

Fall/Winter
2021



Number of Wildlife Patients
Treated since 2009: > 31,100

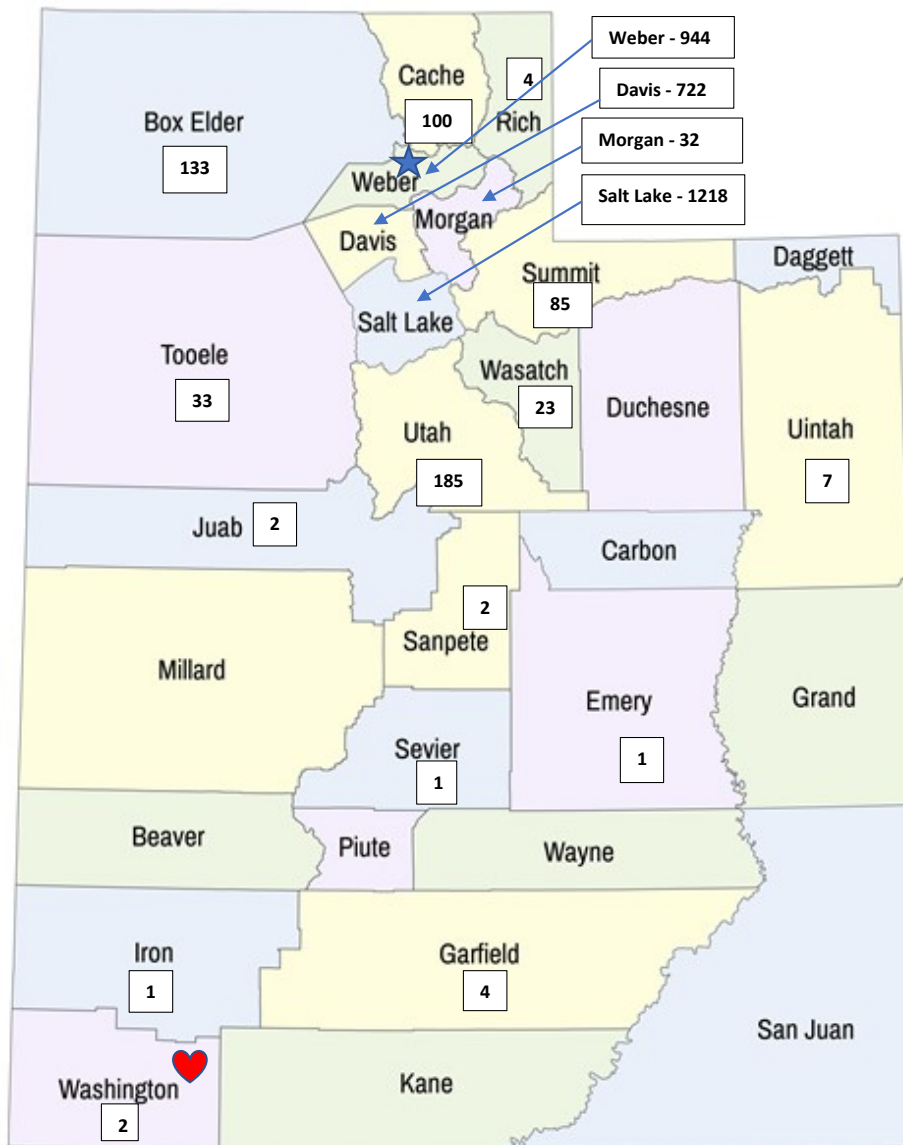
As Another Year comes to a Close...

"...responsible stewardship of wildlife and habitat."

Where in Utah do our patients come from?

Last year (2020) our numbers soared to almost 3,500 sick, injured and orphaned wildlife patients. If not for thousands of "Warriors" from our communities who cared enough to get them to WRCNU, they would not have received help.

2020 WRCNU Patients by County



You may wonder, "Where in Utah do your patients come from?" We thought this map of the counties and associated patient numbers painted a great answer to that question!

With Sanpete County as the geographical center of the state, we can truly say that Northern Utah is where most of our patients come from.

The I-15 corridor seems to accommodate most folks that are bringing patients in to us.

