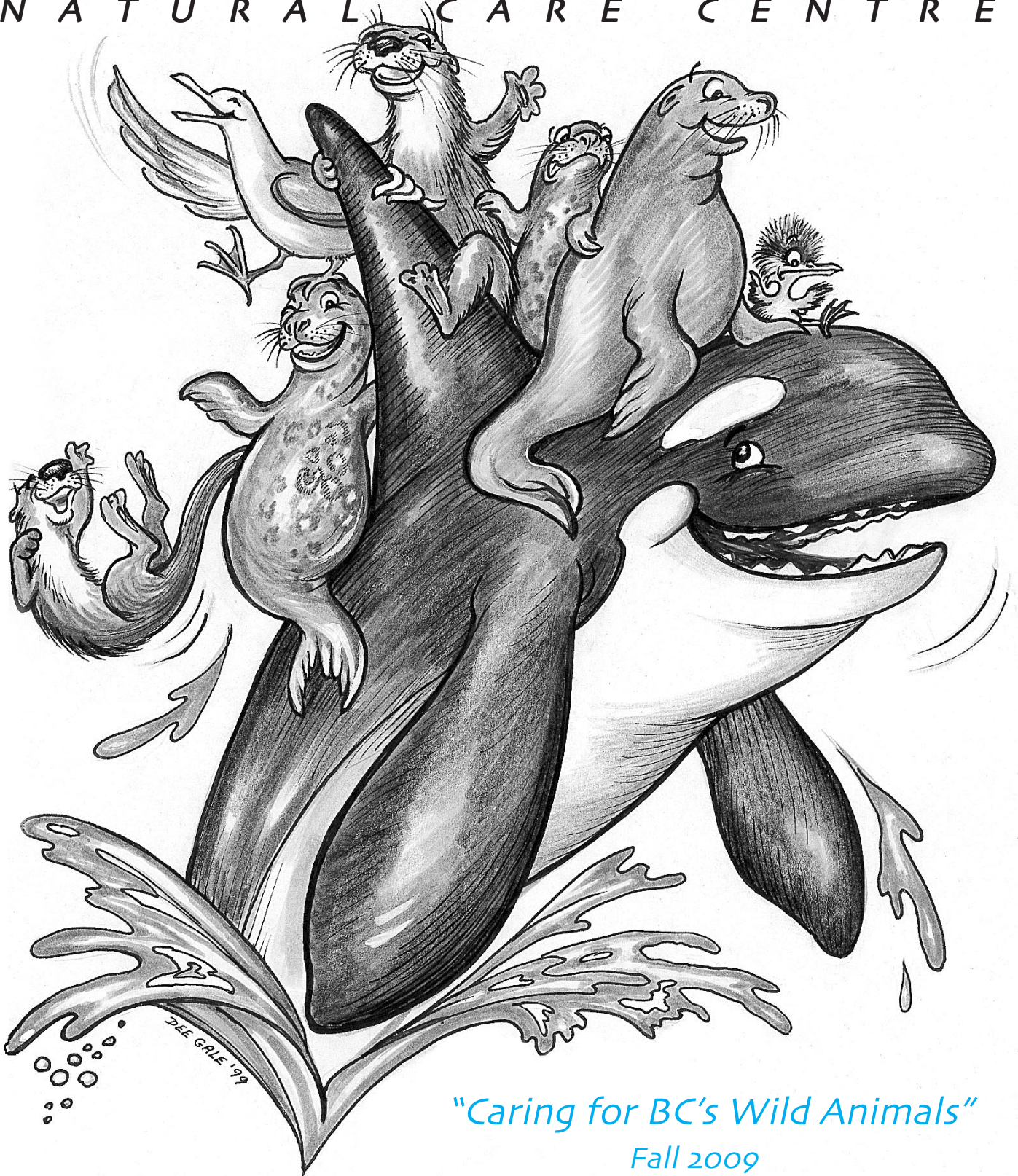


island wildlife

N A T U R A L C A R E C E N T R E



"Caring for BC's Wild Animals"

Fall 2009

A wildlife success story

In 1996, founder, Jeff Lederman wondered if he had done the right thing when he opened the fledgling Island Wildlife. Our 1st year saw less than 100 patients. Now approaching Year 14, we have rescued over 5,000 injured, sick and orphaned wild animals (including more than 600 marine mammals) from throughout our islands and coastal communities as far north as Prince Rupert. It's crystal clear that Jeff had indeed, done the right thing!

