

**President's Message . . .** It almost feels surreal to be entering our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the pandemic. I've heard people refer to this new year as "2020, too," and not in a good way. It makes me cringe, to be honest. I think we are all saying "enough already" to the forced changes we are dealing with, but I also think we really need to focus on going forward. There's simply no point in dwelling on "the way things were before." Now is the beginning of the "new normal," and we just have to face it, deal with it, accept it and move on. So, let's focus on what is really important – our upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium, March 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2022! And as surely as the sun rises every morning, we have another promise of new life as well – the annual spring "baby season." I'll gladly use my time and energy and center my activities around that constant! For some new rehabilitators, this may be their very first season of baby squirrels, opossums, rabbits and possibly dealing with baby birds. For those of us doing this work for a long time, I'm tempted to groan and remember the long days ahead, the non-stop feedings and the endless clean-up work. But I think we owe it to ourselves this year to take a deep breath and really stop and think about what we are going



to be doing. In the face of so many losses in the past few years, isn't it nice to be able to just concentrate and work with the innocent tiny little lives that are dependent upon our efforts to survive? Let's make this spring season about LIFE, about positive changes and about the joy that rehabilitating brings to us. Remember the smiles it puts on our faces when that little squirrel opens its eyes for the first time and gazes around in bewilderment, the



happiness we feel when that little baby bunny *finally* starts sucking on the nipple like crazy and the laughter as those little wobbly-legged baby opossums first start trying to walk and explore life outside the crab box without falling



over. My day feels complete when the nestlings start gaping for the very first time, sticking their little heads up and opening those tiny beaks as wide as they can. I feel fulfilled when I



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**Greg Lewbart, DVM**

*President’s Message . . . (cont.)*



pop bits of food into each one – it’s such a great feeling of accomplishment to fill those little guys up and get them to quiet down. I think we take too much for granted and do more complaining than celebrating life’s joyous moments. I have made it my personal goal this year to focus on the positive side and spend less time on negative energy. I issue a challenge to each and every one of you – can you make a difference in the world around you by keeping a smile on your face and a song in your heart? Can you

ignore the depressing daily world news and negative social media nonsense that we seem to be bombarded with every day? Let’s do what we do best and save those little lives that are depending upon us. Find the joy in that and relish that happy feeling instead of griping about the tragedies that we cannot fix. Concentrate instead on what you can do. We CAN influence the space around us and take comfort in our family, friends and faith. By doing our best as we go about our daily lives performing our tasks as usual, we share that positive energy created by using our unique rehabilitation skills. And that certainly is a wonderful way to make 2022 even better for everyone!



*Toni O’Neil*

(Photos courtesy of Possumwood Acres & Linda Bergman-Althouse)

*“Wildlife Rehabilitation” Is My Super Power,  
 What’s Yours?*

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# THE “2022” WRNC SYMPOSIUM IS THIS MONTH . . . FINALLY!

by Linda Bergman-Althouse

**YES, FINALLY**, the third time is an absolute charm! After having to choose three different time periods for the WRNC Symposium for a myriad of reasons, it’s going to happen this month, 18 – 20 March 2022. The “Meet & Greet Icebreaker” will be held Friday evening, the 18th. SO . . . if you aren’t registered yet . . . get registered now! The “IN-PERSON” event, held at the North Carolina School of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, NC will be packed with all the GOODIES: Icebreaker on Friday evening (the 18th), our banquet Saturday night (March 19<sup>th</sup>), book-selling, invaluable networking and rolling out brand new (military green & royal purple) t-shirts to accompany our traditional indigo blue sweatshirts. We will be providing top-notch training presented by some of the best guest speakers and wildlife rehabilitators in our field, and of course, THE mega-popular raffle! We have been receiving **RAFFLE ITEMS** for months, but we always appreciate more!! If anyone would like to donate to the raffle or bring an item(s) for the raffle, please email: Kathy Pedrick at [deertrackwildliferescue@gmail.com](mailto:deertrackwildliferescue@gmail.com) to coordinate your efforts. We’d like to thank our new Raffle Co-Coordinator this year, Kathy Pedrick and Grace White, who graciously accepted the opportunity to replace Toni O’Neil and Kathy Lillard. They are doing a great job and are appreciated so much!



This will be our **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for our WRNC Symposium (TWENTY YEARS!)**, and that’s SPECIAL, so we plan to make it the 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 one to remember 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 still open. It’s been too long . . . can’t wait to see you all in a few short weeks (March 18 – 20, 2022)!



# THE "2022" WRNC SYMPOSIUM IS THIS MONTH... FINALLY! (cont.) by Linda Bergman-Althouse

**EXHIBITORS:** We are still 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 & even though we've had to reschedule a few times, 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](mailto: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)

# SYMPOSIUM RAFFLE PREVIEW!

by Linda Bergman-Althouse

Aren't generous people marvelous? We definitely have a "Boat-Load" of them in our field of Wildlife Rehabilitation, so preparation for the 2022 WRNC Symposium Raffle is coming along splendidly! BUT don't let that prevent you from donating an item or two. The more the better we always say! So, just bring a little something along that weekend of 19-20 March 2022 if you'd like! There are so many wonderful and "must-have" items in the queue and coming our way this year, that a picture preview is in order so you can see what you should be budgeting your funds for! From fabulous art to critter apparel (but for us!), comfy wildlife themed pillows, wildlife rehabilitation supplies, nesting boxes (birds and mammals), training manuals, spa baskets, a gorgeous pink and mauve quilt and so much more! Take a gander at a few items that you might be lucky enough to take home!



