



CALGARY
WILDLIFE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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Executive Message

2023 marked Calgary Wildlife's 30th anniversary of dedicated service in rehabilitating injured and orphaned wildlife across southern Alberta. Over the years, we have treated and rehabilitated tens of thousands of wild animals and educated countless children and adults about the vital role wildlife plays in our ecosystems and the importance of coexisting with the animals that share our spaces. 2023 was also a challenging year for Calgary Wildlife due to inflation and the rising costs of nearly everything we rely on. The last half of the year saw an almost 30% increase in costs, putting a significant strain on our resources. Despite these financial hurdles, we are pleased to share several bright spots from the past year. Our year-end holiday campaign was a tremendous success, raising the most funds in its history. This incredible achievement is a testament to the unwavering support and generosity of our community. We also launched a new initiative, the Wild Hearts Club, for our monthly donors. This club has seen a significant uptick in members, providing us with a more stable and predictable revenue stream essential for planning and sustainability.

In 2023, we saw a 25% increase in patients from the previous year. Among these, we successfully treated, rehabilitated, and released 15 endangered and threatened species. Our public education programming thrived, reaching thousands of Calgarians through in-person presentations and contributions to community newsletters throughout Calgary. These efforts have been vital in raising awareness about wildlife rehabilitation and promoting coexistence as a way of preventing human-wildlife conflict.

2023 also saw the completion of the largest flight pen in Alberta, thanks to the Calgary Foundation, complete with a pond and a running stream which can be stocked with fish so our patients can practice their hunting skills ahead of release. The pen is long enough and wide enough for our team to fully assess Alberta's largest birds' full range of flight. This new space has already helped to successfully rehabilitate a great blue heron, a bald eagle, and many more raptors and waterfowl.

In the coming years, we will continue to strengthen our relationships with community stakeholders, diversify our revenue sources, and provide expert, compassionate care to all the wildlife we treat. We are immensely proud of our dedicated team and their accomplishments this year. Here's to an even better year ahead, filled with resiliency, growth, and continued success in our mission to protect and care for Calgary's wildlife.



Beki Hunt

Beki Hunt
Executive Director



Melanie Whalen

Melanie Whalen
Director of Wildlife Care
and Services

Board Message

In 2023, the board of directors concentrated on navigating evolving challenges and seizing new opportunities, all while initiating the groundwork for our 2025-2030 strategic plan. Although our revenue increased compared to the previous year, the economic climate presented significant hurdles, with inflation driving up costs substantially.

Despite these challenges, Calgary Wildlife remains steadfast in its commitment to wildlife care and rehabilitation. Our mission, rooted in mitigating human impact on ecosystems, continues to drive our extensive education and community outreach initiatives aimed at preventing harmful human-wildlife interactions.

2023 also highlighted opportunities for growth. Online and monthly giving has shown promising trends, and our outreach and initiatives continue to rally support. The start of our strategic plan's development has engaged staff, volunteers, and board members, fostering an environment to refine our mission and enhance our impact clarity.

The board recognizes that Calgary Wildlife's achievements are made possible by the dedication and expertise of our staff and volunteers. We are deeply grateful for their unwavering passion and commitment. The financial support from our donors, members, and partners remains essential, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your invaluable contributions.

As we look to the future, we are optimistic about our potential to innovate, grow, and lead. Together, we can continue to make a significant difference, ensuring professional care for wildlife in and around Calgary.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leanna Biggar".

Leanna Biggar

Board President

2023 Board of Directors

Kyle Havart-Crans - President

Leanna Biggar - Vice President (took over president's role in 2024)

Janice Johnson - Secretary

Scott Powell - Treasurer

Roxy Petts - Member at large

Megan Bayley - Member at large

Pommasha Noel-Bentley - Member at large

2023 Management

Beki Hunt - Executive Director

Melanie Whalen - Director of Wildlife Care and Services

Breanne Marois - Wildlife Clinic Supervisor





Our Mission

Keeping communities wild through education and expert, compassionate care for injured and orphaned wildlife.

