

Introduction to Volunteering at CCWR

Thank you for your interest in taking on an active role at CCWR! As a volunteer, you will be part of the centre, a partner in helping CCWR succeed. You will make a significant difference for wildlife and rescued farm animals. No matter what role you play, you will be an essential part of this organization's growth and purpose.

Please read and understand CCWR's mission and vision to ensure that this is an organization in which you want to play a role:

Mission:

Wildlife Rehabilitation

"Wildlife rehabilitation is the practice of skilled, knowledgeable and dedicated care provided by qualified persons for injured, orphaned, diseased or displaced wildlife. Rehabilitators have one ultimate goal; to return wildlife to their native habitat, in optimum health."
(OWREN - Ontario Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Network)

CCWR is working towards a Wildlife Custodian Authorization, to be issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources. We are applying for the funding needed to build our intake clinic and animal enclosures in the hope of taking in injured and orphaned wildlife starting in spring 2011.

Public Education

Some harm to wildlife can be prevented through public education. CCWR will develop an extensive campaign to inform the public about the role people can play in minimizing the impact humans have on wildlife.

Advocacy

CCWR believes that we need to respect nature and that all life should have value and meaning. When human industry interferes with the balance of nature, we need to take a responsible approach. CCWR will work with city officials and developers, speaking on behalf of wildlife when its well-being is threatened by land development.

Sanctuary

CCWR has evolved from The Angora Goat Sanctuary which provides a permanent home to unwanted, neglected or abused farm animals. The Sanctuary branch of CCWR will continue to provide excellent care and a permanent home for these animals.

Vision:

A City that Prevents Conflicts with Wildlife

CCWR will work to help Ottawa become a city that prevents conflicts with wildlife. We want to see fences to keep animals off roads where collisions are frequent. We want to see over passes and tunnels that allow the safe passage of wild animals through city green spaces.

A City that Respects and Accommodates Wildlife

CCWR will lobby urban planners, city officials and developers so that the impact on resident wildlife populations is addressed when new roads and housing developments are planned. We want to anticipate problems that will result in displacing wildlife and destroying habitat, and we will work with the city to find alternatives that minimize the loss of biodiversity and natural green space.

A City with a Plan for Resolving Wildlife Issues

CCWR will work toward ensuring that Ottawa develops a comprehensive plan for resolving issues with wild animals in the city. We will ensure that solutions are based on collaboration between appropriate agencies so that any threat is resolved with minimum harm to both wild animals and people.

We want CCWR to become an essential part of the Ottawa region community. We hope that community members will care about CCWR and value its contributions to a healthy and safe environment.

Important Note:

Wildlife Rehabilitation is a serious profession. There are strict regulations about caring for wildlife. People have been providing wildlife rehabilitation care for many years and we can benefit from the wealth of knowledge they provide. We can learn from their mistakes. Caring for wildlife is not something intuitive; if you do not know what to do, find out instead of guessing. Remember, do no harm. The rules we establish at CCWR are there for the benefit of the wildlife that depend on us for their future chance at survival. CCWR will attempt to designate certain funding to support its volunteers if they wish to attend conferences and training opportunities.

It is important to always keep in mind the best interests of the animals you are here to help. Always ask if what you are doing is for the animal or for your own benefit.

CCWR will never be open to the public, although the public is welcome to take guided tours of the farm. It is essential that the wild animals are not exposed to humans any more than necessary. We will try to provide web cameras for viewing the animals and we will publish photographs and stories so that the public can see the good work we do.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Everyone working at CCWR is a volunteer. Eventually we may have enough stable funding to provide a salary for some positions. However, currently the Executive Director, Veterinarian and everyone else works here because they strongly believe in this work and want to contribute. We want our volunteers to be happy with their contribution, so please communicate your goals and ideas so we can determine how to find a role where you feel valued and satisfied.

Of course, working with animals or on their behalf is very rewarding. However, there are plenty of heart-breaking moments in this type of work. Be good to yourself! Let us know if stress or a difficult situation is getting to you and you need a break or some comfort.

Morale among volunteers is very important for the proper functioning of CCWR. We expect volunteers to encourage each other, work together and support each other.

We need all of our volunteers to help us with funding support. We are a registered charity and can issue tax receipts for donations. As a charity, we are eligible to apply for certain grants, but there is no reliable source of funding. Organizations like CCWR survive by developing a base of public support. The community we serve must value our contributions and be willing to offer donations if we are to continue our work.

Things you need to know, especially if you are working with the animals (particularly wildlife)...

