

President's Message . . . For those of you who have been rehabilitating for the past decade - or two - think back to when you first started your wildlife rehabilitation days. Did you ever think you would still be doing this at this point in your life? We should be very proud of those who contributed to the field when it was in the early stages, making it easier for those who came into this profession later on. Yes, it is now a profession, a paid one at that! Those who have been hired at large centers probably started out as an in-home small sized rehabilitator. Look at how far they have come today! Let this be an inspiration for all you "newbies!" I remember when I first started out in 1991 and was told to look around at everyone in my very first training class - about 20 to 25 people were there. The instructor said that in five years she would be surprised if even one or two people from the class were still interested in this work. To be honest, I was shocked! Surely not - there most definitely had to be almost everyone still active at the five year mark from this beginning. Alas, it was true, and I think that it most likely still is today. Why? Because so many good intentioned people decide that since "they just love animals," they will help them. Are their expectations unrealistic? Did they realize the amount of



work, time, money, mess, more work, more time, more money and much, much more mess there would be? Probably not! So for all you who cleared your own five year mark, Congratulations! I think you will make it to become the next generation of "old timers" like me and the others here leading you on in WRNC. We look forward to you taking over and training the following generation. Wildlife Rehabilitation is such a worthwhile enterprise, and such a necessary profession. It doesn't matter if you take care of one rabbit, four squirrels, or a dozen opossums, those are all lives affected by your training, practice, devotion and skills. You have been blessed with their lives literally held in your hands. What you do means their life or death, and that can be a powerful motivator to be the best you can be! I am so proud to have been a part of WRNC since its early stages. Every person who contributed to the success of this organization is to be commended. Our Symposium continues to be highly effective in getting another batch of those "animal lovers" pointed in the right direction, eyes wide open and with realistic expectations. I bet they will be good for another decade or two and still going strong to be the leaders of tomorrow. I'll still stick around because this is something I believe in with my heart and soul. It is the passion for animals that I see in the eyes of the newcomers every year that inspires me to continue. Thank you for letting me serve as your President for the past two years. It has been an honor.

Toni O'Neil



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Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina, Inc.

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"REGISTRATION IS OPEN" for 2022 WRNC SYMPOSIUM! by Linda Bergman-Althouse

BUT THE DATES HAVE CHANGED!!! Due to a conflict at the Vet School, it was necessary to change the 2022 WRNC Symposium dates to Saturday and Sunday, January 22-23, 2022 with the "Meet & Greet Icebreaker" held Friday evening, the 21st. The Symposium will be here after the whirlwind holidays before you know it! SO . . . get registered now! The "IN-PERSON" event, held at the North Carolina School of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, NC will still be packed with all the GOODIES: Icebreaker on Friday evening (the 21st), our banquet Saturday night, selling rehab/wildlife books, invaluable networking, brand new (military green & royal purple) t-shirts and our traditional indigo blue sweat shirts at the sales tables all weekend, extensive education with expert speakers, fab fun, and we will have our mega-popular raffle again! We are receiving **RAFFLE ITEMS NOW**, but we always need more!! If anyone would like to donate to the raffle or bring an item(s) for the raffle, please email: Toni O'Neil at Oneil9734@yahoo.com OR Kathy Pedick at deertrackwildliferescue@gmail.com to coordinate your efforts.



This will be our **20th symposium (TWENTY YEARS!)**, and that's SPECIAL, so we plan to make it our biggest and best yet! There will be a full set of classes for beginners, classes for mammal, avian and reptile rehabilitators and classes for advanced rehabilitators and veterinarians. As usual, we will have several hands-on labs that we hope will garner vast interest for those who want that kinesthetic experience. We plan to make this symposium really special and want to see familiar, as well as, brand new faces. We are inviting several well-known experts to speak. Look for more information on the classes and speakers on our website. Registration through the North Carolina State University, College of Veterinary Medicine is now open. If funds are a little tight for you, but you still want to attend, check out the SYMPOSIUM SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY on our website (ncwildliferesearch.org) that will cover registration and hotel accommodations for up to three WRNC members. It's been too long . . . can't wait to see you all in January!



“REGISTRATION IS OPEN” for 2022 WRNC SYMPOSIUM! (cont.) by Linda Bergman-Althouse

EXHIBITORS: We are extending a personal invitation to all wildlife interest groups and the WRNC membership to set up an exhibit table displaying information about your group and the work you do with wildlife. What an opportunity for free publicity and to recruit new volunteers! You may also sell your wildlife-related merchandise, gift shop items, hand-made crafts - whatever you wish by taking this opportunity to raise money for your animals and your group! Now that we are “BACK” for the symposium - we anticipate even more attendees for 2022. Members and attendees are always looking for rehab items, supplies, t-shirts, books, pictures, etc. to take home from their trip. Jewelry & craft items are also big sellers, as well as yummy baked goods. People spend because it is for a good cause - YOURS!



If you or your group is interested in this opportunity, please email Toni O’Neil at Oneil9734@yahoo.com for the details, or go straight to our website; <https://ncwildliferehab.org> for the exhibitor application. Toni will be happy to answer any questions you may have. You can reserve a table for either one day or both days, and remember, there is no fee to be an exhibitor if you are associated with a non-profit organization or an animal group. Hope to see your organization represented!

