

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



ALBERTA INSTITUTE
FOR WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION

2021 HIGHLIGHTS



1,761

PATIENTS ADMITTED

153

**DIFFERENT SPECIES
ADMITTED**

41%

SUCCESS RATE

125

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
DELIVERED**

9,202

**VOLUNTEER HOURS LOGGED
BY OVER 130 VOLUNTEERS**

6,804

**CALLS ANSWERED THROUGH
OUR WILDLIFE HOTLINE**

AIWC is located on and services all human and wild residents of Treaty 7 territory. As treaty people, we believe we have a responsibility to care for the lands we inhabit, along with all creatures living on the land with us.



EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

AT AIWC, 2021 WAS DUBBED THE “YEAR OF THE MAMMAL”. MOST OF OUR PATIENTS ARE BIRDS (ABOUT 80%), BUT 2021 BROUGHT US OVER 350 MEMORABLE MAMMAL PATIENTS.

An abundance of mammal patients can be especially rewarding to care for, with many memorable patients such as black bear cubs, moose, several species of bat, and even a badger cub. However, in many cases, mammals are more labour-intensive to care for – especially as babies. They can require round-the-clock care from staff (unlike baby birds who only require regular feedings during daylight hours), and their care protocols, diet, enrichment, and enclosure requirements are often unique to their species and key to their survival. Significant resources are therefore required; mammals are often long-term patients, remaining in care for several months until they are old enough to survive on their own. Of course, it is worth every penny to return our patients to the wild, and we thank you so much for the support you give that makes it happen.

Overall, 2021 was AIWC’s second-busiest year ever in terms of patient intake. (2020 was our busiest.) A total of 1,761 patients were admitted across 153 different species, and we saw a 41% success rate overall, and a 76% success rate for patients who were in care longer than 24 hours. Year over year we are seeing the results of our Wildlife Hotline program working to prevent healthy animals coming into our care and nearly 300 animals were left alone in the wild where they belong,



instead of being “rescued,” after our team triaged calls and were able to provide education on natural behaviours of wildlife.

Our education programs experienced phenomenal growth in 2021, and it was our busiest year in recent memory. The education team delivered 125 programs and was even able to attend 5 in-person outdoor community events. Most of our in-person programs were moved virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic but slowly in-person programming is being introduced as it is safe to do so. The team also expanded our program library and instituted regular online talks, reaching wildlife enthusiasts all across the country.

Our partnership with the University of Guelph brought us a new full-time veterinary intern for the year (the internship runs July-June annually), and we were able to fully digitize our x-ray machine through the support of three donors. AIWC continued to regularly assess protocols for operating during a pandemic and continues to have great feedback from our staff, volunteers, and community of how we have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. With safety measures in place, 140 volunteers still logged over 9,000 hours of donated time in 2021!

In 2021, AIWC began taking a closer look at our facility requirements in preparation for some more long-term planning to begin in 2022. Three new enclosures were added, as well as much-needed repairs to key existing structures.

Despite seeing a drop in donations in early 2021, AIWC did an amazing job of ultimately achieving a surplus of funds for the year. Contributing to this were a number of sizeable grants and donations, as well as targeted online fundraisers such as our 50-50 raffles. We also raised over \$120,000 through our Give the Gift of Saving Wildlife campaign at the end of 2021 – a new record!

Thank you for all you do to support AIWC. We pride ourselves on providing an excellent standard of care to our patients and it’s due to your generosity that we can do this.

HOLLY LILLIE

Executive Director

JENNIFER KAISER

Chair, Board of Directors

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Overall, 2021 was AIWC’s second-busiest year ever in terms of patient intake.”

WILDLIFE HOTLINE

6,804

CALLS ANSWERED THROUGH
OUR WILDLIFE HOTLINE

The highest number of calls we addressed in one day was 60 calls on Thursday, June 4.

Organized over 1,103 pickups/rescues. Often with multiple animals at each pickup. This is a 36% decrease compared to 2020.

Our busiest month was June with 1,383 calls to our wildlife hotline. This was 120 more calls than we received in 2020.

Over 68% of our calls are received during our 'Summer' season (May to September). 4,636 total calls.

392 healthy animals protected from unnecessary intervention in 2021. Up from 292 in 2020.



