

The Ridgeline

NEWSLETTER OF THE BLUE RIDGE WILDLIFE CENTER

ISSUE 59 | FALL 2023

**Growing Up
Wild!**

*This orphaned raccoon
was raised at the Center.*

Thanks for Giving!

As the leaves change color and the crisp autumn air signals the arrival of fall, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've taken together this year. This season of change is the perfect time to express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication to Blue Ridge Wildlife Center.

Our theme for this issue of *The Ridgeline* is "Thanks for Giving," and it couldn't be more fitting. It's a time when we recognize and appreciate the incredible generosity that keeps our center thriving. We'd like to extend our thanks to every one of you who has given so much towards our mission.

First and foremost, your generous monetary contributions have been the lifeblood of our organization. Whether it's a one-time donation or a monthly commitment, your support keeps our doors open and our mission alive. The financial support we receive enables us to provide essential care and rehabilitation to countless animals that pass through our doors. From the injured raptors to the orphaned babies, each life saved is a testament to your compassion and commitment.

But our gratitude doesn't end with financial contributions. Our center thrives thanks to the incredible in-kind donations we receive. Every blanket, every bag of feed, and every roll of gauze is a reminder of your dedication to our cause.

The heart and soul of Blue Ridge Wildlife Center, however, extends beyond bricks and mortar, dollars and cents. It's the time and skills contributed by our dedicated volunteers that truly sets us apart. From the tireless efforts of our volunteers in the hospital to the passion of our education team, your commitment to our mission is both humbling and inspiring. To our Board of Directors, who provide invaluable guidance and leadership, thank you for your wisdom and unwavering support.

Your efforts and dedication extend far beyond the surface. They ripple through the lives of each animal we rehabilitate and release back into the wild. They resonate in the hearts of the people we educate about the importance of coexisting with our wildlife neighbors. Your contributions are woven into the very fabric of our center, making us stronger and more effective with each passing day.

This fall, as we gather to celebrate the season of gratitude and giving, please know that we are profoundly thankful for your support. It is because of you that we can continue our mission of wildlife conservation, rehabilitation, and education. You are the life force that keeps our Center going.

As we embrace the changing seasons, let us also embrace the spirit of "Thanks for Giving" that binds us together. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities the future holds, knowing that with your support, we can make a lasting impact on the world around us.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our cause. You are the reason we can continue to make a difference, one animal and one person at a time.

With gratitude,



Annie Bradfield



Join our
Wild team!

If you're interested in a volunteer position, or a rehabilitation, veterinary, veterinary technician, or education internship with us you can find the application on our website at

blueridgewildlifectr.org

The Effects of Toxins on Wildlife

Toxicity is the primary cause of admission for approximately 1% of our patients, but don't let that small number fool you. Toxins are a massive threat to the health of humans, wildlife, and the environment and they often cause problems before clinical signs of toxicity are evident.

Heavy metal toxicosis

At our hospital, the toxin we find and treat most often is lead. Although >80% of our scavenging species (primarily vultures, eagles, and opossums) come to the Center with increased blood lead levels, their listed cause of admission is most frequently "hit by car" or "unknown trauma". This makes sense because an animal with mildly increased blood lead levels (any level >0 ug/dL and <10ug/dL),

will typically show no obvious signs and would have no reason to be caught up and brought into care. However, those mildly elevated levels are often enough to begin impacting cognitive function and reaction times, making many types of trauma more likely to occur.

Most lead poisoning cases come in during the fall, closely following deer hunting season, as ingestion of lead ammunition fragments in gut piles is the most common route of exposure for wildlife. Although we know how dangerous lead is to humans, many products still contain lead. However, scavengers are not getting lead poisoning from eating car batteries or paint chips—they are ingesting lead that is covered in meat. Game meat is also a common way for humans to be exposed to

this toxin and we know it is a significant threat to individuals that regularly eat game shot with lead-containing ammunition, especially children and women who are pregnant or may become pregnant.