(all symposium photos by John Althouse)



COVID Protocol for 2022 WRNC Symposium



Masks are required in all indoor spaces at the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM), unless you are actively eating or drinking. Outdoor seating for lunch is available outside the cafeteria and the two commons areas. Proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test within 72 hours of arrival is required. Vaccination records and test results (photo or scan) can be uploaded via a link in your registration confirmation email. You will need either a photo, a scan of your vaccination record or test results on your device to upload, or you can email a photo to the email address in your confirmation email (ceregistration@ncsu.edu). COVID guidelines are subject to change. *Please do not register if you are not willing to abide by the CVM/ NCSU's COVID regulations.*

Wild Animals Need Social Distancing, Too!

by Linda Bergman-Althouse

Social Distancing is a very popular buzz phrase these days, but the need for social distancing within the wild kingdom has always been required and sometimes demanded by wildlife themselves. Studies over a 38-year period have found that people need to stay at least 164 feet away from squirrels to avoid disturbing them. Even though these cute urban rodents are frequently found in what is referred to as a human's domain, such as our backyards, parks and gardens, as well as scavenging in human trash bins, all studies conclude that for the benefit of these little racers, people should avoid getting too close to them. This designated 164 feet holds true for other small wildlife such as cottontails, chipmunks, opossums and groundhogs, too, whether it's in person or from a vehicle. The studies state that the closer you are to these animals the more negatively they are influenced by people. Optimal social distancing space is determined by the size and behaviors of each species. Consider deer, elk or bears. These large animals must be afforded between 1,640



feet to 3,280 feet of space, even if you're only standing there looking at them. How about large birds of prey such as an eagle or a vulture? A buffer of 1,312 feet is recommended, but that distance will decrease to 300 feet if you are bird-watching much smaller birds such as robins, bluejays or cardinals. The experts conducting the studies say that "continued exposure to humans in less than these thresholds is most uncomfortable for the animal and has the potential to lead to lower survival and reproduction rates." The researchers recommend implementing an 820 foot cushion as a rule of thumb to minimize the damage caused by people. Some people think that because they have been closer to wild animals (i.e. backyard squirrels, coyotes or deer passing through) than the distances stated is just social distancing bunk, but there are animals who are habituated to human presence and then again, some aren't. Can you tell who's who? During the summer of 2020 and the spring of 2021 (the peak of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns) people were encouraged to venture out and get in touch with Mother Nature which is known to increase health benefits (physical and mental) for humans. At the same time, people flocking to the mountains, woods and coastal vacation lures can negatively impact wildlife populations when their turf is invaded, littering occurs and their need for social distancing is disrespected. Let's give them the space they need, require and at times, demand! As wildlife rehabilitators, we definitely have the need to get closer to wild animals, but this information is invaluable to pass on to the communities in which you serve.

Internships Available at WILDLIFE REHAB CENTER, NC ZOO

Summary: Wildlife rehabilitation is the care of sick, injured, or orphaned native wildlife for return back into the wild, in a condition that will optimize their chances of survival. The Valerie H. Schindler Wildlife Rehabilitation Center believes that compassion, civic responsibility & environmental stewardship are lessons best learned in the company of leaders who embody & practice these values. The center is a teaching facility, scientific in their approach, compassionate in their care, and is involved in rehabilitation, research & education.



public domain photo

Primary Role: Interns assist with the routine daily care of wildlife patients, as well as caring for the resident animal collection. Interns' duties include preparing diets, cleaning cages, admitting patients, feeding animals, answering phones, and record keeping. Interns will also have the opportunity to assist with medical tasks, as ordered by veterinary staff, such as administering treatments, helping with radiographs and assisting with surgeries. In addition, interns participate in special projects, tours, training, cage building/maintenance and animal rescues. The paid intern provides supervision and guidance to volunteers and unpaid interns and acts as liaison to the veterinary staff.

Requirements: Prospective interns must be in an undergraduate, associates program, or recently graduated (within one year) from a relevant field of study, be able to lift a minimum of 50 lbs., bend, stoop, stand for periods of at least 30



photo by Valerie H. Schindler Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Staff

minute intervals, walk on variable substrate, work in all climatic conditions, be able to read & follow instructions, communicate clearly, perform simple calculations and have dependable transportation. Interns must be rabies-vaccinated to care for adult self/feeding and education mammals. Unvaccinated interns may assist with the hand-rearing of orphaned mammals, care for birds and reptiles, and perform all other responsibilities. This position may not be suitable for individuals who are immune suppressed and/or pregnant. Persons who are hearing, sight, or speech impaired should bring this to the attention of the supervisor so reasonable accommodations can be made.

This internship is part of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Councils' Practicum Accreditation Program; interns will receive a certificate upon successful completion of the program.

Applicants: Preference will be given to candidates pursuing a career in animal care, such as wildlife rehabilitation, pre-vet, veterinary technician, zoo and/or aquarium and animal science students.

Availability and Application Deadlines

Summer Session	Fall Session	Spring Session
(Mid May - August) - March 5	(August - Mid October) - June 5	(March - Mid May) - January 5

Internships Available at WILDLIFE REHAB CENTER, NC ZOO

Internships available:

10 Week Unpaid Internships:

- This internship is a minimum of ten weeks, 200 hours, three 6-hour shifts per week, plus two hours of training every Wednesday.
- Must be available to work a set schedule alternating between opening and closing shifts, weekends including holidays.
- Housing available for \$300/month; must have own transportation.
- Spring -three positions available, Summer - seven positions available, Fall - three positions available.

12 Week Unpaid Internships:

- This internship is a minimum of 12 weeks, 360 hours, five 6-hour shifts per week plus two hours of training every Wednesday.
- Must be available to work a set schedule alternating between opening and closing shifts, weekends including holidays.
- Housing is provided, at no cost; must have own transportation.
- Spring - one position available, Summer - one position available, Fall - one position available.

This internship is part of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Councils' Practicum Accreditation Program

To Apply: Please mail an [application](#) to Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, North Carolina Zoo, 4401 Zoo Parkway, Asheboro, NC 27205 or email nczoo.wildliferehab@nczoo.org with questions.



