

# WILDNorth

## ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT



2023

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# ABOUT

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Since 1989, WILDNorth has helped over 40,000 birds and small mammals receive proper medical treatment with the ultimate goal of returning these wild animals to their natural habitat.

## MISSION

To deliver services to people of Northern Alberta with wildlife-related concerns by providing compassionate care to injured and orphaned wildlife and by educating our communities about humanely coexisting with wildlife.

## VISION

To provide world-class care for wildlife in need and to become Alberta's champion and resource for a respectful co-existence between people and wildlife.

## IN 2023 WILDNORTH..

fielded 10,819 calls

admitted 3,153 patients



# Executive Director's Report

## Dale Gienow

In 2023, WILDNorth's team pulled together to rescue and care for even more wildlife patients, than in 2022. As we are, already, the busiest of Alberta's wildlife rehabilitation organizations, this is no small feat. Avian Influenza continued to rear its ugly head and, despite that significant outbreaks typically only last one year, we dealt with many creatures impacted by this highly contagious pathogen, during 2023 migration times. A robust grant, secured through Alberta's Community Initiatives Program, has allowed us to significantly increase our medical capacity to deal with such emerging threats, and others. This funding has allowed us to purchase and make much needed improvements to our medical equipment, and has allowed us to secure a contract for veterinary services, doubling the amount of time we have access to professional veterinarians.

Considered an essential service by the City of Edmonton, we were able to garner additional financial support from our municipal partner. Recognizing our expanding contributions, the City increased our base funding by 50% and increased the funding for our Junior Wildlife Ambassador Program by 25%. Predictable funding is essential to small charities and we are pleased to have secured on-going, multi-year funding agreements with the City of St. Albert, EPCOR, Fortis Alberta, and Sponsor Energy. These large corporate donors, represent a significant portion of our annual funding. What we do is a community effort, and funding from small corporations and individual donors were up roughly 8.5%, in 2023. WILDNorth's financial health is as stable as it has ever been and, for the first time ever, we were able to put some funds into a GIC, generating interest and providing us with some security, in the event of some un-foreseen major expense.

WILDNorth's greatest strength lies in the dedicated professionals and volunteers, that represent the backbone of our organization.

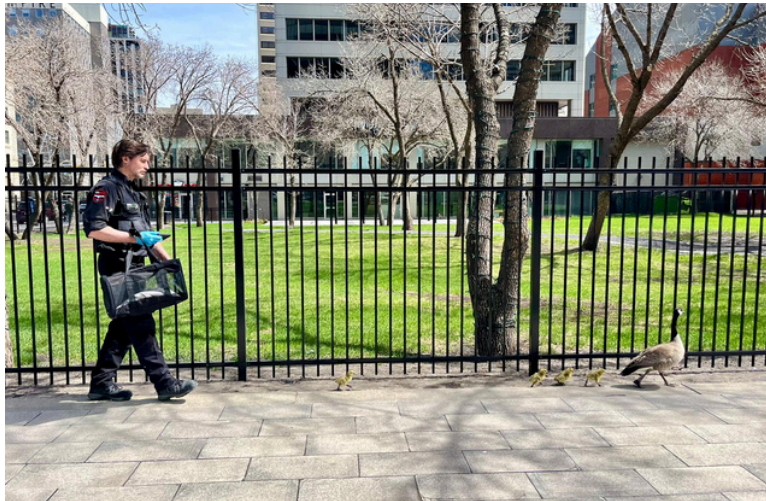


# Executive Director's Report Cont.

## Dale Gienow

From our invested Board of Directors, to our amazing staff, to our scores of hard-working interns and volunteers, WILDNorth is full to the brim with compassionate individuals that care about our injured and orphaned wildlife. In 2023, we were joined by four new staff members. Max Buchanan now heads up our operations as WILDCare Manager out at our Parkland County Rehab Facility, and is joined by Kyle Bohay, one of our new wildlife technicians. Both individuals previously interned with us and are now working hard to make significant improvements to our rehabilitation operations. Megan Urness has joined us as our newest wildlife technician at our Edmonton Wildlife Hospital, and represents a valuable addition to our medical team. As our operation grows, so do our financial obligations. To this end, we brought on Jessica Jones as our dedicated grant writer. As is typical, as we all wear many hats around here, Jessica is helping in other capacities, as well. Recently she has been helping with the development, and delivery, of educational programming.