# 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 ([cereregistration@ncsu.edu](mailto:cereregistration@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.*

## Feeder Wars - - Who Wins?

*by Linda Bergman-Althouse*

We stock our feeders to help out our feathered visitors, especially in the winter, and to enjoy the show of the friendly bustling about amongst the different species of birds that choose to partake in our generous offerings, right? Is that really what's taking place out there? Is it just amicable socializing over a good meal? Nope, it's strictly a business lunch! Get that tummy full, and you might have to bully or get into a few scrapes with other feathery ones to do it! "Some of the most intense avian rivalries are hashed out among the seeds and suet," says Eliot Miller, a researcher at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. When it comes to food, aggression is increased which causes those cute little birdies to gather and fight (or take flight). When it's time to eat, there's a pecking order—and those who come out on top are not always who you'd think. Birds must compete for access to feeder foods and clearly reveal where they belong in the pecking order. By simply noting which species fly off and which ones stand their ground, a database of victors and losers has been built. It stands to reason that bigger



birds are more intimidating. A chickadee may be spunky for its size, but at half an ounce, it doesn't stand a chance against a four-pound Raven. However, some of the winners are a little more surprising. For instance, Downy Woodpeckers are feared despite their diminutive stature. Researchers are convinced it's because of their formidable bills, which are used for hammering into trees and could double as battle gear. Hummingbirds also, as tiny as they are, came out on top. It is noted that because their metabolism is so high, and they need to feed more often than most birds, they don't take any crap from anyone, so they are very quick to tap into their aggression. They will push warblers and wrens away from nectar

feeders and not think twice about it! Here are a few results from studies over the years that reveal who comes out victorious at the feeders when tensions begin to brew:

# Feeder Wars - - Who Wins? (cont.)

by Linda Bergman-Althouse

**American Goldfinch vs. Black-capped Chickadee** - Both birds are low on the feeder totem pole, but goldfinches have a slight edge in size. Still, Black-capped Chickadees are far more aggressive than American Goldfinches though, meaning that they tend to get the prime spot.

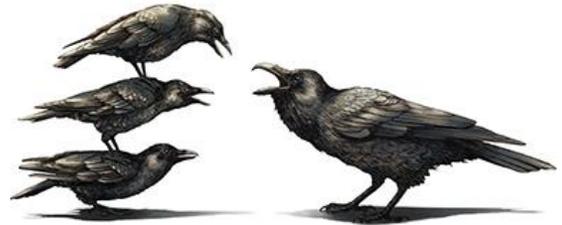
**Winner:** Black-capped Chickadee



**Mourning Dove vs. House Sparrow** - Mourning Doves are known for their passive natures, so their overall dominance score is far weaker than their mass suggests. Yet, they noticeably whip up on House Sparrows, which weigh about as little as a slice of bread (though they're a lot more aerodynamic). A Sparrow might think that he's coming up against a military C-130 with that gargantuan size in comparison and truly doesn't want to deal with all that!



**Winner:** Mourning Dove



**Common Raven vs. American Crow** - Ravens are much heavier than crows and can beat them in any one-on-one battle, but when there's a group of crows, the story is totally different. While ravens are typically solitary birds, crows work together with a "mob mentality" to push rival species out of their territory. Crows are extremely effective working in groups!

**Winner:** A murder of American Crows

**European Starling vs. Blue Jay** - These two species are perfectly matched, despite the Blue Jay's heavier weight and



bullying nature. It has been noticed that introduced species like starlings often don't fit neatly into the predicted pattern. This might have to do with how successful they've been at thriving in new environments (and the Starling's anthem might be that Tom Petty song, "Don't Back Down.")



**Winner:** Draw

**Pileated Woodpecker vs. Red-bellied Woodpecker** - You might think all



woodpeckers are created equal, but not quite. Research has found that there are obvious hierarchies within genres, as seen with Red-bellied Woodpeckers, which dominate the feeder scene when compared to their very large Pileated cousins. We need more science on why, but in the meantime, just put your money on the **Winner:** Red-bellied Woodpecker.

*"The bird is powered by its own life and by its own motivations." Unk*

(Photos for "Feeder Wars" Public Domain)

# *What You Should Know About Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease*

*by Sabrina Kapp, WRNC VSL, NCSU*

**What is it?** -- Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease is a fatal disease in rabbits, is highly contagious, and unlike other rabbit hemorrhagic disease viruses, it affects both domestic and wild rabbits. Quite often, the only signs of the disease are sudden death and blood-stained noses caused by internal bleeding. Infected rabbits may also develop a fever, be hesitant to eat or show respiratory or nervous signs.



**Background** -- Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease is caused by a non-enveloped RNA virus in the calicivirus family. Two variants have been described to cause clinical disease, classical Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV), which has been observed in Europe since 1984, and RHDV2, a newer serotype observed in 2010. RHDV2 is a highly contagious, fatal disease of both domestic and wild rabbits, as well as other lagomorph species. Although endemic to Europe, RHDV2 has recently been documented in several States, and is now spreading rapidly throughout the United States. The resulting stable endemic range in the US has been identified by the USDA as the western half of the country, with the exception of Washington State. An isolated case was reported in Kentucky, December 2021, in a domestic rabbit. The virus has not yet been identified in North Carolina.