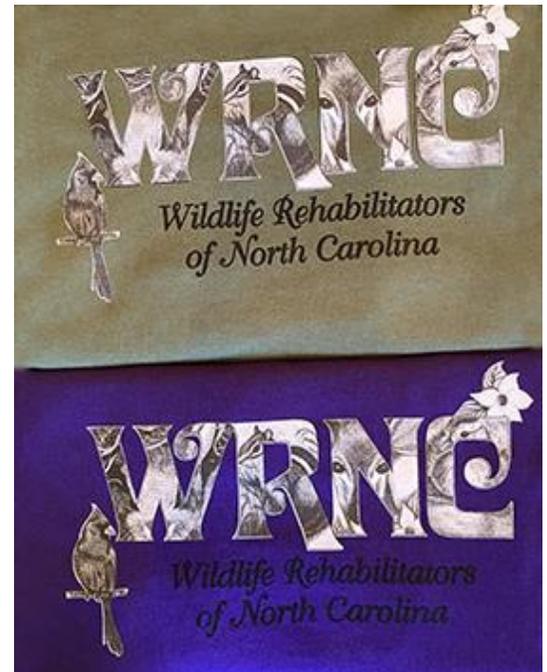
photo by Valerie H. Schindler Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Staff

ANOTHER HIRING OPPORTUNITY: The WNC Nature Center in Asheville is hiring Summer Camp Counselors to lead ecology focused sessions in summer 2022 with 1st-4th graders. All public health mandates will be followed. For more information and to apply, go [here](#). Summer camp at the Western North Carolina Nature Center focuses on zoology, natural history and recreation. They are looking for staff who are energetic and engaging, have strong leadership skills and the ability to model responsible mature behavior as they facilitate a variety of outdoor and indoor activities for youth.

*“Know that the same spark of life that is within you,
is within all of our animal friends.” Rai Aren*

New T-Shirt Colors for 2022 WRNC Symposium

Breaking News!! Along with remaining inventory colors, Chestnut Brown and Navy Blue, we will be offering two new colors: MILITARY GREEN and ROYAL PURPLE! Sizes range from small to 3XL and will be \$12.00 each, and the older inventory of BROWN and BLUE will only be \$10.00 each. We still have a few of our comfy and warm, INDIGO BLUE Sweatshirts, available too for \$20.00 each. Check out the new colors to grow your WRNC t-shirt(s) wardrobe!! People have been asking about the resurgence of olive green for a while now. Remember, STEEL GREEN, our first WRNC T-Shirt? Everybody loved that color and unfortunately, it rotated out of the color chart. WELL, now a variation of it is back! The brand spankin' new T-Shirts will be available at the Symposium, so pad your budget so you'll be able to pick up one, or maybe a couple, at the sales table! Really



lovin' these new colors, and I think you will, too!!! I'll be wearing one of them, FOR SURE! See you at the SYMPOSIUM in January!

(photos by Linda Bergman-Althouse)

Wands For Wildlife Offering by Kimberly 'Tashi' Brewster

Wands for Wildlife is offering a small version of their resource kits for the upcoming 2022 WRNC Symposium.

Wands for Wildlife is a nonprofit initiative that started as a program at Appalachian Wildlife Refuge outside of Asheville, NC. The program grew so big that it is now a separate organization. "Our mission is to engage the global Wand Community to come together and provide support and resources to wildlife caregivers."

The full **Wildlife Caregiver Resource Kits** are available for free upon request.

"We offer a free **Wildlife Caregiver Resource Kit** at no cost. The kit includes a variety of brushes, supplies and a Resource Guide with some best practices."

Please fill out the online form to receive a **FREE** kit - www.wandsforwildlife.org/requestform.html



Ghostly Visitors by L. Michele Poe



Imagine being told by someone searching for help with wildlife that they have a nest of five baby “somethings” and that four of the five “creatures” are white. White? After asking the caller to send pictures, it was determined that most were indeed white, one grey and four white squirrels! The caller, a logger for a tree service working in Forsyth County, heard the distress cries from the young ones and located them on the ground near a tree he’d

just felled. The logger was given instructions to attempt a reunification with mom, but his efforts were unsuccessful. Therefore, the babies were taken into the care of a local wildlife rehabilitator the next day.

Were the four white eyes-closed squirrels albino? Piebald? Nothing seemed to fit the strange coloring of the litter. The curious and excited rehabilitator started researching and learned the squirrels were neither albino nor piebald. They were indeed white squirrels; more specifically ‘White Brevard Squirrels.’ Brevard, population about 8,000, is a small town in Transylvania County and is located in the mountains of Western North Carolina about half way between Asheville, North Carolina and Greenville, South Carolina. Roughly only a dozen locations in the US, including Brevard, have documented that they have white squirrel colonies. While being raised by their Rehab Mom, the newly-received white squirrels in the litter grew quickly and robustly, becoming much larger than most grey squirrels, and their grey litter mate was also heartier and heavier than those from



an average all grey litter. The presence of white squirrels in Forsyth County is a mystery, which could be explained by intentional relocation or by genetic coincidence. According to local legend, Brevard's famed white squirrel population can trace their lineage back to a single pair of white squirrels that arrived in the town when a carnival animal truck overturned in 1949. The pair and their offspring began multiplying and appearing throughout the town. Though the truth of this Brevard history can be doubted, the fact is that white squirrels are actually a white mutation of the well-known Eastern Grey Squirrel. In 1997 the White Squirrel Research Institute (WSRI) was founded by Dr. Robert Glesener, a professor at Brevard College for 26 years. WSRI

is a local non-profit organization that provides financial assistance to the local licensed wildlife rehabilitators who care for the White Squirrel population. Monies are raised through personal donations and the “Adopt a

Ghostly Visitors (cont.) by L. Michele Poe

White Squirrel” program. He also founded the annual “White Squirrel Count” which is when college students are assigned to conduct a “walk through” squirrel population estimate. From their most recent count, WSRI estimates white squirrels represent one-third, or approximately 2,500, of the town’s total squirrel population, which is only an estimation because they are elusive and ever moving targets! It may be easy to assume that these distinct white squirrels are albino, which is the absence of melanin, but this is not correct. According to studies, the vast majority of white squirrels are not albino at all. Albino squirrels do exist, but they are very rare. Under the guidance of Dr. Glesener, the Institute confirms the Brevard White Squirrels are a color variant of the Eastern Grey Squirrel, a native species. The Whites are leucistic, “a condition characterized by reduced pigmentation in animals caused by a recessive gene.” Brevard White Squirrels are unique because their coats are mostly white, but there is a distinctive head patch and dorsal stripe that widens in the shoulder area. The head patch can be solid, horseshoe or doughnut shaped; it may resemble a triangle, a diamond, deer tracks or even a widow’s peak. They have dark eyes and there is some evidence that this pattern is inherited. The Whites found in Forsyth County