As I enter my 5th year as WILDNorth's Executive Director, I can't help but reflect on our growth as an organization. We have grown exponentially during this short time, and our staff, volunteers, donors, and supporters have worked together as a community to provide compassionate care for more than 40,000 wild creatures in need over our 35 year history. I'm proud to call WILDNorth my home, and count myself lucky to be surrounded by such good company.



# President's Report

## Elizabeth Disman, Outgoing President

As I reflect on the past 8 years of service on the board with our remarkable organization, I am filled with immense gratitude. This year, I will be stepping down from the President role and I know that there are big, exciting things in store for us!

Our journey at WILDNorth has been nothing short of extraordinary, and it has been an honor to work alongside each of you on the board....Kate McKenzie, our Vice President, Rachelle Beger, our Treasurer (who will be leaving our board this year due to work commitments), Julia Krizan, our Secretary, Kathleen Edwards, Kay McCormack, Cheryl Feldstein and Daren Mandrusiak. Our board comprises a diverse group of passionate individuals, each bringing unique skills, knowledge and ideas to the table. Together, with Dale, our hardworking, compassionate, excellent Executive Director and all the staff at WILDNorth, we have propelled WILDNorth's growth, making a tangible difference in the lives of animals and humans alike. That has made me be very proud to have been part of this journey and I am excited to see where we go! Our mission—to provide compassionate care for injured and orphaned wildlife while educating our communities about harmonious coexistence with nature—has been at the heart of everything we do. Our Edmonton wildlife hospital and Parkland County Rehabilitation Centre work tirelessly, 365 days a year, to provide world-class care for wildlife in need. And I can't say enough about how grateful we all are that we have such incredible staff, volunteers, interns, supporters, members, donors and corporate sponsors. It couldn't be done without all of them!

As I transition from the President role to the position of Past Chair, I am excited about the next phase of WILDNorth's journey and will continue to support our mission and vision wholeheartedly.

Thank you everyone—from the bottom of my heart—for your unwavering dedication. Let us carry forward our legacy, knowing that every action we take matters in the lives of the animals and the lives of the people with which we interact every day!

With gratitude and warm regards.



# HELPLINE

**Jillian VanKooten**

Helpline & Social Media Manager

WILDNorth's Helpline is the frontline of many human-wildlife interactions. Helpline advisors converse with members of the public about their wildlife encounters, questions, and concerns. Advisors do much more than guide injured wildlife to treatment - they distribute knowledge of wildlife behaviors, foster tolerance, educate on humane coexistence with urban dwelling wild animals, and advocate for Alberta's wildlife. WILDNorth fielded 10,819 calls in 2023, the busiest season on the phones being April through to September. This was our third year with a dedicated Helpline Manager and our WRMD data base to record all helpline calls. These changes continue to enable us to respond to the high volume of calls and rescue requests in a thorough and informative manner. During our aforementioned busy season, April through September, we received 8,735 calls, comprising 80% of all of our annual calls. Of those calls 763 were rescue requests (~8%). WILDNorth also improved our communication methods on the Helpline this past year by obtaining dedicated cellphones.



# HELPLINE CONT.

These two cellphones are used daily to receive pictures and videos via text, short text correspondence, and rescue-based calls when on the road. We confidently relate the decrease in call volume, as indicated by the numbers, to the increased efficiency via our cellphones. Additionally, our Facebook account also engaged in 271 conversations with members of the public in 2023. These conversations generally pertained to injured wildlife concerns or general organizational inquiries. Call numbers are also impacted by staff answering wildlife inquiries via email and other avenues.

The species of wildlife that we received the most calls about, for the second year in a row, were Canada Geese; WILDNorth's Wildlife Helpline fielded 1,134 calls regarding Canada Geese in 2023, thus making up 10% of the calls. These calls could be in relation to conflict situations, such as issues with nesting sites, rescue requests for goslings on rooftops, or Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) concerns.

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# HELPLINE CONT.

