



A Critter's Journey

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THANK YOU!!

A Critter's Chance would like to thank the following volunteers:

Roscel Carandang for all her help with administration work

Lisa Dillow for her tireless efforts to secure donations

Kim Krull our new reptile foster in training

Mary Rae Noce for fostering and helping to secure donations

Critter Fact



The Sulcata Tortoise is from Africa. Their diet consists of mainly dry grass & weeds, with small amounts of dark greens as treats. A full grown Sulcata can weigh as much as 150lbs & live past 100 years old. Sulcatas can't swim, but they sure like a long soak in warm shallow water!

Our Mission: To be a voice for the animals; to educate the public about animal responsibility and ensure that all animals are treated humanely and given a "chance." To make certain that every available resource is used to find adoptive homes for domestic animals and to return wildlife to their natural environment.

Wildlife Rehabilitation

Wildlife rehabilitation is the most rewarding, fulfilling job you could ever have and not get paid a dime for. Wildlife rehabilitators receive no money from the government. In fact, you must possess a state license and a federal license (for federally protected birds and endangered creatures) in order to do this legally. (You may keep the animal long enough to get it to a rehabilitator. This should be done ASAP!) Wildlife rehabilitators are dedicated individuals who sacrifice time, money, sleep, etc. in order to care for sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife. We rescue, rehabilitate, then say goodbye and release them back into their native habitat.

Wildlife do not know we are trying to help, so we sometimes get bit, scratched, and urinated or defecated on. Sometimes the critters are injured so you must clean their wounds, which may have maggots in them, give SubQ fluids and medicines, all while avoiding a bite. We lose sleep because we must duplicate what a mama wild critter would do. We must get up in the middle of the night to feed babies (trying not to wake your spouse), get up half- asleep, warm the formula, feed each baby, then make them urinate and defecate, just like mama!! Each animal has a different formula; different species require different things. For example, baby squirrels require a lot of extra calcium in order to keep from getting MBD, Metabolic Bone Disease.

Once the babies are off the bottle, we must put the urge away to cuddle those sweet, little creatures because it's hands-off time now, time to make or keep them wild. Teach them what they need to know out in the wild, what foods to forage for etc. Once they are of good weight and healthy, knowing what they need to know, it's time for the best part, THE RELEASE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It's time to find a suitable place (we know what their habitats are) so we find a place away from humans and domestic pets and release them in the appropriate time of day. It's time to cry, perhaps, but it's good to see them go, because they will be much happier out in the wild where they belong. It is getting harder to find appropriate habitat to release them due to development. Development is one of the reasons they come into rehab to begin with. We humans bulldoze their homes every day with no regard to the animals. We are speeding to get to here and there and we hit them with our cars, and some horrible people hit them on purpose. We humans need to be more kind to these animals. They were here before we were. You know they learn to live with us, so why can't we learn to CO-EXIST with them? We must not make pets out of them, they were born to be wild, so let's keep them that way.


Here We Grow Again!

A Critter's Chance would like to welcome the following volunteers to their new positions within the group. A big thank you to each for helping ACC grow!

Jeff Altman is our new Volunteer Captain of Programs/Events.

Tracy Eads is our new Volunteer Captain of Rescue/Rehab.

Julia Wilder will be in charge of doing new volunteer introductions. She will assess new volunteer interests and get them to the correct trainer.



Amy's Conservation Corner

In each newsletter, our Vice President, Amy, shares tips as to how you can help improve the environment. Amy is a Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, and a Backyard Wildlife Habitat Steward with the National Wildlife Federation.

Wildlife Babies

Spring is finally here! Love is in the air, and for ACC Volunteers, that means it's BABY SEASON. Every year ACC receives hundreds of calls from the public about a baby critter that has been abandoned, or so they think. Knowing the habits of wildlife will help you understand this isn't always the case. Baby wildlife NEED their mothers; they do such a wonderful job. We can't even come close. This is why it's soooooooooo important to LEAVE THEM ALONE, unless we tell you to bring them to us. Each species requires a special formula that we have to make for them, for example baby squirrels require a lot of calcium so that the babies do not get MBD, metabolic bone disease, and you don't want to know what we add to baby cottontails' formula.

Cottontail rabbits will make their homes in open areas hoping to keep predators away from young. She will dig a shallow hole, pull fur from her own belly to line the nest, then have her babies and cover them back up. She only comes at night to feed them, so you will NEVER see her. Unless you see a dead mother somewhere, chances are she is still around.

There are things you can do to see if she has come. Lay a couple of twigs over the top of the nest and sprinkle flour around the nest, wait and check in the morning. If the twigs have been moved, and you see her foot prints in the flour, she has come back, so LEAVE THEM ALONE. Just be sure to keep your dogs and cats away from the nest for a few weeks until the babies have left.

Opossums are North America's only Marsupial. This means the mother carries her babies in her pouch. So, if you see a dead Opossum along the side of the road, check to see if she has any babies in her pouch. The babies will be okay for 24-48 hours. Call us! We can walk you through this, or we can check.