You will be exposed to diseases and parasites. It is very important that your own pets are fully vaccinated so you don't transfer any diseases to them. Your doctor should be informed that you are working with farm animals and/or wildlife. You should ask for deworming medicine several times a year. You must have had a tetanus shot within the last 10 years. You may also choose to be vaccinated for rabies. You may also choose to limit which animals you wish to work with.

- Many of the wild animals will not survive. You will need to be able to handle this.
- We will euthanize animals as humanely as possible if they are suffering and will not recover.
- Raccoons, foxes, skunks and bats are considered rabies vector species. At this time, rabies is only being detected in bats. It is transmitted through saliva. Rabies is deadly to all mammals unless vaccinated.
- Raccoons can also carry canine distemper, feline panleukopenia and parvovirus. These can be deadly to raccoons as well as your pet cats and dogs.
- Raccoons also carry a deadly parasite, Baylisascaris Procyonis, the raccoon roundworm. This roundworm remains in the digestive tract of raccoons and doesn't harm them. However, if it is transmitted to other animals including humans, it migrates to the brain and causes permanent neurological damage. It is transmitted through contact with raccoon feces.
- We will perform necropsy on animals. This means that when an animal dies, we may explore the body to try to learn and better understand what was wrong. This can help us save other animals.
- You will make mistakes and feel very badly about them. When this happens, you need to acknowledge the mistake, forgive yourself and learn from the experience.

It is highly recommended that volunteers who wish to work directly on wildlife intake, study for and take the MNR wildlife custodian exam. This is a multiple choice exam of 100 questions. I can provide you with the study material, including the 500 question set from which the 100 questions will be chosen. When you wish to write the exam, I will arrange for you to go to the Kemptville MNR office to write it. The exam will give you an appreciation of the breadth of knowledge needed to work in the area of wildlife rehabilitation. It will enable you to give better information to the public.

Wildlife Foster Care

Through establishing a network of volunteers trained to provide foster care for healthy animals, CCWR can reserve its on-site care for the sick and injured. This ensures that stable, healthy animals are not exposed to illness and allows CCWR to offer care to more animals in need.

Foster care sites are needed for very young orphans as well as for animals that are almost ready for release. On the volunteer application, you can indicate which species you would like to foster either as babies or for soft release. The following information can help inform your choice.

Baby squirrels

Orphaned baby squirrels can come into CCWR when they are practically newborn, pink and blind. It is not easy to succeed in raising these very fragile creatures, but it can be done with proper training. It is essential that the babies are kept at the right temperature, are fed frequently the right formula by the correct technique. They must have their genitals stimulated so that they will empty their bladder and rectum. One of the main problems is aspiration, the danger of the baby inhaling some formula into the lungs. Therefore, feeding must be done very slowly by allowing a drop of formula at a time to form at the baby's mouth for it to drink. It is very rewarding to see these tiny creatures survive, grow stronger, become furred and open their eyes. They typically need to be formula fed until they are 2 months old.

Baby raccoons

Raccoon orphans are generally good at bottle feeding from a young age. They need to continue on formula until they are at least 3 months old. They also need their genitals stimulated at least until their eyes are open. The main concern with raccoons are the transmissible diseases and parasites to which the caregivers may be exposed (rabies, parvovirus, panleukopenia, distemper, roundworm). You must be very careful in cleaning up raccoon feces. The roundworm eggs are very difficult to kill. However, raising raccoons can give you many delightful hours of cuddling and entertainment. They are very intelligent, social animals that will easily come to enjoy your attention.

Baby cottontail rabbits

Cottontails need a very steady, calm environment. They can die simply from the stress of captivity. A room in a foster home must be dedicated to the infant cottontails. This room should be kept quiet, warm and with dim lighting. Actual physical handling of the cottontails should be minimized (no cuddling) and gloves should be worn to minimize the transfer of human scent. Formula feeding must be done carefully to avoid aspiration. The genitals must be stimulated so that they will relieve their bladder and rectum.

Soft release sites

You can offer to provide soft release of animals from your property if that type of animal is frequently found in your area and your site is safe for the rehabilitated animals to explore as they adapt and return to the wild. You will be provided with an appropriate enclosure for the animals and will provide food and water for them in this enclosure for a couple of weeks before leaving the doors open. Continue to provide food and water in the open enclosure for at least another month so the animals have a reliable food source while they adapt to the local area. Raccoons will find potential dens and learn to find food. Squirrels will learn to fit into the local population. Fawns will find and join a local herd. This is the final great success to celebrate in wildlife rehabilitation – meeting the ultimate goal of giving these animals a chance for life in their natural habitat.