AS WE REFLECT ON 2021, WE ARE NOT ONLY ABLE TO IDENTIFY CERTAIN SIMILARITIES TO PREVIOUS YEARS ON AIWC'S WILDLIFE HOTLINE, BUT ALSO INTERESTING CONTRASTS TO PRECEDING RECORDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

2021 marked our fourth year of tracking Hotline metrics, which means we now have year-over-year results to identify our growth, community demands, and personnel management techniques. From these insights, AIWC will continue to modify our practices and procedures to ensure that the Hotline, and accompanying Rescue Program, continues to meet the needs of our community and the animals who depend on us for support and assistance.

2021 saw an increase in calls received to the Hotline by 2%. Although this is not a substantial figure, it does equate to approximately 200 additional calls, and it does show that the demand for our services is consistent and still growing.

In contrast, a surprising development from 2021 was a reduction in the number of pickups and rescues we completed by our Rescue Program. Typically, an increase in calls is met with an accompanying increase in rescue requests. However, in 2021 we completed 24% less pickups and rescues, which amounts to approximately 265 fewer animal collections. This could be due to our education efforts in the community prevent animals from needlessly being admitted (e.g., kidnapped), but also the eagerness of the public to assist in transport. There was a substantial increase in the sheer amount of 'Caller Drop-Off's" to our centre in 2021; we received a total of 116 patients, that were driven out to our centre by community members, which is a 114% increase compared to 2020.

In addition, we also achieved some notable milestones amongst our Hotline staff. We are blessed to have many dedicated Hotline personnel who assist in the day-to-day operations. This includes full-time staff, seasonal staff, and of course our passionate and devoted hotline volunteers. We are also exceedingly proud of the fact that many of our Hotline staff and volunteers have been with the organization for an extended period of time. Currently we have a team of 32 trained hotline volunteers, 50% of which have been with the organization for more than two years. In 2021, our Hotline volunteers answered over 677 calls regarding injured and orphaned wildlife. Most of these calls were received outside of AIWC's regular operating hours. Without the commitment of our Hotline volunteers, and their willingness to offer their personal time in the early mornings and late evenings, we would not be able to provide advice for these callers. With the help of our volunteer team, we can ensure that those animals still get the help they need as quickly as possible.



“

2021 saw one of our best performances in volunteer rescue coverage: we had sufficient volunteer driving coverage 92% of the time.”

In 2021 we were successful in receiving funds through Canada Summer Jobs and were able to hire four 8-week positions to aid in our Hotline management and rescue coordination as service dispatchers. 2021 revealed just as much as previous years that these roles are crucial to our accessibility and rescue response time during the busy summer months. Our 2021 dispatchers completed 2,484 calls from May to August.

On a final note, because we do believe in the importance of celebrating achievements, 2021 also marked the fourth year where we have had a designated Office Administrator to manage the Hotline. They alone have answered over 10,700 calls since starting in 2017!

Wildlife Rescue Program

This utter dedication to our cause also extends to our rescue volunteers. This is shown in the distance some of the representatives of AIWC will go to help an animal in need. In 2021 we received patients from as far north as Vegreville and south to Milk River. For special cases where shared driving is not possible, or time is essential, we depend on staff or volunteers to make the trip alone. One of our longest rescues completed by a volunteer driver in 2021 was the rescue of five flying squirrel pups from Edmonton, AB. They were only a few weeks old and deemed to be orphaned, so our driver made the six-hour round trip to help bring them into our care.

Another considerable rescue involved two staff members who made a trip down to Willow Creek just outside of Nanton, AB, to assist an orphaned moose calf. He was only a few days old and rescue was essential. He successfully made the trip, all the while receiving care from our veterinarian.

We also participated in a momentous rescue with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), where an adult bald eagle was rescued by boat, from a river island just next to the Three Sisters Campground, between Canmore and Banff. This rescue was a joint effort between rescue volunteers and conservation officers. We are grateful for the assistance and expertise of AEP in assisting with this rescue and were overjoyed to see the eagle make a full recovery and be returned to the same area several months later.

