

Second Stories

SECOND CHANCE WILDLIFE CENTER'S NEWSLETTER

HOLIDAY 2024

Dear Friends of Second Chance,

The holiday season includes unexpected guests and packages full of surprises. At Second Chance Wildlife Center we never know which precious animal might arrive at our door next, and, each new patient brings its own unique story and needs.

As we approach our 30th year of service in 2025, we have had our share of surprises when we open the box, bin, crate, or other containers in which caring people have gently placed injured, ill, and orphaned animals for transport. **In this newsletter, we will share a few of the most unique surprises found inside those containers this year.**

We admit over 120 different species annually and we are prepared with the knowledge and training needed to provide customized care for each. **As donors, your support helps to provide the species-specific food, medications, equipment, housing, and other vital resources.**

The holidays are also a time for family games and puzzles. So, **we've included a fun quiz** in which you and others try to identify different animal patients. The person with the highest score wins bragging rights and the others must do the dishes! You can tell them we said so.

We at SCWC are more eager to open our new facility in Clarksburg than a child waiting to open presents at Christmastime. Over the past 9 months, various utilities and supplies were delayed (out of our control), and that set us back a few months, but now we are moving full steam ahead toward a spring 2025 opening. Highlights of our new facility include: Nearly 3x the indoor space and 10x the outdoor space compared to our current location, a 100' long flight training and strengthening enclosure, species-specific climate control in each room, separate x-ray & surgery rooms, an all-new rescue hotline phone system, a donor-funded educational display in the reception area, and much more.

Our MILLION DOLLAR MATCH for is still taking place. Thanks to a generous donor your unrestricted gifts will essentially be doubled now through December 31st! There is still over \$450,000 left to match! **Help us reach our goal to take full advantage of this amazing opportunity to build funds for the future before the donor's wonderful offer expires in a few weeks!**

Please find it in your hearts to give generously this holiday season. More space = more patients = more expenses, and funding received in December determines plans for the following year's operational capacity. We want to help and heal as many animals as possible.

We thank you for your support in the past and wish you a happy and safe holiday season.

P.S. A few opportunities remain to name a room, outdoor enclosure, or a tree (to be planted), at the new facility. Send inquiries to MSmith@scwc.org

Donate online today at www.SCWC.org or help us avoid service fees with a check mailed to:
Second Chance Wildlife Center 7101 Barcellona Dr, Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Animal Care Costs Have
SKYROCKETED!

Fruits & Vegetables
Formula
Live Fish & Insects
Medications
Cleaning Supplies



But Donations are FLAT.
**PLEASE HELP US MEET THE NEEDS
OF OUR WILDLIFE PATIENTS**



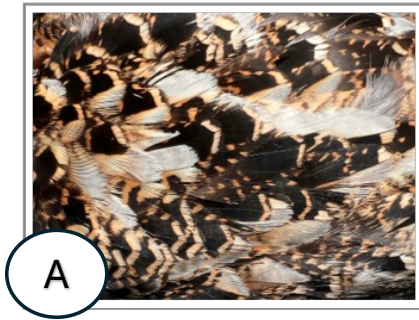
ABOVE: Imagine our surprise when we opened this box and found a young **albino** Catbird! Look inside this newsletter for this bird's story plus more unexpected guests that showed up at SCWC this year.

GIVE WITH CONFIDENCE!



Second Chance Wildlife Center now holds the **highest ratings possible** from two of the most trusted independent charity evaluation organizations in the U.S. (Candid/ Guidestar & Charity Navigator).

HOLIDAY GAME NIGHT ACTIVITY: IDENTIFY THE ANIMAL



ANSWERS AT BOTTOM OF PAGE (upside down). No cheating!



This October, one of Second Chance Wildlife Center's longest serving volunteers, Betty Jones, 85 years young, passed away peacefully at home in a favorite chair with her beloved cat in her lap. Although she was passionate about animals, Betty was content behind the scenes helping with laundry, mopping, washing dishes, organizing clinic spaces, and sternly reminding volunteers and interns what is - and is not - recyclable in Montgomery County.