**Transmission of RHDV2** -- RHDV2 is highly contagious and spreads through blood, feces, and bodily secretions. The virus travels readily on fomites, such as outdoor veggies, shoes and clothing. It is also stable at extreme temperatures, including those below freezing and over 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Biting insects have also been shown to act as a vector for this virus. Additionally, the virus has been isolated from the feces of carnivorous birds and mammals which have eaten an infected rabbit. Rabbits who survive RHDV2 can continue to shed the virus for 2 or more months after resolution of clinical signs.



Domestic rabbits should not be allowed outdoors or have any direct or indirect contact with wild rabbits.

**How to tell if a rabbit has RHDV2** -- Clinical signs are often nonspecific, and in approximately 90% of cases result in acute death of the patient. Early signs include inappetence, lethargy, fever, seizures, icterus, and difficulty breathing. These are often in conjunction with, or followed by bleeding from the nose, mouth or rectum. Internal hemorrhage and hepatic necrosis can be seen on necropsy. Deceased animals with blood around the mucous membranes should be reported to the N. C. Wildlife Helpline to aid in the epidemiological tracking of the virus.

**How can I keep my rehab patients safe?** --



Monitor all lagomorph patients closely for any of the clinical signs described above. Humans cannot contract the virus but can play a role in spreading it. Wear disposable gloves and designated isolation gowns and shoes when handling your lagomorph patients. Avoid cross-contamination, especially between litters or individuals from different locations. All shared equipment, and surfaces should be disinfected in a 1:10 bleach solution for at least 10 minutes. Ensure all ectoparasites are resolved on intake, and animals are kept away from flying insects. If you feed your rehab bunnies outdoor grass or veggies, do your best to exclude other wild rabbits from the area. Do not feed deceased wild rabbits to raptors or other carnivores. Dispose of all carcasses securely in the trash.

# *What You Should Know About Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (cont.)* by Sabrina Kapp, WRNC VSL, NCSU

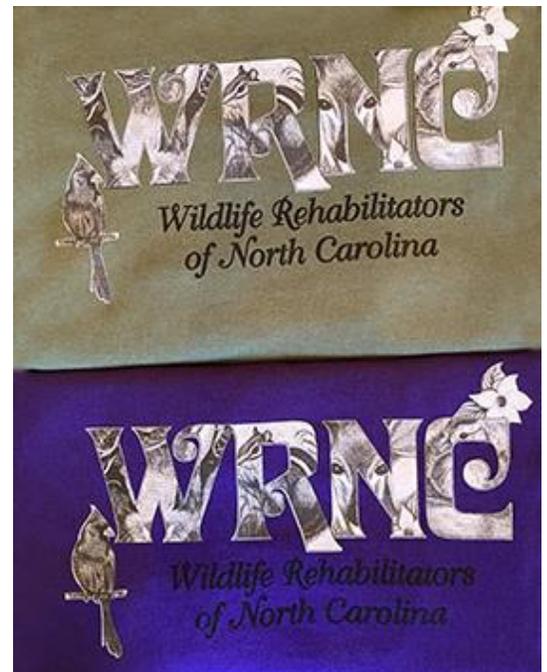
**Who do you contact?** -- Biologists with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission are asking the public to help them monitor the potential spread of this deadly rabbit disease, which has not yet been observed in North Carolina's rabbit populations, by reporting any sightings of dead rabbits to the agency. Wild rabbits found dead with no visible signs of injury or those found dead with blood around their nose, mouth or rectum, should be avoided but reported by calling the N. C. Wildlife Helpline at 866-318-2401 or emailing [wildlifehelpline@ncwildlife.org](mailto:wildlifehelpline@ncwildlife.org). Outbreaks of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus, Type 2 (RHDV2) are ongoing in the United States currently. Between July 2019 and June 2020, RHDV2 was detected in rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) in Washington, New York City, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, Nevada, California and Utah. The fear is, it could be heading this way.



(All photos for RHD article public domain)

## *New T-Shirt Colors for 2022 WRNC Symposium*

Don't forget, our "New T-shirt Colors" will be presented at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual WRNC Symposium in March. Along with remaining inventory colors, Chestnut Brown and Navy Blue, the two new colors: Military Green and Royal Purple will be great additions to your WRNC T-shirt wardrobe! New color 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. 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 one up, or maybe a couple (they make great gifts), 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 March!



(Photos by Linda Bergman-Althouse)

## *Passing the Torch!* by Linda Bergman-Althouse

It's never too early to plant the seeds for conservation of nature and a healthy respect, if not passion, for wildlife! Wildlife Rehabilitators, who have been in the trenches 20 and 30 years, often wonder who they will pass the torch to when retirement time (if there is such a thing!) comes. Who will care as much as we do about providing injured or orphaned wildlife that much deserved second chance at living the life they were intended to live? The answer is every young person we share our stories with are potential candidates. They may not all become wildlife rehabilitators, but they may do other things such as continue to share or instill love for wildlife in others, work or volunteer in our field in some other capacity or even feel compelled to donate to the cause. Every educational program we present, the relationships we build with the public while on a rescue, every tour of our facilities and the myriad of questions we're asked by youngsters everywhere we go present opportunities to pass the torch. There are some very huge hearts out there that we need to continue our efforts to reach. Where are your young "Wildlife Warriors" who you would like to showcase? Email a picture and short write-up to [lbergmanx@gmail.com](mailto:lbergmanx@gmail.com) to include them in our next newsletter!



