

The Wildlife Center of Virginia

2017 Annual Report



The Wildlife Center of Virginia ... a hospital for native wildlife.

During 2017, the Wildlife Center admitted 2,768 patients – sick, injured, and orphaned wild animals from all across Virginia, and our highest caseload since 2002.

Among the 2017 patients were:

- 403 Eastern Cottontails;
- 329 Virginia Opossums;
- 198 Eastern Gray Squirrels;
- 119 Eastern Box Turtles;
- 10 different species of bats;
- One Fowler's Toad (*cover photo*). This adult toad was accidentally stepped on and suffered a dislocated left femur. After four weeks of physical therapy, the toad was returned to the wild.

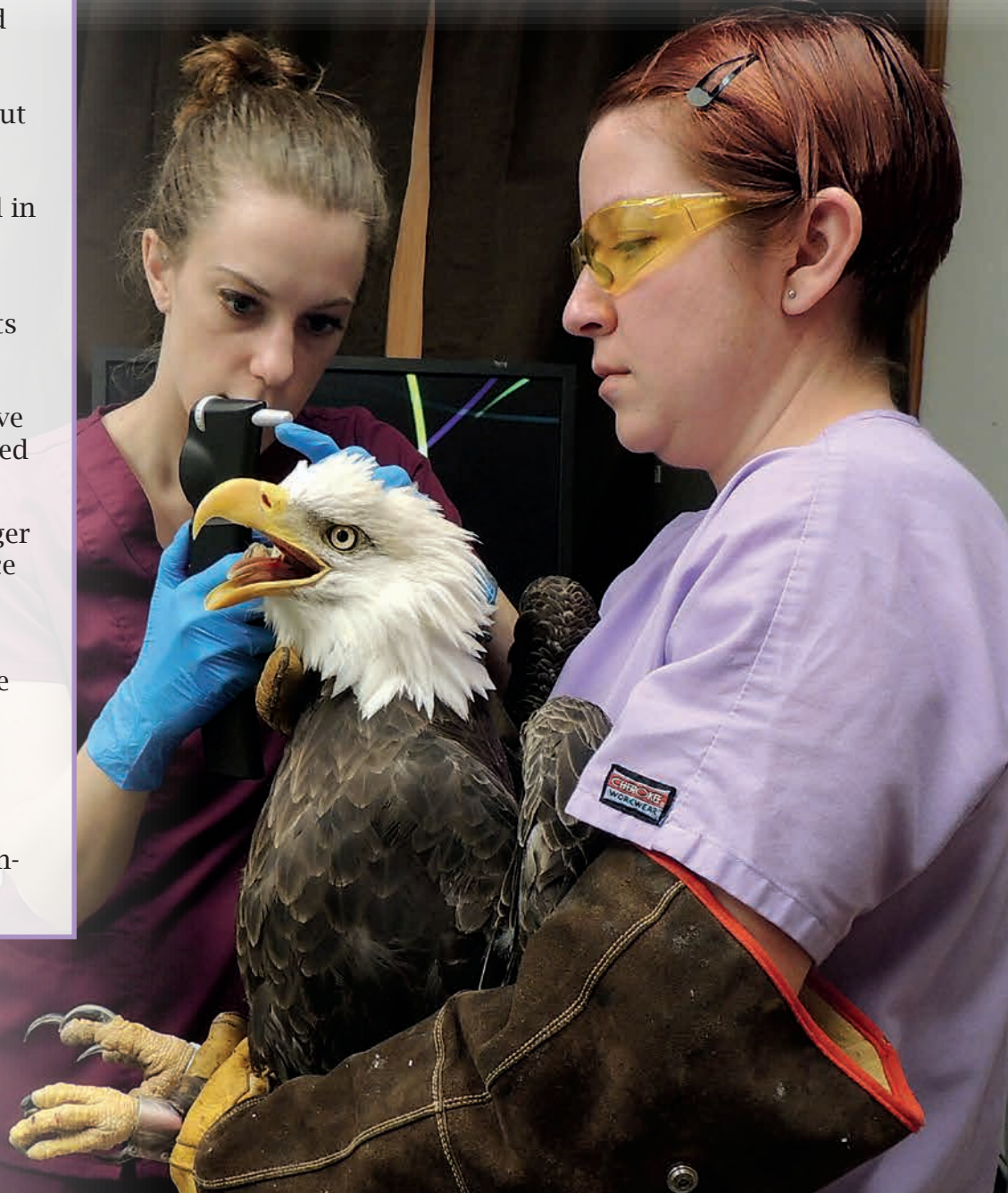
A record-setting 55 Bald Eagles, shattering the previous record of 42 eagles set in 2012. About 70 percent of these 55 eagles came in with detectable levels of lead in their blood.