CCWR Volunteer Driver

Purpose

The majority of Volunteer Drivers are involved in transporting sick, injured or orphaned wild animals to Constance Creek Wildlife Refuge or an associated veterinary clinic. Sometimes drivers may transfer animals that have been dropped at CCWR to other centres such as the Wild Bird Care Centre.

How Volunteers Help

Volunteer drivers will be given an animal transport kit to keep in their car. They will provide CCWR with a rough schedule of when they are most likely to be available, where they will probably be located and their contact numbers. The CCWR hotline person on duty will have a list of these contact numbers for volunteer drivers and will work through the list to contact someone when there is a need to pick up an animal. The hotline worker will make arrangements for the animal to be taken to a vet if necessary and will communicate this with the driver. **Driver safety comes first – a driver can always refuse a job if they do not feel safe collecting the animal.**

Examples of Activities

- Collect injured, orphaned and sick wild animals throughout the Ottawa region and transport them into the care of CCWR
- Respond to reports taken by the CCWR Hotline by driving to the scene of an incident and work with the CCWR staff in assessing the situation
- Transport animals from CCWR to foster sites or other wildlife rehabilitators in Eastern Ontario
- Make general driving trips that will assist CCWR with their daily logistical needs (i.e. Pick up of supplies or donations)
- Transport rehabilitated animals to the area where they will be released

Qualifications/Requirements

- 18 years of age or older
- Access to a vehicle
- Full Ontario G license
- Strong Comprehension of English
- A Cell Phone
- Access to map of the Ottawa and Eastern Ontario

Volunteers are required to attend a General Information Session at CCWR and will be interviewed thereafter.

Timeframe

Volunteer Drivers operate based on their availability and generally do not have set hours for volunteering. Before getting started, we ask that Drivers outline to us the times they are most frequently available to donate their time. When a situation arises that requires a Driver, we contact all volunteers in the area whose schedule indicates they might be able to help.

Because of this system, Drivers are not asked to commit to a set number of volunteer hours per week and are free to decide how often they would like to help out. As a result, Volunteer Driving is flexible enough to fit into almost any type of schedule and appeals to all sorts of individuals from the recently retired to regular Ottawa area residents.

Location

Volunteer Drivers mainly operate within the Ottawa region but occasionally situations arise that require travel to much farther locations. We encourage Drivers to let us know if they make regular trips outside of the Ottawa region (to the cottage, workplace, family visits, etc.) or if they are willing to drive over long distances.

Benefits

- Help in the survival and preservation of wildlife
- Gain a unique perspective on the challenges that wildlife face in an urban setting
- Learn more about the broad range of wild species that live in close contact with humans
- Assist sick, injured and orphaned wildlife without being directly involved
- Provide important public service by intervening when there is a threat to the well being of a wild animal and/or person

CCWR Wildlife Foster Care Volunteer**Purpose**

Every spring and summer, CCWR receives orphaned wild baby animals. Due to time and space limitations, CCWR cannot take on the immense workload created by the combined needs of these babies, especially neonates that need feeding every two hours. To remedy this, CCWR will foster out litters of baby wild animals to families that have the appropriate space and environmental conditions in their home and enough time to support the babies' healthy development.

Once animals have become independent and are ready to transition back into life in the wild, a soft-release is usually the preferred option. In these cases, the animals are placed with foster families who have property that provides an appropriate habitat for release. Foster families provide food and monitor the animals as they come and go while they adapt to their return to the wild.

How Volunteers Help

Orphaned wild baby animals cannot survive in nature without the care of their mother. Foster Parents provide orphaned baby animals with an opportunity to develop as normally as possible and give them a fighting chance at survival once released back into the wild. They also provide the support needed for animals to transition back to life in the wild.

Examples of Activities

- Locate and prepare a suitable space (warm, quiet, safe) in your home for the orphaned babies
- Set up the babies' cage in an appropriate manner and clean their cage when required
- Weigh babies up to once a day and calculate their formula consumption
- Prepare formula for babies and syringe feed at least 4 times a day
- Keep a record of the babies' development and report any issues to CCWR
- Alternatively, provide prerelease care and a habitat-appropriate soft release site for rehabilitated wildlife ready for return to the wild

Qualifications/Requirements:

- 18 years of age or older (with consent of all others in household)
- Strong comprehension of English
- A time schedule that permits the frequent feeding
- Safe, quiet and low stress space in your home to host the babies. This location will ideally be isolated from the high traffic areas of the household and must not be accessible to other pets in the house. This space should also provide a window for natural light and an electric socket for a heating pad.
- The Foster Parent is required to provide a heating pad, a digital weighing scale, old blankets and some supplementary food sources
- Privacy must be provided. The animals in care must not become overly familiar to humans or stressed by over handling.
- As a release site, you will be provided with appropriate outdoor housing for the species you foster

Training

Families begin the foster process by setting up a Home Assessment with a CCWR staff member. During this visit to your home, the CCWR staff member will examine the room where you intend to host the babies and ensure there aren't any outstanding safety issues that may exist in the space. Once the Home Assessment has been completed, each Foster family will be required to attend wildlife care training sessions at CCWR.