Although 21-month-old Bennett, WRNC Pres. Toni O'Neil's grandson from Cary, NC, can't really articulate his love for wildlife yet, his actions & interest sure speak loudly. He's having a conversation with a neighborhood squirrel, and it's not clear what he's trying to get across, but we're sure the squirrel knows.

Seven-year-old first grader, Hudson, son of Courtney Cole (Wildlife Rehabilitation Technician at Possumwood Acres, Hubert, NC) gets very excited to spend time with the wildlife residents, such as Puck the Groundhog and loves to help out in any way he can; such as food delivery (as you can see), or giving tours to anyone who will follow. He also stars in "Wild Hudson" videos.

Sydney, Linda Bergman-Althouse's granddaughter from Texas, is a big-time animal lover, wild and domestic, since her toddler days just like Bennett, and that love has continued as you can see from the pic in her "Squirrels for Peace" shirt at age eight to her recent WRNC Sweatshirt (which she proudly wears to school) pic at age 14. She has given wildlife presentations, complete with story boards, to classes throughout elementary school and middle school. Her menagerie of animals includes two dogs, three cats, guinea pigs, a bearded dragon and a herd of deer who visits her property every night. She has developed a healthy and great admiration, as well as respect for wildlife and is passionate about conservation.

Bennett, Hudson and Sydney are talking the talk and walking the "Wildlife Rehabilitation" walk!

When we speak about conserving nature, we are really talking about taking care of our future, because nature provides essential resources for our survival and enjoyment, and we must pass this concern to others, everywhere.

*We don't own the planet Earth; we belong to it. And we must share it with our wildlife – Steve Irwin.*

# *WRNC Board of Trustees Election Candidates!*

*compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse*

During the WRNC Symposium Banquet on Saturday, 19 March, the 2022 Board of Trustees election will occur. Three incumbents 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 re-introduce the 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 Wildlife-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 2021 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

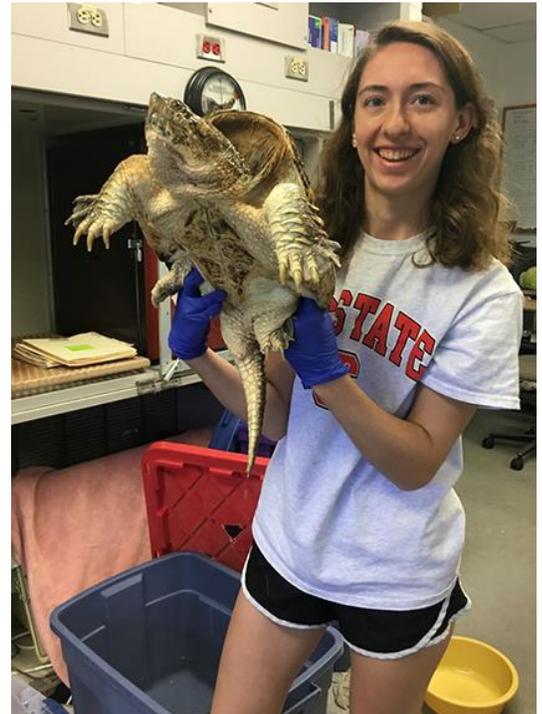


always had a passion for anything with four legs. She is originally from New York State where as a child, always had dogs, bunnies and horses. She was rehabbing before she knew it was a "thing." Finding Wildlife Welfare, Inc. in Raleigh and becoming a licensed rehabilitator has been a dream come true. 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.

# Meet the “New” Veterinary Student Liaisons!

by Linda Bergman-Althouse

**BAYLI WELLMAN** is a veterinary student who is passionate about small animal and exotic medicine and looking for an opportunity to gain experience with a broader selection of species. She is a 2020 NCSU graduate with a biology concentration and currently a North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine student, Class of 2025. She has accumulated vast medical skills that range from administration and lab skills to very technical hands-on procedures such as wound repair, blood draws, administering anesthesia, intubation and venipuncture to name a few. She is an active member of the NCSU Turtle Rescue Team where she performs shell repairs and assists with surgeries, as well as routine turtle treatments to include food preparation, parasite removal, bandaging, gavaging and turtle husbandry. Bayli is also on the Aquatics Team at NCSU CVM, focusing on frogs & fish. Her animal experience is greatly varied as she has been an Education Animal Keeper Intern at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, a volunteer at the Durham Museum of Life and Science Animal Department, as well as a volunteer with the Cairns Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre. She also has a history of assistance with equine veterinary treatments. This girl is doing it all!! Welcome aboard, BAYLI!



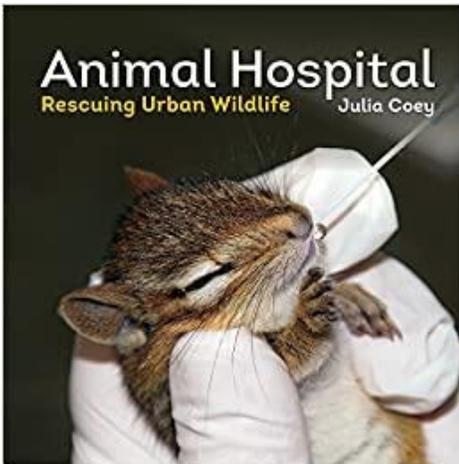
**HOLLY AMATO** is a 2021 NCSU Animal Science graduate with a veterinary bioscience concentration and Plant Biology major in which she achieved Wild Plant Identification Certification. She is currently a North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine student, Class of 2025. Holly keeps busy daily by assisting technicians with the workup and care of animals including cats, dogs, birds, small mammals and reptiles. She also manages the treatments and husbandry for wildlife admitted to the hospital including raptors, songbirds, rabbits, rodents and reptiles. A variety of tasks she is responsible for includes setting up for procedures