As the population of the counties becomes denser, so do human/animal conflicts and injuries. Salt Lake, Utah, Davis, and Weber Counties being the densest in that order, reflect the highest patient numbers for us.

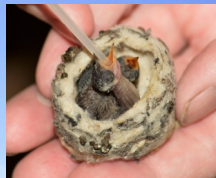
We could generally say that proximity to our facility drives a lot of patient visits, although you can see we have a few "outliers" in the Southern Utah counties!

THANK YOU to all of our Wildlife Warriors for going the extra mile for the Wild Ones!



Most Honorable of Mentions go to two of our Wildlife Warriors from Washington County—one from Ivins and one from St. George. They transported a White-crowned Sparrow and a Northern Mockingbird to us for treatment ... over 335 miles ONE-WAY — WOW!





Above: Fluffy Cooper's Hawk Nestling

Below: A fledged juvenile Cooper's Hawk released in October. Far right, is same youngster one day before her release.



2021 Wildlife Patients

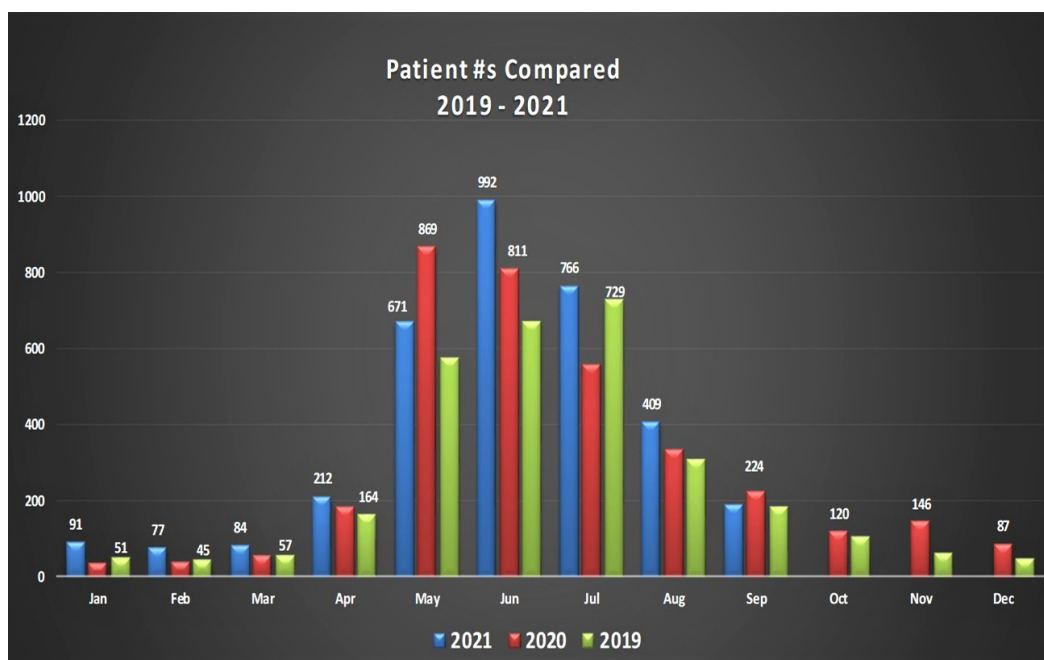
Are you one who does not like that hawk that comes into your yard to prey on backyard birds? We get it, nature can be brutal, but we ask you to think about the amazing wildlife event that is taking place in your yard. Consider each of your backyard visitors as "individuals". Like us, they all must eat, sleep, seek shelter and water. If your yard is the meeting place for songbirds AND raptors, then it is likely that your yard provides all these key elements for animals who are finding it harder and harder to survive here in Utah.

Cooper's Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, American Kestrels, and even owls are all common backyard visitors. Their place in this world is to weed out the weak, sick, and less skilled songbirds and rodents.

In doing so they will actually help ensure the strongest/most capable survive, creating healthy future populations of all of these interlaced species.