Our Vision

Human and wildlife coexistence.

Our Pillars

Care:

Best care is our commitment to provide compassionate, expert treatment to injured and orphaned wildlife. We hold ourselves to this by measuring our outcomes each year and hiring and supporting expert staff to work with our wildlife patients.

Educate:

Education is our commitment to both positive remediation and prevention of harmful interactions between humans and wildlife. We promote an understanding of the inherent value of wildlife. We inform and educate people to live in harmony with wildlife and to respond appropriately when wildlife incidents or conflict occur.

Connect:

Connecting is our commitment to working with others to keep communities wild. We contribute to collective knowledge, collaborate to provide best care, and foster mutually beneficial relationships with government, professional associations, educational institutions, volunteers, and others towards shared goals.

Our Impact

Volunteers & Staff

In 2023 we saw more than **25,000 hours** dedicated to our mission of helping wildlife. We couldn't do all we do without our dedicated team of staff caring for our wild patients and educating the public about wildlife.

Our wonderful team of volunteers help us to continue our crucial work by helping with site maintenance and building, public education, clinic support, hotline support, patient transport, social media, and events and fundraising. Without such a fantastic team, we wouldn't be able to achieve all we do to help wildlife in need.



Staff hours: 21,522

Volunteer hours: 4127

Our Impact

Hotline

Our wildlife hotline is an integral part of our organization, providing crucial support to callers in distressing situations. This service offers guidance on whether certain wildlife behaviours are normal and helps determine if an animal needs to come into our care. Our trained staff are always ready to offer advice, ensuring that both the animals and the public receive the best possible support.

During off-hours, our recorded messages continue to serve as a valuable resource. These messages offer situation-specific guidance and provide emergency contact numbers for immediate assistance. The hotline not only helps in making informed decisions but also plays a significant role in educating the public about normal wildlife behaviour. By ensuring that help is always available, our hotline reinforces our commitment to wildlife care and community support, making it an indispensable part of our mission.



Wildlife Hotline Calls - 8223

Breakdown By Location:

Southeast Calgary	23%	Southwest Calgary	17%
Northwest Calgary	22%	Northeast Calgary	16%
Outside Calgary	22%		

Top Call Breakdown:

- Small Birds** - Fledglings and Robins
- Large Birds** - Magpies and Rock Doves
- Small Mammals** - Hares, Rabbits, Skunks
- Waterfowl** - Geese and Ducks
- Birds of Prey** - Hawks and Owls
- Large Mammals** - Deer and Bobcats



Our Impact

Education

In 2023, we successfully completed a full year of our Wild Wise programming, an initiative designed for elementary school children to teach them about coexistence with wildlife and the benefits these animals bring to our ecosystems. Our education ambassador programs also thrived, providing attendees with the unique opportunity to see raptors up close and learn about their important roles in nature. Additionally, 2023 marked the retirement of our beloved great horned owl, Ophelia, who had been educating the public about owls for over a dozen years. Ophelia's contributions to our educational efforts have been invaluable, and she leaves behind a lasting legacy of inspiring countless individuals to appreciate and protect these magnificent creatures.

Teacher's Quote

“Wild Wise was a very engaging program with different activities for all types of learners. The messages delivered through the program are great too, our kids need to know how our activities are affecting the wildlife and think about how we can all live in harmony.”



144 Education Presentations

3500+ children and adults reached

63

Owl Presentations

52

Wild Wise Presentations

29

Hawk Presentations

2

All About Us Presentations

Our Impact

Community Newsletters

Our In 2023, Calgary Wildlife featured in over 20 community newsletters across Calgary.

The topics covered included debunking common wildlife myths, informational wildlife comics, and educational articles about wild babies, urban wildlife, and native wildlife.



In Our City

Mountain Marmots

The high-pitched whistle of the hoary marmot may surprise you when hiking in the mountains. Marmots are diurnal (active during the day) and like to perch on rocks with high vantage points, acting as sentries to any incoming danger, such as eagles or bears. Their piercing alarm call quickly alerts colony members to return to their burrows.