photo by Michele Poe



photo by John Althouse

fit the description and all have the same shaped head patch. They’re often described as mystical, ghostly and ethereal, but they are always considered a wildlife treasure. The White Squirrels became so prized that the Brevard City Council voted in 1986 to approve an ordinance declaring and establishing a sanctuary for squirrels, especially the white ones, that states it “shall be unlawful for any person to hunt, kill, trap or otherwise take any protected squirrels within the city by this section” on the council’s website. The township holds an annual White Squirrel Festival on Memorial Day weekend to celebrate their most coveted residents, complete with parade and “squirrely” activities! Brevard visitors often ask where they can find the unusual squirrels to observe and photograph. The Institute says, its “purely by chance” and refers them to a town map that indicates that most sightings occur on the Brevard College campus. While tempted to release the unusual litter near her, the Rehab Mom transported a then eight-week-old sibling group to an experienced rehabber in Transylvania County. The transfer

was made based on safety and survivability concerns. The family group will be cared for through the winter and released in the spring, when they will join an established colony in this protected community. For more details or to report additional sightings contact the White Squirrel Institute at whitesquirrelinstitute@gmail.com or (828) 548-0491 or write to Katy Rosenberg, White Squirrel Institute, 175 E. MainSt., Brevard NC 28712. Memorial Day weekend in Brevard anyone?

Meet the New WRNC Board Candidates!

Compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse

During the WRNC Symposium Banquet, the 2022 Board of Trustees election will occur. Three incumbents that you know fairly well will be re-running: Cindy Bailey, Jean Chamberlain and Toni O-Neil, but we'd also like to take this opportunity to introduce three new candidates who have thrown their wildlife rehab hat into the ring!

REBEKAH KRISTON of Lumberton, NC is the proud cofounder of A Wild Life: Center for Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Release in Lumberton, NC. She never anticipated that she would become a wildlife rehabilitator although she has always had a love for animals and taken care of those that were injured. Rebekah is a graduate of North Carolina State University and Appalachian State University and holds a Master's Degree in Communication Disorders. She practiced speech pathology for seven years, and following the birth of her daughter, Lilly, she became a stay-at-home mom. During this time, her work with rehabilitating wildlife gradually increased and she saw the great need for a local place of rehabilitation for the wild animals in her area as well as the need for public education about the animals with which we coexist. After collaboration with a wildlife rehabilitator friend, A Wild Life was founded. Rebekah currently holds a license to rehabilitate small mammals. She has completed training for raptor rehab and is currently awaiting USFW to grant her the raptor rehab permit. She is planning to obtain the RVS license and has completed the courses necessary to move forward in this area. Rebekah currently lives in Lumberton, NC with her husband, daughter, English bulldog, Lynx point Siamese cat, guinea pig, and a host of other animals. She enjoys writing music, singing, going to the beach, fishing, reading, traveling, and of course. . . . all things animals!



KATHY PEDRICK of Denver, NC began working in 1983 with Dr. Reynolds, a veterinarian in New Jersey, and assisted in medical procedures. She would take home animals to rehabilitate and release or discharge such as rabbits, opossums, squirrels, raccoons, deer and domestic pets. Kathy relocated to North Carolina in 1992, and married her husband Brian in 1993, and soon after, she began working with other wildlife rehabilitators; rehabilitating squirrels, rabbits and opossums. Kathy has two children; a daughter born in 1995 and a son in 2000. She established Deer Track Wild Life Rescue in 2016 in Denver NC. Kathy has attended WRNC Symposium classes in Raleigh in 2019 and virtually in 2020. She achieved her Rabies Vector Species certification in 2019. In 2021, she started the process of registering Deer Track Wildlife Rescue as a 501c3 non-profit. Kathy has made it her mission to help mentor and teach new rehabilitators. She hosted her first class in August of this year and had 25 attendees. Several of those participants have gone on to continue their training as wildlife apprentices. She currently has nine rehabilitators working in her charge, and at this time, four are in training to receive their RVS certification. Beyond wildlife rehabilitation, she works for Welbourne, White and Schmidt Dentistry as a dental assistant and has been with them for over 20 years.

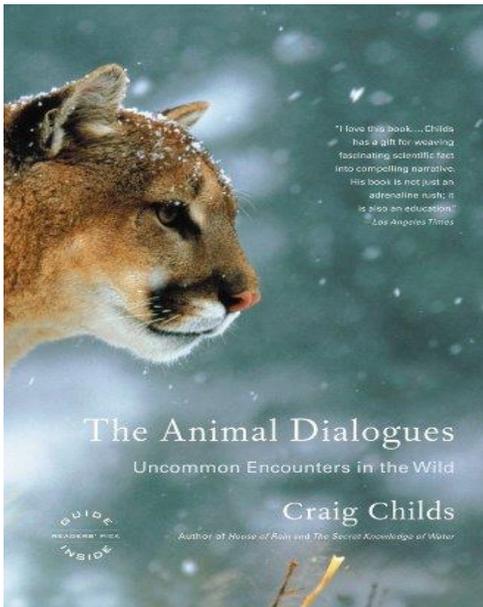


LINDA VERALDI, a resident of Raleigh, NC for 38 years, lives there with her husband Sam and two children. Linda has always had a passion for anything with four legs. She is originally from New York State where as a child, always had dogs, bunnies and horses. She was rehabbing before she knew it was a "thing." Finding Wildlife Welfare, Inc. in Raleigh and becoming a licensed rehabilitator has been a dream come true. She enjoys rehabbing opossums, squirrels and bunnies, but she has truly found her passion with opossums. She was asked to join WWI's Opossum Training Team as her love for this misunderstood creature was infectious. She helped launch the move for the 2020/2021 training season for dozens of new rehabbers to a Zoom platform. It was a great success! She is also a mentor to new rehabbers and loves nothing more than to see them grow and thrive with each group of babies they take in. She loves to educate and inform everyone she meets about rehabbing and especially, the wonderful Virginia Opossum and would love to re-educate the public about their abuse and mistreatment.