Eagles are ingesting fragments of lead bullets and shotgun pellets left in the remains of deer and small game that have been shot with lead-based ammunition.

A lead fragment no bigger than a small grain of rice can kill a Bald Eagle.

There **are** treatment options available – if the eagle is treated in time.

The Wildlife Center is also leading a national campaign to encourage hunters to switch to non-lead ammunition.



2017 Patient Admissions

Total Admissions 2,768

Mammals [1,306 patients]

American Beaver	3
American Black Bear	21
Big Brown Bat	27
Bobcat	2
Brazilian Free-tailed Bat	1
Coyote	1
Deer Mouse	24
Domestic Rabbit	1
Eastern Chipmunk	11
Eastern Cottontail	403
Eastern Gray Squirrel	198
Eastern Mole	1
Eastern Pipistrelle	3
Eastern Red Bat	6
Eastern Small-footed Myotis	1
Eastern Woodrat	1
Evening Bat	1
Gray Fox	4
Hoary Bat	1
House Mouse	24
Little Brown Bat	2
Little Short-tailed Shrew	1
Meadow Vole	1
North American River Otter	1
Northern Long-eared Bat	1
Pine Vole	1
Raccoon	54
Red Fox	19
Silver-haired Bat	3
Southern Flying Squirrel	14
Striped Skunk	17
Virginia Opossum	329
White-footed Mouse	9
White-tailed Deer	101
Woodchuck	19

Reptiles and Amphibians [254]

African Dwarf Frog	18
Axolotl	29
Coastal Plain Cooter	1
Common Five-lined Skink	1
Eastern American Toad	1
Eastern Box Turtle	119
Eastern Fence Lizard	1
Eastern Gartersnake	3
Eastern Mud Turtle	1
Eastern Painted Turtle	20
Eastern Ratsnake	14
Eastern River Cooter	5
Fowler's Toad	1
Northern Black Racer	3
Northern Brownsnake	1

Northern Diamondback Terrapin	2
Northern Ring-necked Snake	2
Northern Rough Greensnake	1
Red Cornsnake	2
Red-eared Slider	3
Smooth Greensnake	1
Snapping Turtle	21
Timber Rattlesnake	1
Wood Turtle	1
Yellow-bellied Slider	2

Raptors and Vultures [374]

American Kestrel	8
Bald Eagle	55
Barn Owl	1
Barred Owl	34
Black Vulture	16
Broad-winged Hawk	18
Cooper's Hawk	34
Eastern Screech-Owl	69
Great Horned Owl	24
Gyrfalcon	2
Northern Harrier	1
Osprey	7
Peregrine Falcon	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	22
Red-tailed Hawk	58
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7
Turkey Vulture	12

Passerines [Songbirds][575]

American Crow	36
American Goldfinch	13
American Robin	91
Baltimore Oriole	1
Barn Swallow	9
Black-capped Chickadee	1
Blue Jay	35
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1
Brown Thrasher	7
Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Carolina Chickadee	3
Carolina Wren	39
Cedar Waxwing	13
Chipping Sparrow	6
Common Grackle	30
Common Raven	1
Connecticut Warbler	1
Dark-eyed Junco	2
Eastern Bluebird	22
Eastern Meadowlark	1
Eastern Phoebe	11
Eastern Towhee	1
European Starling	69
Fish Crow	10
Gray Catbird	13
Great Crested Flycatcher	1
Hermit Thrush	1

