

Focus on Animals

THE FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS ANNUAL REPORT NEWSLETTER 🐾 2018 EDITION



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MONTANA WILD — BACK TO THE WILD Wildlife Rehabilitation Works

Bears, birds, and a young badger are just a few of the orphaned and injured species taken in at the Montana Wildlife Center during 2018. Of nearly 200 animals in all, the majority were birds.

Twelve Bald Eagles and 10 Golden Eagles were brought to the center. Some have already been released back to the big sky, while five are building up strength and stamina in the flight barn to prepare for release.

Ten Black Bear cubs were taken in and, of those, six will need to winter over at the center. Fortunately, the four Grizzly cubs were able to be placed in permanent homes and all are thriving. One cub is at NW Trek in Washington; the other three are at Zoo Sauvage in San Felicien, Quebec Canada.



Photographer, Kris Fedro



Other species of orphaned young received in spring 2018 included bobcat kittens, coyote pups, red fox kits, a yellow-bellied marmot and a long-tailed weasel.

Montana's orphaned and injured wildlife have a brighter future because of the efforts of Lisa Rhodin, manager of the Montana Wildlife Center, her staff and her crew of volunteers that donate over 1000 hours monthly. Their dedication to effective rehabilitation is confirmed by the 24 Black Bear cubs from 2017 that were successfully released back to the wild in 2018.

All photos of wildlife are courtesy of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. For more photos and video of wildlife at the center, visit Montana WILD on Facebook. 🐾

SAVING DOGS, IMPROVING LIVES OF PEOPLE Carroll College Canine Program

Carroll College in Helena offers the nation's only undergraduate degree program in Anthrozoology (ANZ), the study of the human-animal bond. Course work blends core curriculum with extensive hands-on training with dogs, horses, and even wildlife. Internship and research opportunities are possible with partner organizations like Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Zoo Montana, Working Dogs for Conservation, and Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch.

In the canine training program, students learn to train dogs from regional shelters. The dogs live with, and attend classes with their student handlers. After working on basic skills, they focus on specialized tasks based on the student's interest and the dog's aptitude (scent-detection, search and rescue, PTSD), and they practice training techniques specific to those areas.



Photo courtesy of Working Dogs for Conservation
Photographer, St. Zimmerman

"Tobias" is a graduate of the ANZ canine training program. His first job was in Montana's Flathead Valley alerting authorities to invasive water species. A standout in scent detection, he is now with Working Dogs for Conservation (WD4C).

Canine Training, continued on page 3

MORE ABOUT MONTANA WILD

MULTI-PURPOSE GAZEBO IN 2019

Construction of a gazebo that will serve as sheltered space for outdoor classes and special events is underway. Ground has been broken, supports are up, and the roof is raised. The project should be completed by spring 2019. *FFA contributed grant funds in 2017.*



Photographer, Dianne Nickman

NEW OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Traveling WILD (TW) targets communities 50 miles or more from Montana WILD. During the school year, focus is on teaching about wildlife conservation at schools. In summer, it provides hands-on wildlife and fishing events and clinics. TW has delivered 195 programs in 59 cities and 35 counties. **Distance Learning Program (DLP)** taught about sage grouse and this year will also teach about grizzly bears. DLP reached an additional 583 students from 23 schools in 23 different cities.

Together, the programs reached 8,318 youth and adults in 2017 and, so far in 2018, have reached 7,455. For information, call Laurie Wolf, Education Program Manager at 444-9945.

AMBASSADOR ANIMAL IN TRAINING

A baby badger about 10 days old came to the center after her mother was shot. 'Uki' (meaning survivor in Inuit) was hand-raised, is accustomed to humans and responds well to clicker training, all of which makes her a candidate for ambassador animal. If she proves to be a good candidate, she will help support FWP's Conservation Education programs.

VOLUNTEERS ARE VIPs

Special recognition was given to volunteers at the Visitor and Education Center for outstanding contributions in helping to cover the front desk and deliver conservation education programs. Honorees were Lynne Dixon and Mary Ryan, 7 years; Bill Cook, 6 years; Marti Cook, 4.5 years; Sharon Liederman, 3.5 years.

More volunteers are needed. They are essential at Montana WILD and, in return, they find great satisfaction in the varied and interesting opportunities there.

If you like working with youth



Photographer, Dianne Nickman

Volunteer Erin holds "Monte," a Merlin which is a small species of falcon.

BIRDS & BEASLEYS

Generous Partners in Wildlife

When Birds & Beasleys celebrated 25 years in business October 13-14, the Helena birding/art/gift store had already been a long-time partner with Montana WILD. Store owners Jane Beasley and Sandy Shull generously dedicated a portion of sales that weekend to the Foundation. Their gift of over \$1,600 will help support projects at the wildlife rehabilitation center at Montana WILD. 🐾



Photographer, Dianne Nickman

Jane Beasley and Sandy Shull, mother/daughter owners of Birds & Beasleys, partner with Montana WILD's wildlife rehabilitation center by providing store space for ambassador birds and their volunteer handlers to help educate the public.

and have a passion for fish and/or wildlife, you could help out by assisting or leading programs at the Education Center. If you're an early bird, like to work weekends and would enjoy feeding animals, cleaning cages, preparing feed for bear cubs or raptors – or handling ambassador birds - the wildlife center might be the place for you.



