



## 2019 Annual Report



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

As usual, 2019 was a very busy year for AIWC, especially compared to 2018. In 2019, we admitted 1,481 animals of 151 different species, an increase of over 400 animals (39%) compared to 2018!

Due to your support, we were able to meet this demand for services and still maintain our high standards of care, ending the year with a 47% success rate. The national average success rate in wildlife rehabilitation is 33% because the best defense mechanism of wild animals is not displaying when they are injured, so sadly when they do come into care, they are often in critical condition. We constantly strive to provide the best level of care to our patients, and it is shown through our consistently high success rate.

These successes would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, both full-time, part-time, and seasonal, our over 140 volunteers who committed over 6,600 volunteer hours throughout the year, and the donations, both cash and in-kind, of the amazing community that supports AIWC and shares their support with their friends, families, and colleagues.

In addition to our rehabilitation program, education is the other pillar of AIWC's mandate; getting out in the community and educating the public (with a focus on the younger generations) about our wild neighbours, how to help them, and how to peacefully coexist. AIWC does this in a variety of ways: answering calls to our wildlife hotline, engaging with our community online and through newsletters, providing information on how to coexist with urban wildlife through local media channels, attending community events, hosting talks at our site, and providing education programs to schools, youth groups, and any other community organization. 2019 was no exception, and our education team reached over 6,000 individuals in-person throughout the year and attended 142 different events and programs.

Thank you for your generosity in 2019 to ensure that wildlife continue to receive the critical care they need. Your contributions have saved lives in need and we hope we can rely on your continued support in 2020.

Thank you for caring for Alberta's wildlife!

**Holly Lillie**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Jennifer Kaiser**  
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# 2019 Highlights

**1,481 patients** admitted, with a success rate of **47%**.



Answered over **5,600 wildlife hotline calls** from the public.



Obtained our permit to rehabilitate black bear cubs from the province and **successfully rehabilitated** and released our **first black bear cub** patient.

Over **6,600 volunteer hours donated** for everything from helping in the clinic, to mailing newsletters, to social media and fundraising.



Board of Directors and the Executive Director created a **new Strategic Plan** to determine AIWC's goals and guide our operations.

Hosted **5 work event days** for local businesses.



Our **3<sup>rd</sup> annual Give the Gift of Saving Wildlife** December fundraiser exceeded our fundraising target by **18%**.

Completion of our **Wildlife Emergency Response Unit**, sponsored by Inter Pipeline Ltd., to support injured and orphaned wildlife impacted by disaster events and act as an overflow recovery space as needed.

Welcomed the public to visit us at one of our **6 On-site Talks** and **3 garage sales**.



Held our **first Work Out for Wildlife** fundraiser.



Education programs delivered to nearly **3,000 individuals** and represented wildlife concerns at **37 community events**.

AIWC staff attended and presented at the **National Wildlife Rehabilitators' Symposium**.

# WILDLIFE HOTLINE

AIWC's Wildlife Hotline program is an incredible tool for engaging with the public; it provides a point of contact for any concerned citizens to have their wildlife questions answered, whether it be about nesting red squirrels in Cardston, an orphaned duckling in High Level, or a family of skunks in a Calgary suburb.

No matter where the call is from, or what the concern is, AIWC provides expert advice that not only fosters an appreciation of our native wildlife and peaceful coexistence, but also ensures that their legacy in Alberta is preserved.

It is through the wildlife hotline that AIWC was able to successfully complete 1,100 pickups and rescues of injured and orphaned wildlife in Alberta throughout 2019, from the more than 5,600 individual calls received requesting our advice or assistance.

Importantly, the wildlife hotline also prevents healthy animals from needlessly being admitted to our centre; by talking to the public early, we are able to prevent common unnecessary admissions such as the accidental kidnapping of healthy baby birds or hares. In 2019, our hotline advice ensured 203 healthy animals remained in the wild where they belong, an increase of more than 50% from 2018.





## Wildlife Hotline Statistics

Our busiest month was **June with 1,037 calls** to our wildlife hotline. This was **33% more** calls than June 2018.

**Over 70%** of our calls are received during our 'Summer' season (May to September). **3,919 total calls during this time.**

**5,601 total calls** to Hotline in 2019.

Organized over **1,100 pickups/rescues**, often with multiple animals at each pickup.