Horned Lark	1
House Finch	36
House Sparrow	18
House Wren	4
Northern Cardinal	39
Northern Mockingbird	7
Ovenbird	2
Purple Martin	1
Red-eyed Vireo	3
Red-winged Blackbird	1
Scarlet Tanager	3
Song Sparrow	6
Swainson's Thrush	1
Tree Swallow	1
Tufted Titmouse	9
Undetermined Passerine	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	5
White-throated Sparrow	3
Willow Flycatcher	1
Yellow Warbler	1

Other Birds [259]

American Woodcock	2
Black-billed Cuckoo	1
Canada Goose	43
Chimney Swift	7
Common Loon	2
Domestic Fowl	5
Double-crested Cormorant	1
Downy Woodpecker	2
Eastern Whip-poor-will	1
Great Blue Heron	6
Great Egret	1
Green Heron	1
Herring Gull	1
Killdeer	6
Mallard	34
Mourning Dove	63
Northern Flicker	6
Pied-billed Grebe	1
Pileated Woodpecker	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	19
Rock Dove	9
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	19
Virginia Rail	1
Wild Turkey	4
Wood Duck	10
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	7
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	4

Includes patients admitted as part of enforcement actions.



Bobcats

Bobcats are found all across Virginia ... but these secretive, elusive cats are rarely seen. In the past decade, the Center has admitted only nine Bobcats – including two in 2017!

Bobcat #17-2495 (*top right photos*). On September 30, a juvenile female Bobcat was struck by a vehicle while crossing Route 33 in Rockingham County. The cat was captured and transported to the Wildlife Center, where it was assigned Patient #17-2495 – the 2,495th patient of the year. Radiographs found a fracture of the right femur.

Dr. Ernesto Dominguez, the Center's Hospital Director, took the Bobcat into surgery on October 4 and successfully stabilized the fracture.

The Bobcat has been living in the Center's Large Mammal Enclosure since late October; she is expected to be released back into the wild in April.

In the meantime, #17-2495 may occasionally be spotted on Cam #3 of the Center's web-based *Critter Cam*. [Even in a relatively confined space, a Bobcat can be secretive and elusive.] *Critter Cam* watchers have seen behaviors familiar to anyone who has a domestic housecat – grooming, napping in the sunshine, playing with her food ... and a fascination with boxes.



Bobcat #17-2688 (*bottom left photos*). On Thanksgiving Day a woman driving from Gloucester County to work in Richmond hit “something”. When she arrived at work, she was surprised to see that that “something” was a Bobcat – which was lodged in the grille of her Prius.

That Bobcat was admitted to the Center later that day – as Patient #17-2688 – and the photo of the cat lodged in the grille was picked up by media across the country. The Bobcat appeared to be in miraculously good shape; Center vets later found a hairline fracture of the cat's jaw. The Bobcat adjusted to a special soft diet – a rat slurry [blenderized rat parts].

On January 22, the Bobcat was sedated for a complete set of radiographs, blood work, and urinalysis. Radiographs confirmed that the jaw fracture had fully healed; other tests were within normal limits.

The Bobcat has been successfully transitioned to whole food and is expected to be returned to the wild soon.

For the latest news on these Bobcats, and many other patients, please visit the Center's website ... www.wildlifecenter.org.