As one of only two centres in the country permitted by the Department of Fisheries & Oceans to rescue and treat marine mammals, one of our principal areas of focus is stranded seal pups. But we also give expert care to avian species and terrestrial mammals. Our patient roster includes eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, waterfowl, songbirds, deer, beaver, muskrat, squirrels, harbour seal pups and occasionally seal lions, elephant seals, fur seals and river otters.

Over the years, we have built a small but impressive facility on our rocky 4-acres and we are proud to say that we have attained one of the highest survival rates in North America. We believe this is because of our atypical approach to medicine – an integration of conventional veterinary protocols with the best of naturopathic therapies (such as homeopathic and herbal remedies); combined with a devoted and highly skilled animal care team, and a quick response to animal emergencies. We are also a teaching facility...most of our animal care staff are volunteer interns who come from all over the world to learn our techniques. Here are just a few of this year's stories...

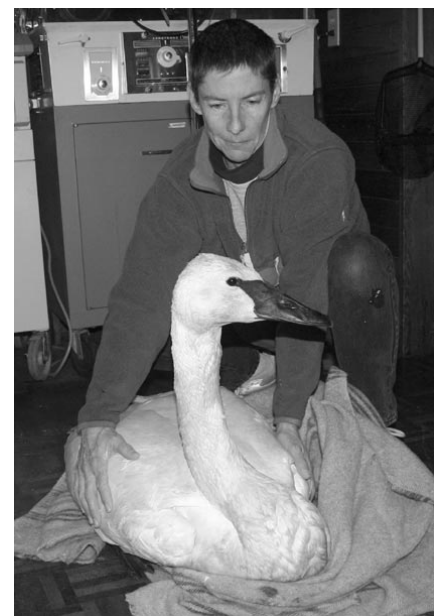
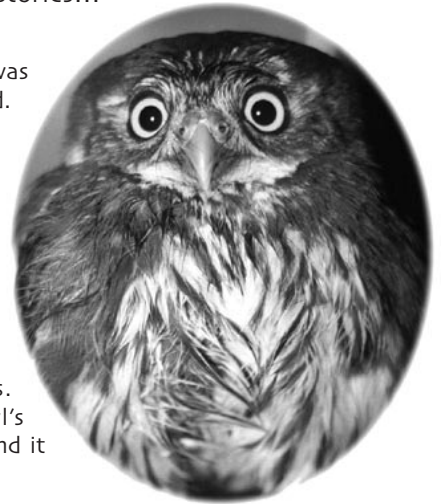


These twin Bald Eagle youngsters were found wet and starving some days after their nest blew down in the Sunset area of SSI. It didn't take long before these young birds were perching and exercising their wings. After a month in our large flight enclosure, the eagles were released back to their home turf.

An all too frequent fate for Trumpeter Swans in the Pacific Northwest is lead poisoning. For decades, our lakes, ponds and wetlands have been peppered with lead shot from hunters. The sediment is now so impregnated with toxic lead shot that these magnificent birds are suffering terrible deaths at an alarming rate. The "sport" of hunting has left a deadly legacy that continues its carnage long after the hunters have left.



This tiny Pygmy Owl was found starving on the ground. The reason for its starvation was immediately apparent. Its corneas were totally opaque. The owl was blind. Among our many alternative treatments is a very reliable eye herb called Euphrasia, which when boiled into a tea and applied by compress to the eyes, cleared the opacities. Within a few weeks the owl's eyesight was fully restored and it was set free.



Two of our cutest patients this summer were these two orphaned baby gulls, with plumage resembling tiny leopard print and singsong peeps. It is extremely beneficial to an orphaned animal's recovery if it has a sibling with them. When we admit lone baby birds and mammals, we make every effort to locate a buddy of the same age and species from another centre.