Alberta is home to two of these extra-large ground squirrels, the hoary marmot, and the yellow-bellied marmot. Their names describe their distinguishing feature: the hoary marmot has dark hair grizzled with silver tips, whereas the yellow-bellied marmot has yellow or reddish fur.

Hoary marmots are the largest of the ground squirrels in North America, weighing an average of ten to fifteen pounds, (the heaviest hoary marmot ever recorded managed thirty!) Marmot weight fluctuates throughout the year with their eight-month hibernation period where they can lose twenty percent of their body weight!



Yellow-bellied marmots tend to live at lower elevations. Their colonies are similarly structured with a single male, several breeding females, and their young.

Marmots survive best with their colonies. Unfortunately, there has been a trend of hitchhiking marmots who, curious about visiting vehicles (and attracted to the minerals often found on cars), have crawled into the frame or engine, and travelled back into the city. If you are spending the day in the mountains, please check your vehicle frame, or bang on the hood of your car before heading back to the city. You'll scare the marmots off and help them stay in the wild where they belong!

Found injured or orphaned wildlife? Unsure if the animal is truly in need of help?

the tree line in the Rocky onies usually consist of a eding females and their lay wrestling, grooming, and



Cute but not cuddly

Don't be fooled by these cutelings! Most wild babies just need to be left alone. Fledging birds are learning to fly while leverets (baby hares) and fawns rely on camouflage for protection while mom forages! Keep pets secure when wild young are around.

Do you have teaching experience and a passion for wildlife? If so, we need YOU! Apply today to join our urban wildlife education team.

Scan to learn more or visit: www.calgarywildlife.org

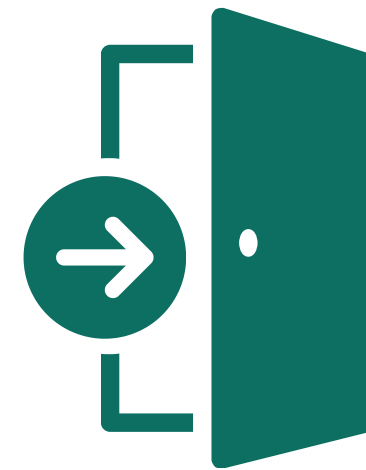
Our Impact

Wildlife Clinic

Each year, the number of patients we care for fluctuates due to various factors such as changing weather patterns, the severity of infectious diseases, and extreme weather events. In 2023, we experienced a notable 25% increase in patient intakes compared to 2022.

Most of our patients come to us for reasons such as being orphaned, collisions with vehicles, buildings, or windows, and interactions with other animals, with domestic cats being the most common cause. While the specific species of patients we receive may vary from year to year, the underlying reasons for their admissions remain relatively consistent.

This increase in patient numbers underscores the ongoing challenges wildlife face in our ever-changing environment. It also highlights the critical importance of our work. Our dedicated team remains committed to adapting to these changes and providing the necessary support to help wildlife in need.