and surgeries, ensuring proper maintenance and sterilization of surgical equipment, answering phones and keeping the hospital stocked, as well as organized. Holly’s work history in the field of animal care includes Veterinary Assistant/Animal Care Technician at Care First Animal Hospital, NCSU Alternative Service Break (ASB) Team Leader, Animal Reproductive Anatomy and Physiology Lab TA, NCSU Dairy Unit Milker/Calf Feeder and her own self-run Pet/House Sitting Service which she still operates today. She has vast research experience and is very generous with her time as she volunteers in an array of capacities such as on the NCSU Turtle Rescue Team, NCSU Carnivore Team working with red wolves and now, with the Wildlife Rehabilitators of North Carolina as one of our newest Veterinary Student Liaisons. Holly’s course curriculum also integrated studying abroad in China and Belize. Welcome aboard, HOLLY!

(Photos submitted by Bayli and Holly, respectively)

# The BOOKSHELF ..... compiled by Linda Bergman-Althouse

## Animal Hospital: Rescuing Urban Wildlife by Julia Coey



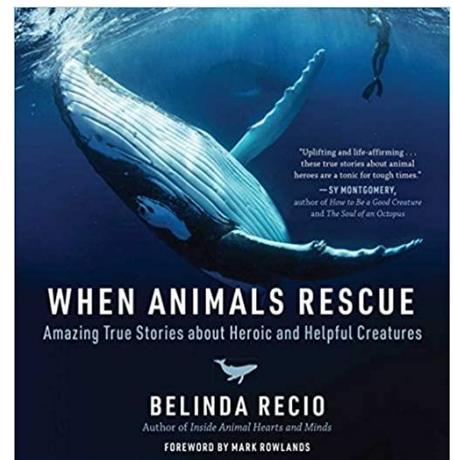
Our cities are already filled with a huge variety of wildlife. As urban areas expand, they impinge on the natural habitats of animals that would not otherwise find themselves in an urban setting, including birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, as well as rare, threatened and even endangered wildlife. *Animal Hospital* describes how injured and orphaned wild animals are rehabilitated and cared for after being rescued from perilous situations. It follows the activities of an urban animal rescue facility and the efforts of the trained professionals that rescue, treat, rehabilitate and release the animals. Kids will learn about the amazing wild animals that they may encounter in their neighborhoods, even the most recognizable have fascinating traits. They will get tips on how to protect and support urban wildlife and learn what to do if they encounter an animal that needs help. There are exciting real-life stories about rescued animals with photographs that give readers an up-close look.

While including animals in North America, *Animal Hospital* also describes international efforts that encourage conservation and awareness. Most reviews mention that this book is a valuable title in the classroom and an exciting and inspiring choice for any youngster, so, it might be a great gift for younger folk as we plant the seeds and pass the torch. (only 64 pages and clear & effective images) **Check it out at:** <https://amzn.to/3G0dJT4>

67% 5 Star Ratings

## When Animals Rescue: Amazing True Stories about Heroic and Helpful Creatures by Belinda Recio

This book is a collection of true tales of animal empathy and altruism that may inspire us to reflect on our own human nature. What do stories about humpback whales protecting a biologist from a shark, a pride of lions rescuing a girl from kidnappers, gorillas working together to dismantle poacher snares, a parrot warding off an attacker in a park, a chimpanzee consoling a human and an elephant trying to rescue a baby rhino tell us about animal nature? And what might they suggest about our very own human nature? Until just a few decades ago, there were only a few animals reported to behave empathetically and altruistically. More recently, the list of species who have been observed behaving in compassionate, helpful, and caring ways has grown exponentially, ranging from rats to elephants. During a time in history when studies show that human empathy is decreasing, our knowledge about animal empathy is increasing. These true tales of heroism, kindness and compassion suggest that we have far more in common with other animals than we once believed and provocatively suggest that what's best about our human natures just might be our animal natures.



**Check it out at:** <https://amzn.to/3rJpw0E>

66% 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 BOOKSHELF"** is a feature to showcase a few **recommended books** that you may enjoy. If you have a book recommendation, please email [lbergmanx@gmail.com](mailto:lbergmanx@gmail.com) with your personal addition to **"The BOOK SHELF."** Thanks!

# “Checking In” with ‘Carolina Waterfowl Rescue’

by Jennifer Gordon, Founder and Director

Carolina Waterfowl Rescue (CWR) was founded by Director Jennifer Gordon in 2003. Carolina Waterfowl Rescue is a nonprofit 501c3 wildlife rescue organization located in Indian Trail, NC and is run by federally licensed wildlife rehabilitators who provide sanctuary, rescue and rehabilitation for wildlife, farmed and exotic animals. CWR provides care to over seven thousand birds a year spanning over fifty different wild bird species. CWR also accepts domestic animals for placement, investigates nuisance referrals and offers animal rescue assistance. This year CWR is excited to announce that we acquired the property next to the rescue and will be expanding. Our first plan is to install a fence for the animals to give them more space to graze. On the new property, as part of the land purchase, we acquired a new building that will allow us to expand



our songbird program. The building will allow for more space for the many stages of baby bird development. The building will allow us to have handicap access so we can expand our accessibility to volunteers and we have a variety of task related opportunities for volunteers, to include Animal Care Morning Shift, Animal Care Evening Shift, Produce