Our first seal pup of the year had quite a journey. She was netted by commercial fishermen off the coast of Prince Rupert. Fortunately for the pup, the captain had brought his wife along as galley cook. She insisted they bring the pup to shore and contacted the Prince Rupert Wildlife Rehab Shelter for help. They in turn, contacted us and we arranged for the pup to be flown cargo, thanks to Air Canada, to the Vancouver airport where she was met by our volunteer helicopter pilot. All in all, it took less than 24 hours to get this lucky pup into intensive care.

A large Brown Pelican was literally 'sittin on the dock at the bay' this spring. Cowichan Bay residents watched over this huge bird for several days while he roosted lethargically on the end of a dock. Pelicans are not indigenous to this region and this one was clearly lost. He appeared to be extremely tired and didn't seem to be fishing or eating. Captured by seasonal residents, the pelican was transported to Salt Spring Island. After examination he was found to be emaciated and dehydrated, although no injury or disease could be determined. He slowly began to eat whole fish on his own, gained weight and his feather condition improved.



After about 3 1/2 months in our care, the pelican was loaded onto Norm Snihur's helicopter and flown to Rocky Point, south of Sooke. On September 3, the pelican joyously flew back to freedom.

The unfortunate saga of BC Gaming Funds

In September, Rich Coleman, the minister responsible for Gaming, cut all funding intended for environmental charities as his ministry had unbelievably deemed animal welfare and the environment to be its lowest priority. We are not naive about grant funding – there are times when we don't receive a particular grant that we have applied for. But this was handled badly. Normally funders give us an idea when, due to a tough economy, they may not be able to support us. We then have opportunity to pursue other avenues. But after a decade of qualifying for and receiving this grant, the Gaming decision came shortly before the date the funding was expected. This was an unexpected loss of \$65,000 and represented nearly 30% of our budget. Gaming funds are important because, unlike most other grants that provide money for one specific project, they are fairly

unrestricted and we are able to pay for our most needed items (such as animal food, medications, and salaries).

With limited other options available, we turned to those we know best...our loyal donors, our friends and our families. As we have said before, "It takes a village" and it did. Our "village" comprised of several hundred individuals demonstrated just how important animal welfare is to them.

How did we do?

As of December 1, we are thrilled to say that we have raised \$45,000 of the lost funding. But, about half of the money raised was from our recurring donors. We are a little worried that we might have impacted our regular year end donations. Please remember that your regular annual donation is still critical. To those of you who have already given what you can, we thank you sincerely.

In defence of the common species

At the Centre, we see a lot of common as well as threatened species and are sometimes asked why we treat those whose populations are flourishing. Simply put, life is either sacred or it's not. How can we draw a line in the sand and say that life on one side is important and life on the other is not? We see animals as independent lives, not populations, and if we can prevent the needless suffering of an individual, then we have done good work. Just why are abundant species taken for granted? There are many cases where a once plentiful species is now gone. The last Passenger Pigeon, once the most abundant bird in the world, died in a zoo in 1918. The Hawaiian Crow, a once prolific avian scavenger, is now one of the most highly protected birds in the world. The Vancouver Island Marmot – just another rodent? No, as the rarest mammal in Canada it is now protected. What changed to make them more valuable? Just numbers.

In recognition of the Country Grocer

We would like to take this opportunity to thank one of our most charitable local businesses - the Country Grocer (formerly the Ganges Village Market). They generously donate to community organizations, 1% of all receipts left by their customers. It's important to remember that these donations come from the store's own profits and that when you leave your grocery receipt, you are directing the Country Grocer where to donate *their* money; we still depend on your financial support as well.

Another Inconvenient Truth by Jeff Lederman

Since Island Wildlife's inception, we have been telling the public that when it comes to seal pups; *if you can pick it up, it's an orphan!* To this day I have not seen a single seal pup in our facility that could possibly have survived without intervention. The myth of the good intentioned person picking up a healthy seal pup and thus making an orphan of it, or "pup-napping" as some have coined it is just that, a myth.

John Calambokidis, a renowned marine mammal scientist from Cascadia Research, Olympia, WA., did a seemingly unrelated study on coyote predation on seals; "We studied predation on Puget Sound harbor seals. The coyote predation was targeting pups and among this group, we were able to document that nearly all of the pups successfully attacked were sick or in poor condition." (Journal of Wildlife Diseases 25:319-328).

