

## Comfort from Nature

The last few months have been difficult for everyone. Our hearts go out to those who have endured serious illness or the loss of a loved one due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and to the heroic health care professionals who have worked tirelessly to provide care for the many victims of this disease.

Those of us who have been lucky enough not to suffer the direct effects of the virus have also had our worlds turned upside down. Our work, school and social lives have been disrupted and we've had to adapt to constantly changing circumstances. We are concerned about friends and family. It's a stressful time.

What has helped you deal with the restrictions and social isolation of Staying Home and Staying Healthy? If you ask 20 people that question, you will probably get 20 different answers, ranging from music, art or phone calls with friends, to good red wine and vast quantities of dark chocolate.

For many of us nature has been a great source of comfort. While the human world has been turned on its head, it's reassuring to know that the natural world continues as normal. Wildflowers bloom and birds sing, just as they always do at this time of year. Those of us who live on the San Juans consider ourselves lucky to have so much natural beauty around us. Within a short distance of our homes we can see sweeping ocean views and white-capped mountains, or watch eagles soar overhead. But nature doesn't have to be on a grand scale to be enjoyable.

One of my favorite parts about working from home was watching the activity at the bird feeders in our yard. Little juncos would flit in, grab a few seeds and fly off, while chickadees would hang daintily from the suet feeder to peck a few mouthfuls. Then a Pileated Woodpecker

turned up. This huge bird tried desperately to cling to the block of suet. His big feet clung tightly, his wings flapped, and his tail flicked back and forth as he desperately tried to keep his balance, while the suet block wildly swung from side to side. He kept me entertained for almost ten minutes before he finally gave up and flew off.

But you don't have to live in the countryside to enjoy wildlife. People living in city apartments have had fun watching male Rock Pigeons puffing themselves up and

strutting their stuff on the roof tops, trying to impress the ladies. Others were entertained by young sparrows, with their big yellow gapes, frantically fluttering their wings and begging their parents to feed them. Wildlife is all around us if we pause to look.

When the pace of our lives slows down and we're not constantly rushing around, we have time to notice and appreciate these precious moments and realize how important nature is

in our lives. It will be nice to get back to "normal", to go back to work, or visit friends and family but wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all remember what it was like to have a little more time to look and listen, to connect with nature, to stop and smell the (wild) roses?



*Pileated woodpecker*



*Nootka rose*

We'd love to hear about your favorite nature moments from the past few months. If you'd like to share photos or stories please email them to [wolfhollow@wolfhollowwildlife.org](mailto:wolfhollow@wolfhollowwildlife.org).

## Keeping Going

How do you keep a Wildlife Rehab Center going throughout a pandemic? There is no simple answer, so, like every other business and organization, we had to adapt. In addition to wearing masks and enhancing our cleaning and disinfection protocols, staff worked from home, with only one rehab staff member on duty each day. On-site animal care volunteering was suspended and only a core group of animal transport volunteers remained in operation. We delayed the arrival of our seasonal rehabber, reduced internship slots from 8 to 5, canceled all out-of-state interns and delayed the arrival of the first two interns until late May.

As busy baby season arrived and restrictions were relaxed, we gradually had more staff on site and invited a few local, long-term animal care volunteers to return.

We developed a drop-off system so people on San Juan Island can bring in animals while maintaining social distancing.

As almost all education events and presentations have been canceled throughout the summer, we also canceled our education internship this year.

Our Executive Director is mostly working from home, and while essential outdoor facilities maintenance continues, our Facilities Manager and volunteer arrange schedules to work separately.

We'll keep you posted on how our operation continues to adapt over the next few months.