Rodenticides

Poisoned animals presenting as primary trauma cases is not unique to lead poisoning or heavy metal poisoning in general. We see this same pattern with toxins like rodenticides and certain pesticides. Although we rarely see birds of prey die directly from rodenticide ingestion (most do not survive long enough to come into care), we know from multiple studies that raptors being admitted to wildlife hospitals have extremely high rates of rodenticide exposure and sub-clinical levels of the toxin in their blood. Some studies have revealed that up to 96% of raptor patients admitted to wildlife hospitals for any reason have detectable levels of rodenticide in their blood (Murray 2017).

It is also worth noting that the majority of patients dying of rodenticide poisoning are not the typically-targeted mice and rats. Chipmunks are actually the most common species we see die directly from this toxin. We also know that rodenticides are often ingested by pets and are a common cause of poisoning and death in cats and dogs. To make matters worse, we know that rodenticides are not an effective solution, even for their target victims. Killing mice and rats only opens up the area for new mice and rats to move in. Securing food items and closing off entryways is the only way to truly eliminate the problem. Mice and rats can be trapped in humane traps and released just outside the home on the same property until all entryways have been sealed.



Black and Turkey Vultures are two of the species we see most commonly impacted by lead poisoning. Over 80% of our Eagles and Virginia Opossum patients are also admitted with elevated blood lead levels.



Some studies have revealed that up to 96% of raptor patients admitted to wildlife hospitals for any reason have detectable levels of rodenticide in their blood (Murray 2017).



This eagle and chipmunk succumbed to rodenticide poisoning. While raptors typically build up rodenticide in their system over time by eating multiple affected prey animals, chipmunks often die with a stomach full of the bright green poison as seen in this photo.

Drug Toxicity

Drugs, when ingested at high doses accidentally or without prescription, can also cause severe toxicities in wildlife and of course humans and domestics. One example that we see repeatedly in red foxes is ivermectin toxicity. At our hospital, we have only seen this in foxes (though it could happen to a variety of animals). This is due to the fact that foxes are commonly suspected to be suffering from mange and subsequently fed this anti-parasitic medication by well-intentioned humans.

Ivermectin is a drug that was often used to treat mange (among other diseases), which is an infestation of mites that we commonly diagnose in red foxes in our area. These mites cause hair loss, itching, and thickened skin. Although the drug will kill the mites, it does not treat the secondary skin issues nor the underlying cause of disease. It must also be dosed properly at specific intervals. Despite the ineffectiveness and the fact that it is illegal to medicate free-ranging wildlife, people will choose to feed this drug to a variety of animals. When the drug is accidentally overdosed, as it often is when weights and sensitivities cannot be confirmed, these animals suffer signs of toxicity and often death.

Please help our wildlife by following our state's laws! Medicating wildlife in the field like this is illegal for a reason. Even if



Juvenile red foxes, like the one pictured here, are the most frequent victims of ivermectin toxicity seen at the Center.

it were effective, this drug is lethal to other wild species and there is no way to ensure that a specific animal gets the appropriate dose (or that another animal does NOT ingest it) without containing the animal and getting it to a licensed rehabilitator for care.

Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)

In addition to these toxic materials that humans knowingly put into the environment, we also have lesser-known toxins such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs). EDCs are chemicals that are known to interfere with the way the body's hormones work and we already know about the problems these chemicals cause in humans. We are exposed to these EDCs through the water we drink, the food we eat, the air we breathe, and even through our skin. Some mimic our own hormones while others block our hormones, preventing them from doing their job in the body. In humans, this leads to fertility issues including poor sperm quality, lowered fertility, endometriosis, early puberty, etc. It also alters immune function and has been associated with certain cancers, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, neurological issues and more.

We now know that these chemicals cause hormonal problems in wildlife just



Each year, 8-15% of our Woodland Box Turtle Patients are admitted with aural abscesses. These abscesses are thought to be caused by organochlorine pesticides in the environment.

Aural abscesses, which impact about 15% of our box turtle patients, are believed to be linked to organochlorine pesticides.

as they do in humans. Although many of the chemicals have been banned in some countries, many of these are extremely persistent in the environment. We are still seeing impacts of DDT on wildlife even though it was banned in the 1970s!