Photographer, Kris Ivano

"Luna," a Great Horned Owl, with volunteer Diana Longdon.

Certain seasons, especially summer, are busiest but you can be put on a call list for any time of the year. Potential volunteers need to fill out paperwork and be available for training. **For information on volunteering at the visitor and education center, call Laurie at 444-9945. For the wildlife center, call Lisa at 444-9942.** 🐾



Photographer, Kris Ivano

Laura Heit, a volunteer at the Montana Wildlife Center, takes 'Zero,' a Swainson's Hawk, out for exercise. Each ambassador bird is walked 20-30 minutes twice daily for enrichment and training purposes.

SPAY/NEUTER AND EMERGENCY FUNDS PROGRAMS

HELPING PETS AND PEOPLE

Spay/Neuter. Since the program's inception in 1992, FFA has dedicated \$126,163 toward efforts to curb overpopulation of pets. Since our last newsletter, FFA has contributed \$3,418 through spay/neuter vouchers and support of a low-cost public clinic in Helena.

Emergency Funds. This program is designed to help low-income pet owners meet critical emergency veterinary expenses. Since our last newsletter, FFA has provided \$2,530 in emergency assistance. Since 1992, FFA has dedicated \$85,979 to this program. 🐾



Photographer: Dianne Nickman



Clockwise, starting above left:

"Duncan" needed treatment for a back problem at the same time a family member was facing health problems.

"Miss Molly Brown" was in serious trouble after wasp stings triggered dangerous swelling. As a companion dog, she helps her owner cope with PTSD.

"Yogi" came down with a respiratory infection that put his owner's health at risk.

After treatment by Dr. Newman at the Animal Center, Yogi is fine.

Canine Training, continued from page 1

At year's end, all dogs are tested for "Canine Good Citizen" certification from the American Kennel Club. About 90 percent are adopted by carefully vetted "forever families," or are placed in 'working' homes to be of service, or become companion animals. About 10 percent go on to work in specialized fields for which they were trained. Student career goals include counseling or medicine where service dogs can help people of all ages with physical or mental challenges; veterinary school; and working with scent-trained dogs.

FFA grants to the canine training program include funding for training equipment and sponsorship of the cost of training a dog for the 2018-2019 school year. 🐾



Photographer (both photos), Dianne Nickman



Above: Student Hannah Decker is training 'Dax' to detect ancient bones.

Students and dogs in the canine-training program relax after a work session. Left to right: Carleigh with "Murphy" (search and rescue); Hannah who is training a scent-detection dog and will coordinate adoptions in April 2019; Jo with 'Jasper' (drug-detection); and Amanda, teaching assistant.

FFA SMALL GRANTS

360 Video

A grant of \$4,200 was awarded to Montana WILD toward development of an educational '360-degree' video, an interactive exhibit and application that will let visitors use a 52" TV to 'tour' parts of Montana WILD. Educational programming will supplement the virtual tour which includes some areas not open to the public, such as the wildlife rehabilitation area.

Spay/Neuter

FFA contributed \$3,150 to SPAY Montana's clinic in Helena in fall 2018. FFA co-sponsored the clinic with the Lewis & Clark Humane Society. The free clinic was offered to the neediest pet owners whose pets could not otherwise be spayed or neutered. At the 2-day clinic, 155 dogs and cats were altered.

Carroll College canine training program

Received \$695 toward the purchase of training equipment and \$2,500 for sponsorship of a canine-in-training for the 2018-2019 school year (see "Canine Training" article on page 1).

Abandoned ducks and geese

A grant of \$1200 was dedicated to the purchase of supplemental feed grain for the ducks and geese at Lewis & Clark fairgrounds pond during the winter months.

Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

A grant of \$600 was awarded for purchase of a safe-capture cannon net and a portable nebulizer for field rescue operations. 🐾

Visit our website:
www.foundationforanimals.org



Focus on Animals

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and volunteers at the
Montana Wildlife Center.



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ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM

PUBLIC LANDS ARE IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

The objective of the annual Adopt-A-Species art and essay contest for the 2017-2018 school year was to have Helena elementary students think about their favorite public lands and how their adopted species fits into this landscape. Each student could choose a national, state or local park, forest or waterway – any place that belongs to all of us. Students learned that public lands are particularly important for Montana's wildlife. Ample food, water, shelter and space are needed for a healthy habitat. Public lands provide safe haven for Montana wildlife and offer added quality of life to people of all ages who visit or live in Montana.

Students expressed their views in the Helena Independent Record's April 2018 Earth Week supplement, which is also posted on the Foundation's web site.

The Adopt-A-Species program is sponsored by the Helena Forest Service, Montana Discovery Foundation, the Foundation For Animals, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. 🐾



Jamie Fessenden, 6th grade, Montana City School



Joleah Parker, 5th grade, Broadwater Elementary



Kamryn Beckworth, 1st grade, Jefferson School