



MARS
WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRE

Annual Report

2021-2022

Visitor Centre
July, 2021

Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society

Box 415, 1331 Williams Beach Road
Merville, BC, Canada V0R 2M0
info@marswildliferescue.com
www.marswildliferescue.com

Hospital Office Tel: 1-250-337-2021

After Hours Emergency: 1-250-897-2257

Hospital Hours: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Visitor Centre Tel: 1-778-428-1990

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Mission

To conserve and protect native wildlife and its natural habitat through education and rehabilitation.

Goals

To reduce suffering of wildlife often affected by human influences, educate the public about their effect on nature, and how to reduce that impact.

Philosophy

We are a non-profit organization. Our energy is directed towards rehabilitation and education, and the funding for those endeavours.

We abide by all governing laws and regulations under which we operate. MARS holds permits from federal and provincial governments that allow us to rescue, keep in captivity, and care for wildlife.



Purpose

Rescue, Recover, Rehabilitate, & Release

ill, injured, orphaned or oiled wildlife

Conserve & Protect

wildlife by promoting the conservation of wildlife habitat.

Contribute

to the knowledge and understanding of wildlife by participating in research and sharing that information with wildlife organizations and the general public.

Educate

the general public about wildlife issues through lectures, displays, workshops, reports, and publications.

President's Report

Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (MARS Wildlife Rescue) thanks all our generous and compassionate contributors for helping us continue wildlife rehabilitation, education and conservation efforts in 2021/2022.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of BC Hydro, Peninsula Co-op, Animalitos Pet Wellness, Comox Valley Regional District, Strathcona Regional District, Pod Creative, WestJet (who have donated several flights for our raffles and extended the expiry dates due to COVID), Wickaninnish Inn (a true friend of MARS), Campbell River Whale and Wildlife Tours, West Coast Helicopters, Old House Law and Notary, Art Knapp Courtenay, Il Falcone Restaurant, and Chris Hatfield for turning plants into donations.

Thanks to our partners in rescuing and caring for wildlife: The Rotary Club of Courtenay, Campbell River Daybreak Rotary, Planet Clean, Pilon Tools, Shar Kare, BC Ferries and Pacific Coastal Airlines.

Many of our contributors also volunteered at MARS, for example: RK Contracting (Randy) has been volunteering with the construction committee, Progressive Electrical (Matthaeus has helped with our electrical permits), Centra Windows (a group of their staff sponsored a work party), Ponting Contracting (provided us with an excavator) and our neighbours Sam and Bruce.



Land Acknowledgement

Gilakas'la č̣eč̣e haθeč̣

We respectfully acknowledge that the land we gather on is on the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

We much appreciate our corporate members:
Dr. Fran Dental Care, Shannon Lawrence
Physiotherapy, Spiketop Cedar Ltd. and Incona Inc.

During this past year MARS was the fortunate beneficiary of the Brenda Louise Weis estate and Susan Bloom, Canadian Altra Ego Trust donation.

Thank you to Dan and Wendy Davies, and Cliff and Wendy Craig for helping us with fundraising efforts in the gift shop.

We acknowledge the ongoing financial support from the Province of British Columbia and the significant financial contribution from the Laidlaw Foundation.

Thanks to Sharron for our fabulous new Flight Pen.

And finally, we are very thankful for the support of the MARS Wildlife Rescue board of directors, staff, contractors and our many volunteers. Without you this could not have been possible.



As you will read in the following reports, we had several challenges on many levels due to the COVID pandemic. The wildlife hospital continued to move forward with a reduction in the number of volunteers and the loss of revenue in the gift shop was largely offset by donations.

Thank you again!



A growing number of supporters are choosing to donate through monthly automatic debit. These monthly contributions provide our organization with a much-needed level of financial certainty. There are now 96 donors contributing a total of \$3,404 per month, up from 81 monthly donors in the previous year who contributed \$3,000 per month. Wayne Good, of BC Smoke Shop in Victoria, was our first monthly donor and our longest standing donor.

MARS has several anonymous donors and a large supportive community of people who care enough to contribute time and/or supplies. After several short notice callouts on Facebook for specific supplies we were often overwhelmed by the generous response.

