

Northwoods Wildlife Rescue, Inc.



Julie Dickie
28 Feb. 2019
HC COLA Meeting

Mission

- To rescue, habilitate or rehabilitate and then successfully release the critter back into the wild where it belongs.
- 501c3 non profit
- All volunteers
- No government financial assistance.
- Covers Hubbard, Becker, Wadena and Cass Counties.
- Statewide if needed.



Critters of the Northwoods:

- Aquatic
- Avian
- Mammals
- Reptiles



Story of the wood ducks:

- The DNR received a phone call about a wood duck that was killed by a domestic cat.
- The Conservation officer responded and found the adult mother dead and little baby wood ducks running around the legion parking lot.
- The CO was able to capture the little duckies (which likely would have been fun to watch!)
- On initial exam all but two of the little duckies appeared healthy. The duckies appeared to be one to two days old.
- So..the “rehab” began.

All birds are not the same!

- Some are altricial (born or hatched eyes closed, naked (without feathers) or mobility).
- And some, like these little ones are precocial. They are born wide eyed and mobile almost immediately upon birth or hatching.
- This gets a little more complicated with some species that are a little of each.

More on this a little later.



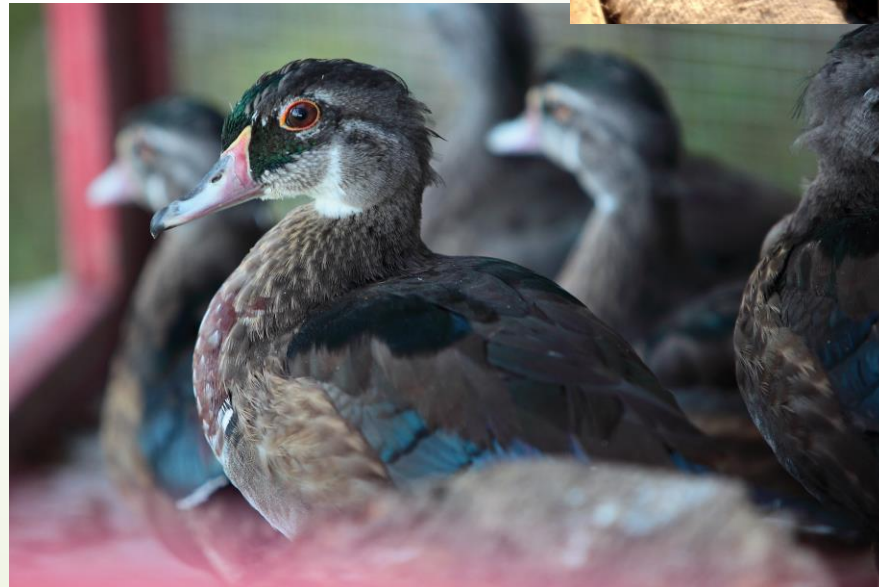
Hardest part of rehabbing.

- Following our mission; our goal is to release the wildlife back into the wild with as little human bonding as possible.
- That means as adorable as they are cuddling, hugging, sharing, comforting, talking to them all that stuff is a no go.
- Some bonding is inevitable. The less they become used to things like music, predators, and of course our voices the better the chance they will have at survival upon release.
- If the animal is habituated to people or natural predator the result of is generally death.



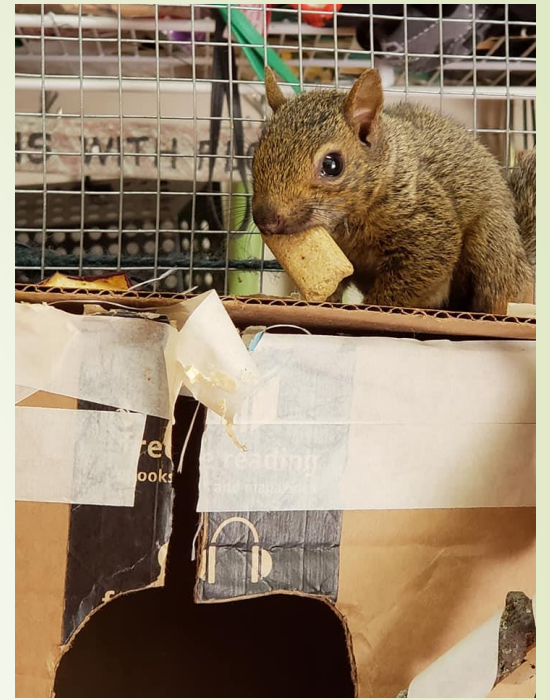
Discussion about these little wood duckies:

- The initial call
 - When should the DNR or a rehabber be called?
- What do you do while you wait?
- What if no one is available?
 - Options/ not an option
- Care
- Release
 - When
 - Where



Feeding and housing:

- Escape artists!
- Cages and retention methods (the S's of cages)
 - Size matters
 - Safety matters
 - Sanitation matters
- Feeding (what, how and how much).
 - To little / to much?
 - To often / not often enough?
- Piggies not duckies???