Other Native mammals make their nests in trees. Sometimes, they fall out due to storms or people cut down their trees. If you cut down a tree and find the babies, a lot of times the babies can be reunited with their mothers (unless mother has been killed). Take the babies inside, away from the noise, keep them in a box that they cannot get out of, and put them in a dark, quiet spot. When you are done with the tree removal, take the babies back to where the tree once stood, and the mother most times will come back and take them one by one to her backup nest. Give this a little time and be sure to keep your pets out of the area. Again, call ACC and we can walk you through this. It works! We've done it several times.

Baby birds often fall out of the nest also. If they have a few feathers, they are probably what we call Fledglings. They are learning to fly; mother and father are close by, so LEAVE THEM ALONE!!!!!!!!!!!!

If they have no feathers, get an old Easter basket, put a little grass or something soft in there for the baby to snuggle in, and hang this basket up in a limb if you can't reach the nest. The parents will continue to feed and take care of the baby.

Baby turtles: LEAVE THEM ALONE! They do not need your help unless they are injured. Indiana native turtles are becoming ENDANGERED because too many people are taking them out of the wild and making them pets. (This is Illegal now.) They are also losing their habitat to development or getting hit on the roads. Baby turtles are born knowing exactly what they need to do and eat in order to survive. The mother does not rear them at all, so please LEAVE THEM ALONE.

Mother deer have their babies out in the open also to discourage predators. The babies are born with no smell at all and lie perfectly still until mother comes back to feed them. So unless you see a dead mother deer on the road, she is still taking care of her young. LEAVE THEM ALONE.

We cannot stress enough about when to intervene and when to LEAVE THE ANIMALS ALONE. Bringing the babies into rehab is stressful on them, and some animals can be imprinted very easily by humans. Please, when in doubt, CALL US 317-585-9036. Wildlife are losing their homes to development every day. When you cut down their trees, they may be forced to make their home in your home, so please BE KIND. Call us, please. How would you like it if you just had a baby and someone came and tore down your home, leaving you to find a new one? Put yourself in their shoes and consider making your yard more wildlife-friendly.

Accomplishments

A Critter's Chance is constantly working to benefit animals. Here are some of our accomplishments for this quarter.

- ❖ As we mentioned in our story above, "Here We Grow Again," we've been able to fill several important volunteer leadership positions!
- ❖ We have been invited back to many events we participated in last year! This is important to our group because we have met many people at events who become volunteers and fosters. For a list of events we will be participating in, please see the events page of our website.

How you can help

- Help provide formula for wildlife babies! As we mentioned above, we are in the midst of wildlife rehabilitation season. We use kitten replacement formula to feed the wildlife babies in our care. An 11 oz can of liquid costs about \$12 and will feed 4 six-day old raccoons for approximately four days. A 28 oz can of powdered formula costs \$30 to \$35 and will feed 15 six-day-old raccoons for approximately two weeks. We go through many cans of this each spring! Your donation in either of the amounts would really help us to care for these babies! If you would like to donate, you may mail a check to 11057 Allisonville Road, PMB431, Fishers, IN 46038, or use the PayPal button on our website (<http://www.acritterschance.com>).
- Donate items for our fall fundraiser. We spend time throughout the year collecting items for the silent auction at our fundraiser. Some of the things we look for are gift cards, Colts items, and items to put in auction baskets.
- Volunteer your time. We can always use more volunteers. For a list of open volunteer positions, please visit our website at <http://www.acritterschance.com/Positions.html>.

Critter Craziiness

Sometimes we get a story that is just too funny or outrageous not to share!

This story was submitted by Mary, our bird expert. It's a short story, but very funny!

While Mary drinks her coffee in the morning, she sits and spends some time with her birds. She has a Moluccan Cockatoo named Ricky that is normally always up to some type of mischief! If she turns her back in the morning, Ricky picks up her

cigarettes and drops them into her coffee! Mary has to watch him very closely!



In The Works...

The following is a list of things we are currently working on.

- ❖ Trying to find land and funding for a center where we can house and care for the animals.
- ❖ Training new foster parents and wildlife rehabilitators.
- ❖ Working on finishing a coffee table book with pictures and stories of our rescued animals.
- ❖ Michelle and Amy will be attending the Noah's Wish disaster training course in order to become certified animal disaster relief and rescue. They plan to form a disaster response team within A Critter's Chance!



Rehab Volunteers: PLEASE READ

This message is for all current A Critter's Chance wildlife rehabilitation volunteers. The paperwork required for the wildlife will need to be turned in more frequently. Please give your paperwork to one of the Volunteer Captains, Jeff or Tracy. It is easy for paperwork to get lost throughout the year, so please make sure to submit it to one of the Volunteer Captains in a timely manner. This is very important, as we are held accountable to turn the paperwork into the DNR! Thank you for your cooperation!