Volunteer, Transport Volunteer, Hotline Volunteer and Baby Bird Feeders. Each Spring, Carolina Waterfowl Rescue accepts several hundred orphaned and injured baby songbirds. We get over 50 species of baby birds each year! We house, feed, raise and provide medical care to each and every one. Babies need constant and continuous care to survive their early days and weeks, and we rely on seasonal volunteers to provide this care. If you reside in our area and are interested in becoming a Baby Bird Volunteer, please email [songbirds@cwrescue.org](mailto:songbirds@cwrescue.org). CWR works hard every day to make sure all animals' needs are met, and part of that responsibility is to ensure we have enough staff onboard to take care of all animals appropriately and in a timely manner. CWR has a paid internship program for students

entering the world of rehabilitation. This program teaches students what requirements and demands are needed for rehabbers. It allows the students to gain invaluable hands-on training and experience. In the coming years CWR is planning to open an adoption center to help domestic animals get the placement they deserve. CWR adopts out over 600 domestic animals a year. We would like to

## CWR Internship Program

Looking for qualified applicants interested in Animal Care

Email [lmillaci@cwrescue.org](mailto:lmillaci@cwrescue.org) for more information.



see that number increased and the quality of life for all animals improved. With an adoption center, it would allow us to open part of the rescue to the public, so they may come and see the animals available for adoption. This year CWR would also like to raise funds to develop a radiography department on site for rehabbers. Carolina Waterfowl Rescue runs entirely on donations. Every animal that passes through our facility is only helped through the generosity of individuals and community partners who understand the importance of the work we do and share our desire to positively impact our local ecology. CWR continually works with other



rescues, rehabbers and resources to maintain health and wellness of animals in need. Our goal is to provide treatments quickly and efficiently to save lives. We have definitely expanded over the years in mission and services, and with the help of a great staff, volunteer crew and the community, we will continue to grow.

(Photos by CWR Staff)

**All Independent Rehabilitators & Wildlife Shelters or Centers;** you are invited to “CHECK IN” with WRNC and other Wildlife Rehabilitators across NC. “What’s up” in your neck of the State **REHAB WISE!** [lbergmanx@gmail.com](mailto:lbergmanx@gmail.com)

# Training Opportunities! Never Stop Learning!

IN-PERSON and virtual Wildlife Rehab Classes are being offered. Always continue to check with the sources listed below for upcoming training opportunities throughout the year. Some of the methods of training will still be virtual, Zoom & webinars, but all information and knowledge gained is of value – no matter how it's presented!

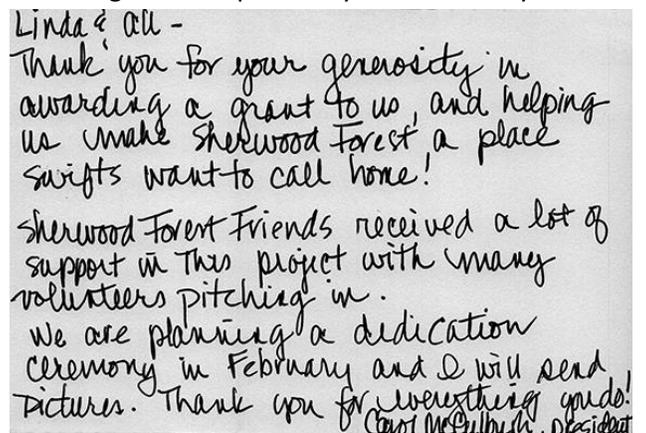
- The 20<sup>th</sup> annual **WRNC Symposium (in-person)** will be held March 18–20, 2022 at the NCS College of Veterinary Medicine in Raleigh, NC. Check our website (<https://ncwildliferehab.org>) for all the details! Registration is open.
- **Wildlife Rehab, Inc.** is currently holding a 12-week course, "Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation," with a weekly virtual class that began February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Check with them to see when their next training course is. [wildliferehabinc.org](http://wildliferehabinc.org)
- **Carolina Raptor Center, Charlotte, NC** CRC offers rehabilitation seminars throughout the year. Contact Mathias Engelman at 704.875.6521, ext. 108 or at [mathiasengelman@carolinaraptorcenter.org](mailto:mathiasengelman@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)

## Chimney Swifts at Risk! *by Linda Bergman-Althouse*

We've known for a while now that Chimney Swift numbers have been falling significantly worldwide. As a result, swifts have been added to a list of endangered birds because modern houses just don't have the accommodations of the nooks and crannies they need to nest in. A lack of nesting sites is thought to be one reason behind a falling population, as well as reduced food supplies due to a drop in the number of insects available for these insectivores to eat. Modern homes are less likely to have small spaces between bricks and in eaves where the birds like to nest. Therefore, a charity organization in the UK is pushing for special "swift bricks," which contain small tunnels and nesting spaces for the birds, to be installed in new-build homes. This is something we may need to look into for our Chimney Swift situation in the United States, if Audubon isn't doing that already! WRNC did jump on the need to provide alternative Chimney Swift habitat by implementing our WRNC Chimney Swift Tower Grant Program back in 2007, and we have been assisting with the funding of the construction of Chimney Swift Towers throughout our state since then. Fortunately, Chimney Swifts are well adapted to man-made structures, so it is possible to create nesting habitat specifically for swifts. If you are a member of an environmentally active group, an individual environment enthusiast, a WRNC member or nonmember, you may want to construct and maintain a Chimney Swift tower in your area to encourage Chimney Swifts, acrobatic insectivores who vacuum the sky at dawn and dusk, to return to your community each year. Check out our website for application requirements (<https://ncwildliferehab.org>). Heads up – the deadline for applying is 1 November, annually.