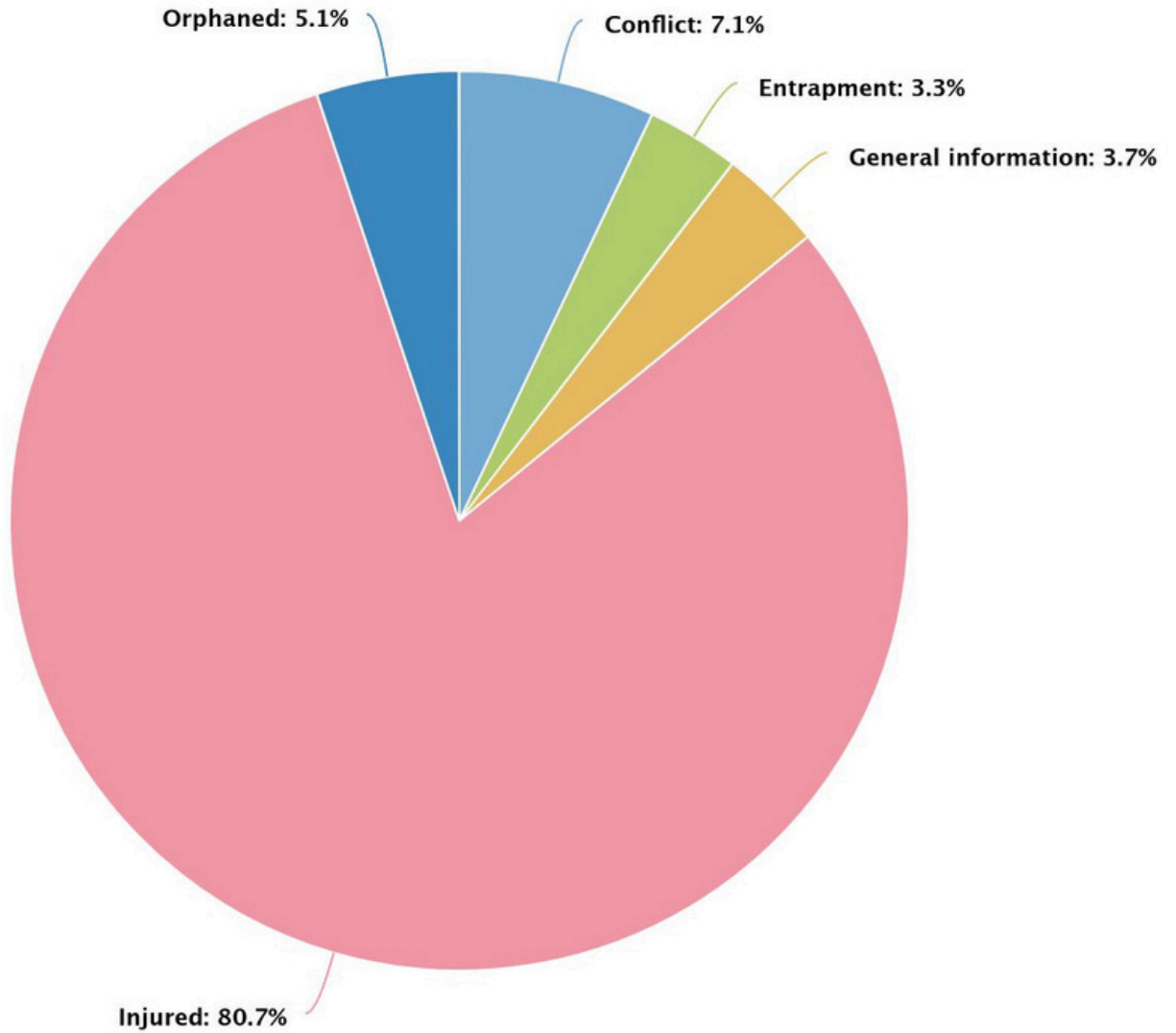
Comparatively, we fielded 1,027 calls on Black-billed Magpies, 796 calls on White-tailed Prairie Hares, 648 calls on Pigeons (Rock Doves), and 621 calls on Ducks. These numbers accurately reflect the common concerns we are assisting the public with via the helpline. 7% of our calls were human-animal conflict based and 5% were concerns of orphaned baby wildlife, while 77% were regarding what the public viewed as injured wildlife in need of assistance. Members of the public are often unaware of our organization until they need us, so we always utilize every opportunity to educate individuals on WILDNorth's mission and vision.