**203 healthy animals protected** from unnecessary intervention in 2019, increased from 132 in 2018.

The highest number of calls we addressed in a single day was **60 calls on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.**

# WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

In 2019, AIWC admitted 1,481 animals.

This year we saw a slightly increased ratio of birds to mammals than prior years: 78% patients admitted were birds, 42% mammals, and 0.1% amphibians. We saw 118 different species of birds and 29 species of mammals, including four neonate northern flying squirrel pups that were abandoned by their mother in early June, two orphaned moose calves, and one American black bear cub, all who were released back to the wild, along with 458 other animals.

AIWC is proud to have achieved a success rate of 47% in 2019, remaining higher than the national average for wildlife rehabilitation, despite an increase in patient numbers and a new species that was added to the care routine: American black bears.

## Black Bear Cub Rehabilitation



In 2019, the Government of Alberta approved AIWC's rehabilitation of American black bear cubs under 12 months of age. This was incredibly exciting news; prior to 2018, black bear rehabilitation had been prohibited in Alberta, and we knew that the need for orphaned cub rehabilitation in the province was high. Understanding that such incredible, intelligent mammals would need specialized care, our Executive Director

## Rehabilitation by the Numbers

Rehabilitation **success rate of 47%** in 2019.

Of patients admitted in 2019, **78% were birds** and **42% were mammals**.

and the Rehabilitation Manager travelled to Smithers, BC to be trained in black bear rehabilitation by the expert staff at Northern Lights Wildlife Shelter, another Canadian wildlife rehabilitation centre that specializes in black and grizzly bear rehabilitation. During training, AIWC staff were instructed on proper feeding practices, socializing cubs with one another, enrichment, how to prevent habituation, and enclosure design. When they returned, AIWC immediately began preparations to obtain approval to care for black bear cubs under the new provincial protocol.

One priority for approval was an appropriate enclosure, and AIWC was able to retrofit an existing large mammal enclosure for the specific black bear cub needs.

The enclosure was modified to include multiple climbing structures, a water feature, dens, and various platforms and structures for feeding and climbing. A privacy fence was built around the enclosure, while the back of the enclosure looked out onto a private natural area on AIWC's grounds, allowing cubs to observe the natural world around them undisturbed.

AIWC received our first black bear cub patient on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019: a young female that had been found alone in Northwest Alberta. The cub was started on a specialized formula and natural supplemental foods that she would have had access to in the wild, such as wildflowers, berries, and various plant species. The cub adjusted well, and after the required isolation period was over, she was transitioned into the larger mammal enclosure. By installing cameras in the enclosure, AIWC staff could observe how fast she could climb, how she would lounge in her water feature on hot summer days, and how she thoroughly enjoyed picking the berries off of berry bushes and catching the fish staff would stock in her water feature for special enrichment. By October 2019, the cub was ready for release to the wild. To prepare for release, the cub was radio-collared and microchipped, blood and hair samples were taken, and, a few days later, she was transported to a release site near where she was found. We are hopeful that the information we can obtain from post-release monitoring of this cub will help in shaping black bear rehabilitation protocols in the future.

We are happy to report that this cub has established a home range in a deep wilderness area, successfully denned in her first winter, and we are hopeful she will continue to thrive in the wild in her first spring and summer out of captivity.

**118 species of birds**  
were admitted in 2019.

**29 species of mammals**  
were admitted in 2019.



## Veterinary Case Studies



### NORTHERN FLICKER 19-893

With some severe traumas, the patient's most serious condition is not always obvious when the animal is first admitted. Tissue damage from severe acute trauma can take time to present itself, and this was the case with a female northern flicker that was admitted in July 2019.

The bird had flown into a house through a chimney and, in her attempt to escape, flew into a window. Upon intake, she presented with severe head trauma, a dull mentation, and swelling to the eyes. She was initially treated with pain medication, fluids, supplemental oxygen, and medicated eye drops. After a few days in our intensive care area, she was moved to a small indoor enclosure where movement could be restricted while she was still resting. She exhibited normal feeding and perching behaviours quickly after this move.