Now how this study relates is this; If a hungry predator, the coyote, which relies on stealth and speed to make a kill cannot capture a pup that is not in poor condition, what are the chances that a tourist in Bermuda shorts and flip flops, successfully picks up a healthy pup on the beach? I would think slim to none.

The public has been told for decades, by "the experts", that it is normal behavior for newborn and young Harbour Seal pups to be left on the beach while mother goes off to feed. In reality, adult seals have huge fat reserves and can fast for weeks if necessary. Does it seem natural that a mother, capable of a lengthy fast would feel the over whelming urge to leave her new born pup unprotected on a beach while she goes off looking for fish?

The notion that you should observe an orphaned pup for 24 hours is not only arbitrary, but would have to be based on the assumption that someone else didn't watch that same pup the day before for 24 hours and someone else the day before that for another 24 hours. It is quite common for an unfortunate pup to literally be watched to death, in 24 hour increments.

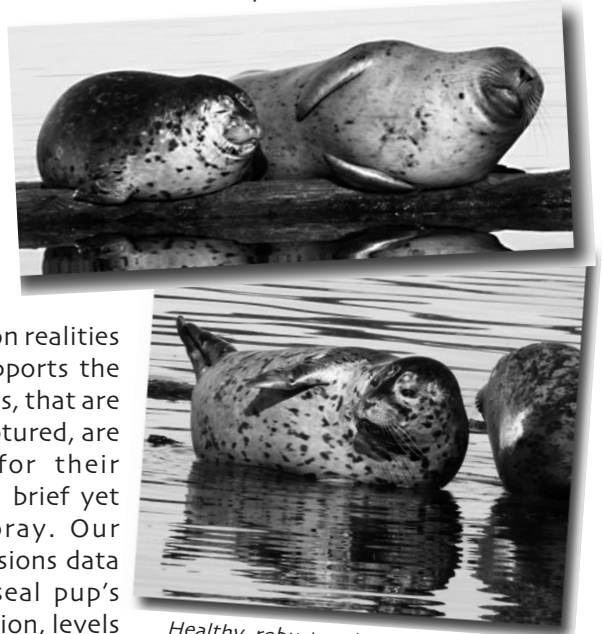
I have been involved in the rehabilitation of wild North American species for 20 years and I have never experienced the level of misinformation and obstructionist behaviour regarding any other wild species, avian or mammalian, that has confronted me while trying to save dying seal pups.

Over the last 13 years Island Wildlife has compiled volumes of data regarding the pups we have rescued and cared for. Nothing in our data, nothing in our experience, nothing in the rehabilitation realities we witness every day supports the idea that Harbour Seal pups, that are able to be picked up or captured, are actually just waiting for their mothers to return from a brief yet unnecessary feeding foray. Our detailed rescue and admissions data takes into account the seal pup's weight, age, overall condition, levels of dehydration, starvation and glycemic level as well as whole blood count indicating levels of bacterial infection. Armed with our data I will stand before God or mother nature and swear that these seal pups will die without our intervention!

John Calambokidis, from Cascadia Research, also says, "I do think agencies over play the chances that pups will be reunited with their mothers. There have been anecdotal reports of mothers returning to get their pups but I am not sure on the validity of these. I also think it is important to consider whether there is a rehabilitation center able and willing to take pups. In most areas there are far more orphaned pups than could ever be cared for by all the rehabilitation centers. These factors have made the exaggerated statements about the chances of pups being reunited a convenient excuse for leaving the animals alone."

According to scientist, Sarah Allen, Point Reyes National Seashore, Point Reyes, CA, "I have seen no data

on whether they (lone pups) have been reunited with a female. However, radio-tagged females that I have followed were in constant contact with their pups until weaning, and would haul out even in the same small area on the beach day after day."



Healthy, robust seal pups with moms.