Timeframe

Most babies in need of foster care will be placed in spring. There is often a second birthing season for squirrels in July. Soft release foster sites will be needed from July to November. Foster Families do not have to be available throughout this entire time period but are required to fully commit to the time needed for their babies to become self sufficient (weaned). This process can last anywhere from 3 to 8 weeks and will vary among differing species.

Location

Your lovely home

Benefits

- Receive in depth training on the feeding and maintenance associated with a particular species of wild baby animal
- Experience a one of a kind, hands on look at the development of baby wildlife
- Provide the chance of survival to a litter of orphaned animals
- Enjoy the satisfaction of enabling a safe transition to rehabilitated animals as they adapt to life in the wild

CCWR Telephone Hotline Volunteer

Purpose

The CCWR Hotline will be created to provide the following crucial services:

- Assess calls about sick, injured or orphaned animals
- Help resolve nuisance situations humanely and effectively
- Provide general wildlife and wildlife habitat-related education
- Coordinate pick up and delivery of animals in need of rescue
- Prevent further harm to wild animals
- Prevent potential harm to humans
- Respond as CCWR's voice to the public

How Volunteers Help

It is imperative to respond quickly and accurately to each and every call that comes through the system. Hotline Volunteers help to improve both the timeliness and quality of service provided by CCWR. They often prevent harm to animals and people by providing important education to callers. By responding to calls in a professional, calm and polite manner, hotline attendants can have a huge impact on the well-being of wildlife, raise the profile of CCWR and gain community respect and support for the work we do.

Examples of Activities

- Keep good records of all calls and responses
- Answer phone in appropriate, professional manner to optimize the possibility of helping any wildlife in need
- Listen to messages left on the Hotline Answering Machine and respond as appropriate
- Assist in the process of admitting sick, injured and orphaned wildlife into the care of CCWR
- Contact Volunteer Drivers when the need arises
- General filing and administration

Qualifications/Requirements

- 18 years of age or older
- Fluency in English
- Basic computer skills
- Able to listen and type simultaneously
- Patient, organized, level-headed
- Comfortable working in a fast-paced office environment

Volunteers are required to attend a General Orientation Session at CCWR. Special telephone hotline training is required and there will be an interview thereafter.

Timeframe

Hotline Volunteers are asked to commit to one scheduled shift of four hours a week over a six month period. It may be possible to arrange taking the hotline cell phone off-site for some shifts. The shift schedule is the same for all seven days of the week:

Morning: 8:00am to 12:00pm

Afternoon: 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Evening: 4:00pm to 8:00pm

Training

You will be required to complete an online training module "Telephone Skills – Handling Wildlife Emergency Calls." Further training will be conducted on the internet. Because the Hotline position is quite unique to other office-based positions, volunteers are required to go through somewhat extensive training. As a result, preference is given to a longer term volunteer.

Location

CCWR located in Dunrobin

Benefits

- Huge role in preventing harm to animals and people
- Gain office experience in a unique environment
- Earn a reference letter based on your efforts
- Acquire a broad base of information on the treatment of wildlife in urban situations
- Assist animals without being directly involved in their care

CCWR Sanctuary Farm Animal Care Volunteer

Purpose

CCWR grew out of a farm animal rescue charity that was expanded to include wildlife rehabilitation in its mission. We continue to provide sanctuary to farm animals that have been abandoned, surrendered or in need of rescue. These animals are provided with a secure, caring home at our farm. They also play a role in educating the public about animals so that people will see each animal as a unique, feeling and interesting individual.

How Volunteers Help

Volunteers are principally involved with meeting the daily needs of the farm animals. They may also give tours of the farm to the public during open hours.

Examples of Activities

Special Needs Animals

Some animals at the farm are old or lame and so need special attention on a daily basis.

