with squirrels. In addition to squirrels, she has been rehabbing opossums from naked 20-gram neonates to release. She also releases for fellow rehabbers.

She lives on a 45-acre farm in Oxford (near Kerr Lake) with her husband, 6 rescue dogs, 2 domestic turkeys, 23 Guinea hens, 6 ducks and 26 chickens. She feels lucky to be able to raise the squirrel babies and release them on the farm. She finds an inner peace working with her wildlife babies.

Daron Barnes

(Rabies Species Regulations)

Daron graduated from NC State University in 1996 with a Bachelor's degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences. He has been an employee of the NC Wildlife Commission for 18 years, and is currently the Section Manager over Regulated Activity Permits (RAPS) and the Human Wildlife Interactions (HWI) call center. He is responsible for endangered species permits, wildlife and fish collection licenses, captivity licenses for rehabilitation and holding, falconry licenses, controlled hunting preserves, wildlife damage control agents, special hunt opportunities, non-farmed cervid facilities, gamebird propagation licenses, taxidermy licenses and special permits. He also supervises a human wildlife interaction hotline providing assistance and technical guidance to callers regarding wildlife observations, injured wildlife, and wildlife damage.

Victoria Benson, MT(ASCP)

(Medical Math for Small Mammal Rehabbing)

Victoria is a graduate of UNC-CH and a registered Medical Technologist with 35+ years of clinical and research experience in microbiology and oncology biology laboratories. This extensive scientific background aids in her passion for wildlife rehabilitation; microscopy, identification of parasites, accurate laboratory calculations, and familiarity with the metric system, among other things, are all tools that help ensure the successful outcome that we all strive for.

Victoria has been an active rehabber and mentor/trainer with Wildlife Welfare, Inc. for several years, and is delighted to be able to devote more time now that she is retired and no longer has to transport baby animals on a Triangle Transit bus to her job at UNC-CH!

Linda Bowen

(Bats 101, Kindergarten for Wood Ducks)

Linda is licensed by CT DEEP, specializing in bats and also by USFWS to rehabilitate migratory birds, specializing in waterfowl. She works closely with CT DEEP and USFWS regarding bat

populations and White Nose Syndrome and is coauthor of the nationally recognized protocol Rehabilitating Bats with White Nose Syndrome which is available for free download at www.bats101.info. She authored the chapters on bats in both the NWRA Topics in Wildlife Medicine: Orthopedics and Medical Management of Wildlife Species: A Guide for Veterinary Practitioners published by Wiley-Blackwell and the section on bats in the upcoming revision of IWRC's Minimum Standards. Tabitha's Tale is her children's book about bats which is also available through her website www.bats101.info. She has published articles in state and national rehabilitation journals and has lectured at several wildlife conferences in the northeast.

David Davenport

(Banquet Guest Speaker)

David grew up with a love for animals, the outdoors and exploring new places. Travel was important to his parents who likely instilled this passion in Dave. These childhood pursuits stayed with Dave into adulthood and have evolved into a lifetime of conservation, education and travel. Academically, Dave received a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and Biosocial Science from Coe College before earning and Master of Science in Zoology from North Carolina State University. His professional career includes conducting field research and ecological survey work for the Wildlife Conservation Society in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. He then served as the Curator of Living Collections – Herpetologist for the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. Currently, Dave is the owner and president of EcoQuest Travel, Inc. – an ecotourism company that is dedicated to providing responsible ecological and adventure travel worldwide. He is active in a variety of organizations including serving as president of NC State’s Fisheries and Wildlife Alumni Association and Chairman of the Policy, Regulation and Trade Working Group for the North Carolina Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

Dr. Ernesto Dominquez

(Handling and Restraint of Wildlife, Amphibians)