The Book Shelf compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse

The Animal Dialogues: Uncommon Encounters in the Wild by Craig Childs



Whether recalling the experience of being chased through the Grand Canyon by a bighorn sheep, swimming with sharks off the coast of British Columbia, watching a peregrine falcon perform acrobatic stunts at 200 miles per hour, or engaging in a tense face-off with a mountain lion near a desert waterhole, Craig Childs captures the moment so vividly that he puts the reader in his boots. Each of the forty brief, compelling narratives in *The Animal Dialogues* focuses on the author's own encounter with a particular species and is replete with astonishing facts about the species' behavior, habitat, breeding, and lifespan. But the glory of each essay lies in Childs's ability to portray the sometimes brutal beauty of the wilderness, to capture the individual essence of wild creatures, to transport the reader beyond the human realm and deep inside the animal kingdom.

Described as one of the finest nature writers at work in America today—a lyrical, dramatic, illuminating tour of the hidden domain of wild animals.

Check it out at: <https://amzn.to/3C2a3ur>

77% 5 Star Ratings

Wildlife Rehabilitation: Basic Life Support by Nancy A. Schwartz

To take care of injured birds and mammals takes more than a good heart, it takes knowledge and skill. Here is where you can receive plenty of both to expertly know how to feed and care for their injuries. Over 15 years of experience in assisting injured and orphaned wildlife has been written in a clearly organized, well-illustrated, easy-to-understand book that is invaluable and indispensable for anyone who may want to help an injured or orphaned bird or mammal.

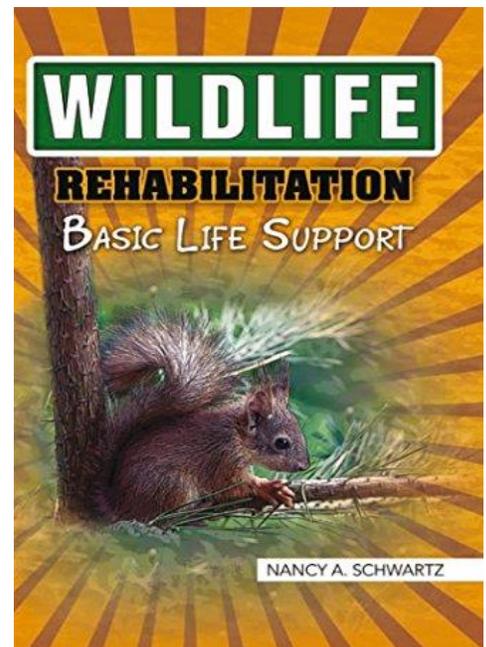
Considered very much a “beginner book” by some reviewers.

This book discusses:

- *Species information
- *Physical exams
- *Handling species
- *Basic housing
- *Feeding guide
- *First-aid
- *Treatment of oiled birds
- *Conversion factors
- *Permit information
- *Over 50 photos

Check it out at: <https://amzn.to/3kpbDk9>

78% 5 Star Ratings



HEY THERE! Reading is a **STAYCATION** where you can visit someone else’s world for a while or find those like-minded people you can relate to! **“The BOOK SHELF”** is a feature to showcase a few **recommended books** that you may enjoy. If you have a book recommendation, please email lbergmanx@gmail.com with your personal addition to **“The BOOK SHELF.”** Thanks!

“Checking In” with ‘SkyWatch Bird Rescue’

by Amelia Mason, Founder and Director



SkyWatch Bird Rescue is a ten acre bird sanctuary with an on-site avian clinic that launched in 2010 and is located in Castle Hayne, NC. Over the past year, the bird rescue has been very busy. Besides having a hectic summer raising approximately 1000 baby songbirds and several dozens of baby birds of other species, such as raptors and shore birds, (not to mention rehabbing adult birds too), we have been building, building and building, for the purpose of being open to the public for visits, tours, programs and events. We are now open to the public, and it's going very well. We do regular educational programs here on site. We just had a big Halloween event for kids that people enjoyed

so much, and we plan on making this an annual fundraiser. Like many shelters, the online donations through social media have decreased significantly during COVID times, so we've had to rethink where financial support can come from and decided that being open to the public for tours and visits and focusing on continuing to grow the sanctuary for that purpose is the best way for us to adjust. This Spring we made a special announcement that the Educational Ambassadors of Cape Fear Raptor Center have now joined the SkyWatch Bird Sanctuary. Dr Joni Shimp, owner of CFRC, is our vet and is just eight minutes up the road, so we decided to merge and bring all of their education birds to live here and be part of the ten acre sanctuary. That way there's even more educational exposure to the community for both organizations. We have many Shorebirds, Waterfowl and other species that are residents at SkyWatch Rescue, and they have such a great team of Education Raptors including non-releasable Eagles that will be on public display. This merger brings these amazing animals to more eyes to see, visit and enjoy, which strengthens public outreach even further. We can now offer



even more educational outreach to the community and exciting learning opportunities for students, to include raptor husbandry, caretaking and glove training. We have two projects we're working on now and hope to make those announcements in the spring. We are partnering with Cape Fear Garden Club to build a bee garden and to have Beehives with a flower garden here on site as another essential part of the sanctuary. This, also, will allow more opportunities for students to come and learn about the importance of bees, apiary education and beekeeping. In my opinion Bats, Birds and Bees are the three most important animals on the planet in regards to conservation, pollination, preservation of the woodlands, forests and crops, so that means yet another section of the property developed into an

“Checking In” with ‘Sky Watch Bird Rescue’

(cont.) by Amelia Mason, Founder and Director

educational outreach area. We are very excited for that! Like many shelters, I can safely say we are very happy summer is over. Fall is a time for building and making progress on the sanctuary to expand even further and to get ready for



another year. I hope by next Fall to have a big Bat housing project happening on site, and once again offer learning opportunities. Our mission at SkyWatch Bird Rescue is to raise public awareness through education and to promote preservation and conservation. Our ongoing daily work includes active intake of migratory and non-migratory birds, with a focus on rehabilitation and release back into the wild. From the



smallest hummingbird to the giant pelican, no bird in need is ever turned away. Birds receive medical care, food, safe housing and rehabilitation until they can be returned back to the wild for “a chance to soar once more.” Domestic and exotic birds receive permanent safe sanctuary at SkyWatch Bird Rescue, for a chance to retire into peaceful lives.



