



## **CITY WILDLIFE 2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

The goals of City Wildlife are to rescue sick, orphaned, and injured wild animals and return them to the wild; to promote the enjoyment of and harmonious co-existence with native wildlife; and to protect the District of Columbia's wild places for animal habitats. In this report, we highlight strides made in achieving these goals through four distinct City Wildlife efforts: the Rehabilitation Center, *Lights Out DC*, *Duck Watch*, and community outreach.

## The Rehabilitation Center: Saving the Victims of a Unfriendly Environment

In 2013, City Wildlife established the District of Columbia’s first-ever wildlife rehabilitation center at 15 Oglethorpe Street, NW. It has been open to help injured, ill, and orphaned wild animals every day since then – weekends and holidays included. When the coronavirus pandemic shut Washington down in the spring of 2020, City Wildlife modified its protocols to protect its essential staff and members of the public. For five months during that year, the center accepted patients only from animal control officers, who received animals from the public. In spite of this change, patient numbers dropped only slightly: intake in 2020 was 1715, as compared to approximately 1,900 in 2019 and 2018.



Typically, City Wildlife’s patients have been struck by vehicles, attacked by pets, injured by lawn mowers, poisoned by pesticides, or have suffered other injuries caused by human activities in our built environment. Every one of these animals needs the clinic’s help to survive and return to the wild.



A wildlife veterinarian oversees the care of the animals. She works in a modern surgical suite equipped with digital radiograph, anesthesia apparatus, and a comprehensive veterinary pharmacy. A crew of trained animal care technicians look after the basic needs of the animals: housing, food, medicines, and enrichment. In previous years, a corps of dedicated volunteers helped care for the patients, but the coronavirus forced the closing of the volunteer program for much of 2020, and the center had to increase staff hours to compensate for the lack of volunteers.

City Wildlife works with almost all native species of wildlife, including raptors, songbirds, waterfowl, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. (The center does not have a permit to handle rabies vector species such as raccoons, foxes, bats, skunks, and coyotes, nor do we handle bear or deer.) Many of the center’s patients are listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) by DC’s *Wildlife Action Plan*. In 2020 we helped 308 SGCN, representing 18 species of birds, two species of reptiles and amphibians, and seven species of mammals.

2020 Animal Intake: 1,715.

Waterfowl	156
Perching birds	955
Raptors	49
Other birds	48
Squirrels	276
Opossums	81
Eastern cottontails	81
Other mammals	26
Reptiles & amphibians	43

## ***Lights Out DC: Is Our Love of Glass Costing Us Our Birds?***

In 2020, *Lights Out DC* marked its tenth anniversary. Since the program's inception, *Lights Out* volunteers have documented more than 3,700 victims of bird/glass collisions in just a small area of downtown DC. (84 percent of these birds were dead.) The victims included many of our most colorful and beloved migratory birds — warblers, tanagers, thrushes, hummingbirds, and others — whose populations are declining alarmingly.

Though pandemic restrictions kept volunteers from monitoring the established routes in the spring of 2020, the busy fall season brought in an unusually — and tragically — large number of migrant birds: 665 birds were found in 2020, most during the fall.



A ten-year report released in conjunction with *Lights Out DC's* anniversary identifies buildings from Union Station to Mt. Vernon Square that are particularly hazardous to migrating songbirds. Five buildings have killed nearly 40 percent of the total victims found. Some of these buildings, when approached by *Lights Out DC*, have taken steps to address the problem by reducing night-time lighting and covering problem windows with patterned film. One of these, the Washington Convention Center, installed bird-safe film on its L Street overpass to achieve an 85 percent reduction in bird strikes.

Scientists estimate that North American bird populations have declined by 29 percent since 1970. Bird/glass collisions are one of the primary causes of this mortality; up to a billion birds are killed by glass collisions each year in the U.S. Peak periods for bird/glass collisions are during spring and fall migrations.

*Lights Out DC* is part of growing movement nationally to recognize and address the problem of bird/glass collisions. In fall 2020, former First Lady Laura Bush promoted *Lights Out Texas* to save migrating birds in Dallas and Houston. Recent legislation in San Francisco and New York City mandates bird-safe construction in many new or substantially remodeled buildings. Bird-safe building laws are being considered by both the U.S. Congress and the Maryland legislature, and City Wildlife is recommending that Washington, DC, take similar steps.

**In 2020, *Lights Out DC* volunteers monitored two four-mile routes around Union Station and The Convention Center and documented more than 600 bird strikes, bringing the total number of birds found since 2010 to 3,732.**

## Duck Watch: Urban Waterfowl Get a Hand



When urban Mallard eggs hatch, the ducklings are sometimes unable to follow their mothers to water – a necessary source of protection and food – because they are trapped on rooftops or in enclosed courtyards. Other broods face hazards such as city traffic, sewer grates, sunken areaways, or barriers like walls or curbs as they walk to water. City Wildlife’s all-volunteer *Duck Watch* program is there to help. The volunteers monitor the ducks nest and assist the mother ducks and their ducklings as they make their way through the city to their chosen water source. When needed, volunteers can also capture and relocate duck families to suitable bodies of water. Last year, for instance, *Duck Watch* volunteers rescued and relocated four Mallard families that were trapped inside the U.S. Botanic Garden’s courtyard.