Keep in mind, being a hawk is not easy. Flying and weaving through vegetation to catch prey is a dangerous lifestyle. One study of more than 300 Cooper's hawk skeletons showed 23 percent had old, healed-over fractures in the bones of the chest, especially of the furcula (aka wishbone). Hawks will often make 10-30 attempts (misses) before they are successful in securing food. They may go several days without food before finally bringing home food for themselves and/or their young chicks—it's "the circle of life", and hawks are an important player.

If your yard is lucky enough to have hawk visitors, then sit back and enjoy the wonders of nature in your own backyard.



The Last Three Years

As of September 30th, we have treated more animals than at the end of any prior year and 2021 is not over.

Seven of the first nine months of this year saw record numbers coming through the Center's doors. *Why?* Heat was a major player, the drought is having a huge negative impact on our wildlife. Heat, lack of water, lack of prey/food and human development has and is making life for our wild friends extremely difficult.

Please help our backyard friends. Provided fresh/clean water and grow wildlife friendly plants for food and shelter. They need our help.

2021 Wildlife Patients

In years of drought, there is less to eat. Raptors are affected by lack of prey (mice, voles, rabbits, etc.) whose populations are also affected by a lack of food. It's a vicious circle and normally works itself out as droughts end and the rains return.

Sadly, we are expecting to see more weather extremes and in-turn we can expect to see more wild animals suffering the effects. This starving juvenile Red-tailed Hawk was using the Swainson's Hawk (sometimes referred to as "the Grasshopper Hawk") technique of hunting grasshoppers to try and fill its belly. The proof was in the huge pellet it coughed up soon after arrival. The pellet was comprised of many grasshopper exoskeletons, which is not something we typically see from Red-tails.



Left, is a feisty female American Kestrel in care at WRCNU.



Right, a Virginia's Warbler after release this August.



Above, a Common Loon was found stranded on dry land. Loons are basically a "large Grebe" and like Grebes they cannot walk on dry land nor can they take flight unless on a body of water due to their legs/feet being set so far back on their bodies.

This individual was released in October so that it could resume its migration.

WRCNU Presents Our
3rd Fall Speaker Education Event
Saturday, November 6th, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Sign up for this
FREE WEBINAR
on our Events Page at
WWW.WRCNU.ORG
Beginning on September 30th, 2021
for access to the webinar and our
ONLINE SILENT AUCTION

Jeff Foster Site Search, Animal Transfer & Rehab Coordinator
for The Whale Sanctuary Project

Jeff has worked in all facets of the marine mammal field including capture, animal husbandry, training, rehabilitation, research and reintroduction. Some of his noteworthy projects include: overseeing the sea otter rescue during the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, working as the Director of Research & Field Operations for the Keiko Project, and overseeing the capture, rehabilitation and successful reintroduction of "Springer," an out of habitat orphan killer Whale in the Pacific Northwest. Jeff has received numerous accolades and awards, including NOAA's "Environmental Hero of the Year" in 2006, for his dolphin rescue work during Hurricane Katrina and the tsunami in Southeast Asia. His work has been featured in National Geographic, CNN, 60 Minutes, Dateline, the BBC and the New York Times.

Thank you to our sponsors:

For questions regarding this event please email Allison@wrcnu.org

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Did you "attend" our Fall Webinar?

This newsletter went to print before our first ever Education webinar Event with Guest Speaker *Jeff Foster of The Whale Sanctuary Project*.

We hope that those of you who participated found it fun and educational. Hopefully 2022 will be a year where we can again gather together for an enjoyable dinner and meet another Guest speaker who will share their experiences from a different wild animal or environmental perspective.

In anticipation of a great event,
THANK YOU for attending!



WRCNU Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers



Helpless Infant OR “Independent” Youngster?

All animals undergo a period of time where they journey away from their parent’s side to learn to become independent. This period varies between species.

Cottontails become independent surprisingly early. Healthy cottontail kits wean around 3-4 weeks, venturing from their burrows once their eyes are open and their ears stand up. By 5-6 weeks they are completely self-reliant. At any sign of danger a cottontail’s first instinct is to freeze in order to avoid detection, they may not run immediately when approached.

If you encounter a cottontail at this stage, it is important to leave them alone and supervise pets and children while outside to protect these less-experienced juveniles who haven’t quite mastered the art of escape and evasion.

Two Juvenile Red-tailed Hawks—Released Sept 2021



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