After four days in care, a large lesion to her keel (breastbone) started to become evident as the affected area became necrotic. Fortunately, the bone was unaffected, but the tissue surrounding the keel area was severely damaged. The patient was started on antibiotics to prevent infection, and a special bandage was placed on the area to keep the wound moist while it continued to debride itself. Once the veterinary team was certain the wound was ready for surgical debridement, the patient was placed under anesthesia and the dead tissue was surgically removed to allow room for new, healthy tissue to take its place. The wound covered the majority of the bird's keel area, and a special hydrocolloid bandage was placed to allow the tissue to grow back in a moist, healthy environment. This bandage allowed for decreased handling as it only needed to be changed every three days, and also allowed further debridement or removal of any subsequent dead tissue that developed.

After several weeks of treatment, the wound had completely closed, and the patient was allowed outside for flight conditioning. She was later released, all conditions resolved, exactly one month after she was admitted.





### RED-TAILED HAWK 19-868;

Some patients are admitted to us with little to no known history, or their history does not explain the injuries or conditions they are admitted with. This was the case for a fledgling red-tailed hawk, who was hospitalized in late July 2019. He was found in a ditch on the side of a road, and while we suspected he was in a collision with a vehicle, he was barely old enough to have fully left the nest.

The mystery continued when he was examined. The initial exam revealed a right clavicle (collarbone) fracture, consistent with a car strike, but he was thin, had a depressed mentation and was dehydrated. Strangely, a large mass was palpated in the crop area, a pouch-like structure extending laterally off of the esophagus to store food before digestion. He was initially treated with pain medication, fluids, and his wing was wrapped to his body to stabilize the shoulder fracture. Once stable, x-rays were performed to get a better look at the fracture and the mass in his crop.

After little information could be obtained from the x-rays about the mass, the veterinarian opted to do a surgical exploration of the mass to ensure it wasn't harmful. The patient was placed under anesthesia, and the area was exposed. The mass was found to be a hardened abscess (likely due to trauma and subsequent infection). The mass was carefully removed and the patient recovered well from the surgery. For a week, the patient was tube-fed to the stomach to avoid trauma to the surgical site in the crop, and, once the area had adequate time to heal, clean meat (meat without any feather or bones) was fed, along with additional supplements.

Over the course of the treatment, the clavicle fracture healed, and the bandage was removed. Once on a regular diet, the patient was moved outside for flight conditioning and to ensure the digestive system was processing foods correctly. Fortunately, the bird healed well from the surgery and was flying well after a few weeks of flight conditioning. This patient was released back to suitable habitat near where he was found after 47 days in care.

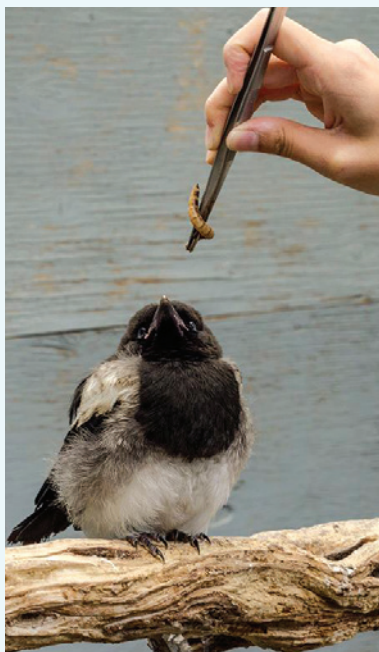
# EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We believe in developing awareness through education. Through outreach programming, we are working to creating strong co-existence between Albertans and wildlife.

## Volunteering

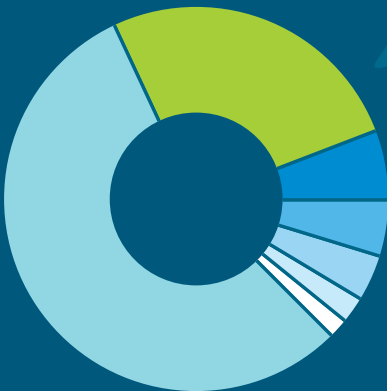
Volunteers are involved in every aspect of the organization at AIWC, from our Board of Directors to rescuing animals. Whether it's assisting in the clinic with cleaning and feeding patients, doing laundry, picking up injured wildlife, interacting with the public, or helping with grant writing, AIWC's volunteers put their hearts and souls into everything that they do.