Although many of the issues with EDCs are seen at the population level as a result of fertility issues, there is one that we see quite commonly at the Center. Aural abscesses, which impact about 15% of our box turtle patients, are believed to be linked to organochlorine pesticides. These pesticides induce a vitamin A deficiency, which changes the tissues of the ear and can cause these abscesses in turtles.

There is still much to learn about how these chemicals are impacting humans and even more to learn about their ef-

fects on wildlife. Support research and legislation to learn more about how these EDCs impact our world and encourage the use of safer products where possible. When shopping, choose fewer synthetic products and look for products that limit unnecessary packaging, especially plastics. Like other toxicities, do not assume that there is no problem just because you do not see animals actively dying all around you—these chemicals harm entire populations but they do so slowly and discreetly.

Murray, M. Anticoagulant rodenticide exposure and toxicosis in four species of birds of prey in Massachusetts, USA, 2012–2016, in relation to use of rodenticides by pest management professionals. Ecotoxicology 26, 1041–1050 (2017).

What are some examples of EDCs?



- **Pesticides** – DDT (insecticide banned in 1972 in the U.S. but persistent in the environment), atrazine (often applied to large agricultural fields), glyphosate (found in products like RoundUp).
- **Plastics and food storage materials** – Bisphenol A, phthalates, etc.
- **Personal care products** – Parabens, UV filters, phthalates
- **Anti-bacterial soaps** – Triclosan
- **Textiles and clothing** – Perfluorochemicals
- **Industrial solvents and lubricants** – Dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls
- **Fireworks, rockets, explosives** – Perchlorate salts



Consider using products that are non-toxic to you and the environment. Help protect our wildlife from being exposed to chemicals—from the food they eat to the water they drink—and be respectful of the surroundings in which the animals live. Picking up trash not only protects the environment and keeps our surroundings beautiful, but it can also save wildlife.

Enrichment, why is it important?

Enrichment for animals typically includes various types of activities and sensory changes to encourage physical and mental well-being. Here are some ways we at BRWC use enrichment for our ambassador animals and even some rehab animals.

Food-Based Enrichment

- **Puzzle feeders:** These encourage animals to work for their food, stimulating problem-solving and foraging behaviors.
- **Scavenger hunts:** Hiding food items or treats around the enclosure encourages animals to search for their meals, mimicking natural hunting or foraging behaviors.

Sensory Enrichment

- **Scent trails:** Marking objects with scents or spices can stimulate an animal's sense of smell and encourage exploration.
- **New objects:** Introducing new textures, toys, or other objects like feathers, fur, or snake sheds can pique an animal's curiosity and engage their senses.

Environmental Enrichment

- **Changes in habitat:** Rearranging or modifying the enclosure periodically provides new challenges and promotes exploration. Enclosures can be designed to



provide different hiding places, perches, textures, substrates, and even microclimates.

- **Education programming:** While most programs are done at BRWC, taking an animal to a new location can be mentally stimulating.



Above: Mocha, the striped skunk, works on her puzzle bowl. **Right:** Jasper, the red fox, plays with a new toy. **Below:** Bear, the striped skunk, forages for food among play balls.



Social Enrichment

- **Interactions:** Visual and auditory interactions can be mentally stimulating, especially with new sounds of animals they have never heard before, or do not hear often.

- **Training sessions with keepers:** Our keepers teach animals to participate in their own care, such as entering a crate, stepping onto a scale, or flying to a glove. This type of training, which uses positive reinforcement, helps animals learn specific behaviors, making it less stressful for both sides to improve their overall well-being.

Cognitive Enrichment

- **Puzzle toys and games:** Cognitive enrichment requires problem-solving and mental engagement.

- **Activities:** Activities that mimic natural behaviors can help educate the public about wildlife conservation and the importance of protecting these animals and their habitats while allowing the animal to engage in species-specific behaviors..