Every little bit helps. MARS Wildlife Rescue is a volunteer organization with only four (full time equivalent) staff to guide and support volunteers, who are the life blood of our organization. It may sound hard to believe, but the hundreds of volunteers (ranging from animal care, education, bird handlers, guides, people working in the gift shop, parks maintenance, construction volunteers and others helping with short term projects), officially logged 21,580 volunteer hours during 2021/2022 for the in-kind value of \$491,600. Due to COVID restrictions, this is down from last year by 7,105 hours. We know that since not everyone tracks their hours, the actual total value is much higher.

We apologize if we inadvertently missed any donors or volunteers. We thank all that have generously donated time, money, food and supplies for animal care, skilled labour and materials. Your support is very much appreciated.

- Warren Warttig, RPBio, MARS President

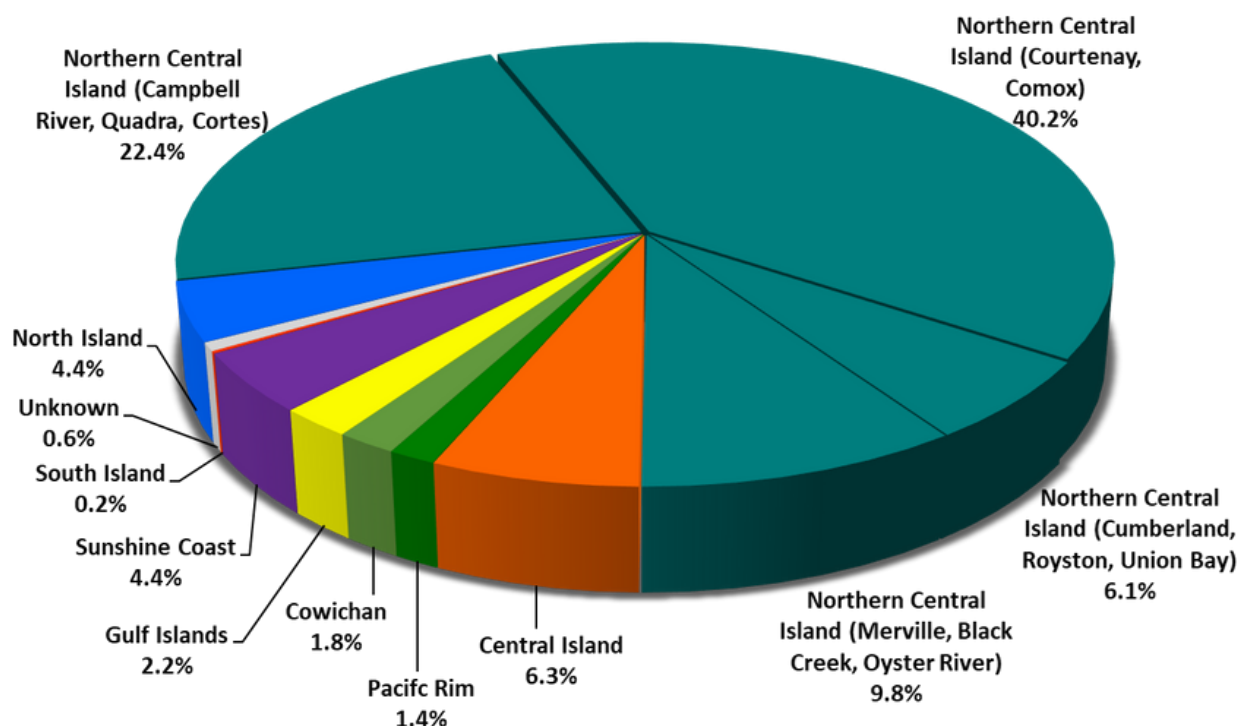


Wildlife Rehabilitation Manager's Report

We admitted **1421** patients in 2021, a remarkable **20% increase** from 2020. We received animals from all regions of Vancouver Island, as well as the Sunshine Coast and Greater Vancouver. Roughly 8% of these animals were transfers from other wildlife centers seeking our assistance with specialized or long-term care.