2019 was a big year for volunteer recruitment; we added 40 new volunteers, bringing our year-end total up to 144 active volunteers! Thanks to this incredible boost, we are in a very strong position for 2020. In particular, we are thrilled to welcome so many new volunteer rescue drivers to the team, which dramatically increases our ability to get out to rescues in the field or collect patients from partnered veterinary offices and bring injured and orphaned wildlife to the clinic for care as quickly as possible.





## 2019 Volunteer Hours



- 58% Clinic and Construction
- 27% Rescue
- 5% Public Awareness
- 4% Wildlife Hotline
- 3% Board of Directors
- 2% Administration, Photography, Fundraising, Other
- 1% Newsletter and Blog

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**6,650** total volunteer hours were donated in 2019

## Wildlife Education Programs

Demand for our in-class wildlife education programs remained steady, with 105 presentations delivered in 2019. Our most popular program was “World of Owls”, which made up nearly one third of all bookings! During these education programs, we connected with nearly 3,000 students of all ages, from preschoolers to senior citizens, helping to foster an appreciation of wildlife across multiple generations.



## Education by the Numbers

Delivered **105 wildlife education presentations** in 2019.

Connected with nearly **3,000 students** through our education programs.

## Public Awareness Events

AIWC's education team made outreach at public awareness events a priority in 2019, which paid off in a big way! We attended 37 events in and around Southern Alberta, including regular booths at the Bow Habitat Station, the Priddis-Millarville Fair, and the Triwood Community Christmas Market. Not only were many of these events great fundraisers for AIWC, but we also spread the word about the work we do to over 3,100 people – more than double our Public Awareness audience from 2018. This effort would not be possible without the dedication of our Public Awareness volunteers.



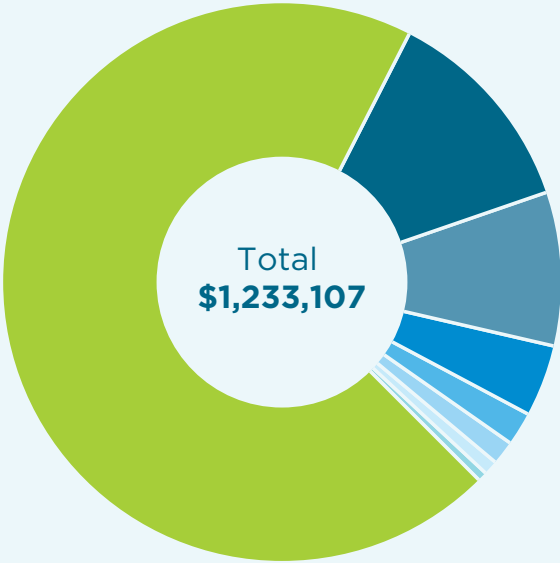
## Outreach by the Numbers

Attended **37 outreach events** throughout Southern Alberta in 2019.

Reached over **3,100 people** through our outreach initiatives in 2019.

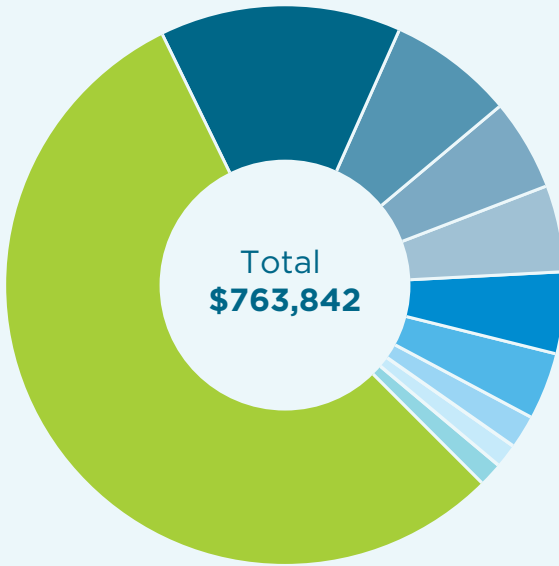
# 2019 FINANCIALS

## REVENUE



- \$864,400** Donations
- \$152,913** Grants
- \$109,317** In-Kind Travel & Donations
- \$50,694** Casino
- \$21,940** Special Events, Sales, Rebates
- \$17,570** Training & Education
- \$9,658** Amortization of deferred capital contributions
- \$6,615** Memberships