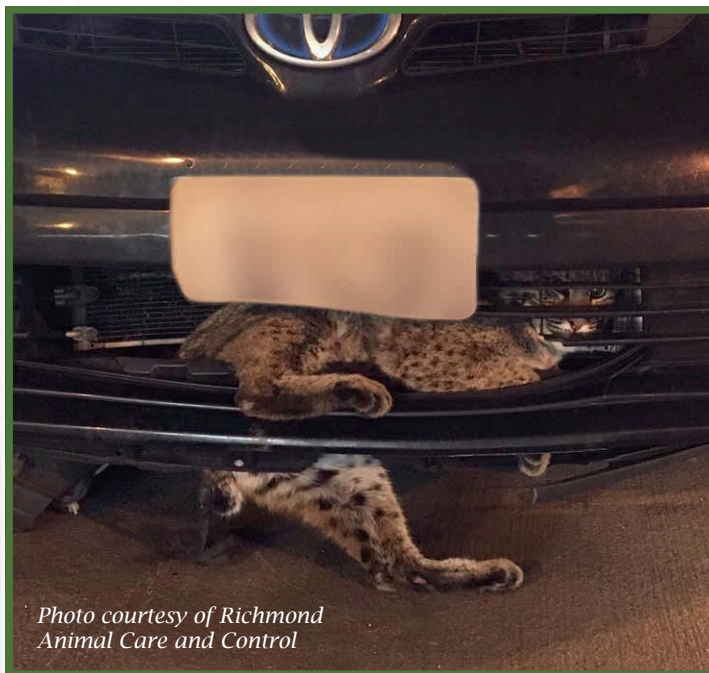


Photo courtesy of Richmond Animal Care and Control

*The Wildlife Center of Virginia ... teaching the world
to care about and to care for wildlife and the environment.*

During 2017, the Wildlife Center:

- Provided hands-on training in our state-of-the-art facilities to 58 veterinary and rehabilitation students from 29 states and seven other countries. In March, we were the host facility for the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's annual conference in Williamsburg, which drew more than 500 participants from 45 states and three countries. And in November, we sponsored our own *Call of the Wild* conference in Waynesboro, with 195 participants.
- Launched the Wildlife Care Academy, providing online and in-person instruction in wildlife rehabilitation, wildlife medicine and diagnostics, capture and restraint techniques, etc. In its first six months, the Academy "enrolled" hundreds of individuals from 32 states ... and Belize, Brazil, Canada, India, and Portugal.
- Did in-person programs - primarily in schools and libraries - that engaged more than 18,000 children and adults. Through Skype, Center outreach staff "traveled" more than 76,000 miles online - visiting classrooms in 20 states and Brazil, Canada, India, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.
- Continued *Critter Cam*, a live online broadcast and moderated discussion on the Center's website. *Critter Cam* allows wildlife enthusiasts around the world to watch a variety of patients - rollicking Black Bear cubs, Bald Eagles, a Bobcat - and to check in on some of the Center's beloved residents.
- On a monthly basis, the Center broadcast *Hospital Cam*, a live "over-the-shoulder" look at the veterinary and rehabilitation team treating patients in the Center's clinic. And we did an occasional *Surgery Cam* - a live feed from the Center's surgical suite.
- Through the efforts of a dedicated team of volunteers, produced the ninth edition of the *Garden of Eagles* calendar. Proceeds from the sale of the 2018 calendar paid for a re-design and replacement of the roofs of two of the Center's eagle flight pens (*photo left*). These pens are where eagles and other large raptors are exercised before they are returned to the wild.
- Celebrated our 35th Anniversary!

2018 SAVE THE DATES

- April 27: *Buddy the Bald Eagle's 10th Hatch Day Celebration*, Wildlife Center, Waynesboro
- November 3: *Annual Gala and Benefit Auction*, Stonewall Jackson Hotel, Staunton
- November 16 - 18: *23rd Annual Call of the Wild Conference*, Best Western Inn & Suites Conference Center, Waynesboro



Teaching With “Dear Abby”...

In August, along with letters about a strained relationship with a mother-in-law and a familiar “am I ready to date?” question from a 15-year-old, came a letter to Dear Abby from “An Apple A Day”. “Apple” reported that she ate an apple every day on the way home from work and tossed the core out the car window. “I try my best to support the Earth, and I believe I am feeding the rabbits and birds with my apple a day.” Some of her friends called the habit littering, and “Apple” asked for Abby’s advice.

Abby sided with the friends and encouraged “Apple” to keep a litter bag in her car.

Wildlife Center President Ed Clark wrote his own letter to Dear Abby, which appeared in her column a few months later ...