For nonreleasable education ambassadors, enrichment is crucial for improving their overall well-being and ensuring they can fulfill their ambassador role with ease. It reduces stress, prevents stereotypic behaviors, keeps them physically and mentally fit, and makes them more engaging with trainers and to the public. Enrichment is an essential aspect of caring for these animals in a way that benefits both them and the educational goals of the programs they represent.



Education Director, CJ White, works with Gryllz, the Red-tailed hawk. Photo by Neal Krysinski.



Gizmo, the Virginia opossum, enjoys his pumpkin activity.



Thank you, Reagan!

Instead of birthday gifts for herself, Reagan asked her friends and family to donate items to support BRWC.

If you would like to make a donation please visit our website blueridgewildlifectr.org.

A "Wild World" Gala

Long Branch Historic House and Farm • Millwood, VA

We extend our deepest gratitude for the extraordinary generosity we received at this year's "Wild World" Gala which far exceeded our fundraising goal for the evening!

With your help, we were able to purchase much-needed and life-saving medical equipment for our wildlife hospital including a new x-ray and ultrasound machine. This vital equipment will enable us to provide the highest level of care for the thousands of trauma patients that come through our doors each year.

The success of our gala is a testament to the collective power of compassion and dedication. Your generosity will make a lasting impact on the health and well-being of our wild neighbors! You are truly *Wildlife Guardians*.



Board Chair, Dr. Russ McKelway, honors co-founder Beatrice von Gontard for her decades of hard work and dedication to BRWC.



A huge thank you to our 2023 Gala sponsors and attendees for their support in helping our native wildlife!

Photos by Joanne Maisano.



Meet this year's Title Sponsor — Onsite Wastewater Service, CO

Onsite Wastewater Service, CO started life as most businesses do, a little bit by accident, a little bit by invention. Before working in the septic world, I ran a research program at WVU which integrated fish and plant ecosystems. Even after producing 40,000 pounds of fish annually (and as much lettuce as the Farm Manager would grant me space to grow!) I was able to improve the quality of the water on the farm. This meant, in simple terms, that the water leaving the farm was purer and cleaner than the water entering the property. After the project came to an unexpected budgetary end, I fell into septic work and discovered that new alternative septic systems are very similar to those what I had been designing back at the college.

Onsite Wastewater Service, CO chose to sponsor Blue Ridge Wildlife Center's Gala because we have seen the impact that the organization has on the area. In one of the first years of the company's operation, we discovered a small screech owl on the side of the road. The owl had been hit and had a severe eye laceration. I had an employee at the time who asked me what we could do to save

this owl and whether we could pause our workday to do so. I looked at him and said "Absolutely we can save the owl. That's the reason we started our own company. As long as we take care of our customers, we have the time to do this as well."

Further development continues and more is on the way. I am acutely aware that, as we develop our business, we are changing and taking away natural habitat. Swathes of rural Virginia may well be adversely impacted in the decades to come and, with this in mind, I want to support BRWC as they endeavor to provide the best care and assistance possible to animals in need. Additionally, we see that our contributions are being used well. Recently, during a visit to BRWC I found out that Annie [Bradfield] gave up the luxuries of her first-floor office and moved to a shared office space in the basement because more room was needed for the hospital. This is one of the most impressive actions that I have ever seen an Executive Director take and I make a point of giving money to those sorts of kind humans whenever I can.

The septic business is, by its very nature, an environmental business. Every day when we go to work, we strive to maintain and optimize septic systems and bring older systems up to modern standards. We do this to keep our rivers, bays and ground water clean and our bays and oceans fishable for people like us and for the generations to come. As the father of a 12-year-old with a love of the outdoors, I am constantly aware of my responsibility to prepare him for the world that he is inheriting. Talking with my son about the environment and the work that I do is wonderful, but leading by example feels far more meaningful.

ONSITE WASTEWATER SERVICE, CO - Matt Ferrell, founder of Onsite Wastewater Service, CO

Photo of Matt and Elle Ferrell at the gala by Joanne Maisano.



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Patient + Corner

Releases!