Most recently, a 2022 Chimney Swift Tower Grant for \$500 was awarded to Carol McCullough who is a resident of Sherwood Forest, an Audubon community in Cedar Mountain, North Carolina. Her community is extremely passionate about conserving Chimney Swifts, and this will be their 4<sup>th</sup> tower construction, and WRNC is helping with this one! The build has begun, and Carol and her team are very appreciative of WRNC's support!! Can't wait to see their tower!!



Linda & all -  
Thank you for your generosity in awarding a grant to us, and helping us make Sherwood Forest a place Swifts want to call home!  
Sherwood Forest Friends received a lot of support in this project with many volunteers pitching in.  
We are planning a dedication ceremony in February and I will send pictures. Thank you for everything you do!  
Carol McCullough, resident

# “The Under-Appreciated Sparrow!”

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

Color catches our eyes as we avid bird watchers will probably agree; take for example the bright red Cardinal or the



royal Bluebird and the brilliant, rusty breast of the American Robin. How about the rich black, white and orange-rust color blocking of the Towhee or the adorned Blue Jay, the vivid Purple Finch or the glamorous Painted Bunting? We can’t miss those birds because they announce their presence in living color! What we tend to miss are the little guys, who blend in and are only here in the coastal region of North Carolina during the grayness of winter such as fast, unobtrusive and flitting sparrows. There are 43 species of sparrows worldwide that make up an extended family of tiny passerine birds, and the ones we see most on the coast are the House, Chipping, Song

Sparrow and the White-throated Sparrow. Most sparrows breed as far north as Canada and only migrate to or through North Carolina during October before the harsh cold season hits up north. They will stay through late April, early May and then head back to their northern habitat for breeding. Recently, a White-Throated Sparrow smacked the patio glass

door of this author’s home, and Frizbee, an “indoor only” feline alerted me to his still and lifeless presence on the deck. The limp sparrow was placed in a comfy, towel lined container and placed in the warm, wildlife triage to monitor just how serious his injuries were and if in fact, he could recover from only being stunned or knocked out. Happy to report that within a half hour, he was on his feet and making his desire to be released known. Thankfully, he pulled through, and there was no reason to transport him to the Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter in Newport, NC. White-Throated



Sparrows, from the family of New World Sparrows,

are brown and gray, diminutive birds that weigh only one ounce on the average. The one thing that might stand out in their appearance is a striking head pattern that includes a yellow or tan stripe, as well as a patch of white on their throat. Sparrows are small but plump with short tails and stubby but powerful beaks similar to the beaks of other seed eating birds such as the House Finch. To help them hold and break seeds, the sparrow has an extra bone in their tongue called the preglossale, which stiffens the tongue while eating. White-throated Sparrows eat seeds of grasses and weeds, including ragweed and buckwheat, as well as fruits of sumac, grape, cranberry, mountain ash, rose, blueberry, blackberry and dogwood. In summer they eat large numbers of insects caught on the forest floor or during quick flights out from low vegetation. Their insect diet includes dragonflies, wasps,

stinkbugs, beetles, flies, caterpillars, spiders, millipedes, centipedes and snails. Parents feed their nestlings almost exclusively insects. During winter, which is when they hang out with us on the coast, White-throated Sparrows readily visit our bird feeders for millet and black oil sunflower seeds. In spring they eat the tender buds, blossoms and young seeds of oak, apple, maple, beech and elm to ready themselves for their return migration north. Hierarchies, or pecking

## “The Under-Appreciated Sparrow!” (cont.)

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

orders, exist in these winter flocks where males are typically dominant over females. Because of the sparrow’s abundance, accessibility on both breeding and wintering grounds and the relative ease it can be maintained in captivity, they have been used in many types of bird monitoring. They have an important place in studies related to breeding biology, physiology in relation to the annual cycle, circadian rhythms, migration, dominance and territoriality, functions of song and the effects of pesticides and forestry practices. Although sparrows have unique benefits and values; ecological importance, beautiful earth-toned color schemes and are often mentioned in song lyrics, as well as a frequent topic in folklore, they may very well be the least appreciated of all birds, even though sparrows are one of the most abundant birds found in the forests of North America.