Dr. Ernesto Dominguez grew up in Mexico City. After two years of studies in medical school (2003-2005), he quit med school to follow his dream of becoming a veterinarian. Dr. Ernesto graduated from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) School of Veterinary Medicine in 2013. During his last year of veterinary school, Dr. Ernesto spent some time doing his graduation project in avian orthopedics at the Wildlife Center of Virginia. After getting his degree, he completed different postgraduate training in wildlife centers and zoos around the world, including the Belize Wildlife and Referral Clinic, Arcas Wildlife Center in Guatemala, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, African Safari Zoo in Mexico, and the Johannesburg Zoo in South Africa. From September 2015 to June 2016 he completed an internship in Raptor Medicine and Surgery at the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Ernesto is currently the Hospital Director of the Wildlife Center of Virginia; he is Board Certified by the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, a Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator, and he oversees the medical treatment and rehabilitation of more than 2,900 patients per year.

Maureen Eiger

(Release Criteria for Birds, Choosing Where to Release Birds)

Maureen Eiger is the founder and Director of Help Wild Birds; Roanoke’s only nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation organization that exclusively rehabs migratory birds. She is a State and Federally Permitted Bird Rehabber and has been rehabbing various species of birds for over 12 years. She has been a contributing writer to the North American Bluebird Society Journal, The Roanoke Star Newspaper, various Audubon and bird club newsletters and the blog 10,000 Birds. She receives hundreds of calls a year from people from all over the country asking for advice to solve their "bird problems" or answer bird related questions. Maureen is an avid birder, a Virginia Bluebird Society Board Member and previous Vice President of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club. She enjoys teaching bird rehab and non-rehab bird programs to various groups and networking with other bird rehabbers across North America. You can say her life is very “birdy.”

Mathias Engelmann

(Bat House Workshop)

Mathias is a biologist and the Senior Rehabilitation Coordinator at Carolina Raptor Center where he has worked for 37 years. Under the guidance of staff veterinarian Dr. Scott, Mathias, along with several other staff members and many volunteers and interns, he provides day-to-day care for 800-1000 new raptor admission every year. Mathias specializes in cage construction and raptor banding.

Nina Fischesser

(Working with Your Vet)

Nina Fischesser has been a licensed rehabilitator since 1991, was the founding WRNC president. She works with avian, small mammalian, and reptilian native NC species. She holds a MA in Environmental Education and Communication from Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC Canada, and a BA in Therapeutic Recreation from Southern Illinois University. Nina has been employed for 15 years at Lees McRae College in Banner Elk, NC, as Director of the May Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, teaching wildlife rehabilitation and wildlife education through experientially based program as a BS in Wildlife Biology: Concentration Wildlife Rehabilitation. Nina was employed by the North Carolina Outward Bound School as a field instructor for 11 years, and is a strong believer in experiential education through wildlife rehabilitation and wilderness adventure.

Lisa Fosco (Elisa)

(Skunk Rehab, Fox Rehab, Rehabbing Rabbits)

Lisa Fosco (Elisa) is a wildlife biologist and a licensed veterinary technician that has been rehabilitating wildlife for over 30 years. She spent several years as a home rehabilitator and has managed high volume wildlife centers across North America, including her time managing the largest rehabilitation organization in Canada. Lisa was an instructor for the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council for 14 years and has taught professional wildlife medicine and rehabilitation on 5 continents. She has also worked in the field, focusing on the re-introduction of endangered species. Lisa's most recent role was as the Director of Animal Care at Walden's Puddle Wildlife Center in Nashville Tennessee.

Kelsey Gaylor

(Opossums 101 Opossums 201, Failure to Thrive in Small Mammals)

Kelsey Gaylor is from Alabama and has always had respect for the environment and those who live in it. She always had a soft spot for animals and would bring home anything injured that she could help. When she found the Possumwood Acres ad looking for interns, she volunteered over 340 hours and never left. She was hired as a wildlife tech, and not long after that was moved to rehab coordinator. She has been working with Toni O'Neil for three years and has learned much about our native species.