Working with public officials, building managers, architects, and members of the public, *Duck Watch* volunteers implement solutions based on natural waterfowl behavior. Currently, they are collaborating with management at the District Wharf to design and install ramps and floats so that ducklings, which are not waterproof at birth, can get out of the water and be brooded by their mothers if they become waterlogged. Ultimately, *Duck Watch* is building a connected and educated community of waterfowl-friendly urbanites.

In 2020, *Duck Watch* volunteers monitored and assisted ducklings and goslings from a total of 66 nests in all four quadrants of Washington, DC.



## Community Engagement

Much of City Wildlife's life-saving rescue work happens via telephone calls and emails, without requiring that animals be brought to the center. In 2020, we responded to more than 3,000 requests (an average of about eight per day) with information on wild animal behavior and advice on mitigating conflicts with wild animals in an effective and humane manner.

Always looking for ways to help people appreciate and understand the wild animals who share their communities, City Wildlife holds numerous educational events throughout the year. In 2020, we held three such events at the center before the pandemic made this impossible. The subsequent seven educational events, which included school lessons and webinars, happened virtually. A highly popular webinar in September looked at how the exploitation of wild animals is connected to pandemics, such as the one caused by the coronavirus, and showcased wildlife rehabilitation centers' role as early detection sentinels of zoonotic diseases.

Throughout the year, City Wildlife maintained our regular educational

posts on its busy website and through its social media accounts, where new posts appeared several times each week. These offerings highlighted the work of the rehabilitation center, *Lights Out DC*, and *Duck Watch*, provided practical information on helping wild animals and solving conflicts with them humanely and effectively, and promoted the enjoyment of wildlife and nature in the city.

Finally, City Wildlife networked with an active coalition of other local environmental organizations to advocate for the protection of the natural areas in District of Columbia, such as Kenilworth Park and Kingman and Heritage Islands, to ensure that these areas remain safe havens for wildlife.

Despite the pandemic, City Wildlife held ten educational events in FY2020. The annual Valentine's Day open house, held before the coronavirus appeared, attracted about 300 participants. Once the pandemic struck, virtual programs became the norm. City Wildlife's 2020 programs targeted at youth reached 375 young people.

## Financial Statement

City Wildlife, a registered nonprofit charity, could not exist without the generosity of the public. Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law and pay for animal food, medicines, and other essential rehabilitation costs. Donors can be assured that their gifts are used wisely and directly to benefit animals.

City Wildlife has passed the Catalogue for Philanthropy's rigorous vetting process and is one of the charities it recommends for effectiveness, transparency, and efficiency. City Wildlife has also achieved Guidestar's Platinum Level, the highest level it awards charities.

### Statement of Financial Position (FY2020)

Assets		
	Total current assets	216,701
	Property and equipment (equipment and leasehold improvements less accumulated depreciation)	16,000
	Other assets	1,683
	<b>Total assets</b>	<b>234,384</b>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
	Current liabilities	17,603
	Net assets (unrestricted)	215,908
	Net assets (temporarily restricted)	873
	<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>234,384</b>

### Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets (FY2020)

Support and Revenue		
	Contributions	334,889
	Government grants	205,000
	Donated stock	5,611
	Product sales - net	895
	Miscellaneous income	554
	Net assets released from donor restrictions	
	<b>Total support and revenue</b>	<b>546,949</b>
Expenses		
	Program services (Rehabilitation Center)	445,433
	Management and general	34,693
	Fundraising	44,240
	<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>524,366</b>
	Change in net assets	64,479
	Net assets at beginning of year	152,302
	<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<b>216,781</b>

A complete audit, prepared by Linton Shafer Warfield & Garrett, P.A., can be requested by writing to City Wildlife, PO Box 60078, Washington, DC 20039.

## **Members of the board of directors**

Anne M. Lewis, President  
Maryanna Kieffer, Vice President  
April Linton, Vice President  
Ginny May, Secretary  
Gertrude Scanlan, Treasurer  
Jim Monsma, Executive Director  
Anne Armstrong  
Lisbeth Fuisz  
Peter S. Glassman, DVM  
Paula Goldberg  
John Hadidian, PhD  
Veska Kita  
Helen O'Brien  
Lisa Olson  
Mike Prucker

## **Staff:**

Jim Monsma, Executive Director  
Cheryl Chooljian, DVM, Clinic Director/Staff Veterinarian  
Corey Mullen, Animal Care Manager  
Jennifer Mattioli, Director of Communication  
Susan Chase, Wildlife Rehabilitator  
Emily Slagle, Wildlife Care Technician  
Courtney Thomas, Wildlife Care Technician

**City Wildlife, 15 Oglethorpe Street, NW, Washington, DC 20011**

**Mall: PO Box 60078, Washington, DC 20039**

**202-882-1000**

[info@citywildlife.org](mailto:info@citywildlife.org)

[www.citywildlife.org](http://www.citywildlife.org)

**Open every day of the year from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.**