Autumn means leaves—and animals leaving! Many of our patients must be released by early autumn to be successful through winter. For example, all reptiles and amphibians must be released before October 1st to ensure they have plenty of time to find and create a hibernaculum (shelter) and survive the freezing winter temperatures. Squirrels have a less rigid date, but must be released while food is plentiful to give juveniles enough time to build a cache to survive when resources are scarce during winter months. Since the end of August, we've released over 50 Eastern gray squirrels, 25 turtles, and 17 Virginia opossums! The remaining squirrels and reptiles/amphibians that are still with us will stay until Spring.



Dangers of Barbed Wire



This Eastern screech owl was rescued after being found hooked onto a barbed wire fence. On exam, this owl's prognosis was extremely guarded—while the patagium (the skin between the shoulder and wrist that allows extension of the wing for flight) was still intact, much of the tissue surrounding it was torn and badly damaged. Thankfully the owl was stable enough on intake to undergo surgery that day. The lacerations were cleaned and closed and the wing was bandaged to allow for optimal healing. Just a week later, the wing was showing great improvement in healing and sutures were removed! After physical therapy and time regaining condition in an outdoor enclosure, this owl was successfully returned home!



A comparison of the initial laceration injury and the healing process.

Black Vulture Imping



This Black Vulture suffered an unfortunate event that left many of the flight feathers of the left wing completely singed. With these feathers compromised, this bird was unable to fly and find food, becoming extremely emaciated and resorting to feeding on what carrion was available nearby. This also led the bird to consuming meat or organ tissue that had

been shot with lead, as they had elevated blood lead levels and had a confirmed lead pellet fragment in the gastrointestinal tract. While treating for lead, our staff decided to move forward with a process called “imping,” where donor feathers from a deceased bird of the same species and age are “implanted” into the cut feather shafts of the damaged feathers. This allows the bird to immediately achieve flight after the procedure. Since the original feather follicle is still intact, these feathers molt out normally. This bird’s procedure

Before (left) and after (below) the imping process that will allow this bird to fly again.



went well and they’ve since been moved to one of our outdoor pre-release enclosures in preparation for release!



Allegheny Woodrat — A Rare Patient!



Allegheny Woodrats are very uncommon patients at the Center—this was the first adult we’ve ever treated! This species is only found in rocky forested areas along the Appalachian Mountains and is considered near threatened on the IUCN red list.

This individual was brought into care due to weakness and poor condition. Physical exam revealed three massive botfly larvae growing in her neck! Though

botfly are fairly common in wildlife and not often a cause for concern, these were pushing on the throat, making eating and swallowing difficult. Because of this, she became thin, dehydrated, and was unable to groom away fleas, leading to infestation.

The larvae were surgically removed

and the patient was able to eat and groom properly without the larvae in her neck. Given the threatened status of the species, genetic samples from this patient, blood samples, and the removed larvae have been saved to aid state biologists in better understanding these woodrats.



From Orphans to Release Thanks to New Pre-release Enclosures



These two raccoons came to the Center as individual orphans from separate situations. They became fast friends, playing and learning how to be raccoons in our indoor raccoon nursery.

This year, we fundraised for five brand-new multi-cage complexes designed and built by CDE Cages. One of these was a new four-cage raccoon complex. This new caging for raccoons allows us to house more than double our previous cage's limit and allows for easier enclosure cleaning and superior housing for our raccoon patients. Through a generous donation from Trex of their plastic composite deck boards, we were able to build the cages on an elevated platform. This allows us to fully scrub and remove debris, flushing it straight through the flooring to ensure our patients are staying clean and preventing disease spread. The non-porous material allows for better disinfection and the excellent drainage means that our patients can be back into the enclosure quickly. The raccoon enclosures also were designed with a door that opens between cages in the complex, allowing for shifting from one cage into the other so that cleaning can be done without the animals in the enclosure, and to allow for a changing, mentally-stimulating environment!

These two youngsters eventually graduated to these outdoor enclosures. After being outside for months acclimating and practicing the skills they will need to survive, these two were finally released in Clarke County at a beautiful property where they had plenty of healthy habitat and resources. As our caging was not complete until late in the

season, these were the only two babies we raised from start to finish this year, but we are excited to make use of our new, larger caging for years to come.