About the author & director: Amelia’s love for wildlife started at a very young age. She grew up in South Africa and spent much of her time in the Kruger National Park, the largest wild game preservation in the world. School vacations were spent at the Pretoria Zoo, taking zoological classes and helping zoo caretakers tend to the animals and exhibits.



After high school, she spent one year working in the Golden Gate National Park in the mountains of South Africa. Amelia came to the United States at age 19 and has lived in Hawaii, Arizona, New York, Connecticut, Oregon, Florida and finally settled in North Carolina. Amelia became a volunteer for a waterfowl rescue where she was surprised to learn that wildlife rescue in the states is not funded by taxpayer dollars. That knowledge inspired her to move through the ranks of wildlife rehabilitation to where she is today.

(all photos by SkyWatch Bird Rescue Staff)

ATTENTION: All Independent Rehabilitators & Wildlife Shelters or Centers! You are invited to “**CHECK IN**” with WRNC and other Wildlife Rehabilitators across North Carolina with **ADMIT, RESCUE** or **RELEASE** stories that are recent or grand memories that stand out for you. We are ALL interested in “**what’s up**” in your neck of the Tarheel State **REHAB WISE!** Just email a short **STORY** with a **PICTURE** or two to **SHARE** in our next WRNC Newsletter. lbergmanx@gmail.com Thanking you in advance for checking in and keeping us in the loop!

Training Opportunities! Never Stop Learning!

“IN-PERSON” Wildlife Rehab Classes as well as virtual are being offered. Always continue to check with the sources listed below for upcoming Wildlife Rehabilitation classes throughout the year. Some of the methods of training will still be virtual, Zoom & webinars, but we are moving toward normalcy and remember, the information and knowledge gained is extremely valuable no matter how we get it!

- **Reptile & Amphibian Nutrition Training** coming up Sunday, December 12, 2021 - 3 pm EST. Free, Live, Interactive, RACE-approved WEBINAR! Presenter: THOMAS H. BOYER, DVM, DABVP
Registration: <https://bit.ly/3BMed9B>
- The 20th annual **WRNC Symposium** (in-person) will be held January 21–23, 2022. Check our website (<https://ncwildliferehab.org>) for all the details! Registration is open and began Monday, November 15, 2021.
- **Wildlife Rehab, Inc.** is holding a 12 week course, “Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation,” with a weekly virtual class, to begin February 7th, 2022 and can accommodate anyone, from anywhere. You can register, via the website at wildliferehabinc.org, starting in November.
- **Carolina Raptor Center, Charlotte, NC** CRC offers rehabilitation seminars throughout the year. Contact Mathias Engelmann at 704.875.6521, ext. 108 or at mathiasengelmann@carolinaraptorcenter.org for information.
- **IWRC** offers a variety of “in person” and “online” classes from ‘Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation’ to ‘Zoonoses.’ Check them out at <https://theiwrc.org/courses> For more detailed information, you can call 866.871.1869.
- **ANOTHER WAY TO GO:** The **Wildlife Resources Commission**, Raleigh, NC offers a wildlife rehabilitation apprenticeship program to rehabilitate **baby squirrels, opossums and bunnies** through a mentor (that you find and initiate). Apply at <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Licensing/Other-Licenses-and-Permits/Wildlife-Rehabilitation-License#6629589download-the-license-forms> (compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse)

Interesting Facts About Bobcats! Compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse

- They are the smallest lynx (8 to 33 pounds, the size of a cocker spaniel).
- They are frequently misidentified (as domestic cats or stray kittens).
- They mainly eat small prey (such as rodents & rabbits but can tackle large prey such as deer).
- They are territorial (and primarily live a solitary life, except for mating).
- Bobcat mothers teach their young to hunt (she brings prey to the den at the end of the first month. Once kittens emerge from the den, she teaches them to hunt while still providing food for them. By 11 months of age, the kits are kicked out of mom's territory).
- The bobcat is crepuscular (being most active at dawn and dusk).
- Some bobcats are in trouble (although they've experienced a resurgence, they are listed as endangered because they are hunted for fur & killed by pythons or rodenticides that their prey have eaten).
- They can run very fast (speeds of up to 30 mph, but they are more sprinters than distance runners).



(photos by Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter Staff)

Save the Bobcats

- Don't buy items made with bobcat fur.
- Avoid using rodenticides to manage vermin.
- Don't release pet pythons into the wild.
- Support bobcat research and conservation organizations.

Native American Symbolism

The bobcat represents: clear vision in dark places, vigilance, patience and the ability to see through masks.

“Let’s Thank the Beavers!”

as written for ‘Carolina Salt Magazine’ by Linda Bergman-Althouse

Yes, there might be a few complaints about the presence of beavers in some areas, but it’s time to take a look at the beaver in a positive light that focuses on the benefits and inspirational values of these industrious and social, primarily nocturnal, semi-aquatic mammals. This is a species of wildlife that is a “few and far between” admit to the Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter in Newport, NC, but when it happens, it’s quite the event for the staffers and volunteers who work there. Despite some people’s displeasure regarding beaver behaviors, we wildlife rehabilitators stand tall, on each side of the beaver, in support of this magnificent animal capable of engineering landscape like very few animals can. Because the beaver is second only to humans in their ability to manipulate their environment, Native