## EXPENSES



●	<b>\$423,143</b>	Salaries & Wages
●	<b>\$105,756</b>	In-Kind Travel
●	<b>\$54,683</b>	Facility Expenses
●	<b>\$40,922</b>	Office & General Supplies
●	<b>\$37,715</b>	Supplies
●	<b>\$36,938</b>	Amortization
●	<b>\$29,257</b>	Professional Fees
●	<b>\$14,300</b>	Travel
●	<b>\$12,591</b>	Fundraising
●	<b>\$8,537</b>	Medical Services

\* Facility expenses is comprised of: interest on long-term debt, utilities, repair and maintenance, and insurance.

\* Office & General Supplies is comprised of: office, interest and bank charges, training, telephone, in-kind gifts, and business taxes, licenses, and memberships.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- ▶ **77<sup>th</sup> Calgary Guides**
- ▶ **A.E. Bowers Elementary School – Mrs. McMurray’s Grade 3 Class**
- ▶ **Airdrie Liquor Store**
- ▶ **Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada**
- ▶ **Annapolis Capital Limited**
- ▶ **Apex Predator Brewing**
- ▶ **Archiasmo Architectural Works Ltd.**
- ▶ **Arctec Alloys Limited**
- ▶ **ATCO Employees Participating in Communities Campaign**
- ▶ **B. Stefanich Foundation**
- ▶ **Back to Nature Photography**
- ▶ **Barr Engineering & Environmental Science Canada Ltd.**
- ▶ **C.H. Andrews Farms Ltd.**
- ▶ **Canadian Natural Resources Limited**
- ▶ **Canadian Tire – Strathmore**
- ▶ **Cochrane Foundation**
- ▶ **Community Natural Foods**
- ▶ **Crossfield Elementary School**
- ▶ **Donmar Foundation**
- ▶ **DT Kayra Fund at the Calgary Foundation**
- ▶ **Grant MacEwan Charitable Foundation**
- ▶ **Harry & Martha Cohen Foundation**
- ▶ **Imperial Oil Resources**
- ▶ **Inter Pipeline Ltd.**



- ▶ **Jackie and George Palmer Fund at the Calgary Foundation**
- ▶ **Lakeland College Environment Club**
- ▶ **MacEwan Family Charity Fund at Calgary Foundation**
- ▶ **Madden Lions Club**
- ▶ **Mark Congram and Lori Anne Woloschuk through Gift Funds Canada**
- ▶ **Morris B. Warren Professional Corporation**
- ▶ **Nickle Family Foundation**
- ▶ **Parkland Scout Group**
- ▶ **Paul Dunphy Productions Inc.**
- ▶ **Plains Midstream**
- ▶ **Red Deer & District Community Foundation**
- ▶ **Renew Oral and Facial Surgical Centre**
- ▶ **Richard Buckley Professional Corporation**
- ▶ **Rocky View County**
- ▶ **Safeway Lake Bonavista**
- ▶ **Sherling Animal Welfare Fund at Calgary Foundation**
- ▶ **Silver Jet Dog Inc.**
- ▶ **Stantec**
- ▶ **The Byler Foundation**
- ▶ **The Greygates Foundation**
- ▶ **The Hindle Family Foundation**
- ▶ **The Maja Foundation**
- ▶ **Time Travellers Car Club of Airdrie**
- ▶ **Totem Charitable Foundation**
- ▶ **United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program**
- ▶ **United Way of Central Alberta, Donor Choice Program**
- ▶ **Unleashed**
- ▶ **Vintage West Wine Marketing**
- ▶ **West Coast Canning Inc.**
- ▶ **Words' Nest**

# THANKS TO YOU!

AIWC relies on the generosity of our community in order to support our operations and give wildlife in need the second chance they deserve.

On behalf of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation, and Alberta's wildlife, we wish to express our thanks and gratitude to all who have contributed to our important cause in many different ways, and we encourage all Albertans to share in our deep appreciation of our wild neighbours.

Best regards,

**The Board of Directors**





ALBERTA INSTITUTE  
**FOR** WILDLIFE  
CONSERVATION