

**W**alking  
ild Rescue  
ANNUAL REPORT



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# LETTER FROM OUR CEO

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2025 was a year filled with immeasurable highs and lows. As I look back on all that the year held I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the outpouring of love and support that Walking Wild received. From our volunteers helping out more than ever before, to the financial support from new and long time supporters and friends and the encouraging and uplifting words we received from our Walking Wild family.

Despite everything the year threw at David and I, Walking Wild was not only able to continue, but grew. We had a record breaking year with expansion projects, lives saved and grew some of our wonderful partnerships with local, state and national organizations that resulted in more lives being saved and a growth in understanding and knowledge about the unique animal that is a captive bred fox.

In 2025 I was continually reminded of just how important our mission is, not just to the animals that currently and will call Walking Wild home, but to our community, both locally and online and our partners and friends across the state, country and world.

2025 will be a year that will always hold a huge amount of significance to me, but now it is time to turn the page and start a new year.

2026 will be a big year for us here at Walking Wild as we open our doors to visitors, launch new and exciting programs, build new relationships and increase our financial stability as an organization. The long sleepless nights that riddled 2025 for me, allowed for some great brainstorming and birthed a future strategic plan for Walking Wild that I am excited to begin this year.

To each and every one of you that supports our mission, no matter how great or small, you are deeply appreciated. We say it all the time, but it is 100% true, we can't save lives without you or continue our mission. You are the fuel for Walking Wild and we are so honored to have your support!

With Gratitude,



Molly Schulz  
Walking Wild CEO/Co-Founder







# YEAR IN REVIEW



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**In 2025 Walking Wild saved 43 lives.**

- 30 Foxes
- 8 Skunks
- 5 Coyotes

**In 2025 Walking Wild added 11 new enclosures totaling 7,800 sq/ft.**

- 7 Fox enclosures
- 3 Skunk enclosures
- 1 Coyote enclosure

**In 2025 Walking Wild completed 90% of our perimeter fence that will allow us to open our doors to visitors and increase our animals outdoor exercise and play space.**

- The perimeter fence/play yard will add 43,000 sq/ft of outdoor play space for our foxes to enjoy and for visitors to interact with our foxes in.

**In 2025 the Walking Wild family suffered immeasurable loss and joy.**

- In June Molly and David's eldest daughter, Melody, passed away from a rare and aggressive form of leukemia.
- In September Molly and David welcomed their youngest Daughter, Harmony, into the world.

**In 2025 the Walking Wild took part in one of the largest fur farm rescues in US history and welcomed animals from seven states.**





# REMEMBERING MELODY

Melody passed away in June after an almost year long battle with a rare and aggressive form of leukemia. She was just 20 months old. In August of 2024 I took Melody to urgent care for what we thought was rough teething. Forty-eight hours later our entire world was turned upside down when our precious little girl was diagnosed and we began a 9 month hospital stay.

In April Melody was able to return home, but not the way we hoped, we returned home on hospice. We were able to enjoy almost two months at home with her before she beat us all to heaven.

Melody truly was a remarkable little girl. She faced everything in life with a smile, dancing and a joy that surpasses all reason. She loved life and every living thing. Although she found joy in every situation, there were few things Melody loved more than her animals. Melody brought a

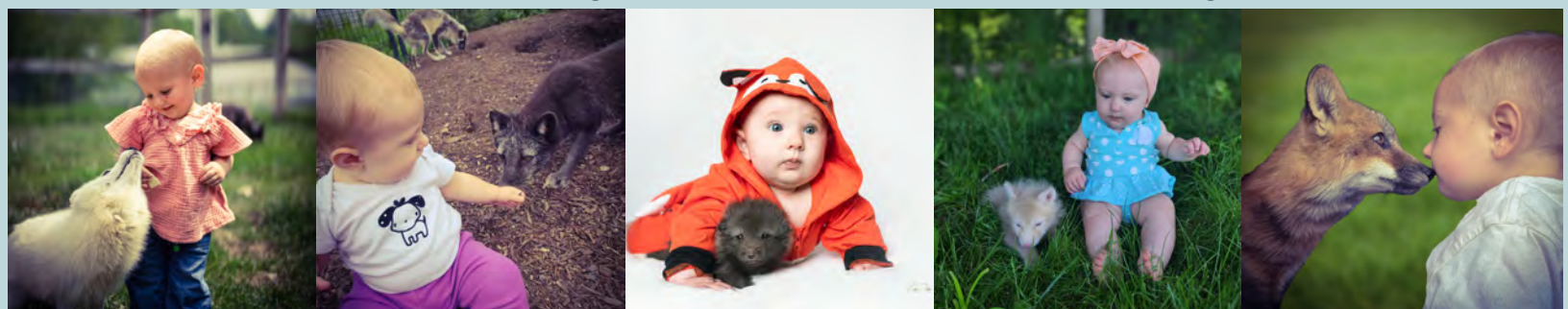
new life and happiness to Walking Wild. The smiles she shared when she got to interact with her fox were contagious. Melody never met or saw an animal that she didn't love. She had a gentleness, understanding and care for animals far beyond her age.

