

Gibsons Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre

Helping wildlife, one animal at a time

Note from Irene

As you may have already guessed, 2020 was an eventful and challenging year here at Gibsons Wildlife Rescue Centre, with the result that we missed sending out our annual newsletter. So we have lots to share in this year's newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who has provided moral support, financial and material gifts, and volunteer time. Your contributions are what makes it possible for us to rescue and rehabilitate wildlife, and release many of these animals back to their homes.

Irene Davy



Remembering Clint Davy

Many of you will already know that Clint Davy – a tireless defender of wildlife – passed away in January of 2020. He is sorely missed by Irene and the community. A brief obituary is on the GWRC website.

Irene continues to run Wildlife Rehab Centre, with support from part-time staff and volunteers.

2020 by the Numbers

314

wild critters taken in

4621

telephone calls answered

Ten Thousandth Patient!

In February 2020, this male great horned owl was the ten thousandth patient to be admitted to Gibsons Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre!

He was brought in after becoming entangled in garden netting. Fortunately, apart from some skin tears on one of his wings, he was in good condition and after about a week in care, was able to be released back into the wild.



New Trailer Opened to Patients

After two years and many hurdles cleared, Gibsons Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre's new trailer (photo on next page) was finally ready to receive its wildlife patients requiring indoor care, and on Friday, April 24, 2020, these animals were moved into their new more spacious abode.

It truly took a community to make this project possible. On behalf of the wildlife needing help, that will be coming to us in the days ahead, we sincerely thank all of you.

[View photos and learn how the community came together to get it built.](#)



Video: Raccoon Kits Released

In June, 2020, the release day for six orphan raccoons arrived at last! They were admitted to the Rehab Centre in 2019 as tiny kits, some with their eyes unopened. Three were found in Port Mellon, one in Pender Harbour and two in Gibsons.

After researching the best place to release them, we found a relatively isolated spot in the forest near the mouth of a creek.

Despite the considerable amount of food and care needed to raise these little bandits, we missed their mischievous antics after release!

[You can watch a video of the release here on facebook.](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=851592981915900)

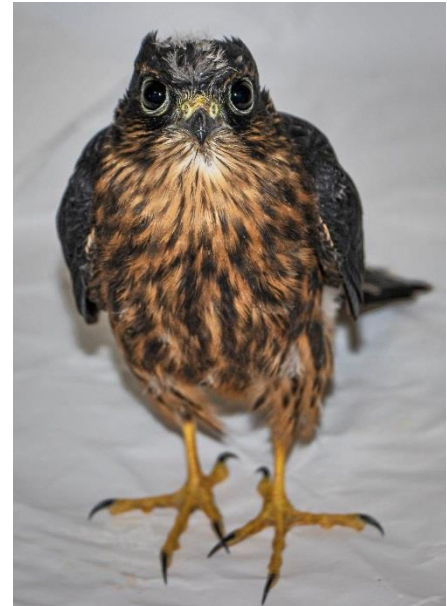
URL: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=851592981915900>

Merlin Fledgling Rescued

In July, 2020, this alert little merlin fledgling was found on the road in Roberts Creek, dazed but otherwise uninjured.

With a healthy appetite and able to fly after some care, he was transferred to the raptor rehabilitation specialists Orphaned Wildlife (OWL) in Richmond, to be taught to hunt prior to release.

These small falcons are superb fliers who chase down their prey – small birds and occasional dragonflies – on the wing.



Sooty Grouse Released after Possibly Ingesting Toxins

When a member of the public was able to pick up this sooty grouse hen, it was thought she may have been hit by a vehicle. The bird did not have any obvious injury but was weak and lethargic and had diarrhea, suggesting she had eaten something toxic.

Over the next few days in our care she gradually returned to normal, becoming much brighter and evidently anxious to be released. She was then returned to her forest home in early October, 2020.



You can Help Protect Birds with Window Decals

This pine siskin was one of more than 25 (!) that were brought to the rehab centre in the second half of 2020. That year saw a record pine siskin irruption (migration from a bird's normal habitat) throughout much of North America, due to poor seed production in Canada's coniferous forests.

Unfortunately individual siskins - or even flocks - tend to attack their reflected images in windows, often resulting in concussions and other injuries. Placing decals on the outside of windows is highly recommended to reduce the likelihood of such collisions.



Spotted Towhee Recovers from Encounter with Cat

In late December, 2020, this plucky little spotted towhee (shown on following page) was brought to us from Halfmoon Bay after losing his tail in an encounter with a cat. He also had a minor injury near his eye and general feather loss.

While staying with us, he was very lively, apparently enjoying the company of his little friend (as seen here). About 6 weeks later he was released, having regrown his tail feathers.



Barred Owlet Released after Treatment at OWL

In June, a tiny barred owlet – not much bigger than the credit card it is shown next to – was discovered huddled against the base of the massive “Twister” tree in Hidden Grove (near Sandy Hook) by a passing trail walker, who phoned us.

After discussing the owlet’s apparent very young age, general condition, and the number of dogs frequenting the trail, we made the decision for one of our volunteers to bring it in.



The owlet stayed with us until it was a bit bigger and stronger, and then went to Orphaned Wildlife in Delta, where it grew up with a barred owl foster dad to learn some owl skills. In August, she was then returned to the Sunshine Coast and we released her near where she was found.

Douglas Squirrel in Care

This young Douglas squirrel was snatched by a cat, whose owner quickly rescued him then brought him to us the next day. He's a very vocal little animal, and charges at us when we first attempt to feed him, but once the syringe is in his mouth he eagerly sucks the special formula we have for orphaned squirrels. We shall enjoy watching him grow until he's ready for release to the wild.



Fundraising Alternative to Annual Silent Auction

Following the 2019 Annual Silent Auction at Sunnycrest Mall, GWRC decided not to continue with the annual silent auction. While volunteers have worked hard to make this a successful fundraiser year after year, it has required significant involvement from Irene and Nicole Fortier in terms of their time and valuable space to store donations.

So early in 2020, volunteers set up a facebook group called [GWRC Ongoing Online Garage Sale](#), where members of the community can post items to sell which others can discover and purchase, with the understanding that the seller will then donate the proceeds of the sale to GWRC.

The group quickly reached over 400 members and started generating sales and donations. Then Covid-19 arrived, slowing things greatly while people isolated at home. We hope to reinvigorate this fundraiser in the coming months.

If you're on facebook, you can help fundraise by joining the group and buying and selling items. At the top of the facebook page, you'll find information on how to participate.

How to Help the Rehab Centre

There are many ways you can help the Rehab Centre save wildlife.

- Deposit your grocery receipts in boxes at the following grocery stores, which will generate donations to us: IGA, SuperValu and Claytons.
- [Purchase items on our online shop.](#)
- Donate animal food, cleaning supplies or stationary. [See our wish list.](#)
- Volunteer for wildlife care, yard work, gardening, picking up injured wildlife, or fundraising.
- Participate in the *GWRC Ongoing Online Garage Sale* [facebook group](#).
- [Donate online or with a cheque.](#)
- Forward this newsletter to friends who are concerned about wildlife. We invite them to [join our mailing list using the form on this page of our website](#). We will NOT share their email address with anyone.