Another major source of misinformation is the internet, where anyone with an opinion can sound like they know what they are talking about. Much of the information on Harbour Seal pups and rehabilitation in our region comes from Washington and Oregon; from agencies and organizations with an agenda. These States comprise the North West region of National Marine Fisheries, the US counterpart to our DFO. The strict policy of the NW region is leave pups on the beach to die; let nature take its course. And to that end, they will prosecute individuals who rescue a pup, they will threaten to revoke the permits of wildlife centres that accept these pups and they will publish dubious information for public consumption. I know, I worked in this region for 2 years and I experienced all of this.

Following is a photograph downloaded from the Sea Side Aquarium's newsletter, a member of the NW Stranding Network.

The caption claimed that “this pup was deliberately left alone and as a result had a happy reunion with its mother”.

Look at this pitiful animal. She is severely emaciated and has not seen her mother in perhaps 2 weeks. She is not resting, she is dying. I have nothing against this aquarium per se, I am just illustrating the sort of misinformation that is commonly disseminated to the public.



The news media is another reliable source for unreliable information. In 2008 we rescued a struggling pup from a Sydney marina. Some locals in the area believed that they knew what was best for “their seals” and were not going to allow us to intervene. Needless to say, we eventually got the pup to the safety of our facility, but not before these irate, local, no-it-allers involved the press. A reporter was dispatched to our centre where I did an on camera physical examination of the pup, explaining in detail the facts of his poor condition. That night the story aired with the clever title “Seal of Disapproval” and if you missed the story you could simply click the link on their website titled “Stolen Seal Pup”.



The photo of the healthy seal pup featured on their website is not even the pup in question. They pulled it from their files. The truth is quickly lost when the media’s mission is to fabricate sensational stories rather than supporting a dedicated local animal welfare charity by accurately reporting on the event.

I am aware of one centre that stepped up their “Let Seals Be” media campaign while their rescue centre underwent major reconstruction. Another organization routinely tells the public to leave a seal pup alone and its mother will be back, when their facility is getting full or the pup’s location or time of year is inconvenient.

The Marine Mammal Center in California, the worlds busiest marine mammal rescue facility, published in their 2008 Annual Report that 1% of their patients are brought into their facility due to unauthorized pick up by the public. This seems like a pretty good trade off. One out of every 100 animals may be picked up prematurely while 99 out of 100 are receiving the quick response and life saving care they desperately need. Why watch 99 seals suffer for 24 hours or more to ensure that maybe one seal is not picked up prematurely?

I am not advocating that the public should walk around grabbing sick pups off the beach at will. However, if you come upon a seal that may be in trouble, try to keep people and dogs away and call the Wildlife Centre immediately. It’s the informed thing to do and chances are you are going to save a life. **How great is that?**

Vehicles Needed: From a rescue truck to an intern car, we always need reliable transportation. If you have a van, pick up, 4x4 or economy car, in good condition, consider a donation to the Wildlife Centre. If it suits our needs we can offer a generous tax receipt. It may save an animal’s life, collect browse for our fawns or just take a tired intern to the grocery store.



photos - Saffrina Welch

The One that Got Away

Each year more than 300,000 small whales and dolphins die from fishing net entanglement. But how many deer meet a similar fate? That’s right, deer dying from fishing net entanglement. When Islanders opt for cheap fencing and surround their property with discarded fishing nets, they might as well be trawling for bucks. This is a common occurrence that usually does not have a happy ending. This time the Wildlife Centre was called while the buck was still alive and could be restrained with sedative blow darts. Then, using knives, scissors and wire cutters this mess of “sheep fencing” was removed and as the sedation wore off, the buck staggered into the woods.



Our extended family - It gives us the greatest of pleasure to acknowledge and recognize the people who help make our team a success. Without the support of these dedicated individuals and organizations, Island Wildlife would just be another good idea.