It wasn't something she was taught, she didn't need to be. She instinctively knew how to interact with animals and love them.



Melody's presence will not just be missed by David, myself and our families, but the entire sanctuary feels her absence.

The animals that she had a bond with, the volunteers that she was growing up around and many of our supporters all feel the sadness of her absence. Melody may be physically gone from our presence, but she will forever be a part of Walking Wild and her memory will continue to impact our mission and push us to new heights. We love & miss you sweet girl! You will always be part of Walking Wild!





# HORROR TO HOPE



Fur farming may seem like an archaic practice, but it is still alive and well today. Many are surprised to find out that not only does fur farming still take place, but it is legal and goes almost entirely unregulated. Ohio, our home state, has many fur farms, sadly, but in 2025, one of its largest became a thing of the past for good.

In December the owner of a large fur farm in Northern Ohio passed away leaving almost 500 animals in need of rescue. Foxes, Coyotes, Skunks and Wolf Dogs were living in deplorable conditions in a house of horrors. Most in cages that were sealed shut and would only be opened to be killed. Many animals were living with the bodies of deceased animals trapped in their cages with them. This is the eighth fur farm we have seen and fur farm rescue we have been a part of, but this fur and urine farm was by far the most appalling we have ever seen.



Humane World for animals took charge of the situation, coordinating placement for all the animals that were able to find sanctuary and helping the animals that were unable to be saved due to medical issues pass on peacefully surrounded by love. Walking Wild was honored to be asked to help with providing a forever home to 21 animals that were able to escape this house of horrors.