Intake by Region 2021





Blue-Listed Species

Includes any native species considered to be of Special Concern (formerly Vulnerable) in British Columbia. We treated many more species at risk in 2021:

- 1 Band-Tailed Pigeon
- 1 Barn Owl
- 2 Common Nighthawks
- 1 Double-Crested Cormorant
- 16 Great Blue Herons
- 3 Killdeer
- 8 Little Brown Bats
- 1 Marbled Murrelet
- 1 Northern Pygmy Owl
- 5 Northern Saw-whet Owls
- 1 Peregrine Falcon
- 3 Purple Martins
- 2 Surf Scoters
- 1 Tundra Swan
- 1 Western Screech Owl
- 1 Yuma Myotis



Most Common Avian Patients in 2021

- 113** Pine Siskin
- 103** American Robin
- 76** Mallard
- 69** Bald Eagle
- 48** Anna's Hummingbird



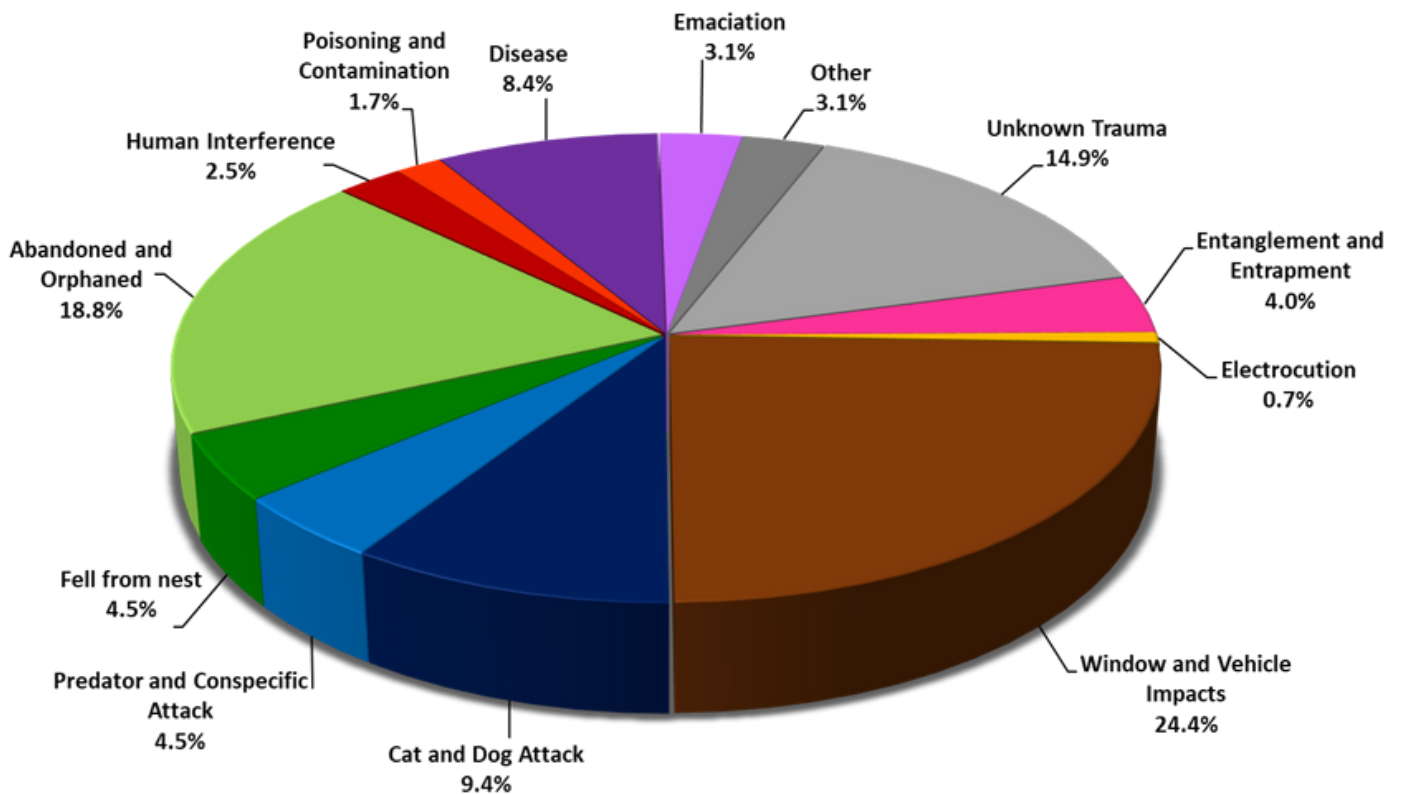
Most Common Mammal Patients in 2021

- 64** Racoon
- 39** Black-tailed Deer
- 8** Harbour Seal
- 8** Little Brown Bat
- 7** Red Squirrel





Reasons for Intake 2021



The reasons for intake remained largely unchanged. Trauma due to human activity continues to be the leading causes of wildlife admissions.