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# CALLS BY CATEGORY



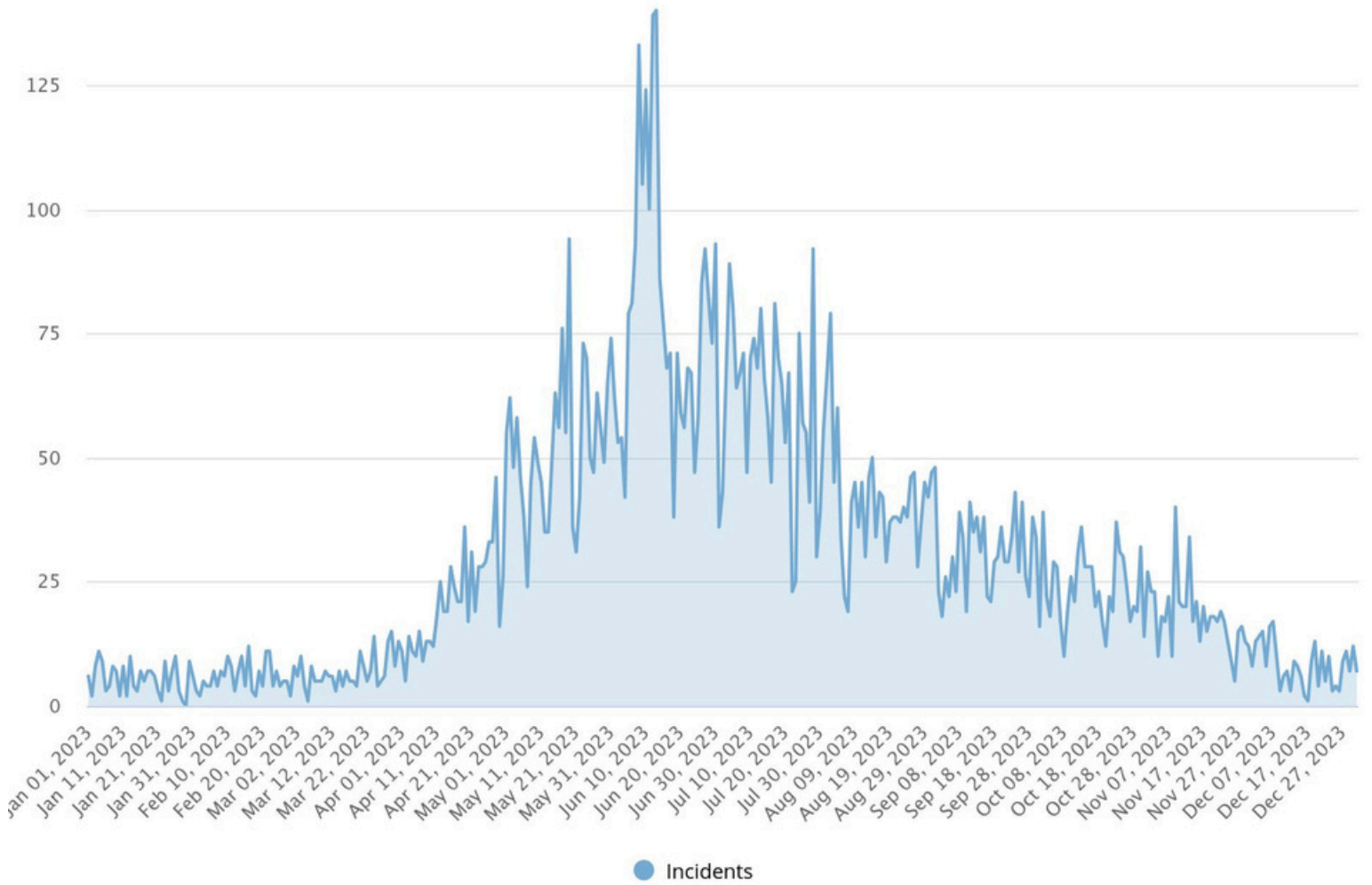
**Incidents by Category**



● Conflict   ● Entrapment   ● General information   ● Injured   ● Orphaned

# CALL VOLUME BY DAY

Incidents Per Day Occurred



# Social Media

**Jillian Vandervinne**

Helpline & Social Media Manager

Social Media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Twitter, serve as a significant portion of our educational outreach. Our content across all platforms is aimed to be educational in nature, always supporting our mission and vision of living humanely with urban dwelling wildlife. Our two main platforms for posting and communication are Facebook and Instagram; though these pages are primarily used for posting, we do also field many direct messages with wildlife-based inquiries. Throughout 2023, WILDNorth's Facebook page gained 1,100 new 'likes', resulting in a 2023-year total of 11,513. Facebook also has followers, where 'likes' are a show of support and our content still shows up on their feed, followers receive more regular notifications and updates; WILDNorth's Facebook page has 12,505 followers. Likewise, WILDNorth's Instagram page gained 443 new followers in 2023, amounting to an end total of 8,101 followers, a 9.0% increase. Another way to track the effectiveness of our content on Facebook is through its reach (how many other accounts saw our content). In 2023, our Facebook posts reached 334,269 accounts and our Instagram page reached 50,131 accounts. Our overall Facebook page visits also increased in comparison to 2022. WILDNorth's Facebook page was visited 24.7k times, and the Instagram page was visited 9.2k times, representing a year over year increase of 184% and 25% respectively. WILDNorth's TikTok has also grown over the past year as we have worked to be consistently active in our educational outreach. In 2023 WILDNorth's TikTok account reached 119,289 individuals, gained 3,238 followers and garnered 132,894 overall videos views. TikTok continues to be a growing platform, especially when considering the audience of younger individuals, so we are happy with our growth in this area. Overall, WILDNorth's social media had a successful year of outreach, education, and growth, and we look forward to all that can improve in 2024.

# WILDRescue

## Dale Gienow

### Executive Director

2023 was a very busy year for our WILDRescue team. Field rescue inquiries were up 15%, and we responded to 1,108 public requests for the rescue of imperiled wild animals. Though species ran the full gambit, our WILDRescue staff, interns, and volunteers were able to bring in many animals that the public was unable to attend to. These unique scenarios usually involved animals infected with avian influenza (or other zoonotic diseases), dangerous creatures, or wildlife that were difficult to capture or access. WILDNorth's