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Patients
Through
the Doors

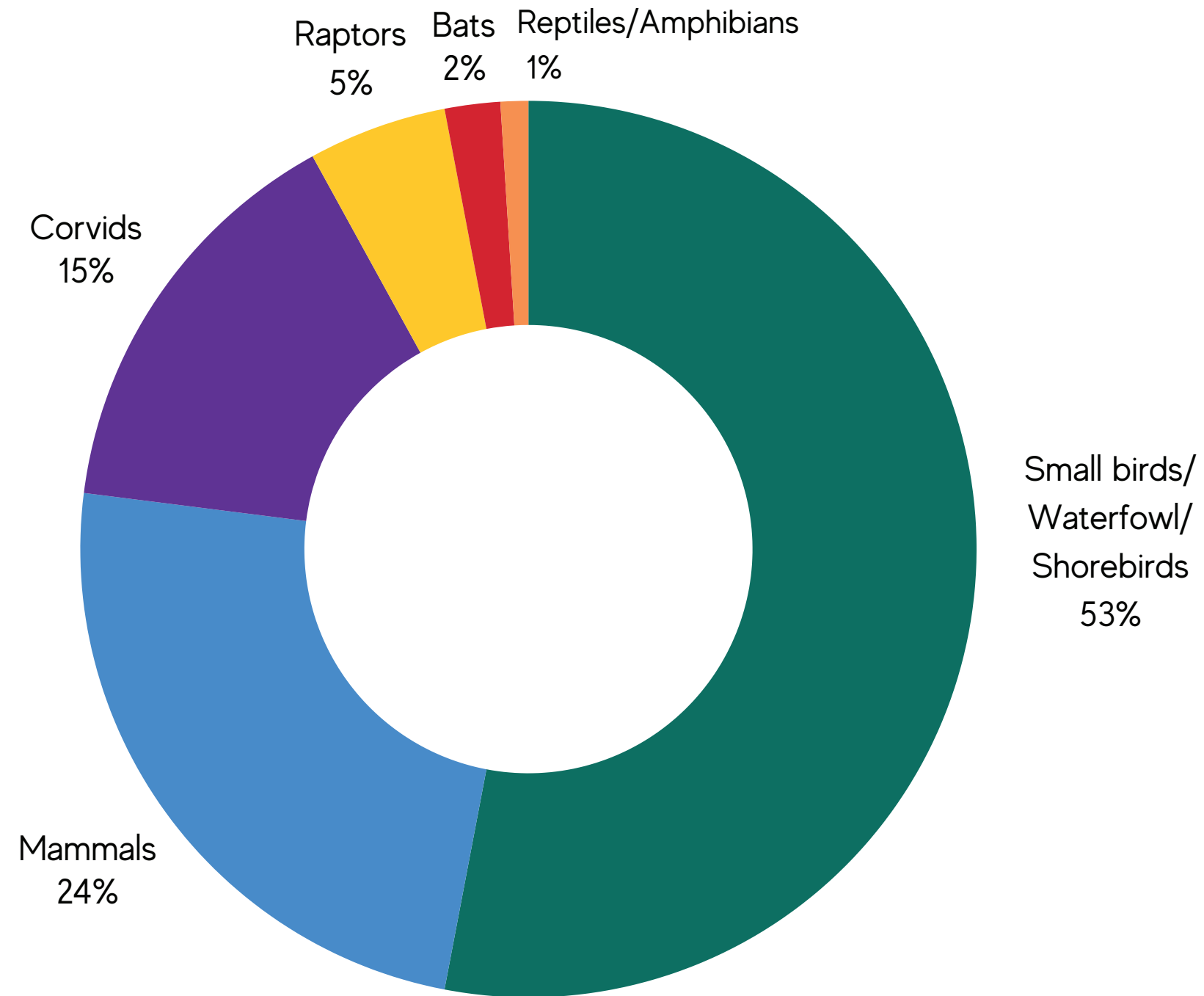


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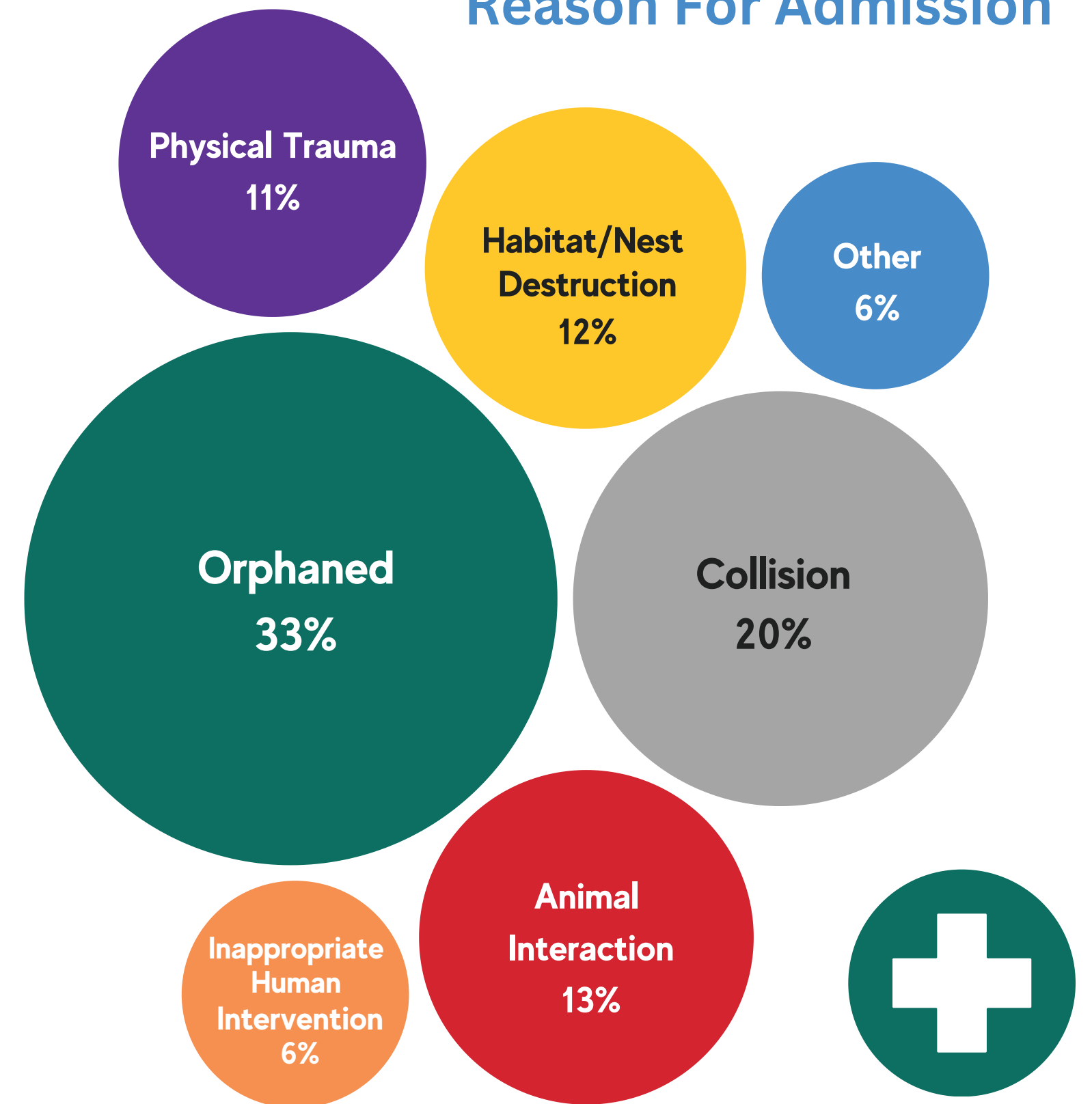
Endangered/
Threatened
Species
Successfully
Released



Patient Breakdown




Reason For Admission



Success Stories

Ferruginous Hawks

Patients 722-724 of 2023



Every patient Calgary Wildlife accepts is a unique and special case, but three of the patients we took in in the summer of 2023 were particularly rare: three ferruginous hawk babies. Ferruginous hawks (*Buteo regalis*) are an endangered species in Alberta, with their population declining due to habitat loss and fragmentation of grasslands caused by urbanization and agricultural practices. The three hawks had been found orphaned in Drumheller and were transported to Calgary Wildlife for care. Upon arrival, they were dehydrated but overall healthy. They spent their first few weeks in one of our isolation rooms, used to quarantine sick animals or provide a quiet place for more delicate patients like prey species or babies. The ferruginous hawks were tweezer-fed until they were able to feed themselves. As they matured, their down was replaced by flight feathers, and as their feathers came in, we were in for another surprise. Two out of the three siblings were dark morphs, a rare genetic mutation seen in only a small percentage of ferruginous hawks. This mutation causes their feathers to be extremely dark, contrasting with the typical combination of white and light brown plumage.