911 rescue & animal care volunteers - Christiane Angell, BC Ferries, Maj Birch & Mountaineer Avian Rescue, Claire Bouchard, Wendy Brown, Chemainus Animal Hospital, Critter Care Wildlife Society, the Coast Guard Auxiliaries, Cobble Hill Animal Hospital, Candace Cornock, Cornelia Deaton, Brian Declaire, Delta SPCA, Charrone & Chris Douglas, Duncan Animal Hospital, Michael Dunn, Duncan SPCA, Michelle Fairbanks & Jeffery Dickinson, Gavin Ellis, Clay Evans, Robin Ferry, Dave Foreman, Kris Fullbrook, Gabriola Vet Clinic, Ian Gidney from Outdoors Vision; Jennifer Goodbrand, Cpt. Paul Grey, John Grundy, Ann Hadaway & Bob Bruce, Terry & Jess Hansen, Dawn & Carla Henderson, Andrew Higgs, Barbara Hill, Constable Mike Holmes, Linda Hood, Natasha Horne, Ivy Huang, Patricia & Mel Huggins, Ken Hunter, Jasmyn, John Jefferson, Anne Jones, Debbie King, Reg Kirkham, Brian & Louise Krasowski, Ladysmith Animal Hospital, Lady Minto Hospital, Lightning Press, Trevor Mathews, Deb McGovern, John MacKenzie, Bill Mattin, Doug Maynard, Mill Bay Animal Hospital, Martin & Pawli Model, Ken Morissette, Beth Morris & Jim Chapman, Gord Murphy, Nanaimo SPCA, Helen & Bob Nation, Ruby Neubauer, Jim & Joanne Nichol, Orphaned Wildlife Rehabilitation Society, Kiyo Okuda, Parksville SPCA, Rosemary Partridge, Pender Power Squadron, Roger Pilkington, Brenda Plaxton, Ru Pope, Port Alberni SPCA, Prevost Vet Clinic, Cynthia Pronick, Raymond Proudlove, Charlene Reinhold, Christina Richard, Nina Roslovic, the SSI school boat drivers, SSI RCMP, Thomas Schnare, Mark Shaw, Sue Smith, Dr. Maureen Stone, Pam Sutherland, Jan Thomas, Undersea Gardens, the Vancouver Aquarium, Victoria Harbour Patrol, Wild ARC, Michelle Williams-Krasnicki, Deborah Wallace, Lyle Wilson, Karen Wolst, Lon Wood, Zeuss.

The ultimate 911'ers - Ed and Linda Harris, our most devoted rescue team members whose dedication and love for the animals is simply unsurpassed; helicopter pilot Norm Snihur who will fly at the drop of a hat to help save an animal; and of course, Bryce and Romy Chapman for letting Norm land his bird in their backyard.

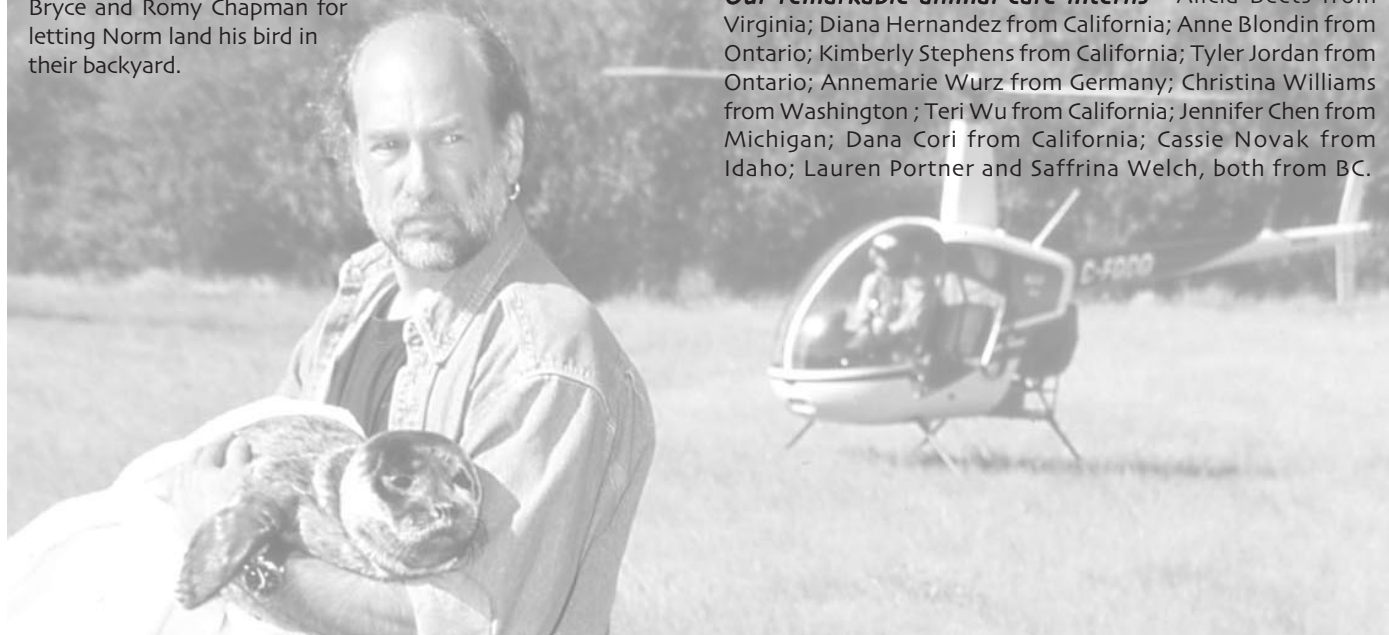
We would not have been able to rescue every animal in need without the unfailing assistance from Barbara DeBurgh; Sheila Wowchuk; Karin Drownitzki; Diane Hardacker; Derek Astbury; John Cowan; Tawny Mollard; Sheila Lake and Liz Ciocea and all the volunteers from GROWLS; Chuck Rennie; Mony and Marinus Vesseur; and Dave Hargreaves.

