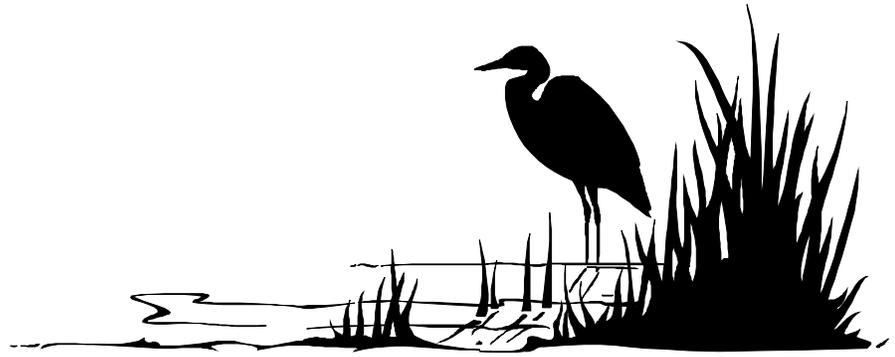


Wildlife Tales

2021 VOL. XXII No 1
Written by: Carol Kerr Hardee, B.S., M.S.



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Center News

2020 - A year like no other

Despite the Covid 19 pandemic this year, we continued to admit orphaned and injured wildlife as usual. Obtaining supplies, formulas, vaccines, and foods went smoothly throughout the year; so that the animals in care had all of their needs met. I want to thank everyone who has continued to support the center through these most difficult times as well as our devoted volunteers. Dr. David Jourdenais generously treated a number of special cases for us, and we are so grateful to him. Here we have a photo of one of our patients, a juvenile raccoon.



Please visit us at our web site: www.wildlifecenterflorida.org

Arrivals and Releases

White tail deer

Throughout the spring and early summer months, many phone calls were received concerning baby deer. Whenever such calls come in, we always ask specific questions to determine whether or not intervention is needed. Many times, a fawn is observed lying in a pasture or under trees but no mother deer is seen. Of course, this sight could be alarming to many people who have the idea that the doe is always at her offspring's side.

Actually, the mother doe remains away from her fawn for a considerable amount of time. She has scent glands which a predator may be able to detect, and, therefore, be led to her baby. The fawn has almost no scent which helps to protect it. Fawns also instinctively know to “freeze” in place when they sense danger, and this, too, makes them difficult for predators to detect.

When we receive a fawn call, we want to know if the baby is walking around and crying which is a sign that it may be in trouble or calmly lying down which usually means that all is well. We also ask if there are flies around the fawn which can also be a danger sign.

Usually, the baby deer can be left where it was observed, and often, we receive a second call because the doe was seen to return to her baby. We did have to rescue more than a dozen fawns in 2020. Volunteer, Lindy Williams, was instrumental in these cases and has the expertise to treat for dehydration, proper feeding, and medical care. I am ever grateful for her help.



Arrivals and Releases

Raccoons

During the spring and early summer months, orphaned raccoons were very plentiful. There were times that there did not seem to be a way to admit one more, and yet, we did. I have several volunteers who are listed on my Florida wildlife permits to care for animals in their homes and on their property. Without their kind help, many of these babies would have died; and I owe all of these wonderful volunteers my gratitude for a job well done.



Here are photos of just a few of the baby raccoons admitted for care in 2020.



Ethan Allen (photo right)

During the winter of 2019-2020, a young man noticed a baby raccoon, still alive, lying near the sidewalk. A woman told him that the baby raccoon had been there for three days. The man brought the poor baby to me at the WRC, and I began to attempt to save his life. He was at death's door, but I felt that I should do everything in my power to save his life. After warming the little guy, I gave him subcutaneous fluids and pediatric fluids orally.



Within 24 hours, the baby raccoon was able to take formula from a bottle.

Over the next days, the baby raccoon grew ever stronger and gained weight rapidly. He had a strong determination to survive despite the ordeal that he had been through. The man who had rescued the baby was named Ethan, and I named the little raccoon Ethan Allen. He was able to recover, grow up, and months later be released with others into the wild. I shall never forget him or his spirit to survive.

Arrivals and Releases

Eastern Gray Squirrels

Baby gray squirrels began to arrive late in July, throughout August, and all of September. (They continue to arrive from October through March, but not in the vast numbers seen in the main months mentioned). At times, I was spending 10 hours per day just feeding the baby squirrels, and there were many other species of babies also requiring my attention. Not to complain, but working 14-16 hour days, 7 days per week is very difficult.

Volunteer, Nathalie Barnhart, was able to take more than a dozen from me, and thus, gave me some breathing room. Another volunteer, Esther Plummer, was a life saver because she took in about 40 baby squirrels over a month's time and did a great job raising them. Somehow, she also squeezed in the time to transport orphaned babies when the caller could not.



E. Gray squirrels in care 2020



Arrivals and Releases

Southern Flying Squirrels

The first group of three baby flyers weighing only 7 and 8 grams went to volunteer, Terri White, who successfully raised the tiny munchkins. Later in the season, I admitted a 7 gram flyer girl; then a few days later, another female which was 14 grams and finally a male which was 12 grams. Flying squirrels can be very difficult to raise as they can develop problems with parasites, which can be fatal if not discovered quickly and treated. Being of such a diminutive size when admitted, they are a challenge to feed properly without aspirating them.