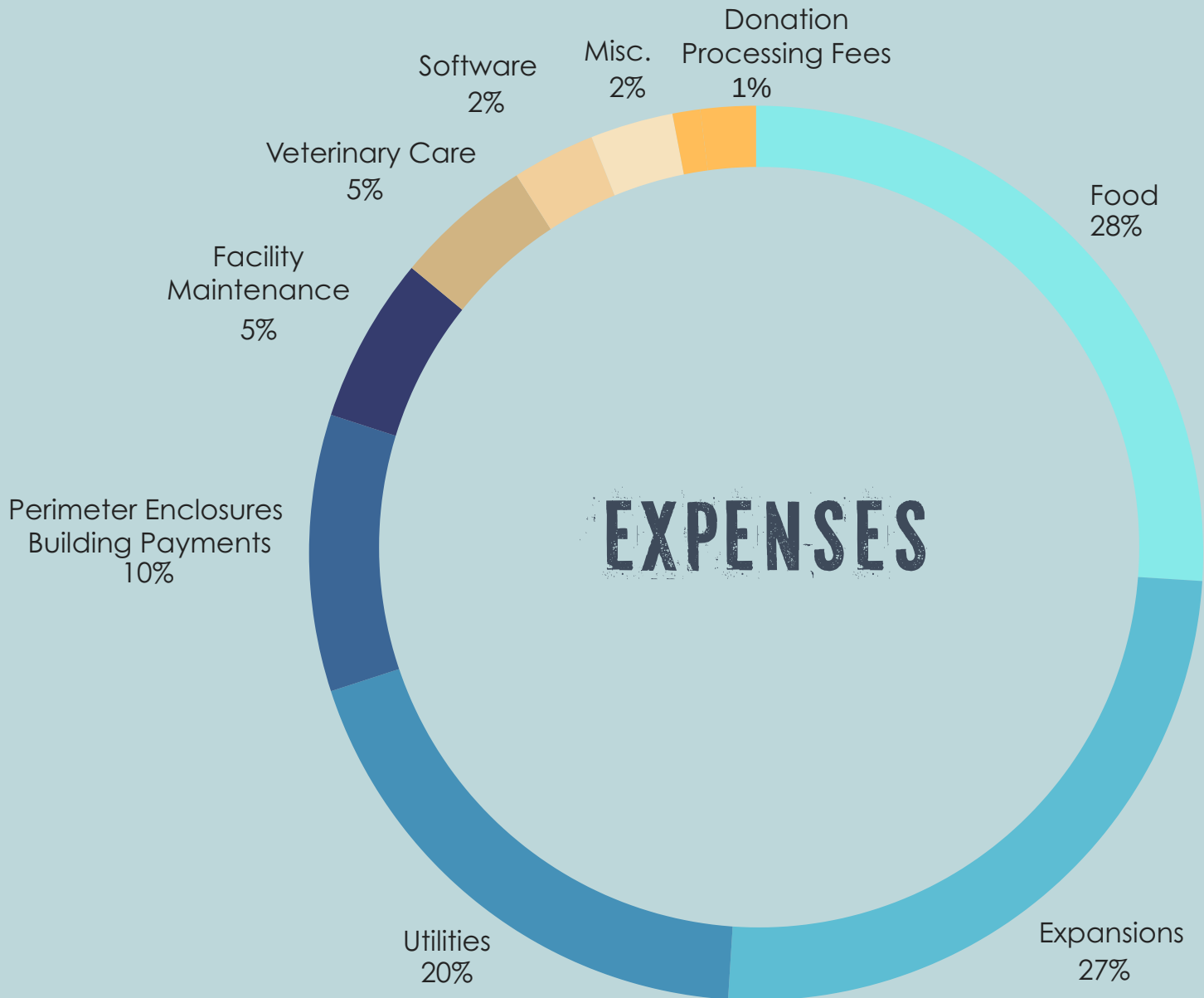
We welcomed 10 foxes, six skunks and five coyotes. As one of the only placement facilities that had experience with fur and urine farm survivors, we were asked to take some of the animals in special situations and

we are so honored to have been able to surround each one of them with love and provide them with the forever home, freedom and care they deserve.