Veterinarians extraordinaire - Dr. Derrick Milton; Drs. Ken Langelier & Ian Lawrie and all the staff of Island Veterinary Hospital; Drs. Marnie Ford & Charlotte Keller of West Coast Veterinary Eye Specialists; Dr. Martin Haulena of the Vancouver Aquarium; Dr. Ilija Lukic; Drs. Malcom & Harold Bond of Saltspring Veterinary Services; Drs. Dave MacDonald & Sasha Edgell of Gulf Islands Veterinary Clinic and Dr. Stephen Raverty of Animal Health Center in Abbotsford.

Pillars of support - We can never say thank you enough to the individuals and organizations who support us financially. By request, we do not publish the names of our community donors, but you know how deeply grateful we are. Especially this year when you jumped onboard to assist us make up the loss of our Gaming funding. Thank you to **Pilar Bauta** and the **W. Garfield Weston Foundation** and the **Vancouver Foundation** for their grants towards our seal pup intensive care program; the **Brigitte Bardot Foundation** for their grant towards the purchase of fish for our marine mammals; to the **Eden Conservation Trust** for their grant towards animal care; and to the **Salt Spring Island Foundation** for their 2008 grant which purchased our new animal laundry dryer and medications fridge. We would also like to recognize the very helpful fundraising efforts by The Fritz Theatre, Kelli Etheridge, Kathi Allinson's grade 5/6 class from Alex Hope Elementary in Langley, and Taryn Muldoon from the Salt Spring Centre School.

Singular sensations - Jim & Janice Kearly of Growler Cove who have never let us down in ensuring we have enough herring for our many seals; Greg Dombowsky for his website expertise; Marit McBride and Ed & Linda Harris who keep tabs on our Country Grocer receipts; Harlequin Nature Graphics for donating some great t-shirts; Pretzel Motors; Dr. Ty Binfet and his Rest.Q Animal Sanctuary; Wayne Langley; Pharmasave; Sam Graci for keeping us in Greens+; and of course, Richard Krieger.

Our remarkable animal care interns - Alicia Beets from Virginia; Diana Hernandez from California; Anne Blondin from Ontario; Kimberly Stephens from California; Tyler Jordan from Ontario; Annemarie Wurz from Germany; Christina Williams from Washington; Teri Wu from California; Jennifer Chen from Michigan; Dana Cori from California; Cassie Novak from Idaho; Lauren Portner and Saffrina Welch, both from BC.