Freedom for the Duckies



So, you live on or near water...

- What wildlife are you likely to see?
 - Birds
 - Bears
 - Foxes
 - Raccoons
 - Fish
 - Minks
 - Deer
 - Coyotes
 - Wolves
 - Bobcats
 - Cougars
 - And of course squirrels and chipmonks.
 - The list goes on and on.



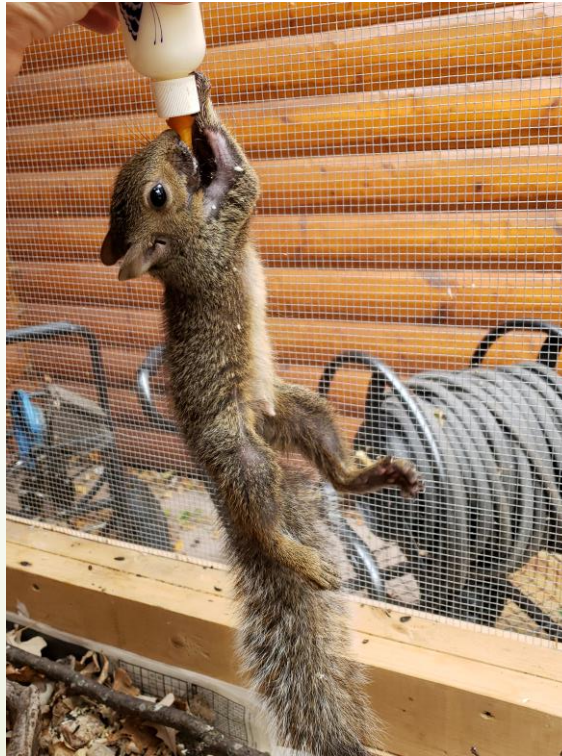
Back to those birdies:

- Remember those terms?
- Altricial: naked or slight feathers, eyes closed, completely dependent
 - Examples: songbirds, hummingbirds, swallows, woodpeckers
- Precocial: covered with “baby” feathers, eyes open, mobile.
 - Examples: ducks, geese, swans, quail, shorebirds



Everybody has needs, babies and injured animals:

- Need warmth
- Need hydration
- Need nutrition



Nestlings/ Fledglings

- “Should I put it back in the nest?”
 - First lets decide if it's a nestling or a fledgling.
 - Nestlings are unable to move enough to survive outside of the nest
 - Fledglings, while they can't yet fly, are building their skills and strength outside of the nest.
 - Where is the nest?
 - Where are the parents?
 - What predators are around?



Deer



- Nature is amazing. Instinctive knowledge
 - Back to the ducks for a moment- how did they know to migrate? How did they know to come back. (Internal GPS???)
- With deer, when “mom” senses danger she runs AWAY from her fawn(s). The fawns instinctively know to curl into a “ball” and remain completely still. At this point in their development they have no odor so if they remain still the predator chases mom (the doe) and the fawn(s) are safe. The fawns don’t move until mom returns. If she is alive, She WILL return! She comes back when she feels the threat is gone. If you are around---a threat is still there-YOU.



When to intervene:

- ▶ If you KNOW Mom has been killed (Car Crash, etc.) The fawn may need to be rescued.
- ▶ If you are unsure, it most likely does not need to be rescued.
 - ▶ How to figure it out?
 - ▶ Remove anything you introduced.
 - ▶ Observe/monitor from quite a distance.
 - ▶ How old is the fawn?
 - ▶ Does it still have spots?

Other animals in need of rescue

- For most wild animals you need to first remember THEY CAN HURT YOU.
- Animals have a strong drive to survive and if you are a perceived threat to that survival they will try to flee or fight.
- If you can approach a normally wild animal and they do not flee something is wrong.
- Lets talk about a beautiful Bobcat.