Americans called them “Little People,” conveying great respect for their abilities. The beaver is the largest rodent (mammals that gnaw) in North America, weighing between 35 and 50 pounds as adults. However, beavers weighing up to 90 lbs have been reported. Beavers are two to three feet in length, with an additional 10-18 inches for the tail. When they reach 2 1/2 years of age, they select mates for life, and males and females are similar in size. Beavers live in large



family groups called colonies made up of monogamous parents, newborns called kits and the yearlings from the previous spring. Beavers have short front legs and webbed hind feet with a double claw on the second toe that they use to comb their fur. The beaver’s fluffy fur, made waterproof by coating it with castoreum, an oily secretion from its scent glands, is chestnut brown to blackish. Two noticeable features are its large, bright orange incisor teeth that never stop growing which are used for cutting bark and chiseling trees and its very large, uniquely flat, hairless tail. The beaver uses its flat, stiff tail as a

rudder for swimming, slapping the water to communicate warnings, storing fat and also as a third leg for support when standing upright. Beavers are slow and merely waddle on land, but agile and quick in the water. Some of the physical features and capabilities of the beaver are unparalleled and downright amazing! Did you know they have a set of transparent eyelids allowing them to see under water? Beavers also close their ears and nose while submerged. They can hold their breath under water for up to 15 minutes, and their lips seal behind their incisors, allowing them to gnaw wood underwater. Astounding! They live in freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers and streams, usually near woodlands, although beavers do not eat fish. They are strict herbivores and their favorite foods include leaves and green bark (cambium) from aspen, twigs, roots, aquatic plants such as water lily tubers, clover, grasses, apples, alfalfa and fast-growing trees. Beaver pruning stimulates trees and bushes to grow healthier and larger in the spring. When they take down a tree they don’t waste a thing. They eat the bark and buds before cutting up branches and sections of the trunk which are carried away for use in the construction of dams or lodges. Lodges built with tree limbs, sticks, twigs, mud

“Let’s Thank the Beavers!” (cont.)

as written for ‘Carolina Salt Magazine’ by Linda Bergman-Althouse

and sometimes rocks help slow the flow of floodwaters, control erosion and sedimentation, provides or enlarges habitat for wood ducks and other wetland wildlife, increases fish and aquatic plant populations, creates an ecosystem that breaks down pesticides, thereby producing cleaner water downstream and dramatically influences the maintenance of wetlands during extreme drought, recharging ground water resources. Now wouldn't you agree that's quite a bit to say "Thank You" for? Although beavers mark their territory with "scent mounds," piles of mud and sticks that the beaver coats in musk oil, they will occasionally share their home with another species such as a family of muskrats. Their lodges typically contain two dens, one for drying off after



entering the lodge under water and a dryer den where the family will live and socialize. The damming that results from the construction of their lodge serves a number of purposes for the beaver; water becomes deep enough for the beaver to swim in, they are able to stockpile food under water, and beaver lodges are designed with multiple, deep entrances and exits for protection from predators. Coyotes, black bear, eagles and humans are common predators of beavers. Beavers do not hibernate, remaining active all winter long. Most beaver mates will not reproduce until they are three years of age and typically birth one litter of offspring between March and May after a gestation period of four months. Two to six, eyes-open, kits are born weighing about one pound each and able to swim the day they are born, but to stay safe they stick to the water inside the lodge. They are weaned from

mother's milk within 6-8 weeks, but beaver young stay with their parents for at least two years before venturing out on their own, after stern encouragement from their parents, to find a mate and build their own domelike home. A beaver's longevity can be 20 years, but most live only half that. Okay, so they take a few trees here and there, but they aren't wasteful! They fell a particular tree for a particular reason; a larger mature tree will be felled to form the basis of a dam. A young, second growth tree will be felled for food. Beavers will also fell broad-leaved trees to encourage new growth, creating a closer food source. And okay, they may reroute a stream or two, but let's say thanks to the beavers for all the good things they do and the amazing, adorable creatures they are. I'm guessing most people will agree that the beaver is quite cute, especially baby beavers! However,



never approach a beaver, even if it appears docile, friendly or cute. They will become frightened and start hissing or blowing. That means the beaver is not happy. A beaver is a wild animal and capable of great harm to you (remember, they chew trees), so respect for these incredible little architects and environmental partners is due. This holiday season, when we reflect on all we are thankful for, let's thank the beavers!

(all photos public domain or stock)

Passerine Morbidity-Mortality Event

Latest Update from USGS National Wildlife Health Center Fall 2021 Newsletter



In late May 2021, wildlife managers in Washington D.C., Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky began receiving reports of sick, dying, and dead birds with eye swelling and crusty discharge, some of which also reportedly exhibited neurological behaviors. North Carolina, as well as other eastern coastal states, followed shortly with reports of the same phenomenon. An investigation ensued where laboratories examined numerous carcasses, tissues, and forage items via necropsy, histopathology, virology, microbiology, parasitology and toxicology. In addition to traditional techniques, transmitting electron microscopy (TEM) and metagenomics analyses (some laboratory results are still pending) were performed. Despite the exhaustive

collective effort of the laboratories, no definitive cause(s) of illness or death have been determined at this time. However, the labs have collectively been able to rule out important diseases and pathogens including salmonellosis, chlamydiosis, avian influenza, West Nile virus, coronaviruses, Newcastle disease, herpesviruses, poxviruses, and Trichomonas parasites. Jurisdiction-based messaging and media interactions during the event focused on ceasing backyard feeding during the event (to reduce the chances for infectious agent transmission at feeding sites), thorough and regular cleaning of feeding/watering devices, sick/dead bird reporting, and appropriate carcass handling and disposal. As of mid-August, reports received by the affected jurisdictions have decreased in many jurisdictions, likely signaling cessation of the event. In response, jurisdictions are modifying, and in many cases completely lifting, their previous guidance to cease feeding but encouraging continued vigilance by those choosing to resume feeding for any indication of illness around their feeders.

Lessons learned during this event include:

(public domain photos)

- collaborative regional approaches to disease events are feasible and desirable as they promote common understanding of event status, collective messaging, and inter-laboratory cooperation
- the public is concerned about passerine mortality as evidenced by the number of reports and media attention received for this event
- the public and media can be a useful source for reporting sick/dead birds
- webforms are useful tools to collect information from the public regarding disease events, and well-constructed, automated forms can greatly facilitate agency response while reducing staffing requirements to respond to emails and phone calls



“The Continued Existence of Wildlife and Wilderness is Important to the Quality of Life of Humans!” Jim Fowler