Their winter range covers most of the eastern United States, including all of North Carolina, and it is one of the most numerous birds to winter in our state, along with the Dark-eyed Junco and the Song Sparrow. You’ll find White-throated sparrows on the ground, often in flocks, while they scratch through leaves with both feet in search of seeds, fruits and insects. White-throated Sparrows hop when they’re on the ground rather than walking or running, then pounce forward at anything they’ve uncovered. These winter visitors love leafy urban spaces with brushy edges or hedgerows and active bird feeders. To encourage them to visit your feeder, add a brush pile of plentiful groundcover. Use a ground feeder with millet and sunflower hearts, and scatter millet under the brush from now until April for cold weather energy and to ensure safe refuge. Also, keep your birdbaths thawed and full. White-throated sparrows are a joy to listen to and are adored for their clear whistle of “Sweet Sweet Canada, Canada, Canada” which is the song of their homeland. In their breeding region, the female WT Sparrow will build an open cup nest on the ground, hidden by low shrubs or high grass, made of grasses, twigs, weeds, pine needles, fine roots and animal hair. While the female is building the nest, the male will sing to defend their territory and aggressively chase any intruders away. Momma will lay four to five pale blue or greenish blue eggs marked with reddish brown and lavender



that she incubates for about two weeks. After hatching, both parents will feed the nestlings. In about 10 days, the young leave the nest but will still be cared for by their parents for another two weeks. The parents stay together for the summer, but they often choose new partners the next year. The White-throated Sparrow is still widespread, and tallies taken of them during the annual national bird count suggests only a slight decline in the last few decades. Although White-throated Sparrows are not an endangered bird species, we probably should keep our eye on this sparrow. Historically, the sparrow has legendary status and is mentioned in numerous formal literary works. Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, considered the sparrow a sacred bird, a symbol of true love (although they do get a bad rap for not being monogamous!) and

capable of a spiritual connection. In some European countries, the belief is if a sparrow flies into your home, you will have good luck and even better luck if the sparrow builds a nest! Or it could mean that a wedding will happen soon. It is also said that Egyptians believe sparrows catch the souls of the recently deceased and carry them to heaven, and that’s why so many sailors get sparrow tattoos (just in case they die at sea). The call of the sparrow will bring rain! Wow! All

## *“The Under-Appreciated Sparrow!” (cont.)*

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

these beliefs seem like very heavy burdens to place on a tiny sparrow! Still, considering all that, it might be wise to keep our eyes on the sparrow!

*“In this world of ours, the sparrow must live like a hawk if he is to fly at all.”*

*– Hayao Miyazaki*



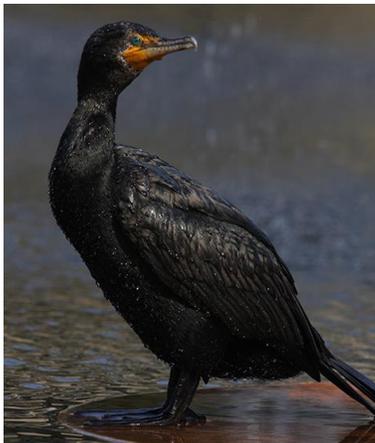
(Photos for U-ASparrow-Public Domain)

## *Wildlife Rescue Story from the Not So Rich & Famous* by Linda Bergman-Althouse

It was a most soggy day on the coast, when my focus became the rescue of a duck walking along Hwy 70 that morphed into a cormorant by the time I got there!! I saw the line of cars and a lady standing in the rain, in the middle of the road waving her jacket to slow traffic. I pulled off to the side of the road and eased my way to the Cormorant, moving him farther away from the road. When I got out and moved toward him, he took off for the open field. Then, the race began!!! Although he couldn't fly, he was fast on his feet, which is odd for Cormorants who are not as agile on land as they are in and on water. I moved



him through the Strawberry Field, which was absolute mud that nearly sucked one of my boots off, and toward the open Farmers' Market entrance, figuring I could trap him in the structure, but he was too smart and turned around to the open field again. Two young(er) ladies came out of a building, so I handed one of them a smaller pole net, while I kept hold of the larger one. After noticing an excavated hole about five plus feet deep that contained water, we (four of us now) moved him toward it until he jumped in. A-HA!! I laid on the ground in the muck while being pelted by rain drops and dipped my net over the side into the muddy murkiness. The Cormorant was swimming about and appeared agitated by all the humans hovering overhead. The lady, who was in the road earlier and probably the one who called the shelter for assistance, kept talking (a little too much). She was saying “Don’t do that, do this, you’re going to hurt him” and so on. I didn’t say anything (we wildlife rehabilitators bite our tongue a lot!) and stayed focused on the rescue. (We’ve all been there.) I’m sure she was just trying to help. Fortunately for me, one the Farmers’ Market girls just blurted out, “Will you please be quiet! She knows what she’s doing!” I grew the biggest smile (inside). I managed to net him as he tried to dart past and swished him against the wall, then slid him slowly up the wall to get him to our ground level. As he was already in the net, I wrapped the entire net with a beach towel and placed him into the transport bag with the pole sticking out the end!! All this happening in the pouring rain! It's what we do!! BUT it's not generally what the public does - SO, I thanked the ladies for all their help, and the cormorant and I were on our way to the shelter. He had no broken bones, but we did find some swelling and road rash, so our theory is, he mistook the wet pavement for a body of water and hit hard. Happy to say he did well in shelter care, and we were able to get him back out there, but to water, of course!!



(Photos by John Althouse)

**(Please email your short but interesting, funny, risky, dangerous, heart-warming, messy or just plain crazy “Rescue Story” to [lbergmanx@gmail.com](mailto:lbergmanx@gmail.com) for our next newsletter. Everyone would love to hear about it!)**

# 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. 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 . . .



Photo by John Althouse

IF . . . you've said to a friend "I'd give you a hug, but I have poop on my shirt."

**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](mailto:lbergmanx@gmail.com)

Quinto wishes everyone a . . . **HAPPY & SUCCESSFUL BABY SEASON!**

### *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](mailto: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 1<sup>st</sup>**

**December 1<sup>st</sup>**

### *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		