Taylor Gregory

(Fluid Therapy Lecture and Lab)

Taylor Gregory is a zoological focus 3rd year veterinary student at North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to vet school, she worked in a wildlife hospital in New England and has been an active member of the Turtle Rescue Team at NC State since starting veterinary school. She has a passion for working in the conservation of large carnivores, marine mammals, sea turtles, and birds of prey. Her favorite local wildlife are both raccoons and coyotes for their adaptability to living alongside humans and mischievous nature. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a zoological medicine residency in order to reach her ultimate goal of working in wildlife conservation.

Melisse Hopping

(Medical Terminology)

Melisse has been a licensed rehabber for almost 20 years. She has taught wildlife rehab classes at Forsyth Tech in Winston -Salem and has taught classes at the symposium for several years. She has presented sessions at schools and local organizations. She is on the board of WRNC, and Owl’s Roost Wildlife Education, a local nonprofit organization.

Carla Johnson

(Handling Wildlife Calls)

Carla has been rehabbing for over 25 years and is on the board of WRNC. She has coordinated wildlife rehabilitation classes through the local community college in Winston-Salem, NC and presented countless environmental education programs to the surrounding community. Carla is WRNC's current President, is on the symposium committee and helped put together and teach the refresher course taught by WRNC. In her spare time, she rescues dogs from puppy mills and natural disaster situations, is the Southeastern Region coordinator, treasurer as well as one of the board of directors for Chihuahua Rescue & Transport, a national 501(c)3 organization and enjoys working to place unwanted hairless dogs.

Susan Jones

(Mammal Physical Exam Lab)

Susie Jones is a third-year veterinary student at NC State University with a focus area in small and exotic animals. She helped organize the two previous WRNC Symposiums as a veterinary student liaison, and she has spent three summers at large wildlife rehabilitation centers working with a wide variety of species. Her professional interests include zoological medicine, anesthesiology, and internal medicine.

Traci Keller

(Bobcat Rehab)

Traci Keller is the Wildlife Care Assistant Manager for the Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center in Kirtland, Ohio. Traci has been rehabbing a variety of native Ohio wildlife for over 20 years, providing daily care to

both rehab patients and 30 resident animal ambassadors, including a Bald Eagle, various raptors, gray foxes, opossums, and variety of herps. Traci helps oversee the care of over 2500 animals that the center receives each year. Traci has specialized in bobcat rehabilitation, and has had much success with this species since 2013. Currently, the Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center is the only rehab facility in the state that rehabs bobcats. Traci has presented on this topic at both OWRA and IWRC symposiums in the past years.

Dr. Gregory Lewbart

(Turtle Shell Repair)

Greg has degrees from Gettysburg College, Northeastern University, and the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. He worked for a large wholesaler of ornamental fishes before joining the faculty at the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1993, where he is Professor of Aquatic Animal Medicine. He is a diplomate of both the American College of Zoological Medicine and the European College of Zoological Medicine, is an author on over 125 popular and scientific articles about invertebrates, fishes, amphibians and reptiles, and speaks locally, nationally and internationally on these subjects. He's also authored or co-authored 25 book chapters and edited or coedited four veterinary textbooks.

Kathy Lillard

(Introduction to Rehabilitation)

Kathy lives in Edenton with her husband and 2 cats. She worked at Wildbirds Unlimited for 3 years and enjoys working in her yard, volunteering in the community, and being outdoors in general.

Kathy has been a member of WRNC since it was formed, and has been helping behind the scenes for several years, especially during the Symposiums and Raffles. She has also been a member of NWRA and IWRC. "I have always loved animals and living in the country I rehabbed animals before I knew what rehabbing was." Now she is taking a break, but has been rehabbing for 21 years. Mainly, she rehabs small mammals (but not bunnies – I scare them to death!) She prefers to work with neo-nates, as she has the time to take them on! Kathy has served on the WRNC Board for 8 years and has also chaired the symposium raffle committee.