Squirrel from a Christmas Past by Linda Bergman-Althouse

When I got the late afternoon call, it didn't sound good; "a squirrel, cat attacked, rescued by a little girl who had been holding the adult squirrel in her lap for over an hour." As a wildlife rehabilitator with years of squirrel experience, my first thoughts were, this squirrel is mortally wounded and on his or her way to squirrel heaven or the squirrel's in shock. If it was the latter and the squirrel came around while on the youngster's lap, the scene would not be pretty and possibly become dangerous to downright bloody. After the gentleman caller told me that he thought "all the squirrel needed right now is to be held and kept warm," I knew I had to get that squirrel off the nine-year-old's lap. I met them at Burger King around 6 pm, and the little girl was still carrying the squirrel in her sweatshirt, even after my advisement to place her in a box for transport. The squirrel was moving but not responding normally, so I gently transferred her from the sweatshirt by towel to a kennel cab. In my home triage, I placed the kennel cab on a heating pad and gave her some time. An hour later, she was a totally different squirrel. She growled, chattered and charged the door more than once when I checked on her. Even though the towels evidenced no sign of blood, I figured a ride to the Outerbanks Wildlife Shelter (OWLS) in Newport, when I went in for my shift the next day, was in order to give her the once over for possible puncture wounds that would need to be cleaned and treated. The ride to the shelter went well, but the exam room was another story. She was totally IN rather than OUT of her little squirrel mind and wanted no part of an exam, probably reflecting on the cat that carried her around a day earlier, and I am much bigger than a cat! Still, although young, she considered herself full-grown! We decided not to sedate her because of the risks involved and since she was acting her normal squirrel "in survival mode self," avoiding us at all costs and still no signs of blood or injury, the decision was made to take her back to her neighborhood and the trees she knows. It was dark when I arrived home on Christmas Eve, so back into the triage she went. She would be a Christmas Day release, or so I planned. Christmas morning, after feeding all the outside critters, I headed into the triage, and it looked like a robbery had gone on in there; things were overturned, knocked off shelves, AND squirrel poo pellets were ON TOP of the kennel cab! She had chewed her way through the side of my toughest kennel cab and was no longer inside. She beat the live trap three times Christmas Day before finally being caught Christmas night. Then it snowed quite heavily the very next day! Snow is welcomed by most North Carolinians because it happens so rarely, especially on the coast and even more so around Christmas, but not so much when you have an agitated adult squirrel to release. So, I had to wait for a partial melt off before her release, which wasn't until two days later. While confined to the live trap, she had plenty of food and water, and even felt comfortable enough to do a little remodeling by chewing at least five cover towels to make nesting material and because it was Christmas, I used red, green and white towels, of course. She chose white as her dominate color as you can see. On Tuesday, I called her rescuers to let them know she was coming home. The little girl wanted to be present, along with her Dad and brother. I'm thinking there's not a lot to see with the speed of a squirrel release, but it was cute. They were all standing in the road, flagging me into the drive, when I arrived. I found a big tree and pointed the live trap towards it. No one saw anything! She was so fast, she was out of the trap and up the tree before our eyes could register anything! It even took a while before we could locate her in the tree! After dumping a zip lock bag of squirrel munchies at the base of the tall pine, I wished the family a Happy New Year, and we parted to enjoy the remainder of our holiday season. I was hoping, with everything the squirrel experienced in that past week, she knew to be a whole lot faster, way more vicious and a little wiser when moving about during her daily scheduled activities. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone!!



photos by Linda Bergman-Althouse



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WRNC Membership Renewal *by Ann Rogers*

REMINDER: DON'T FORGET to pay the annual \$15 dues to renew your WRNC membership! The fiscal year runs from May 1 through April 30 of the next year. Regardless of when we receive your dues during a year, the fee will cover that period of time. Remember, this change was made in 2019 to avoid confusion when the dues payment was formerly included in our symposium registration. Benefits for WRNC members include:



Reduced symposium registration fee	Option to appear in Wildlife Rehabilitator Directory
Access to Newsletter archives	Directory Information Made Available to the Public
Access to Membership Directory	Eligibility to apply for Cage Grants

Go to our website, to the Join/Renew link at [http://www.ncwildliferehab.org/.../member application...](http://www.ncwildliferehab.org/.../member_application...) Belonging to Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina, Inc. helps expand your network with other rehabilitators across the state so we all can share skill sets and knowledge with each other through face-to-face contact and formal training. Also, our annual symposium provides the necessary training for new permits, as well as our annual renewal requirements. WRNC worked for years to encourage the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) to allow RVS licenses among our ranks, and we were instrumental in its ultimate adoption and implementation. With our sustained developmental growth, WRNC has become a centralized training hub for North Carolina Wildlife Rehabilitators, as well as rehabbers from surrounding and more remote states. Please visit WRNC's website today to renew your membership!



(photos by John Althouse)

Quinto's Comedy Corner *by Linda Bergman-Althouse*

QUINTO SAYS: YOU might be a **WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR . . .**

IF . . . you shop for all your Christmas presents at the "White Squirrel Shoppe" in Brevard, NC or SquirrelStore.com.

IF . . . you come home from camping trips or hikes with bags of acorns.

Hey, BTW, Why don't you ever see crows as roadkill?

Because they are always yelling "CAW" "CAW!" (They might be Crows from Jersey or Boston, though!!)

(Thank you Andrew from Possum Wood Acres! – Good One!)

WRNC MEMBERSHIP! If you have a one-liner that describes the unique life and double-down passion of a Wildlife Rehabilitator (**tell it like it is!**) and you'd like to share with **QUINTO** for his column, please send it to lbergmanx@gmail.com



Quinto wishes everyone a . . .

WILD WINTER REHAB SEASON & A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS & HNY!

WRNC Newsletter Schedule

Do you have a wildlife-related idea you would like to share with the WRNC membership? Please submit it to our editors for consideration. How about a relevant article you found somewhere? Send us a link so we can ask for permission to reprint it. Email all articles, ideas, comments and questions to **Linda Bergman-Althouse** at: lbergmanx@gmail.com **Thank you!**

The WRNC newsletter is published four times a year. The deadlines for submissions are prior to:

March 1st

June 1st

September 1st

December 1st

WRNC Newsletter Editor & Copy Editors

Linda Bergman-Althouse	Editor	L. Michele Poe	C-Editor
Jean Chamberlain	C-Editor	Ann Rogers	C-Editor
Carla Johnson	C-Editor		