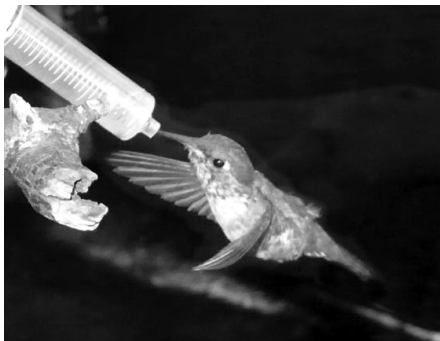
There is nothing more basic to good health than proper nutrition. And so, around the clock, we feed. We tube feed, syringe feed, tweezer feed, bottle feed, force feed..

This cougar kit was bottle fed kitten milk replacer. Each feeding he clamped his teeth down on that large lambs nipple wishing it was one of our fingers.



Bunnies have extremely delicate digestive systems and are fed a milk replacement formula in very specific, small volumes.

If a starving animal is fed whole foods too soon, the expenditure of the energy needed to digest the meal may kill it. This Snowy Owl is being tube fed highly digestible liquid nutrition.



Hand feeding fish to this Northern Fur Seal will soon lead to the seal free feeding on herring tossed into the pool.

Tiny Hummingbird nestlings are tube fed a very specialized nectar formula and small insects like fruit flies. As they grow older they begin to feed while hovering. Sugar water alone is never adequate nutrition for any animal.



Once free feeding herring, Harbour Seals will routinely gain a half a kilo per day. At around 30 kilos they are released back into the ocean.



Nestling passerines, more commonly known as song birds or back yard birds, have their crops filled every 20 to 30 minutes, morning till night. Their diet is a slurry of high quality kitten kibble with nutritional supplements.

Fawns are trained to feed from a bottle rack so that human contact may be limited and fawns can maintain their wild instincts.



Recovering from a broken jaw from an automobile collision, this fawn must be bottle fed by hand with great care.

Because Harbour Seal pups don't bottle feed easily and it is important that at each of 5 daily feeding they ingest a prescribed amount of herring smoothy, (including some unpleasant tasting herbs and medicines), we tube feed them directly into their stomachs.



Donation amount: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

*E-mail (optional) _____

* E-mails are only interesting animal or event updates, not solicitations. Information from our database is private and never shared.

Please send us a tax receipt.

Enclosed is my cheque payable to: **Island Wildlife**

Visa

MasterCard

Account # _____

Exp. date _____

We are now able to accept automated monthly donations through CanadaHelps on-line at www.sealrescue.org

322 Langs Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K1N3 Phone: 250-537-0777
E-mail: iwncc@aol.com www.sealrescue.org Charitable #888706140RR001

Join our rescue efforts

Just look at the wonderful faces in this newsletter. These are only a handful of the thousands of faces we have seen over the years. We have watched them slowly regain their health and know that without Island Wildlife, they would have just been left to suffer and die. As a charity, we do not charge a fee for our services. Our patients do not have an owner to pay the bills and we rely heavily on support from individual donations.

Please show how much you care about the fate of our wild creatures... don't allow these magnificent, innocent creatures to go without the help they so desperately need.

Please make a tax deductible donation today.

Thank you to the following organizations for their critical and continuing support:



THE W. GARFIELD WESTON
FOUNDATION

KERN

Partners In Value Growth

vancouver
foundation



Eden Conservation Trust



Jeff Lederman....Founder Marielle Bonnet....Marine Mammal Specialist Ed & Linda Harris....Rescue / Transport
Seasonal Rehabilitators 2009....Chiara Albero & Kathryn Yochis Kisee Peterson.....Bookkeeper

Board of Directors: Laurel Hanley....President Jackie Ballerone....Sec. Treas. Dr. Derrick Milton, DVM; Diana Hayes

322 Langs Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K1N3 Phone: 250-537-0777 E-mail: iwncc@aol.com www.sealrescue.org



Got Milk?

Situations are not always as they appear. This nursing pup turned out to be a starving orphan who would pop up and steal milk from this unsuspecting mother, as her actual pup looks on. Mony & Marinus Vesseur, two of the centre's rescue volunteers alerted us to the situation and documented this activity for nearly 2 1/2 weeks. Appearing thinner and thinner with each passing day we eventually made the decision to have them capture the pup. Approximately 3 weeks old, she was still below birth weight. 75 days later she was released fat and healthy back into the ocean.