Rebecca Maher

(Approaches for Mitigating Risks for Compassion Fatigue)

Rebecca S Maher, MSW, LCSW. is a clinical social worker, currently in charge of Family and Community Services at NC State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Hospital. She came to NCSU CVM after practicing as a clinical social worker for more than 30 years in pediatrics at a major teaching hospital. She has particular interests in communication, palliative care, meaning making during times of loss, and developed and ran a program to support medical team resiliency. In addition, she was an active member of the clinical ethics consultation committee, and was involved in NCSU's work to establish an Ethics Committee for the Veterinary Hospital. She has also been involved in disaster work as a clinical social worker, both in eastern NC and in NYC after 9/11.

Toni O'Neil

(Introduction to RVS Rehab)

Toni O'Neil has been rehabilitating since 1991 and specializes in songbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and waterfowl. Currently she teaches the Wildlife Rehabilitation courses through Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville, NC and the online courses through the Animal Behavior Institute. Since 2003 she has been the Founder and Executive Director of Possumwood Acres Wildlife Sanctuary in Hubert, NC.

Lynn Oliver

(Woodchuck Rehab, Albinism)

Lynn Oliver is a home-based permitted wildlife rehabber from north west (remote and rural) VA who started rehabbing in 2005, because in 2004 she had fallen in love, head-over-heels, with a baby woodchuck that she helped rescue. She wanted to be able to raise them legally, and so she became an apprentice to a seasoned rehabber and the rest is history. Along with her rehab mentor, they started a non-profit in 2010 called Valley Wildlife Care. Lynn works primarily with woodchucks, but also takes in squirrels, flying squirrels, chipmunks and skunk babies. In her 'other' life, she does freelance graphic design out of her home. Lynn has a (adult) son with albinism, and with the help of an organization called NOAH (the National Organization of Albinism and Hypopigmentation), she's learned about albinism in both humans and animals, and speaks from a "mom and rehabber" point of view to help educate about what albinism IS and it is NOT.

Betty O'Leary

(Avian Physical Exam Lab, Beak Anomalies and Injuries, Feather Imping Lab)

Betty has 25 years of raptor experience at Carolina Raptor Center. She worked with birds in rehabilitation and permanent resident birds used for education. She operated a hawk watch and raptor banding station during fall migration at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge for four years, and assisted with two other stations for 10 years. She enjoys teaching others on raptor rehabilitation and care and performing necropsies.

Linda Ostrand

(Observation: First Look at an Old Problem)

Linda has BA in education and an MS in psychoeducational processes. She has worked with urban wildlife for over 30 years, rehabilitating wildlife in Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina. She now is the executive director of Our Wild Neighbors, a wildlife center in Hillsborough NC.

Barbara Ray

(Raccoon Rehab)

Barbara Ray received her Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from Ohio State University. She is currently Dublin's Nature Education Coordinator and the Rehabilitation Director for Crows Hollow Wildlife Care. Prior to Dublin, Barbara was the Director of Education for the Ohio Wildlife Center and Animal Programs Coordinator/Trainer for the Columbus Zoo from 1989-2001. She has worked as a licensed rehabilitator and veterinary assistant from 1981-present. As an Adjunct Professor at Otterbein University, she guided the captive wildlife management and environmental interpretive curriculum for the new Zoo and Conservation Science 4-year degree program, now in its 6th year. Both past and current responsibilities include creating environmental education programs and providing animal management services and consultation in the community to design and promote habitat modification and green corridors to facilitate peaceful co-existence with wildlife.

Dublin is one of the founding partners of the Ohio Wildlife Community Cooperative, a state-wide cooperative to promote peaceful and safe coexistence with wildlife, and Barbara sits on the committee to plan and implement the annual conference. She is also the Emerging Infectious Diseases and Rabies Vector Chair on the Ohio Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association Board of Directors, and created and teaches the rabies certification for the State of Ohio. She has earned numerous awards such as the Audubon Youth Service award and recognition for work in Environmental Education, animal behavior management and wildlife conservation.