## Roof Repair Project

Many of you donated towards the repair of the main building's roof and might be wondering why you have not heard a progress report. As you can imagine, the past few months have been a difficult time to complete any project. By early spring we had raised the necessary funds, but wet weather prevented us from repairing the roof. Then the pandemic struck, and all non-essential work was put on hold. Now busy baby season is in full swing and we have injured and orphaned animals in our treatment rooms. Hammering and pounding certainly wouldn't help with their recovery, so the roof project has been postponed until fall. Rest assured that your donations will be put to their intended use as soon as there are fewer patients in our clinic and the weather obliges. A big **THANK YOU to the Lions Club of San Juan Island and all other donors for your support and understanding.**

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## New Mammal Enclosure

Our new small mammal enclosure is complete and has already had its first occupants.

The original enclosure had stood up to the activities of many batches of squirrels over the years but was starting to show its age. Thanks to a generous grant from The Summerlee Foundation we were able to replace it this spring. Our Facilities Manager, Mark Billington, and volunteer Jerry McElyea, worked on different stages of the construction and completed it in record time. The finishing touches were two den boxes made by Friday Harbor High School students Kaden Ritchie and Miguel Guillien as part of their community project last fall. The enclosure was finished just as our first two infant squirrels of the year were ready to move outside, so they spent a few weeks climbing around on branches and poking their noses out of the den boxes before they were sent back to Anacortes for release.



## Early Seal

The first Harbor Seal pup of 2020 arrived at Wolf Hollow on May 31<sup>st</sup>. This is 3-4 weeks earlier than we usually see seal pups at the rehab center, because she came from Ocean Shores on the Olympic Peninsula where pupping season is earlier than it is around the San Juans.

She was seen alone for several days, and over the busy Memorial Day weekend, was constantly harassed by people trying to take photos or get her back into the water. A Washington Department of Wildlife biologist rescued the pup and took her to a vet clinic for initial care. When she arrived at Wolf Hollow, we discovered that she was emaciated, dehydrated, had wounds on her flippers and had an umbilical infection, but she was active and had a **very loud voice.**

She started off in our seal nursery, being fed a special high-fat formula while she regained her strength, but has now progressed to swimming in a pool and learning to eat fish. Our naming theme this year is Scientists, so she was named Fossey, after Dian Fossey, the American primatologist famous for her research on Mountain Gorillas.



## Working together, while being apart

Wildlife Rehab Centers in Western Washington regularly work together for the common good of wildlife in our area, but in some ways the Covid-19 pandemic brought us all closer together. We had Zoom meetings to keep in touch and share ideas. My how the face of the rehabilitation world changed! Staffing was minimized, on-site volunteers were suspended, and animal drop off and intake procedures were modified to maintain social distancing.

As the spring and summer baby season kicked in, wildlife rehab centers were struggling with limited staffing, increased calls and high-maintenance infant animals coming into care. At Wolf Hollow we had the added challenge of animal transportation from other islands and the mainland and were glad when other rehab centers generously helped out.

Like everyone else, wildlife rehabbers are having to adapt, and are using lots of mental and physical energy to work out how to keep operations running through this difficult time. The human world may have slowed down, but the natural world around us is still buzzing.



*Pacific tree frog*

We are thankful to have other rehabbers to call on, to team up with, to have a virtual shoulder to cry on when times are hard, and to lift us up when times are good. As the statement goes, “we’re all in this together, even though we’re apart.”

Penny Harner  
Wildlife Rehabilitator

## Director’s Corner

Our collective journey continues through this pandemic, with protests added to the mix. The future feels very unpredictable. As we seek answers, we are also forced to stop barreling through the world at our normal fast pace. We have time to think and reflect. We have time to gradually grow more awake to the world around us. For many, that means reconnection with nature inside and out. Poet Bhupesh Phoolara reminds us “Feel the morning with chirpings of the birds. Let them greet you; just try to understand their words.” (Source: [www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/feel-of-nature](http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/feel-of-nature))

### The Peace of the Wild Things

by Wendell Berry

When despair grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting for their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

([amiracarluccio.com/2017/04/26/poems-the-peace-of-wild-things](http://amiracarluccio.com/2017/04/26/poems-the-peace-of-wild-things))

I hope you can find some peace in nature and wildlife during this time of stress and uncertainty. Breathe in the forest, field, or dale. Listen to bird song. Let nature wash over you and feel the joy in the moment.