We are so appreciative of **Rockfish Wildlife Sanctuary** who sent us their single to be raised with ours, and also took ALL of the infant raccoons we'd raised earlier in the season to provide them with outdoor caging while ours was being built. It truly takes a village to provide wildlife with the best opportunities for them to thrive and get a second chance, and we're fortunate to have such amazing rehabilitators in Virginia!

Between our indoor nursery and our new outdoor enclosures, these orphaned raccoons became friends and learned all the skills of how to be raccoons, and were released together to thrive in the wild.



Flying Squirrels



In one month, we received 12 Southern flying Squirrel patients—that's the most we've ever seen in one year! The majority of these patients came to us as babies or young juveniles. Ten were attacked by a cat and required treatment. Once stable and

healthy, these patients were transferred out to home rehabilitators to continue growing and practicing their skills over the winter with plans to release next spring.



New Medical Equipment

This year, with the funds raised at our "Wild World" Gala", we were fortunate to make huge strides in our medical capabilities! Our old x-ray machine finally broke down this past August and we needed replacement quickly. We were able to purchase the new machine and have it set up quickly thanks to a single donor. We also invested in "point-of-care" (POC) diagnostic equipment, such as a handheld ultrasound and blood chemistry analyzer. The vast majority of our patients are victims of trauma (vehicle/window collisions, predator attacks, etc.), who commonly endure both external and internal injuries. Historically, our ability to evaluate internal damage has been limited to x-ray and physical exam findings, a deficit further complicated by wildlife's notorious talent in masking signs of sickness.

Though we always treat each patient to the best of our ability, this lack of certainty

has no doubt resulted in failure to get ahead of preventable complications, or in some cases, caused us to put extensive resources into a patient despite—unbeknownst to us—a grave prognosis. In

either situation, patient suffering is needlessly prolonged when we don't have all the information.

Thankfully, we now have the freedom to easily identify cancerous masses or diseased organ tissue, monitor kidney function, visualize abdominal bleeding, and more. Acquiring these POC tools hasn't simply been a matter of "bells and whistles"—they are invaluable in providing improved patient care and in helping us continue to make informed medical decisions with confidence!

Thank you to all of the amazing donors who made these upgrades possible!



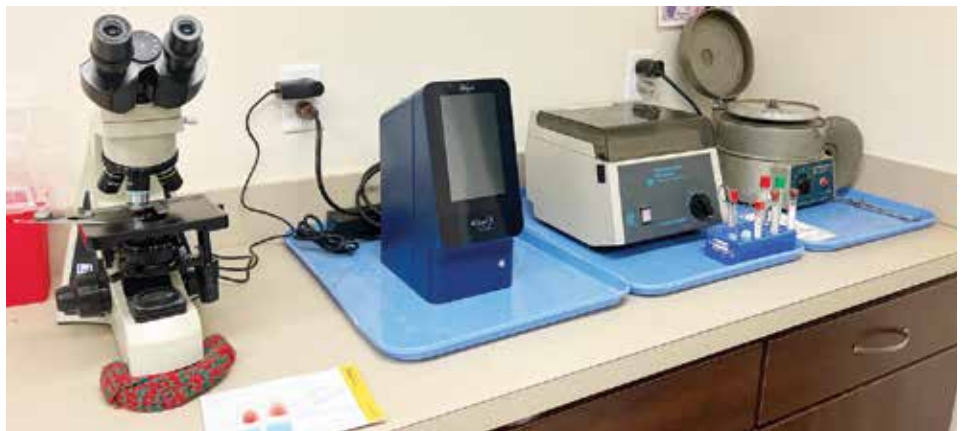
X-ray machine

Obtaining clear radiographs, or x-rays, is critical in many of our cases. It allows us to visualize fractures and dislocations, lead ingestion, fluid in the lungs, and numerous other findings that direct the course of treatment. Our new wireless unit has the added benefit of allowing us to bring the machine to the patient, such as those actively undergoing surgery or being housed in our isolation ward waiting to test negative for avian influenza. Although we do not name patients, we have lovingly named our x-ray machine "Patty", after the amazing donor, Patty Thomas, who recognized the importance of immediately replacing our broken unit and funded 100% of the replacement.