“Dear Abby: I am president and co-founder of the Wildlife Center of Virginia, one of the leading teaching and research hospitals for wildlife medicine in the world. We have treated more than 70,000 wild patients since our organization was established 35 years ago. Like the reader who is under the impression that throwing an apple core out the car window is doing something positive for the Earth, many individuals make ‘little’ decisions without considering the unintended consequences. The example of the apple core has been at the heart of our education program for more than three decades. Before throwing that apple core, believing that some small animal will come finish what’s left, people should consider what will happen if the animal coming to eat their scraps happens to be on the other side of the road.

“Throwing out that apple core will lure that creature into harm’s way. Countless opossums, raccoons, skunks and other small mammals are killed every day because of human food waste on the shoulder of the road. And it doesn’t stop there. Predators like owls also suffer. They hunt along the side of the road, not because they eat apple cores, but because they eat the mice, voles and other small animals who are attracted to feed on that apple core. Then, when the opossum, raccoon or owl is killed by a car, scavengers are attracted to the pavement, where their lives, too, are at risk.

“If readers want to help the Earth, they should take their waste home and dispose of it or recycle it properly. The small act of throwing an apple core out of a car window can cost the lives of the very creatures they claim to want to help.”

“Dear Mr. Clark,” Abby responded, “Thank you for writing so eloquently to educate my readers – and me. Lesson learned.”

“Dear Abby” receives about 10,000 letters a week. The column is syndicated in about 1,400 newspapers across the U.S., with a combined circulation of more than 110 million people.

Financials

The Wildlife Center of Virginia is a 501(c)(3) organization that depends primarily on private donations – not federal, state, or local government funding – for its programs and services. The Center works hard to be an effective and efficient non-profit – we strive to keep our administrative and fundraising costs to a minimum so that we can do the best job possible as a wildlife hospital and education center.

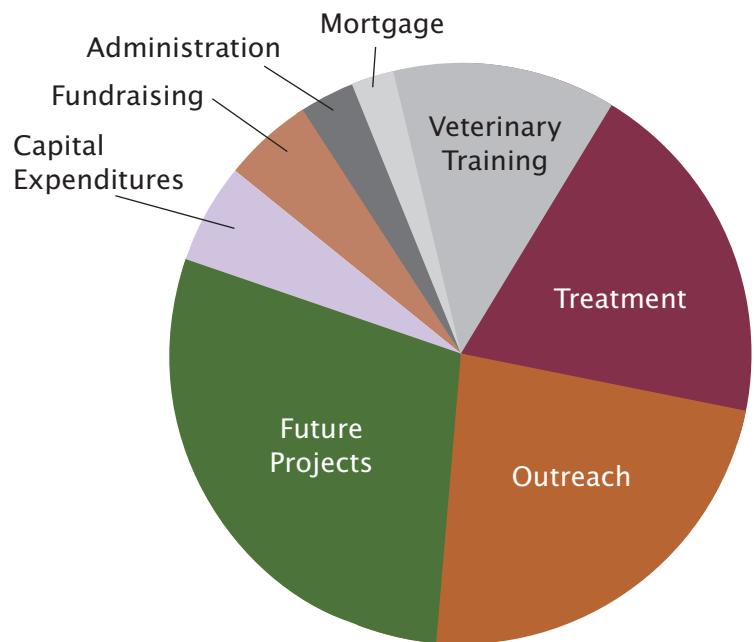
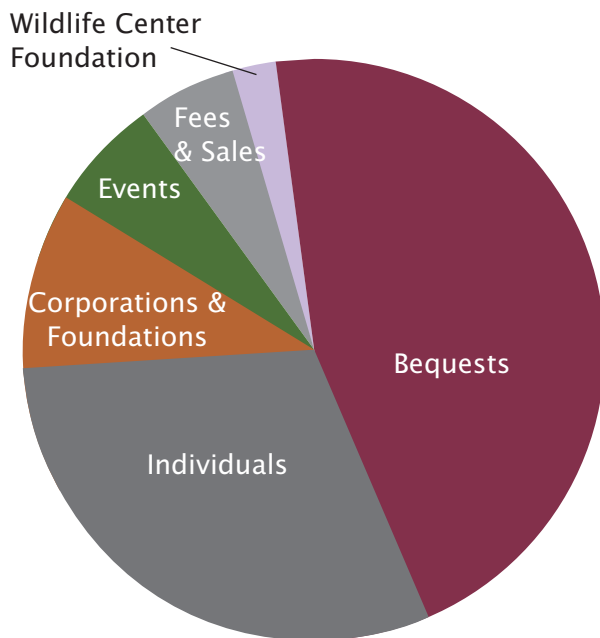
Here's a snapshot of the Center's revenues and expenditures for 2017:

2017 Revenues

Individuals	\$730,037	35%
Bequests	938,165	45%
Corporations/Foundation	178,344	9%
Events [net]	105,641	5%
Program Fees/Sales	88,112	4%
Wildlife Center Foundation	49,000	2%
	\$2,089,299	100%

2017 Expenditures

Treatment	\$405,570	19%
Veterinary Training	322,649	16%
Outreach/Conservation	423,944	20%
Fundraising	100,386	5%
Administration	71,262	3%
Mortgage	40,415	2%
Capital Expenditures	145,613	7%
Future Projects/Reserves	579,460	28%
	\$2,089,299	100%



A financial statement for the most recent fiscal year is available upon request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond VA 23209, 804.786.1343. Financial statements are also posted on the Center's website.



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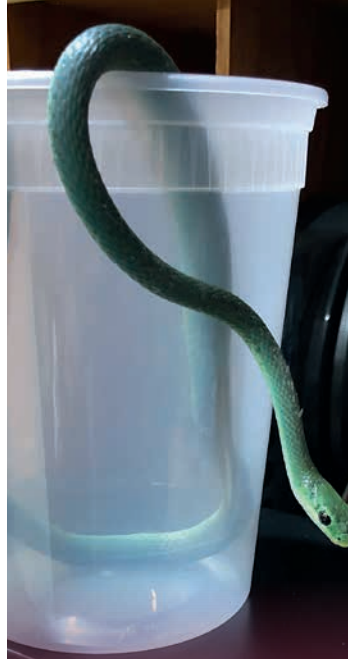
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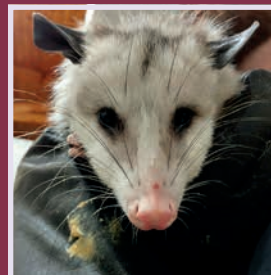
Directors and staff as of January 2018.



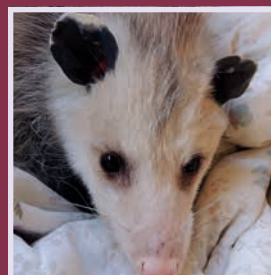
GREENBEAN



CLIFFORD



POSIE



WILLOW

Welcome ABOARD!

During 2017, the Wildlife Center welcomed four new wildlife ambassadors – non-releasable animals who are now serving as Center representatives. These animals travel with our outreach staff across Virginia – to schools, libraries, county fairs, community forums – and help to demonstrate the steps that each of us can take to protect wildlife and the environment.

GREENBEAN is a Northern Rough Greensnake. She was an education snake at a nature center in Virginia for nine years; her origins are unknown, although Northern Rough Greensnakes are found across Virginia. When the nature center closed down in the spring of 2017, her keeper contacted the Wildlife Center to see if Greenbean could continue her role as an ambassador. Greenbean officially joined the Wildlife Center team in June 2017.

Northern Rough Greensnakes are arboreal, meaning they spend most of their time in trees. In the wild, they eat grasshoppers, crickets, caterpillars, spiders, small frogs, snails, and slugs. At the Wildlife Center, Greenbean eats live crickets.

To learn more about these and other Wildlife Center ambassadors – and to learn how you may “adopt” one or more – visit the “Caring for Critters” section of the Center’s website.





The Wildlife Center of Virginia
Post Office Box 1557
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540.942.9453
www.wildlifecenter.org