2021 also saw one of our best performances in volunteer rescue coverage: we had sufficient volunteer driving coverage 92% of the time! This is a huge victory, and has an exponential impact on our response time and subsequent patient care. We have not only retained a substantial portion of our rescue volunteers from year to year, but we are more likely to be able to guarantee assistance for an injured animal as quickly as possible.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION



AIWC 2021 Admissions By Species

20%
MAMMALS



80%
AVIAN

2021 STARTED WITH A BOHEMIAN WAXWING AS OUR FIRST PATIENT AND ENDED WITH A MALLARD ON DECEMBER 30 AS OUR LAST ADMISSION FOR THE YEAR.

In 2021, AIWC admitted 1,761 animals and the patient breakdown for those admitted was 80% avian species and 20% mammal species. AIWC had an overall success rate of 41% and a 76% success rate for patients remaining in care after the first 24 hours.

The hospital saw 116 different species of birds and 31 species of mammals, including moose calves, red fox kits, and an American badger, all of which were released back into the wild along with 566 other animals. The most common species admitted at AIWC this year were black-billed magpies, American robins, mallards, and white-tailed jackrabbits. The majority of injured wildlife are admitted due to human wildlife conflict and the three biggest causes of injuries are window strikes, car collisions, and being caught by domestic cats.

A highlight for AIWC this summer was the successful raising and releasing an American badger cub and two American avocet chicks. The American badger was admitted on May 31 at eight weeks old after he was found next to his diseased sibling along a rural road, with no mother in sight. The lone cub was admitted to check for injuries while the finders continued to look for signs of a mother badger in the area. Although we are able to provide exceptional care for orphaned wildlife, every measure is taken to try and return wild babies back to their mothers if possible because it is always in the animal's best interest to be raised in the wild with their mothers. Sadly, in this case there were no signs of mum and the cub was severely dehydrated and very hungry on intake, all of which indicate that he had been truly orphaned.



While the cub was in our care, he only had two primary caregivers for the duration of his stay who provided him with the specialized care that he needed. His interaction with a limited number of staff was vital to his success in the wild, ensuring he did not become habituated to humans.

When the time came for release, a den was constructed for him by the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area team in a suitable area within the conservation site. AIWC always tries to release patients back to the area where they were found as long as it is safe to do so, but unfortunately in this case it was not. He was successfully released very early in the morning into the den that was constructed for him, but quickly disappeared out of site. The Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area continues to monitor him post release and we are happy to report that although they have not able to get any trail camera footage of him, there have seen many signs of his presence around the area.

The first American avocet chick was admitted on June 15, weighing in at only 17 grams and a few days old, with the second chick being transferred from another rehabilitation center two days after. It is always better to raise orphaned shorebirds with others of the same species if possible because it greatly increases their chance of survival in rehabilitation and post release.

The chicks instantly bonded with each other when introduced and both thrived in care. They were conditioned for release in our new shorebird enclosure that was specifically built for these animals. This new enclosure has substrate specific for their delicate feet to prevent pressure sores and allowed them to have multiple wading pools for them to forage out of and bath in. The rehabilitation team are always working towards creating enclosures that mimic a patient's natural environment as much as possible, to ensure they are comfortable in care and are displaying normal behaviours that are essential to their survival in the wild. After 30 days in care, they were released together into an area with a large established group of American avocets and it was an amazing to see the chicks immediately join up with the adult avocets.

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The rehabilitation team are always working towards creating enclosures that mimic a patient's natural environment as much as possible.”



VETERINARY PROGRAM

NORTHERN FLICKER 21-968:

One of the feistiest patients in care this year was this adult northern flicker. He arrived with signs of head trauma which resulted in a large necrotic flap of skin exposing a rather sizable portion of his skull, with minimal to no neurological abnormalities. He was started on strong antibiotics to prevent infection from developing in the exposed bone along with pain meds. As there was insufficient skin remaining at the site to close the defect with sutures the wound was treated with multiple bandages changes several times weekly while a scar gradually formed, known as second intention healing.

Despite the alarming physical appearance of his injury, this flicker never slowed down at all and was one of the most energetic patients in the hospital. Keeping a bandage on that location in a patient who is always on the move isn't easy and several designs were tested before we found one that worked. After many weeks, the wound finished healing and his feathers regrew in time for his fall release.

INTAKE DATE:	JULY 10, 2021
RELEASE DATE:	OCTOBER 26, 2021



STRIPED SKUNK 21-1494:

This very tiny kit was a late season arrival in September 2021. On arrival he was emaciated, moderately dehydrated with a large number of internal and external parasites including fleas and mild mange. He was also suffering from diarrhea, with an upper respiratory infection with crusting ocular and nasal discharge and large infected ulcerations on his feet with thickened, inflamed skin, and warped nail growth on his paw pads.