professional field rescue service is unique amongst Alberta rehabilitation organizations, and allows us to help wildlife that would otherwise not receive care. Adding further capacity to capture these elusive animals, we trained more City of Edmonton Park Rangers, Animal Control Officers, City Parks Staff, EPCOR employees, and Fortis Alberta personnel. These individuals are taught skills and given resources to help us with our important work, and operate under our permits.

We outfitted a new rescue truck in 2023, and both our vehicles are now routinely used in rescues, especially during our busy summer season. Together with WILDRescue uniforms, these logo-covered vehicles serve to advertise our services to the community, and showcase our professionalism.



## Carly Lynch

Director of WILDCare

In 2023, our commitment to excellence in wildlife rehabilitation propelled us to new heights.

Among our proudest moments was the successful rehabilitation and release of our first-ever Canada Lynx patient, affectionately nicknamed "Hunter". In order to provide the proper care to this rare patient, we needed to develop full medical and rehabilitation protocols. This remarkable accomplishment not only showcased our expertise in wildlife care but also highlighted our dedication to preserving and reintroducing native species to their natural habitats. Our staff at the Rehabilitation Centre did an exemplary job of renovating one of our outdoor enclosures to make it appropriate for a Canada Lynx. This ensured Hunter's well-being while minimizing human interaction, allowing her to thrive in a safe and natural environment. We mostly monitored her via remote cameras, and it was amazing to see her learn and grow!

In an impressive medical feat, we performed what may be the world's first documented blood transfusion between two porcupines. Faced with a critically ill porcupine suffering from anemia and a respiratory infection, our team, in collaboration with Dr. Daren Mandrusiak and his team, executed a successful blood transfusion using blood from a suitable donor porcupine. Both patients recovered fully and were ultimately released back into the wild, marking a significant milestone in wildlife medicine.

Our team's dedication to saving lives knows no bounds. Dr. Kachur, with her skilled hands and compassionate heart, performed a series of life-saving surgeries in 2023. From repairing the fractured wing of a Swainson's Hawk injured in a suspected car collision to meticulously stitching up extensive wounds on a Townsend's Solitaire caught by a cat, Dr. Kachur's expertise brought hope to these patients and many others.



# WILDCare Cont.

## Carly Lynch

Director of WILDCare

Thanks to her unwavering commitment, these once-injured animals are now thriving back in their natural habitats, a testament to the power of expert care and compassion in wildlife rehabilitation.