The biggest change was in disease-related admissions. While the human population grappled with the COVID pandemic, disease was also rampant in our local wildlife. We saw an outbreak of salmonella in pine siskins, the emergence of adenovirus hemorrhagic disease in black-tailed deer, and the prevalence of canine parvovirus in raccoons.

A heatwave in June 2021 accounted for a spike in admissions during the summer, as many birds abandoned their nests or fledged early to avoid baking in the sun.

Despite these challenges, our release rate remained steady at 36%, a testament to the hard work and perseverance of our hospital team.

- Gyl Andersen, MARS Manager of Wildlife Rehabilitation

Financial Reports

Income & Expenses Summary 2021-2022

Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society		
Income Statement		
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL
	Mar 1, 2021 to Feb 28, 2022	Mar 1, 2020 to Feb 28, 2021
INCOME		
Visitor Education Centre & Gift Shop	31,799	40,686
Fundraising	44,716	44,120
Donations	354,230	373,807
Province of BC Gaming	65,000	46,000
Grants	27,500	31,000
CVRD Parks Contract	10,400	10,400
CVRD Firehall Lease	14,400	-
Membership Dues	6,925	5,629
Wage Subsidy	36,405	23,035
Other Income	3,998	15,464
Total Income	595,373	590,141
EXPENSE		
Wildlife Care	75,608	36,528
Education	38,596	7,030
Gift Shop	14,695	10,660
Wages	135,497	147,285
Amortization	70,782	67,569
Administration & General	97,815	89,817
Total Expenses	432,993	358,891
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	162,380	231,251

Financial Reports

Comparative Balance Summary 2021-2022

	Year Ended February 28, 2022	Year Ended February 28, 2021
ASSET		
Current Assets		
Operating Funds	183,442	69,558.00
Restricted Funds	317,476	276,254.00
Accounts Receivable	3,948	6,102.00
Inventory	6,671	6,026.00
Total Current Assets	511,537	357,940.00
Capital Assets		
Land	389,500	389,500
Buildings & Outbuildings	1,496,911	1,455,674
Furniture & Equipment	125,804	88,106
Vehicles	66,117	63,492
Parking & Landscaping	38,461	34,367
	2,116,793	2,031,140
Less Depreciation	-312,665	-248,955
Total Capital Assets	1,804,128	1,782,184
TOTAL ASSET	2,315,665	2,140,124
LIABILITY		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	26,805	12,806
CEBA Loan	30,000	30,000
Prepaid Firehall Lease	4,800	0
CRA, GST & PST Payable	6,555	5,601
Total Current Liabilities	68,160	48,407
Long Term Liabilities		
CCCU Mortgage	285,272	291,866
Total Long Term Liabilities	285,272	291,866
TOTAL LIABILITY	353,432	340,273
EQUITY		
Equity		
Unrestricted Funds	360,523	246,548
Externally Restricted Funds	82,854	62,986
Investment in Property & Equipment	1,518,855	1,490,317
Total Owners Equity	1,962,232	1,799,851
TOTAL EQUITY	1,962,232	1,799,851
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	2,315,665	2,140,124

The chartered accounting firm, Moeller Matthews, prepared a Review Engagement Report for this fiscal year for MARS. For a copy of these financial statements, email: pearl_mckenzie@telus.net