His presenting symptoms were concerning for the early stages of canine distemper virus (CDV), an infectious disease of dogs and many wild carnivores, which is almost always a fatal infection in skunks. However, there were other health issues present in him that would cause similar symptoms, so we decided to admit him in quarantine, treat his known health issues, and watch for the development of other classic signs that would make CDV more likely. As he was too small to obtain adequate blood samples to definitively diagnose the virus at the time, he was treated with a guarded prognosis.

Thankfully he remained bright and active, was very interested in his food and started to gain weight. He did not show symptoms of the later stages of infection such as fever, neurological abnormalities, and pneumonia, but was showing signs of improvement. After two weeks of continued improvement with supportive care it was clear he was not suffering from CDV.

However, he still required treatment for his many other ailments. He received treatments with multiple antiparasitic medications to clear his heavy and diverse parasite load, and the footpad ulcerations were badly infected and required a long regimen of antibiotics, pain medications, and frequent bandage changes to restore his feet. An e-collar was placed on him (which he tolerated better than expected) to prevent self-damage to the bandaging, and he was fed a balanced and healthy diet to restore his fur and bring him up to a healthy weight for release. After 64 days in care, he was healthy and ready for release back into the wild, just in time for him to den up for the coming winter months.

INTAKE DATE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2021
RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 2021



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

9,202

TOTAL VOLUNTEER
HOURS DONATED

190,739

TOTAL KILOMETERS
DRIVEN BY VOLUNTEERS

4,300 hours donated by clinic volunteers

2,855 hours donated by rescue volunteers

913 hours donated by hotline volunteers

260 hours donated by board of directors

451 hours donated by facilities construction
and maintenance volunteers

210 hours donated by fundraising, public
awareness, and office support volunteers

276 hours donated by newsletter, blog, and
social media volunteers



VOLUNTEERING IN 2021 KICKED BACK INTO HIGH GEAR, AND WE COULDN'T BE MORE GRATEFUL! NOT ONLY DID WE HAVE AN INCREASE IN TOTAL ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS TO 133 (UP FROM 117 IN 2020), BUT WE SAW MASSIVE INCREASES IN THE HOURS VOLUNTEERS WERE CONTRIBUTING TO AIWC AS WELL.

In particular, we saw an incredible 59% increase in the number of hours volunteered by our wildlife rehabilitation clinic volunteers, and a 60% increase in facilities construction/maintenance volunteering. We are so thankful to all of our volunteers for their incredible contributions – it's thanks to dedicated people like you that we continue to be able to operate, and provide the best possible care to Alberta's injured and orphaned wildlife.

Wildlife Education Programs

We had an amazing year with education programs, delivering over 125 presentations to groups both locally, across Alberta, and even as far away as Florida in the USA! Most of these programs (97) continued to be delivered virtually, but we were able to safely present 27 programs in person as well.

While virtual presentations can be more challenging, they also present an incredible opportunity to reach audiences we normally wouldn't be able to. One of the largest events we participated in was the digital Mayor's Environment Expo, where we spoke to more than 1,500 students in 3 days! All told, we were able to connect with over 5,000 people in 2021 thanks to the extended reach from our virtual presentations. We are now beginning the transition back to more in-person programs, but will also continue to offer virtual options and reach new, farther-flung audiences!