# 2025 FINANCIALS

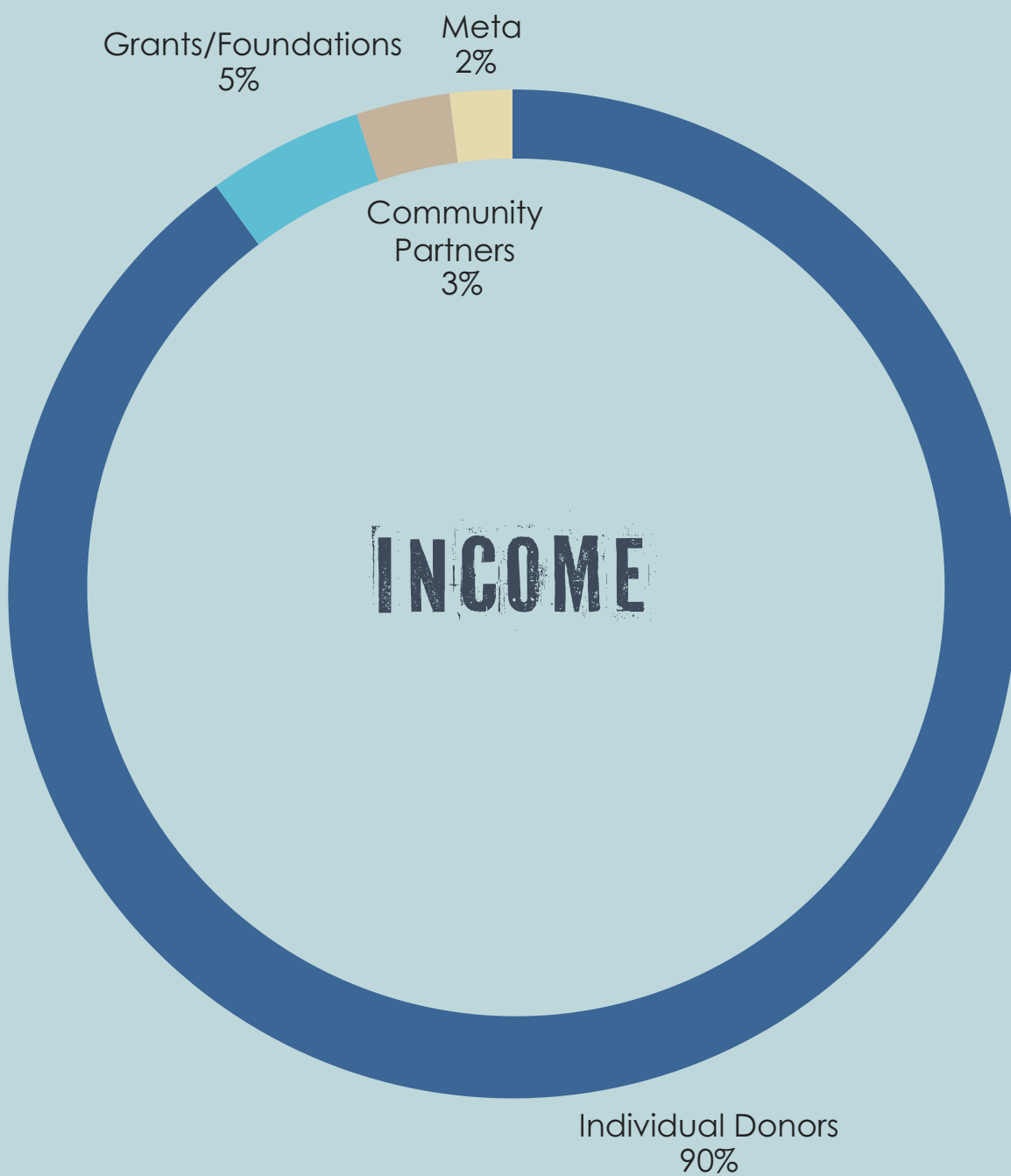
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# 2025 FINANCIALS

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# 2025 FINANCIALS

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## INCOME:

Donations from Individual Donors	\$141,293.30
Donations from Grants/Foundations	\$7,500
Donations from Community Partners	\$4,000
Donations from Meta	\$2,573.49

**Total Donations received in 2025** **\$155,366.79**

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## EXPENSES:

Food	\$40,541.42
Expansions	\$39,340.14
Utilities	\$29,766.96
Perimeter Enclosures Buildings Monthly Payments	\$14,775.19
Facility Maintenance	\$7,894.26
Veterinary Care	\$7,861.74
*This is an outlier number this year due to one time support from a medical professional helping because of Melody's illness.*	
Software	\$4281.49
Misc.	\$2,646.60
Donation Processing Fees	\$1,616.22

**Total Expenses in 2025** **\$148,724.02**

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## 2025 ENDING BALANCE:

**Total Rollover to 2026** **\$6,642.77**





# WHAT'S TO COME IN 2026

## Public Opening

We are so excited that 2026 will finally be the year that we open our doors and welcome fox fans of all ages out to Walking Wild. We have put a lot of work into creating a space that allows people to have a unique experience, but also respects our animals and their need to escape the visitor eye if they feel uncomfortable. With so many of our animals having a traumatic past, this is vital. This unique setup will ensure that both visitors and animals have the best time. Follow us on social media to get updates about when we will officially be opening.

## Growing our Volunteer Team

After a year off, we can't wait to begin growing our volunteer team, offering internship opportunities and expanding volunteer days for community groups that want to come out and help.

## Programs

With our public opening comes the addition of a few programs that we are very excited about. More information will be shared about each of these programs as we get closer to launch.

- Walking with Grief
- Foxes and Fitness
- Star Gazers
- Fox Fans Education Programs

## Dessert Dwellers

Walking Wild is Home to the smallest species of fox, Fennec fox. Fennec fox have unique habitat needs. Our current fennec fox habitat is not able to be enjoyed by visitors when we open to the public. To allow visitors to enjoy our tiny fox friends, and provide a viewing opportunity that doesn't overwhelm our tiny shy friends, we need to build a new habitat for them that will connect to our education pavilion. This habitat will allow us to welcome other friends with extra unique climate requirements as well.