Special Events & Fundraising Report

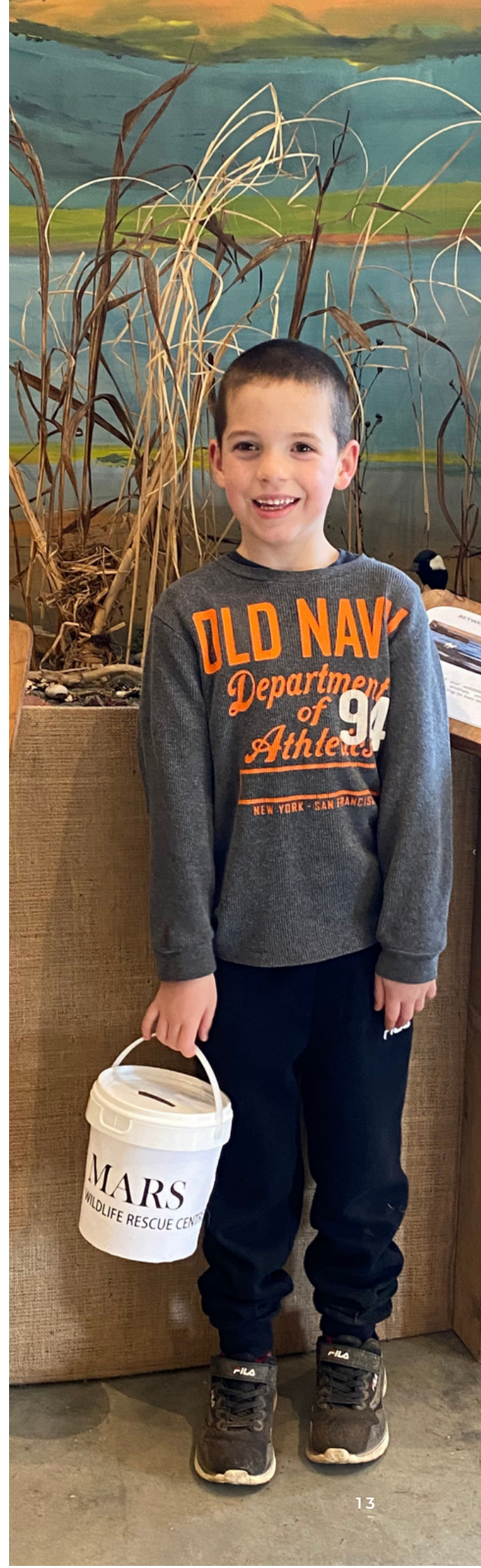
With the start of our fiscal year on March 1st, 2021, we had hoped for a dramatic change in the pandemic situation to allow MARS to re-open the Visitor Centre but unfortunately that was not the case. We continued with fundraising using the internet as our main venue.

Our annual summer raffle kicked off on April 22nd, on Earth Day, and finished on October 11th, 2021 with the draw being held at MARS. This was an online event once again.

Seven fantastic prizes were donated with a collective value of \$5,797.

A new campaign to raise \$20,000 to put toward a larger updated fawn complex was started just prior to the beginning of this fiscal year. The rush was on to raise the funds and complete the project by fawning season in May, 2021. By early March we had raised \$10,651 followed by a very generous donation from the Laidlaw Foundation of \$13,000 which brought the campaign to a close on March 17th. Construction of the fawn complex, indoor shelters and outdoor fenced-in-pens got underway swiftly. In May, the Campbell River Rotary generously donated \$2,500 to the fawn complex. The campaign to raise funds for the x-ray machine which had been put on hold for this, was then revived. As of September 2021, the x-ray fund had raised just over \$22,000.

The Visitor Centre re-opened in early June once COVID restrictions were somewhat relaxed. People were eager to book outdoor tours to walk the trails, see our ambassador birds, view the wetlands and





have a look at all the completed construction projects from our hard-working volunteer construction crew.

Then on July 2nd, we were able to re-open the inside display area of the Visitor Centre.

With COVID 19 restrictions relaxed, we were able to attend Kitty Coleman's Art in the Park on BC Day weekend, July 31st to August 2nd. This was our first chance to be out in the public since the pandemic began. This gave us a chance to sell raffle tickets and volunteer-made COVID masks. Proceeds of raffle ticket sales were \$3,160 and \$20 from the masks. Donations were \$581.06 for an overall total of \$3,761.06. These were excellent results for our first off-site event in a very long time.