Our facilities were buzzing with activity in 2023. We admitted a staggering total of 3153 patients spanning 182 species, underscoring the breadth and depth of our services. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication of our Wildlife Technicians and WILDCare Volunteer team. Despite facing unprecedented challenges and workload, our team exhibited unparalleled professionalism and compassion, resulting in increased release rates across all species groups. We also must recognize the WILDRescue, Wildlife Helpline, and Transport volunteers. Their contributions allow us to care for such a significant volume of patients; whether educating the public about the dangers of trapping and removing wildlife, ensuring an imperiled animal gets the care it deserves as soon as possible, or driving 5 hours away to pick up an animal in need. Our volunteers really go the extra mile (sometimes literally) to contribute to WILDNorth's mission. Recognizing the importance of continuous improvement, we made significant steps toward enhancing our diagnostic and medical capabilities in 2023. Through rigorous training and the adoption of new technologies, we fortified our ability to diagnose and treat wildlife ailments with precision and efficiency. Through continuous training and dedication, our staff and volunteers honed their skills, enabling us to provide precise and efficient diagnostic care to our patients. Our commitment to staying at the forefront of wildlife medicine ensures that every patient receives the highest standard of care possible.



# WILDCare Cont.

## Carly Lynch

Director of WILDCare

Throughout the year, our organization faced numerous challenges; from dealing with the continued impact of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, to managing record-breaking patient intakes while working within a charity budget. Despite these obstacles, our team demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, embodying the spirit of dedication and compassion that defines our mission.

Looking back on the successes and challenges of 2023, we're motivated to persist in our mission of providing compassionate care to wildlife. With your ongoing support and generosity, we remain committed to providing expert care to injured, orphaned, and contaminated wildlife.

## Max Buchanan

WILDCare Manager

The past year working with WILDNorth has been a wonderful experience. Working with the team, and preparing for the 2024 spring rush has been exciting, and I'm really looking forward to moving into the busy season once again. We have a really great crew of volunteers who have supported my efforts out at the Rehabilitation Center this last year, I couldn't have done it without them. Kyle has been a great addition to the team, and has already contributed so much during his time here. At the rate things are going, we are in for a stellar season and will be able to handle anything that comes our way!

*Fun Fact: On June 15th, we had 379 patients in care between our two facilities. In that week, we admitted 232 new patients. Our busiest day for intakes was 47 intakes on June 14th.*





# WILDVolunteer



# WILDVolunteer

## Elsa Rasmussen

Education and Volunteer Manager

Throughout 2023, we onboarded 167 new volunteers and 25,181 volunteer hours were recorded. Our dedicated volunteers completed a wide array of duties through our internships as well as our regular volunteer program including administrative tasks, cleaning, facility maintenance, educating the public, rescuing wildlife, and providing care for our patients. As usual, our animal care volunteer assignments had the vast majority of hours logged (69% of annual volunteer hours). Our volunteers represented WILDNorth at many events including our Edmonton Wildlife Festival and appearances throughout Edmonton, Sherwood Park, St Albert, Tofield, and more! WILDNorth relies heavily on over 200 active volunteers to achieve our mission and vision, thank you so much to all past and present volunteers for your compassion and commitment.

“

**25, 181 volunteer hours were recorded.**

”



# WILD Education

## Elsa Rasmussen

### Education and Volunteer Manager

The education team taught 5026 people of all ages during 2023 while fulfilling our mission to educate our communities about humanely coexisting with wildlife. WILDNorth's education programming included Wonders of Wildlife Rehabilitation, Junior Wildlife Ambassador Program (partnership with the City of Edmonton's Capital City Clean Up), Wildlife Interaction & My Community (partnership with EPCOR), and more! Corby the Raven, WILDNorth's Education Ambassador, turned 1 year old and continues to keep our team busy with training, enrichment, and engaging the public through outreach presentations. WILDAdventures Photography returned with summer sessions geared towards ibis, shorebirds, and waterfowl through a partnership with JaW Nature Photography Ltd.