After 52 days in our care, these remarkable birds were released back into the wild. Ferruginous hawk play an integral role in the ecosystem by controlling rodent populations and maintaining the balance of the food chain. Conservation efforts are crucial for the survival of this species, and it is essential to protect their natural habitats and promote awareness about their plight.

These three were among the fifteen threatened and endangered species we successfully released in 2023.

Success Stories

Ring-billed Gull

Patient 1804 of 2023



The improper disposal of waste poses a significant threat to wildlife, often resulting in injuries. Surprisingly, dump sites can attract wildlife, presenting both an allure and a hazard.

In the fall of 2023, a ring-billed gull became entangled in wet spray foam at a local dump. Promptly noticed by dump workers, the gull was captured, and our wildlife hotline was contacted. Wet spray foam can entrap animals, leading to injuries as they attempt to break free or trapping them as it dries.

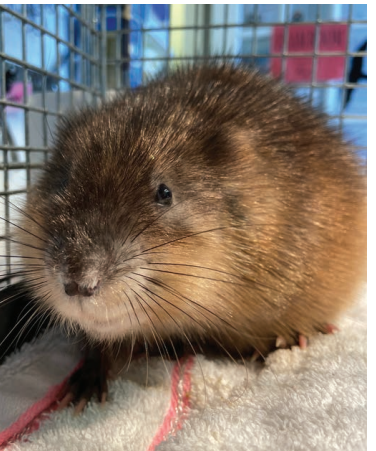
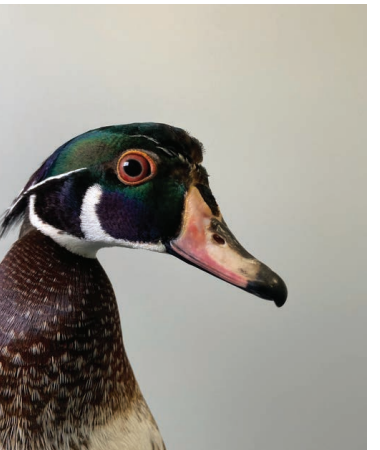
Upon admission, a thorough examination revealed the gull had no severe injuries beyond the spray foam entanglement. Multiple extensive cleaning sessions were necessary to remove the hardened foam. Our team delicately utilized mineral oil and dish soap to eliminate the foam without causing harm. Following a monitoring period, the gull was successfully released at a nearby park with a pond.

Instances like this underscore the significance of responsible waste disposal. Simple practices such as cutting items with loops like six-pack rings and masks, thoroughly cleaning jars with soap and water, cutting plastic dome lids, and ensuring spray foam is dry before disposal can prevent wildlife from suffering severe injuries or fatalities.

These simple steps can make a significant difference for the wildlife we share our environment with.

Patient Gallery

We care for countless animal species annually, here is a selection of just a few memorable faces.



Patient Gallery

We care for countless animal species annually, here is a selection of just a few memorable faces.





Volunteer Engagement

As a volunteer at Calgary Wildlife, I am offered a glimpse into the immense concern and care that people have for animals. It is an honour to be part of the journey toward rehabilitation that a patient experiences, and the dignity given to patients that aren't able to rehabilitate. Volunteering is an activity of hope and heart-break! As someone with a deep affinity with animals, I am delighted to be part of an organization that approaches this important task with efficiency and compassion.

- **Jeremiah Buhler, Calgary Wildlife volunteer**



Donor Impact

Calgary Wildlife delivers a unique and valuable community service. Each time I see an injured wild animal getting help, I feel good about humanity and good about supporting this organization.

- Janet Annesley, Calgary Wildlife donor

Wildlife rehabilitation preserves biodiversity and maintains ecological balance by caring for injured or displaced animals and returning them to their natural habitats. This ensures species populations remain healthy and capable of fulfilling their ecological roles. Human activities such as urbanization, deforestation, and pollution disrupt habitats and harm wildlife, but rehabilitation efforts help mitigate these impacts and restore ecosystems. Additionally, wildlife rehabilitation raises awareness about conservation challenges, inspires wildlife-friendly practices, and fosters coexistence between wildlife and human communities. For these reasons, I am a proud supporter of Calgary Wildlife.