# 2026 FINANCIAL PLANNING

Finances can be one of the most stressful aspects of running a non-profit. If there aren't donations to cover an expense, then they have to be raised in a hurry through a fundraiser that you pray meets the goal in order to cover the cost of the need. Walking Wild operates under a very tight budget to ensure we have the funds to care for our animals and ensure that we are stewarding every dollar donated to the best of our ability. We provide a specialized forever home, medical care, enrichment and food to over 180 animals with a budget of close to \$150,000. Having a tight budget though means that we don't have a lot of wiggle room for unforeseen expenses. In 2026 we will be increasing our financial focus through a planning for the future and creating strategies and funds that allow us to meet needs as they arise without having to launch an emergency fundraiser.

## Increase our Monthly Donors/Sponsors

Walking Wild is the largest non-wild fox rescue in North America and is the forever home to more captive bred fox than any other sanctuary. Most of our animals do not have a sponsor which can take a toll on monthly budgeting. In 2026 we have set the goal to get every animal at least two sponsors/monthly donors. Reaching this goal will allow us to expand and grow our facility as well as reduce our need for constant fundraisers.

## Planning for the Future

Unforeseen expenses always arise, whether it is a medical emergency, a rescue mission emergency or a facility emergency, we want to be prepared. 2026 is the year that we plan for future emergencies that we know will arise. As a non-profit, emergencies are usually extremely stressful, not just because of the situation, but because we have to fundraise to get the funds to address the emergency. This year we want to change that and plan ahead. In 2026 we will begin our future planning through the launch of our medical fund. This fund will allow donors that want to help with medical costs that arise throughout the year a special way to do so. This fund will give it's donors unique and transparent communication, sharing when medical funds are used so that all of our donors supporting this special fund know exactly how their contributions are being spent.

If you are interested in becoming a contributor to our medical fund or have an interest in starting a fund for other future expenses like facility or rescue missions, please email Molly at [walkingwildrescue@gmail.com](mailto:walkingwildrescue@gmail.com).

## Grants and Foundations

2026 will be a year for expanding our grants and foundation funding requests. Most of our funding currently comes from amazing individual donors that keep our mission going. Part of our financial planning for the future, includes expanding our donor base to include more foundations that share a passion for our mission.



# HOW CAN I HELP IN 2026

## Become a Sponsor/Monthly Donor

Our sponsors/monthly donors are the backbone of our organizations. Their donations allow us to budget effectively for caring for our current crew and plan how many additional lives we can financially support. We can't stress how important these donors are to our mission.

### Sponsorship Levels

- Best Buddy - \$10 per month
- Fox Friend - \$25 per month
- Advocate - \$50 per month
- Warrior - \$75
- Life Saver - \$100
- Game Changer - \$200

To become a sponsor or learn more visit [walkingwildrescue.org/sponsor](http://walkingwildrescue.org/sponsor)



## Volunteer

Did you know Walking Wild is 100% volunteer run? We are excited to expand our team of wonderful volunteers. If you have a passion for animals and a desire to help with daily animal husbandry needs please reach out. More information and volunteer applications can be found at [walkingwildrescue.org/volunteering](http://walkingwildrescue.org/volunteering)

## Wishlist Warrior

Walking Wild is constantly in need of items to care for our crew and keep our rescue running. If you are someone that loves sending gifts, maybe becoming a wishlist warrior is how you would most enjoy supporting our mission. We have two wishlists, our Amazon wishlist which has is updated with needed items as they arise and our Chewy Wishlist that has the kibble that we use on it. We go through 60+ bags of kibble a month. Sending a bag or two of kibble off our Chewy wishlist is an AMAZING help. Visit [walkingwildrescue.org/wishlist](http://walkingwildrescue.org/wishlist) to send kibble or other needed items.