Ann Rogers

(Medical Math for Small Mammal Rehabbing)

Ann has been a licensed home rehabilitator of small mammals since 1988. She has been federally permitted for songbirds since 1991. She is a board member of both Wildlife Welfare, Inc. and WRNC. She has a degree in mathematics from Duke University and retired from her job as a software developer in 2000. She is the mother of two adult sons, a Boston terrier, two house sparrows, and two pet mice, who all travel in a motorhome with her and her husband when they take extended trips.

Dr. David Scott

(Large Bird Bandaging Lab, Avian Necropsy Lab, Raptor Eyes and Eye Injuries)

David Scott earned his BS in Electrical Engineering from the University of Illinois in 1988 and his DVM in 1997. He is currently the staff veterinarian at the Carolina Raptor Center where he oversees the medical care of close to 1000 birds each year. His specialties include orthopedic surgery and bioinformatics and he has developed the RaptorMed medical management software system in use at many major rehabilitation facilities worldwide. He regularly speaks at avian conferences both nationally and internationally and teaches veterinary students in an intense hands-on RaptorVet externship program.

In addition to the 2nd edition of his book, "Raptor Medicine, Surgery and Rehabilitation" he just recently published "The red-tailed hawk: A surgical dissection", a detailed layer-by-layer of a common wildlife species.

Dr. Joni Shimp

(RVS Rehab and Vets)

Dr. Joni Shimp went to the University of Minnesota for her undergraduate degree and North Carolina State University for her Veterinary Degree. She works full time in her mixed animal veterinary hospital in Rocky Point, and founded Cape Fear Raptor Center in 2012. She has a strong background in Bald Eagle rehabilitation and reconditioning. She is a co-researcher and author on multiple Bald Eagle research projects. Joni, her husband Scott, and their two children manage and live on Broken Dog Farm, home to the UNC-Wilmington Equestrian team.

Dr. Carl Williams

(RVS: The Disease & Vaccinations)

Dr. Carl Williams is the State Public Health Veterinarian for the North Carolina Division of Public Health, where he has worked since 2004. In this capacity he serves as the supervisor of the foodborne, vectorborne and zoonotic disease surveillance and response programs.

He received his veterinary medical degree and master’s degree in microbiology from NCSU in 1997 and his bachelor’s degree in biology from UNC-Charlotte in 1991. Prior to working for the state of NC, Dr. Williams worked as a small animal practitioner in Carrboro NC, served as a Public Health Officer in the United States Air Force, and worked as the Vectorborne disease epidemiologist for the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

Dr. Williams is licensed to practice veterinary medicine in North Carolina and Wisconsin and is board certified by the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine.

Vicki Windham

(Here Be Dragons, Environmental enrichment in a rehab setting: starting a dialogue)

Vicki is the President/Director of North Mt Wildlife Rescue. She retired as a zookeeper after 22 years and has been a rehabber for the last 12 years. She specializes in reptiles, opossums and cottontails but also cares for other small mammals.

Linda Veraldi

(Release Protocols for Small Mammals)

Linda has lived in Raleigh for 37 years with her husband Sam, and two children and has always had a passion for anything with four legs. Originally from New York State, where as a child she always had dogs, bunnies, and horses, she was rehabbing before she knew it was a "thing". Finding Wildlife Welfare, Inc. and becoming a licensed Rehabilitator was a dream come true. As she enjoys rehabbing opossums, squirrels and bunnies, she has found her passion with opossums. She has been officially rehabbing for a few years and recently joined the Wildlife Welfare, Inc. Opossums Training Team and can't wait to share the passion. She loves to educate and inform everyone she meets about opossums and rehabbing and wants to launch a crusade to re-educate the public about their abuse and mistreatment.