S. Flying squirrels in care 2020



Arrivals and Releases

Coyotes

In May, we received a young, female coyote which suffered from a bad case of sarcoptic mange. I treated her and administered vaccinations to protect her from the basic contagious diseases. Over a few weeks, she responded well to the mange treatments; and when she began to leap against the walls of the cage repeatedly one day, I decided to release her right away before she injured herself. Our friends at the Orlando Airport transported her that same day to one of their vast parcels of protected property. I was ever so grateful to have freed her so quickly.

Cottontail and Marsh Rabbits



Here is a photo of one of the cute baby marsh rabbits that was in care in 2020.

Many baby cottontails were also cared for at the WRC this past year.



Arrivals and Releases

Birds



Great horned owl, 2020



Baby screech owl, 2020

During 2020, volunteer, Esther Plummer, was able to capture more than two dozen cranes and wading birds which needed to be rescued due to various injuries. Great job!



Baby mocking bird, 2020



Baby great horned owl, 2020



Mourning doves, 2020

Arrivals and Releases

Virginia Opossums

As has been the case every spring, many infant opossums came to us for care, primarily when the mother opossums were killed by cars. When very young, the babies are fed formula by using feeding tubes. Gradually, as they mature, the young are offered formula to lap from shallow containers. The Virginia opossum is the only marsupial mammal in North America.



These baby opossums were tubally fed at this age.

When they grew to a larger size, they could feed themselves from a small bowl and begin to eat solid foods.



IN MEMORY

We are saddened to relate that Mary Ann Rouch, a longtime friend and volunteer for WRC since the early 1990s, passed away in April, 2020. Mary Ann was one of the most kindhearted people whom I have ever known. She will be greatly missed.



WISH LIST

Foods: Dry Pedigree, Purina, or Science Diet Puppy food, unsalted peanuts, shelled pecans, any unshelled nuts, wild bird and sunflower seeds, any brands of dry dog or cat foods, and fresh acorns are greatly appreciated for the squirrels in care.

General Supplies: copy paper, infant “receiving blankets”, small size “Catac” nipples and “Miracle nipples” for feeding squirrels found on the web

Cleaning supplies: laundry Tide pods, paper towels, especially Bounty and Viva brands, dryer softener sheets, black, heavy duty trash bags with ties, Charmin bathroom tissue, liquid dish soap, liquid hand soap, zip-lock freezer bags with zipper closures, spray cleaners such as “409”, “Pine Sol” for cleaning floors.

Monetary Donations are always necessary to supply the vaccines, foods, formulas, and equipment required for animal care. Our supporting members make it all possible with their kind assistance for which we are ever grateful.

When you place an order with Amazon online, you can make a donation to WRC which won't cost you anything. Just go on Amazon Smile and choose WRC as your charity. We are on their list of non-profits which receive a percentage from purchases when designated by the buyer. I always do this when I order, and it adds up. Amazon sends the amount earned to our business checking account every three months.



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If you include the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Central Florida in your will, please be sure to use the legal name and address of our Center as listed in this newsletter.

Thank You To The Following:

We wish to thank dear friends of the wildlife, Wayne and Linda Boyd, for their kind and generous support over many years. They have helped us to save countless lives.

We thank the dedicated staff of Disney's Animal Kingdom- Hospital Manager, Lori Grady, and all of the DAK animal keepers and interns who assist the wildlife. Our friends at DAK have done so much to support the care of many injured and orphaned wild animals.

A thanks goes to Dr. David Jourdenais, Geneva Oaks Animal Hospital, who has assisted us for more than 25 years and Dr. Jane Fishman Leon for all of her help.

Thanks, Publix on Alafaya Trail at Eastwood for the fresh produce and dry pet foods.

Thank you to the staff of Sea World, Orlando, for their assistance in accepting injured water birds and sand hill cranes for treatment.

We appreciate the officers of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for their dedication and hard work. They routinely capture injured wildlife and transport them to us, often at night.

We wish to thank the nice folks at Elizabeth Morse Genius Foundation for their support.

Thanks to Johnny Metcalf, James Johnson, and John Rogers for assisting us with releases. You have helped us so much, and we do appreciate it.

Wildlife Center Volunteers

Thank you, Marshall Wolfe, for building climbing cages, feeders, and bed boxes for the squirrels, and for completing various repairs at the center.

Our volunteers who field phone calls, are vaccinated for rabies prevention, care for a wide variety of species, and transport as needed: Leslie Johnson, Lindy Williams, Jennifer Rosenfeldt, Terri White, Jennifer Fletcher Odom, Thressa Jones, Nathalie Barnhart, Ethel Huggins, Mike Melone, and Esther Plummer. Thanks!

A big THANKS also to the volunteer transporters: Valerie & Gary Martin and Lee Day

I wish to thank my brother-in-law, Jack Hardee, for helping me with many hours of work on the website and the newsletter. He is also our IT guy for all computer repairs and problems that arise, seemingly on a continual basis.

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