# Kim Blomme

## Director, Research & Policy

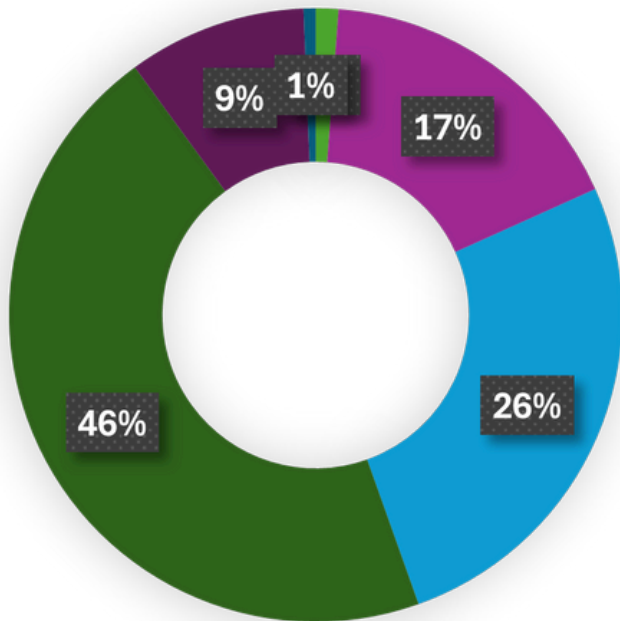
WILDNorth has, over the years, expanded its role in the community to include not only the treatment of injured wildlife and release of healthy individuals back into the wild but also improving welfare of wildlife by educating the public about how to safely interact or live harmoniously with wildlife, when to help and when to just watch; safely and humanely rescuing imperiled wildlife; monitoring wildlife health in conjunction with our partners in veterinary and regulatory agencies and contributing to advancement of wildlife medicine.

Staff must balance many considerations when making decisions about how best to help the animals in our care. Our staff are strongly committed to continually educating themselves on many aspects of wildlife, wildlife disease and rehabilitation, wildlife nutrition, wildlife conservation, and ecological health. Online learning has increased in leaps and bounds and covers an extensive range of topics. Participation in conferences and networking with other professionals ensures we are staying current and continually developing resources. In addition to this, we must stay within our means and ensure valid use of donations while keeping wages and benefits competitive. In short, it's a lot! It has been truly gratifying contributing to and watching WILDNorth flourish and continue to meet these challenges.