## Special Funds Contributor

If you would like to be part of our future and financial stability planning by being a future funds contributor please email Molly at [mschulz@walkingwildrescue.org](mailto:mschulz@walkingwildrescue.org). These funds are focused on medical expenses, emergency rescue expenses and facility emergencies. Thank you for wanting to be part of helping Walking Wild be ready for whatever arises.

# WALKING WITH GRIEF

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We are thrilled to announce a new program that will be starting in 2026, Walking with Grief. Inspired by the journey of grief from the loss of our precious Melody, Walking with Grief is a program that will welcome families that have lost a child, a parent or a sibling, in addition to health care workers that deal with loss on a regular basis, out to Walking Wild. This program will be a time of hope and healing. Walking with Grief is a program focused on honoring the lives of loved ones that are no longer on this Earth and healing through a heartwarming and unforgettable time spent with some of our extra special foxes. Animals have an amazing ability to provide comfort, immeasurable love and a healing presence. Walking with Grief will allow those that are hurting an opportunity to experience comfort in a unique and life changing way. Walking with Grief will begin late spring/early summer and more information will be shared about the program as we get closer to launch.



Hope • Joy • Heart

Walking Wild Rescue



# I'M NOT WILD

Alone, hungry and confused. This is the mental state of any non-wild animal that finds itself abandoned in the wild by those that were supposed to care for it. They are left searching for help and trying to figure out how to survive. Many suffer injuries, sickness or disease. We all know that it is cruel and illegal to dump or abandon our dogs and cats, but it is also illegal to dump or abandon a captive bred fox.

Many people think that because a captive bred fox, is a fox, that it will be fine in the wild, when that is not the case at all. Most captive bred fox in the US or over 100 years removed from any wild animal. They do not have the instincts or skills to survive and can do serious damage to a wild fox population if they were to breed and introduce non-naturally occurring colors and health issues. On top of it all, it is illegal to abandon a captive bred fox, just like it is a dog or cat.

Captive bred fox abandonment is a huge issue and we are seeing more and more fox that are no longer wanted being illegally and cruelly dumped in the wild. Many end up not surviving, but those that do, are lucky enough to find someone that recognized they are in need and help. This year we received nine calls about abandoned foxes in need of help. Five of them we were able to help a good Samaritan catch and are safely here at Walking Wild, but sadly four were killed before they were able to be caught. Many abandoned fox seek safety by hanging out in neighborhoods or near someones house. Younger abandon fox will many times just wander in to a house with a dog or hop in a car.

Although a captive bred fox is a fox, it is not a wild animal. We are working to bring awareness to this issue of abandonment and beginning to work on changes here in our home state of Ohio that will help combat this cruel and growing issue.

## How do you know it isn't a wild fox?

Color is the #1 indicator - If it is not a naturally occurring color of a red species fox or a color that doesn't naturally occur in the area it is found, it isn't wild.

Other giveaways are:

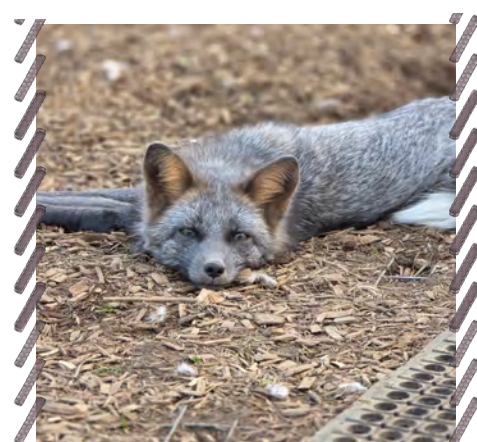
- Temperament
- Size/Body Structure
- Coat
- Accessories (i.e. collar)



Blueberry seeking help at a gas station



Blueberry was successfully caught



Blueberry safe at Walking Wild

Walking Wild Rescue is a non-profit organization that rescues and provides a safe haven and forever home for captive bred foxes and other non-wild friends. We provide every animal with the love and respect they deserve and provide a unique environment in the fox-rescue space that allows every animal to not just live, but thrive.

To learn more visit  
**[walkingwildrescue.org](http://walkingwildrescue.org)**

Walking Wild Rescue  
is located  
in central Ohio.

Walking Wild Rescue  
is licensed  
by ODNR

[info@walkingwildrescue.org](mailto:info@walkingwildrescue.org)

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