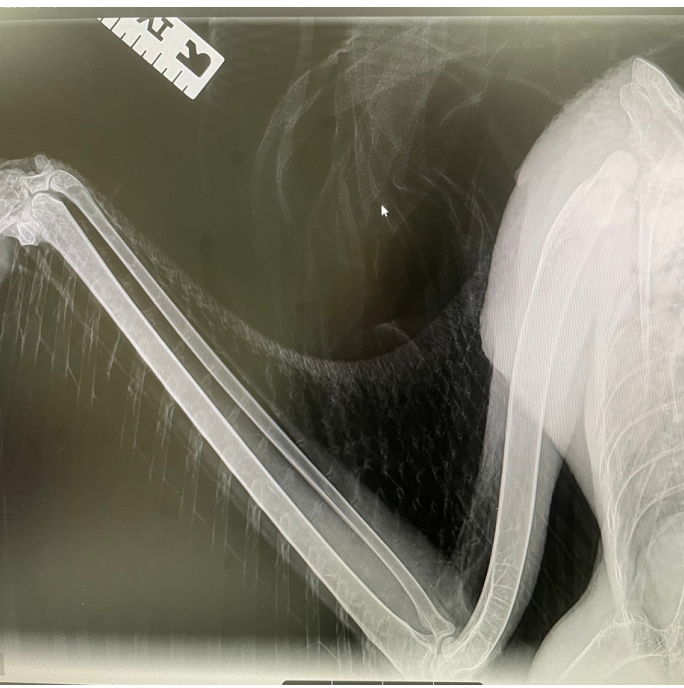
We have been delighted to receive donations from children throughout the summer who as young entrepreneurs, opened lemonade stands so they could raise funds for MARS. These kids are demonstrating their interest in helping wildlife which is so encouraging and hopefully their interest will carry on into adulthood, possibly becoming our next generation of caregivers.

In September, we were in attendance again at Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens Art and Bloom Festival for Labour Day weekend, Sept 4,5,6. We made \$2,790 in raffle ticket sales, \$60 in merchandise and \$385.50 in donations for a total of \$3,235.50. A great weekend!



Our Summer Raffle which began in April, ended with the draw on October 11th, at MARS. We raised \$28,170 in ticket sales and except for the cost of printing tickets, all the funds raised were for the rehabilitation of wildlife.

We had been raising funds to purchase an x-ray machine and we were just shy of our goal when a member generously donated the remaining amount that we needed. We removed this donation category from Canada Helps and replaced it with one for the hospital expansion.



Starting the last week of November into December, we had a Christmas Craft Fair and an Art Sale at the Visitors Centre. This increased gift shop revenue quite a bit.

Art Knapp's decorated a Christmas tree with Snowy owl ornaments as a fundraiser for MARS. They raised \$909.75 and donated all of it to us for rescue and rehabilitation efforts.

On January 17th, there was a widespread fundraiser held virtually to celebrate what would have been Betty White's 100th birthday. Because of her passion for protecting animals, people were asked to donate to their favourite animal rescue society. Our generous supporters blew us out of the water with a phenomenal donation tally of over \$13,000. Her birthday fundraiser is destined to become an annual event for MARS.

We started an online 50/50 raffle back on October 31st, 2021 and ending February 28th, 2022, with proceeds of \$19,690. The lucky winner was Jacqueline Graham from Campbell River with half of that, for a windfall of \$9,845.

We did hope that 2021 would be considerably different in a good way but unfortunately COVID 19 was still a problem with all the variants, so jobs and incomes remained insecure in many areas, but restrictions did loosen at times which allowed us to attend a few events.

Luckily for MARS, we have the best volunteers and donors; they have continued to understand the importance of our mission and never fail to help in any way they can. How do we adequately thank these people? We are at a loss except to say that we value all of you. You can be immensely proud of helping these animals who cannot help themselves.

A huge shout-out to MARS staff and volunteers for another incredibly busy and productive year.



- Lynda Hodgkinson, Chair of the Special Events Committee & Facebook Administrator

Construction Committee Report

The Construction Committee is a group of about 50 Volunteer handymen and women that are on call for construction, maintenance, or any other number of tasks including removal of invasive plants. The group is lead by Warren Warttig and John Turner.

In March, “Spring” cleaning” started early with fixing the plumbing in the large Animal Room and repairing the portable pigeon coup. Planning started in earnest too for a specialized coup for ducklings complete with heated floors (affectionately know as the “Quack Houses”). Designs for a specialize Fawn ICU building were also being worked on (aka the “Fawn Shop”). Progressive Electrical volunteered to hold the permits that are required for the below ground infrastructure needed for the Fawn ICU and future “Student Village. A two-acre fawn pen was well under way and nearing completion.

By mid-April, the two-acre fawn pen was finished, blue chip surfacing was installed around the Visitor Building kiosk, and a new road was completed to access the new fawn pen thanks to funding from Sharron and an excavator Ponting Contracting loaned to Warren. A specialized recovery cage for woodpeckers (the “Thunder Dome”) was almost finished and design drawings for the Fawn ICU building were finalized. Below ground conduit for water electrical and communications to a Fawn barn (attached to the two-acre Fawn Pen) were installed (thanks again to Mark Ponting for the loan of his excavator) and the forms were ready for the fawn barn concrete slab. The upper one-acre fawn pen (to be attached to Fawn ICU) was also competed. The building permit application for the Fawn Shop was submitted April 19.