We also continued building out educational content throughout 2021 on AIWC's YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/c/AlbertaInstituteForWildlifeConservation>). There are now seven educational videos available for free viewing, including a guided virtual tour of the facility that was produced in collaboration with Jamie from Rundle Films! These videos have been viewed over 15,000 times, broadening AIWC's reach to another new audience group.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- 2217017 Alberta Inc
- A. Bromley Photography
- A. Katherine Checkland
- A.E. Bowers Elementary School - Mrs. McMurray's Grade 3 Class
- Airdrie Autobody
- Airdrie Liquor Store
- AJM Environmental Inc.
- Alberta Apparel
- Annapolis Capital Limited
- Apple Creek Golf Course
- Archiasmo Architectural Works
- Arctec Alloys Limited
- ATCO Electric
- Aura Day Spa & Wellness Centre
- Backyard Birds Nature Shop
- Banff Lodging Company
- BBQVille
- Benefaction Foundation
- BJV Feed Management
- Blue Grass Ltd. Nursery, Sod & Garden Centre
- C.H. Andrews Farms Ltd
- Calgary Avian & Exotic Pet Clinic
- Canadian Natural Resources
- Canadian Western Bank
- Coaching with Lucinda
- Cochrane Foundation
- Cochrane Veterinary Care Clinic Ltd
- Donmar Foundation
- DT Kayra Fund at Calgary Foundation
- Eau Claire Distillery
- Elements Outfitters
- Empire Details
- Fairplay Pet Stores
- Fraserway RV
- G&E Pharmacy
- Giftfunds Canada
- Gillis Family Charitable Fund
- Grant MacEwan Charitable Foundation

- Greengate Garden Centres Ltd
- Greygates Foundation
- Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation
- High Prairie School Division
- Homegrown House & Pantry
- Imperial Oil Resources
- Inter Pipeline Ltd
- J.E. Hodgson Family Fund at Calgary Foundation
- Jackie and George Palmer Fund at Calgary Foundation
- Jennifer Ayles
- Jewelnotes Glassworks
- JK Group/Tech Resources Ltd
- Journey Engineering Corporation
- Kids U Inc
- Kitchenaid
- Latrevi
- Lawrence West Family Fund
- Little Larch
- LMR Speciality Ltd
- Lowe's Home Improvement
- MacEwan Family Charity Fund at Calgary Foundation
- Macrame by Amanda
- Marilyn & Mark Brown Family Fund at Calgary Foundation
- Millennium EMS Solutions Ltd
- Nickle Family Foundation
- Nickle School
- Owl's Nest Books
- Pascal Pascal's Patisserie
- Patagonia Calgary
- Paul Dunphy Productions Inc.
- Paul's Pizza Shawnessy
- Pike Studios
- Play Unleashed
- Red Deer & District Community Foundation
- Richard Buckley Prof. Corp.
- River Path Veterinary Clinic
- Rocky Mountain Laser
- Rocky View County
- Screaming Toller Brewing Co
- Smilin' Buddha Tattoo
- Stantec Consulting Ltd
- Steeling Home
- Suzanne Farman
- Sweet Joan Co
- Tail Blazers
- Terry & Linda Gomke Family Fund at Calgary Foundation
- The Buckley Family Foundation
- The Byler Foundation
- The Calgary Foundation
- The Canada United Team
- The Grinning Goat
- The Hindle Family Foundation
- The Maja Foundation at Calgary Foundation
- The Next Page
- The Scotlyn Foundation
- The Summerlee Foundation
- The United Church of Canada Foundation
- The Vegan Popcorn Company
- The Wild Bird Store
- The Yoga Junction
- Totem Charitable Foundation
- Treats by Carla
- True Buch Kombucha
- United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program
- United Way of Greater Toronto, Donor Choice Program
- Western Canadian Spill Services Ltd
- Yamnuska Wolfdog Sanctuary
- YYC Cycle

2021 FINANCIALS

Revenue



TOTAL
\$1,068,894

- \$494,879** Donations
- \$265,019** Grants
- \$120,339** In-kind travel & donations
- \$85,743** Special events, sales, rebates
- \$38,323** Casino
- \$30,258** Government subsidies
- \$14,919** Amortization of deferred capital contributions
- \$11,704** Training & education
- \$7,710** Memberships

Expenses



\$485,366	Salaries & wages	\$37,307	Amortization
\$113,771	In-kind travel	\$31,996	Professional fees
\$67,812	Supplies	\$10,701	Medical Services
\$59,750	Facility expenses	\$7,108	Travel
\$54,620	Office & general supplies	\$6,568	In-kind gifts
\$52,481	Fundraising		

* 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, and business taxes, licenses, and memberships.

THANK YOU



On behalf of the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation, and Alberta's wildlife in need, the Board of Directors would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for everyone who has supported, shared, and donated to our important cause: preserving the legacy of wildlife.

Your support and generosity are critical to our operations and to our ability to provide Alberta's wildlife with the expert care they deserve. We could not do it without you and we hope we can rely on your continued support in 2022.