Betty made an impression on everyone she met at Second Chance; she was truly unforgettable. She had a dry, blunt sense of humor, the energy of a 20-year-old, and she often gave the impression to newcomers that she was "running the show." In her own way, she was doing so, and she ran a tight ship until the very end.

If she took a rare break from her cleaning tasks, Betty would regale us with stories from her long history volunteering with Second Chance and the Howard County Animal shelter, and she'd teach us the history of square dancing (and would sometimes rank her different partners at her square-dance club as if they were on *Dancing with the Stars*). Adventurous even later in life, Betty loved riding her bike through traffic (!) in Columbia, Maryland, and boogie boarding at the beach. She disliked having her photo taken so we have not included one here, but images of her zipping through the center with arms full of newspapers and perfectly folded towels and sheets will be in our minds always.

Betty's contribution to SCWC will not be forgotten and she will be deeply missed by all. She has set a high bar for volunteers and staff, and we are determined to continue to live up to her standards for cleanliness, efficiency, and proper recycling. We love you, Betty. You were a selfless champion for animals and your legacy lives on.

A: AMERICAN WOODCOCK; B. BARRED OWL; C. RED SQUIRREL; D. EASTERN BOX TURTLE; E. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER; F. VIRGINIA OPOSSUM

QUIZ ANSWERS:

UNEXPECTED GUESTS IN 2024



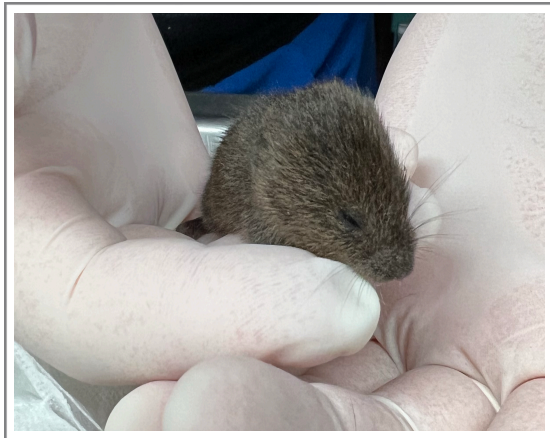
This **Albino Catbird** was found by rescuers on the ground helpless, without parents, with no signs of a nest or the parents returning to care for it. Albinism in birds is quite uncommon, so this individual was quite a surprise for the SCWC team!



This **Belted Kingfisher** was admitted to SCWC this Fall with head trauma from a window strike. Treatment was swift and thankfully one week later the kingfisher was returned to the Annapolis area and released back to the wild.



This juvenile **Common Loon** was found stranded on the ground unable to fly. Loons are fully aquatic and cannot gain flight from land due to their highly specialized foot anatomy adapted for diving. Thankfully no major injuries were noted and after a few days of rehydration and nutrition the loon was released.



One of four **VOLES** admitted in 2024. They rarely thrive in captivity and rehabilitation is a tremendous challenge.

This is one of two **Northern Watersnakes** admitted this year. It was found trapped in netting struggling at the side of a creek. We successfully treated it for abrasions caused by the entanglement. Watersnakes primarily eat fish, are non-venomous, and avoid humans when possible.





This beautiful warbler was brought to us in a box including a large leaf that the compassionate rescuer made into a "nest" for the bird's comfort. We think of it like nature's holiday gift wrap.



This is one of two **Diamondback Terrapins** admitted in 2024. A child brought this hatchling back from coastal Maryland in a sandcastle bucket. Their parents only realized once they had driven back to Montgomery County that they had a surprise turtle passenger. SCWC staff provided the turtle with expert care and arranged transportation back to the coast for release.



This was the only **Rose-Breasted Grosbeak** admitted to Second Chance this year. Having struck a window, this female suffered from severed internal trauma.



Moles are common in Maryland, and the most common species are the hairy-tailed mole, star-nosed mole, and eastern mole. They are active year-round and can be found in a variety of habitats, including lawns, meadows, orchards, and woods.



This unique **Leucistic Cottontail** was found orphaned in a rescuer's yard with no signs of a nest nearby. It was far too small to survive on its own, so the rescuers brought the rabbit to SCWC for care. Not much is known about the rate of leucism in cottontail rabbits, but this is the only leucistic individual admitted to SCWC this year.