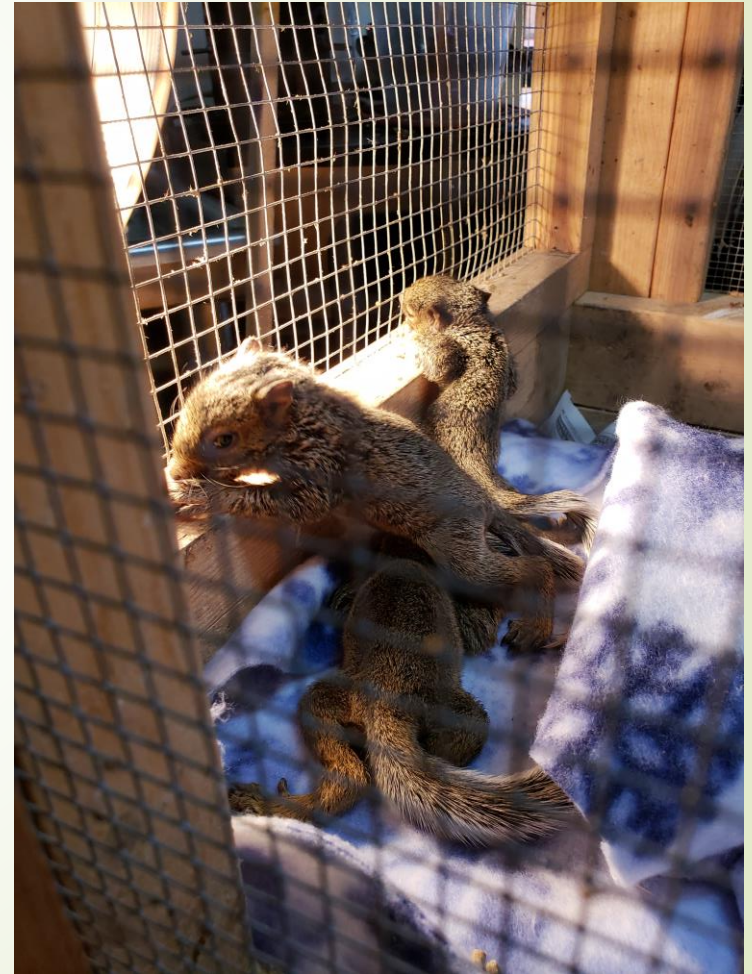


What went wrong?

- How it came to our attention.
- Why, because it was raised as a pet.
- Now the only options for this animal is zoo, educational facility, or euthanasia.
- Socialization with other captive bobcats is not likely.
- How could this have been prevented?

Those often raised as “pets”:

- Fawns
- Raccoons
- Squirrels/Chipmunks
- Foxes
- Coyotes
- And yes, skunks.
- Others (like bears) scary right?



Raccoons:

- Cute, really- really cute babies.
- Very intelligent
- Carry many diseases.
 - Baylisascaris procyonis
 - Feces (soil) remains contaminated for up to TEN YEARS.
 - Rabies
 - No cure
 - Distemper
- Can people get these diseases
 - Absolutely



Foxes

- Rabies
- Distemper
 - Current outbreak
 - Make sure your pets are vaccinated.
- VERY protective of their “kits” or pups.



Back to YOU-



- Bird strikes on your windows.
 - What to do when it happens.
 - How to help prevent future strikes.
- The bird nest is knocked out of a tree or birds out of nest.
- Your dog has injured a bird or other small animal.
- You know of someone who is raising a wild animal.
- What are some lake specific wildlife hazards.



Special Lake/water Hazards:

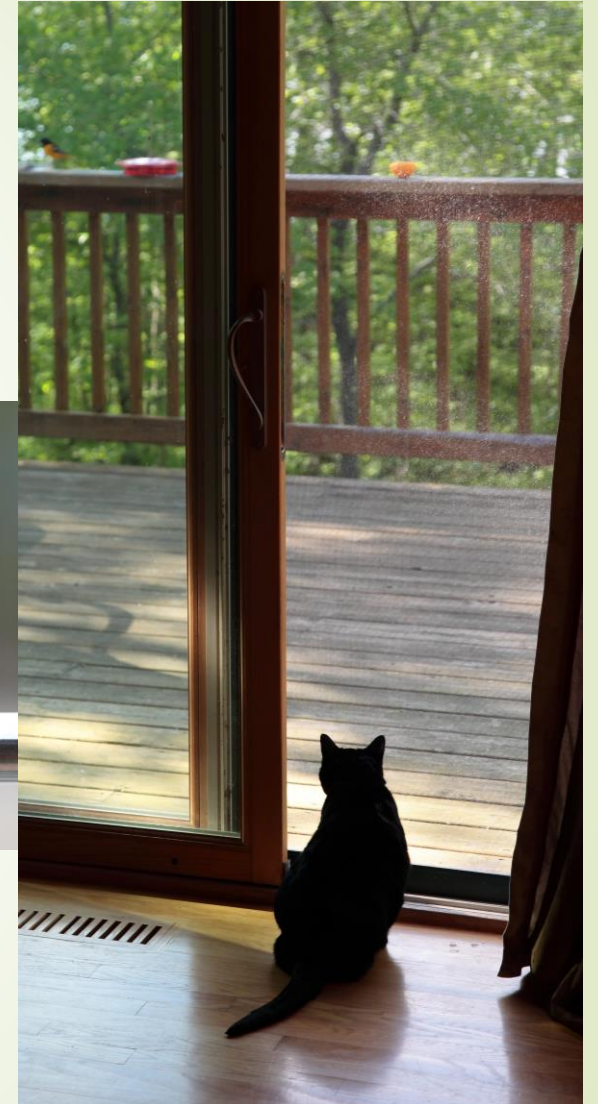
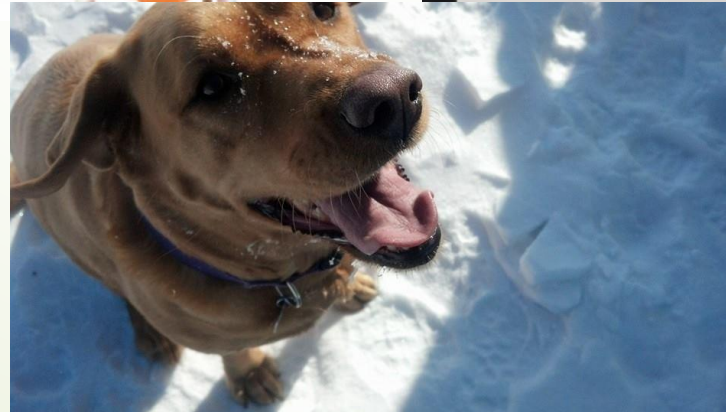


- Boats
- People co-existing
- Ice specifically "Thin Ice".
- Predators
- Invasive species
- Swimmers Itch
- Nuisance Complaints



Should I feed the wildlife?

- Having bird feeders lets us see many species of birds.
- Feeders can help birds (and other animals) get the nutrition they need.
- Nature provides it all, sometimes it's hard to find.
- Placement and sanitation of the feeders is very important.
- Do you have domestic pets?
- Be aware of predators.
- Bird feeders may just attract more than avian friends.





Feeding Wildlife continued:

- Feeding deer and other wildlife is a highly discussed topic.
- There are several thoughts both pro and con.
- CWD- a confirmed case has been found just north of Brainerd.
- Rabies and other diseases should be considered.
- Timing and what to feed them?





Bird Feeders consider:

- Size, type and placement of the feeders.
- Learn about the types of food and the nutritional needs of specific bird species.
- Supplement the feeders with bird houses for the types of birds you are attracting. (Not all homes are equal)
- Water is as important as food. If you are feeding them make sure they have access to clean water.



Solving or preventing problems

- Bats
- Swimmers itch
 - Waterfowl
 - Water repellent
 - Rinse and dry
- 80-90% of bear nuisance calls involve bird feeders
- Moth balls and vinegar soaked rags to discourage over winter dens
- Bright lights
- Landscape design





What topics are important to YOU?

➤ Let's discuss them.



Thank you!



- ▶ Thank you for coming.
- ▶ Thank you for caring about our critters.
- ▶ Call with questions, concerns, or wildlife needs.
- ▶ Call if you are interested in volunteering.



Julie Dickie

Northwoods Wildlife Rescue, Inc.

218-616-2176

northwoodswildliferescue@gmail.com



Local Resources:

- ▶ Northwoods Wildlife Rescue, Inc. P.O. Box 22 Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-616-2176 northwoodswildliferescue@gmail.com
- ▶ DNR Wildlife Division 603 1st St. West Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-8452 parkrapids.wildlife@state.mn.us
- ▶ Wild & Free 27264 State Hwy 18 Garrison, MN
320-692-4180
- ▶ Headwaters Animal Shelter 901 Western Ave S. Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-237-7100