- Tammy Boucher, Calgary Wildlife donor



Public Support

“Found a badly injured Jack Rabbit a few weeks ago and called Calgary Wildlife Rehab. Their estimated response time was pretty accurate and the volunteer arrived with the necessary tools to catch the bunny. As heartbreaking as it was to see how much pain this rabbit was in, the Calgary Wildlife team's empathy, courage, perseverance, and selflessness were incredible.”

“Always kind and helpful on the phone and sends volunteers immediately when required. Thank you for being so caring 🐾”

“Called in a concern about a goose with twine wrapped tightly around its ankle, to the point that it could barely put weight on its leg. By the next day this wonderful team had been able to locate it and remove the twine! Definitely recommend calling them if you see a wild animal in need of help.”

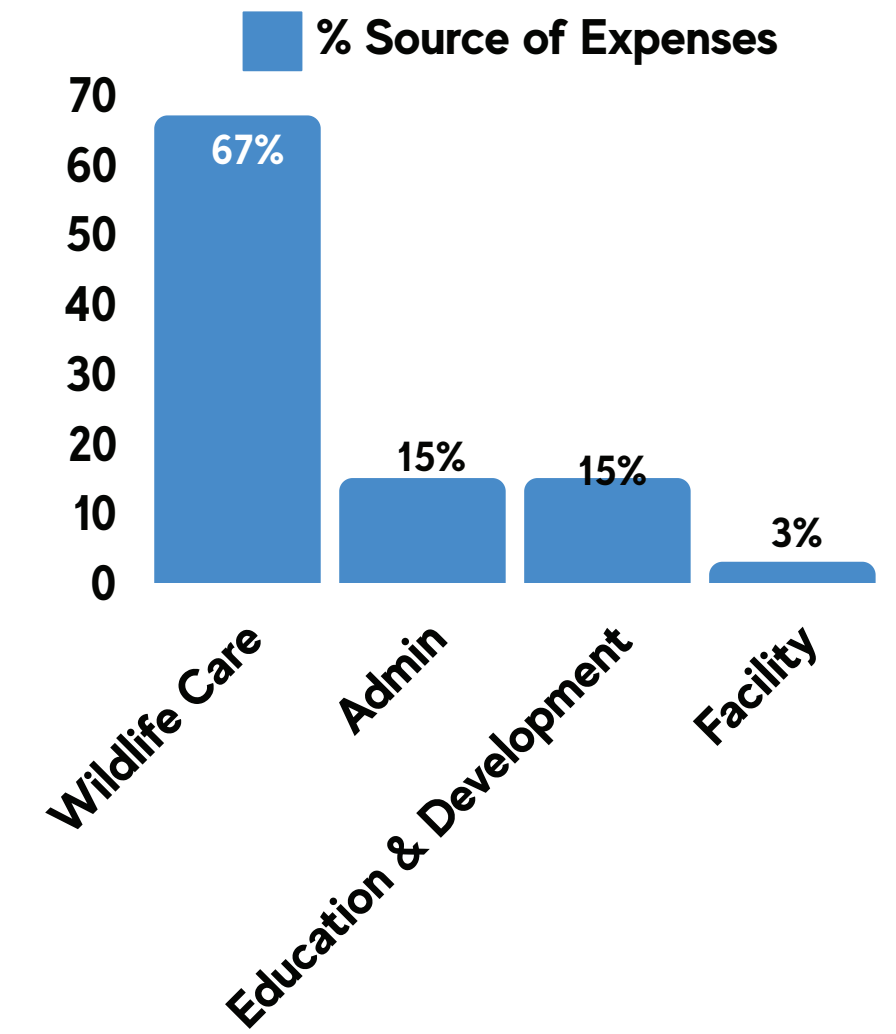
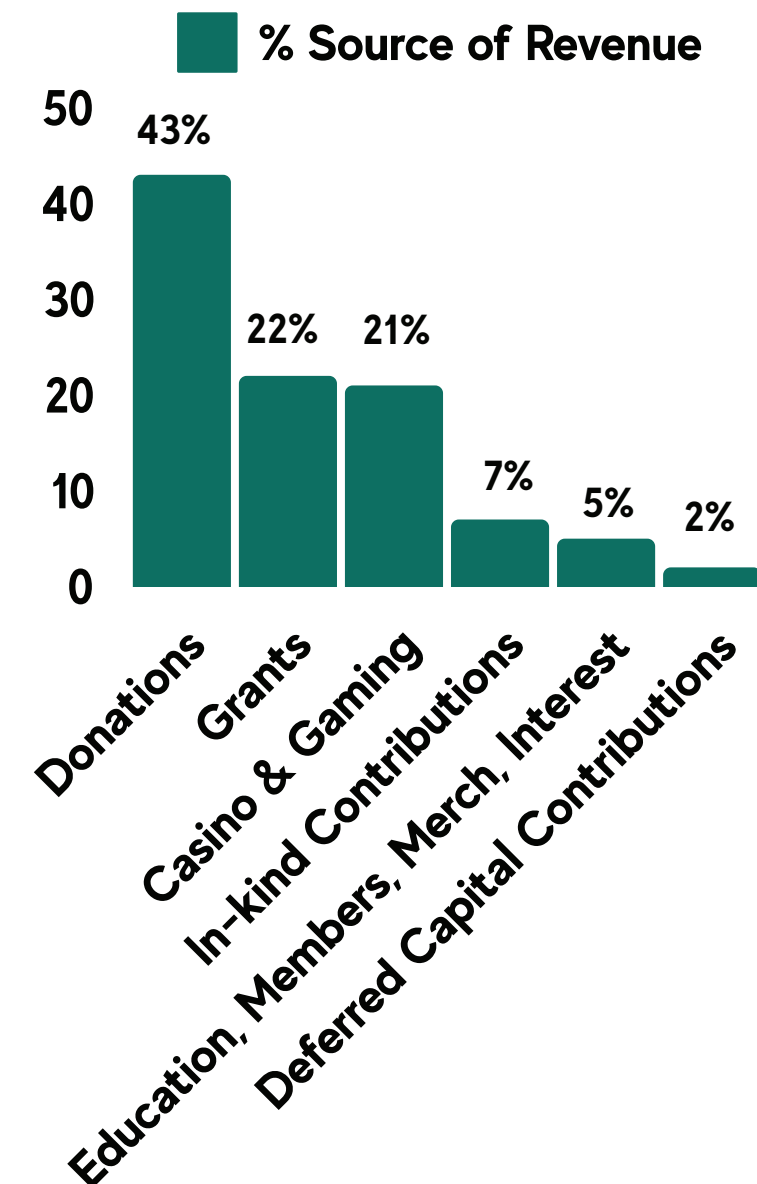
“I took in a little savannah sparrow that I came across unable to fly. I called and spoke to a woman right away and was able to bring in the bird immediately. Wildlife rehabs are such important places that provide critical services and are severely underfunded. If you can, please remember to donate if you bring in an injured or orphaned animal as a small “thank you”.”

Finances

Keeping consistent with past years, our biggest source of revenue continues to be **individual donations**, while our biggest source of expenses continues to be **wildlife care**.



Year after year comparison	2023	2022	2021
Revenue	887,401	728,545	667,681
Expenses	926,770	684,429	584,348



Supporter Recognition

ATCO
Aqueduct Foundation
Canadian Red Cross
City of Calgary
Calgary Foundation
Dan M Primeau
Eric S. Margolis Family Foundation
Government of Canada Canada
Jim Braglin-Marsh
John Bowlen Legacy Flow Through
Fund 1 @ Calgary Foundation
Longshore Resources

Matthews Family Foundation
Nickle Family Foundation
Nielsen Family Wildlife Fund
The Rainkie Family
RBC Foundation
SAIT Graphic Communications & Print
Technology Department
Sherling Animal Welfare Fund
Sponsor Energy
Steve Paterson
Susan Holt
The HOP Foundation





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