### Chanda Stone

Executive Director  
[director@wolfhollowwildlife.org](mailto:director@wolfhollowwildlife.org)

## Statistics thru June 2020

### Number of Animals

Birds	153	63.2%
Mammals	89	36.8
Amphibians/Reptiles	0	0
Total	242	

### Causes

Orphaned/Separated	57	21.1
Cat Attack	38	15.7
Hit by car	28	11.6
Nest destroyed	15	6.2
Dog attack	13	5.4
Hit window/building	9	3.7
Fell from Nest	9	3.7
Unknown	52	21.5
Other	27	11.1

(poison, mower, caught in fence, glue trap)

### Results

Released	59	24.4
Euthanized	81	33.4
DOA	30	12.4
Died in Care	45	18.6
Transferred	0	0
In treatment	27	11.2
Total	242	



*Bald Eagle*

### Wolf Hollow Staff

Chanda Stone – Executive Director  
Penny Harner – Wildlife Rehabilitator  
Abby Fuhrihan – Wildlife Rehabilitator  
Shona Aitken – Education Coordinator  
Mark Billington – Facilities Manager  
Susan Waters – Volunteer Coordinator

### Wolf Hollow Board of Directors

Marc Brown, President  
Susan Waters, Vice President  
Bex Bishop, Secretary  
Chris Minney  
Cindy Hansen  
Sarah Boden  
Albert Barsocchini

### Our Mission

*To promote the well-being of wildlife and their habitats through rehabilitation of injured and orphaned wildlife, public education, and non-invasive research.*

Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center is licensed for wildlife rehabilitation by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

## Welcome Rylie

Our Seasonal Rehabber for this summer is Rylie Chabot. She arrived in mid-April and (after 2 weeks quarantine), started work towards the end of the month.

Rylie grew up in Seattle and is proud to call Washington home. She began gaining wildlife rehab experience in 2015 while attending Western Washington University, where she completed a degree combining Animal Husbandry and Wildlife Ecology. During this time, she volunteered many hours at Whatcom County Humane Society's Wildlife Rehab Center, then completed their internship program. Rylie went on to do an internship at an accredited Wildcat Sanctuary, then worked as a vet assistant with domestic felines before coming to San Juan Island to pursue her next goal of earning a wildlife rehabilitation license in WA.



## Wild Times

With rising costs and our desire to use less paper, we'd like to offer you the opportunity to receive Wild Times by email instead of mail. If you'd like to do that, please send your email address to [director@wolfhollowwildlife.org](mailto:director@wolfhollowwildlife.org) so we can add you to our data base. Please note, we do not sell or share our database with anyone. You can unsubscribe at any time. Thank you for staying connected.

## Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

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Address Service Requested

*36 Years  
Caring for Wildlife*



Great-horned owl



## Something Different

**What has red eyes, bright orange feet and a hairstyle like a demented punk-rocker?**

The answer is a female Red-breasted Merganser.

This bird was found in mid-March by a boater who noticed her splashing and trying to dive. He thought she might be tangled in something, so he approached to try and help. She wasn't tangled, but she couldn't fly off, so he scooped her up and brought her to Wolf Hollow. She was thin and weak but had no wounds or injuries and her waterproofing was in good shape. We set her up in a net-bottomed carrier so she didn't soil her waterproof feathers and wondered how we could feed this high-stress bird. It turned out that wasn't a problem. We put a few small smelt in a container, and she gulped them down. Five seconds and they were all gone.

We don't often get Red-breasted Mergansers for care, so we discovered all kinds of interesting things about this fascinating bird. For instance, she hissed when we came near and made a sound midway between a honk and a growl when we handled her. Who knew that mergansers had such a repertoire? Within a week she had gained weight, was happily diving for fish in an outdoor pool and was ready for release.