Ultrasound

Though radiographs are a core diagnostic tool, they are limited to evaluating dense structures like bones and general size/positioning of organs. An ultrasound allows us to "see through" tissue, creating a cross-section in any direction we choose. We can look for fluid in the chest/abdomen, ruptured bladders, diseased liver tissue, parasitic cysts developing throughout the body, and much more. In addition, we can now safely perform ultrasound-guided needle biopsies and fluid sampling.



Chemistry Analyzer

While we have always been able to perform basic blood tests to evaluate hematocrit, white blood cells, and lead levels, these cannot tell us anything about organ health or function. Using outside laboratories for all other tests meant that we must spend a significant portion of our medical budget on laboratory testing which made serial monitoring cost-prohibitive. Additionally, it could often take days to even obtain results. On-site testing allows us to identify and address problems in real time, tracking changes closely at a lower cost-per-test to determine the efficacy of our treatments.

WildFest 2023

On September 2nd, more than 600 people gathered from various locations to celebrate and learn about native wildlife at our annual, free "WildFest" event hosted at the State Arboretum of Virginia at Blandy Experimental Farm. Guests had the opportunity to stroll from one vendor to another, delving into a wide array of topics presented by organizations such as the American Chestnut Foundation, Human-Beaver Co-existence, Virginia Master Naturalists, K2C (Wildlife Encounters), Sky Meadows State Park, Virginia Department of Health, The State Arboretum, and the BRWC wildlife veterinary table. Additionally, they could explore the BRWC ambassador mammal, bird, and reptile tables, as well as the Gift Shop and silent auction tables, which were set up to raise funds for the center.

The event's most popular attractions were the 30-minute education programs featuring BRWC's own ambassadors. These programs aimed to teach people about our ambassadors, how to appreciate wildlife, and provide proper assistance to animals in need.



Owl-O-Ween



This Halloween season, "Boo Ridge Wildlife Center" hosted its first "Owl-o-Ween" a unique and exciting event that combined the fun of trick-or-treating with an educational twist. This sold-out event gave animal and candy lovers a chance to learn about our wildlife ambassadors while celebrating Halloween in their fantastic costumes. Kids were able to test their skills with jelly beans that either tasted like buttered popcorn or rotten eggs, moldy cheese, or caramel corn to highlight how well a skunk can smell to eat the right foods. Sour Toxic Waste candy served as a fun example of a vulture's extremely acidic stomach acid that helps get rid of bacteria, viruses, and diseases in the environment. Even eyeball gumballs were used to talk about how well hawks and other raptors



are able to see to catch their prey. The event even ended with kids creating their own spooky bat craft! Stay tuned because next year will be even bigger and better!



BRWC staff and friends at the gala. Photo by Joanne Maisano.

ABOUT BRWC

Address: 106 Island Farm Lane, Boyce, Virginia 22620

Wildlife Hotline: (540) 837-9000

E-mail: info@blueridgewildlifectr.org

Web: blueridgewildlifectr.org

BRWC protects and conserves native wildlife by integrating veterinary medicine, rehabilitation, public education, professional training, and research.

BRWC is a 501(c)3 organization (EIN 54-1996991) and relies on private donations exclusively. Wildlife Centers may not receive payment to treat animals, nor do they receive state or federal funding. Contributions are tax-deductible.

BRWC is located on the Burwell-van Lennep Foundation (BVLf) property in Boyce, Virginia. The mission of the BVLf includes preserving the diverse ecology of this land, protecting wildlife, and environmental education. BVLf generously provides the land to BRWC at no cost.

THE RIDGELINE

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Giving Tuesday

is coming up on

November 28th!

Giving Tuesday is a chance to give back and support non-profits. With no state nor Federal funding available for wildlife rehabilitation, we rely on **YOU** to do the important work we do here. Be sure to follow our campaign on social media and please plan to donate to the Center on 11/28!