By May, construction of one of the two new quack houses was completed thanks to Guy Royer for his volunteer electrical work. The fawn barn attached to the two-acre fawn pen was about 50% completed. The last three 20-foot perches were installed in the animal recovery side of the Flight Pen. Broom bashing was well underway. An additional Raccoon Pod was started.

In June and July, the Raccoon Pod and the Fawn Barn were completed, and we received a building permit for the Fawn ICU. An artificial wetland was constructed below the Flight Pen. From September to November, we were re-doing the interiors of each Raccoon Pod to make it more sanitary, gutters were cleaned in preparation for winter, a building permit was being prepared to expand the animal hospital, and the roof was re-done over the Freezer Shed.

During January and February 2022 thoughts turned to re-purposing the lunchroom in the hospital into an X-Ray room and making the lunchroom in the Visitor Building more accessible.

- Warren Warttig, Construction Committee Chair



Education & Habitat Stewardship

Despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic continuing in 2021, the MARS visitor centre team persevered in educating the public about wildlife issues and raising funds for the hospital. The second long-term closure of the centre began in December 2020 and extended to early June 2021. Through most of the summer the team provided modified, pre-booked outdoor tours and gift shop access, as well as opportunities to meet an ambassador bird and handler.



In August we re-opened our exhibits hall for the full MARS experience. Tours were very popular and often over-booked. Written reviews were overwhelmingly positive with compliments for guides and our beautiful gift shop, gratitude for seeing the bird on the glove (consistently a highlight), and respect for all that has been accomplished at MARS in the last few years on behalf of wildlife. Two large summer camp groups, preschool classes, and students from adventure tourism at NIC came for special tours. In all, we conducted over 400 tours and presentations for 3,184 visitors. Our summer staff and dedicated volunteers made this possible. During our closure we were unable to visit schools or have students visit us. Virtual tours lead by Warren Warttig and Ginny St. Pierre were extremely well received and reached 525 students and adults.

We also used our extensive social media reach on Facebook (41,000+ followers) and Instagram (2000+ followers), local print media, and our website to share messages about our wildlife patients, the needs of the hospital, reducing risks to wildlife, and our fundraising efforts.





Habitat stewardship continued around the MARS property with the removal of invasive species such as Scotch broom, Reed canary grass, and Cutleaf blackberry. Volunteers worked in all four seasons, improving the soil, developing meadows, and planting native trees (including Garry oaks), shrubs, grasses, and flowers. The goals are to create habitat for birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians and all manner of insects, to educate the public about strategies for land restoration, and to continuing to make MARS a beautiful place.

All of this work required a great deal of planning, energy, flexibility, and a sense of humour as we faced changing health orders. The visitor center team of about 35 people includes managers, steering committee members, guides, bird handlers, gift shop volunteers, habitat stewards, and summer staff. They worked collaboratively in challenging times with the safety of the public and each other, and our our mission in mind.

We are grateful to all MARS staff, volunteers, donors, and supporters who, through such unsettled times, have been so consistently dedicated to our organization and its goals. Special thanks to Diane Weir, retiring visitor centre manager, for her years of leadership and contribution to MARS Wildlife Rescue.

Bravo to everyone for all we achieved.

- Jan Smith, Education Program & Habitat Stewardship





Board Members & Staff

Board of Directors

President: Warren Warttig

Vice President: Pearl McKenzie

Treasurer: Paul Jackman April 2017–January 2022

Secretary Treasurer: Jaewon Kim from January 2022

Darlene Banerd

Lynda Hodgkinson

Therisa Lowe

Allison Morrison

Virginia (Ginny) Simpson

Janet (Jan) Smith

John Turner

David Volkert

Staff

Manager of Wildlife Rehabilitation: Gylaine Andersen

Assistant Manager of Wildlife Rehabilitation: Kiersten Shyian

Wildlife Rehabilitator: Melissa Steinkey from February 2022

Manager of Visitor Centre: Diane Weir 2019–August 2021, part time

Interim Manager of Visitor Centre: Robert McLennan, August 2021–July 2022, part time

Administrator: Laurie Ulm, part time



MARS
WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRE



Thank you for your generous support!