# 2023 FINANCIALS

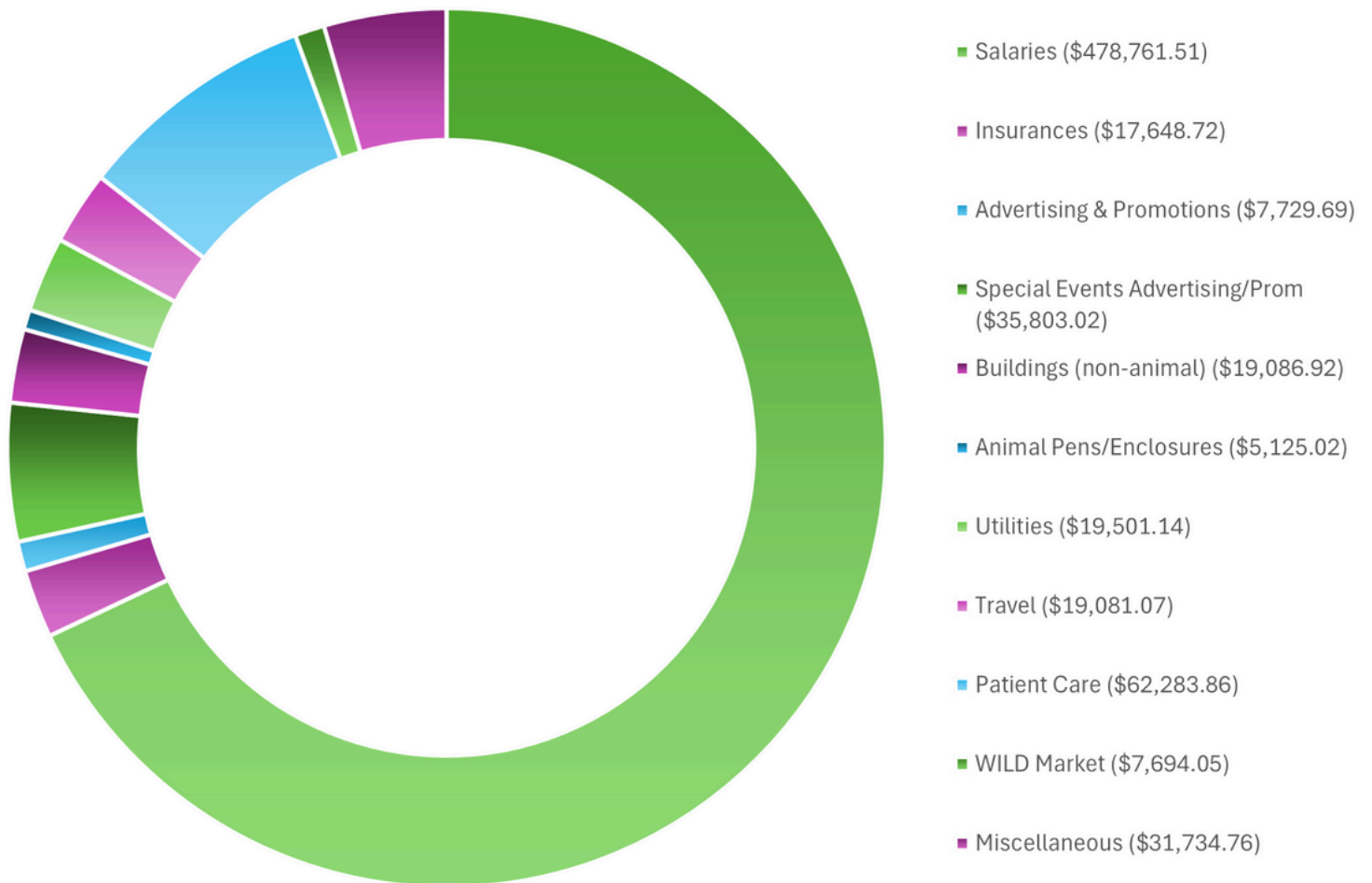
**Total Income 2023: \$803,700.95**



- WILD Market (\$9,611.51)
- Casino (\$137,204.45)
- Donations (\$211,255.33)
- Grants (\$364,960.80)
- Fundraising Events (\$75,578.86)
- Miscellaneous (\$5,090.00)

# 2023 FINANCIALS CONT.

**Total Expenses 2023: \$704,449.76**



# PARTNERS & FUNDERS

ALBERTA CHAMBER OF RESOURCES  
ATB FINANCIAL  
ATCO  
BEAR BELLE DESIGN CO.  
BERKELEY'S PLACE  
BOREAL VETERINARY CENTRE  
BOSCH HYDRAULIC CONNECTIONS LTD.  
CANADIAN TIRE, LEDUC  
CAPITAL CITY CLEAN UP  
CITY OF EDMONTON  
CITY OF ST. ALBERT  
CUNNINGHAM FAMILY FUND  
EDMONTON ASSOCIATION OF SMALL ANIMAL VETERINARIANS  
EDMONTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
EDMONTON NATURE CLUB  
ELDON AND ANNE FOOTE FUND  
CUNNINGHAM ANIMAL CARE FUND  
EMILY BRODEUR  
EPCOR  
FORTIS ALBERTA  
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA  
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA  
HENNING MCKENZIE CONSULTING  
IMPERIAL OIL  
JAMIE ARTHURS MORTGAGES  
JAW NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY LTD.  
JETBRADA  
KIMBERLY JASINSKI  
KINETTE CLUB OF EDMONTON  
KUNITZ SHOES  
LAURA AND COLIN JACKSON FAMILY FUND  
MALCOLMSON FAMILY FUND  
MJ JENKINS FAMILY FOUNDATION  
MUTTART FOUNDATION  
NATURE CONSERVANCY CANADA  
NISKU INDUSTRIAL COATINGS  
PIONEER  
PULSE VETERINARY SPECIALISTS & EMERGENCY  
QUEEN OF POLOS  
ROBINSON & CO.  
RONI'S RIDE  
ROSS MCBAIN CHARITABLE GIFT FUND  
SPONSOR ENERGY  
SYNCRUDE  
TANZI FAMILY ENDOWMENT  
TC ENERGY  
TD BANK  
UNITED WAY  
VCA GUARDIAN VETERINARY CENTRE

## BOARD :

- PRESIDENT: ELIZABETH DISMAN
- VICE PRESIDENT: KATE MCKENZIE
- TREASURER: RACHELLE BEGER
- SECRETARY: JULIA KRIZAN
- DIRECTOR: KATHLEEN EDWARDS
- DIRECTOR: KAY MCCORMACK
- DIRECTOR: CHERYL FELDSTEIN
- DIRECTOR: DR. DAREN MANDRUSIAK

AND MANY MORE GRACIOUS DONORS!

From all of us here at WILDNorth,

We sincerely thank you for supporting WILDNorth as we provide compassionate care for northern Alberta's imperiled wildlife.