- Ensure older horses get their special foods, exercise and fresh air, grooming, a clean stall, fresh water, loving attention
- Ensure any lame or convalescent goats have some time alone in a clean stall for food, fresh water and loving attention
- Report any injuries or problems

Small Animal Care

- Clean water bowls and bottles
- Clean rabbit and guinea pig enclosures
- Ensure animals have food and fresh, clean water
- Interact with the animals so you become familiar with their personalities and needs, enabling you to pass this information along to other volunteers and farm visitors
- Report any injuries or problems

Large Animal Care

- Provide hay and special feeds to farm animals
- Assist with special care of animals such as goat hoof trimming, alpaca shearing, deworming
- Clean barn and provide fresh bedding
- Clean bowls and troughs
- Make sure animals have fresh, clean water
- Maintain the upkeep of the facility by mending fences, fixing gates, removing cobwebs, taking away garbage
- Groom horses
- Interact with the animals so you become familiar with their personalities and needs, enabling you to pass this information along to other volunteers and farm visitors
- Report any injuries or problems

Qualifications/Requirements

- At least 16 years of age (or with supervision of an adult) and able to commit to regular hours
- Interest in and respect for the unique needs of domestic animals
- Strong comprehension of English – both written and spoken
- Updated tetanus vaccination

Timeframe

Farm Sanctuary Care Volunteers are asked to commit to a fixed shift that fits into their schedule.

Training

Farm Sanctuary Volunteers are expected to attend an orientation training session and to wear appropriate protective clothing for working on the farm including boots and gloves.

Location

CCWR located in Dunrobin

Benefits

- Receive training and experience handling and caring for a variety of farm animals
- Receive a reference letter based on your efforts
- Observe and assist in various animal care procedures
- Serve as a positive role model for farm visitors when interacting with animals
- Provide gentle social interaction with animals so they continue to enjoy the company of humans

CCWR Wildlife Care Volunteer

Purpose

During the busy spring and summer seasons, there can be many wild animals in care at CCWR, with additional emergency cases at any time. Wildlife Care Volunteers play an integral part in the rehabilitation of patients by providing general care to the animals and assisting with facility maintenance.

How Volunteers Help

Volunteers are principally involved with meeting the daily needs of the animal patients we admit. As a result of their efforts, hundreds of animals will be successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild each year.

Examples of Activities

- Monitor, feed and weigh infant, juvenile and adult wild animals
- Prepare specialized formulas and foods
- Clean animal cages and laundry, wash equipment involved in the daily care of the animals
- Maintain the upkeep of the facility
- Hand feed wild orphaned animals
- Assist with medical care (wound treatment, medications)
- Keep accurate records on each animal

Qualifications/Requirements

- At least 18 years of age and able to commit to regular hours
- Experience working with animals or completion of 40 volunteer hours of farm animal care at CCWR
- Interest in and respect for the unique needs of wild animals
- Strong comprehension of English – both written and spoken
- Updated tetanus vaccination
- Rabies vaccination not required but volunteers with the vaccine will have the opportunity to handle rabies vector species
- Preference given to those who have passed the MNR Wildlife Custodian examination, have job-related experience working with animals, or have taken courses on wildlife rehabilitation

Timeframe

Wildlife Care Volunteers are asked to commit to one scheduled shift of four hours a week over a minimum 10 month period. The shift schedule is as follows:

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday through Friday	8:00am to 12:00pm	12:00pm to 4:00pm	4:00pm to 8:00pm
Saturday and Sunday	9:00am to 1:00pm	1:00pm to 6:00pm	

Training

Wildlife Care Volunteers are expected to pass the MNR Wildlife Custodian examination and Telephone Skills online course. Materials for preparing for this exam and course will be provided. Volunteers will also be required to attend a Basic Skills Training session before starting their first shift.

Location

CCWR located in Dunrobin

Benefits

- Receive in-depth training on the proper handling and care of a broad range of wild species
- Gain unique hands-on experience with wild animals
- Earn the opportunity to receive advanced training on rare and more difficult-to-handle species
- Receive a reference letter based on your efforts
- Observe and assist in various rehabilitation procedures
- Expand knowledge of native species in regards to natural history, diet and behaviour

CCWR General Support Volunteer

Purpose

Because of the high volume of animals that will live at the farm sanctuary and pass through CCWR, an immense amount of resources are dedicated to both maintaining the upkeep of the facility and ensuring that supplies are cleaned and readily accessible for Wildlife Care.

How Volunteers Help

Maintaining the centre is a constant challenge. By helping with all of the tasks that fall outside of the direct care of animals, General Support Volunteers play an essential role in keeping CCWR running smoothly. Some of these activities are on-going, while others are discreet projects so volunteers can choose according to what fits in their schedules.

Examples of Activities

- book keeping
- accounting
- correspondence
- ordering supplies
- laundry
- website maintenance
- landscaping
- creation of murals and educational displays
- interior decorating and cleaning of clinic trailer interior/exterior
- installation of well and plumbing for trailer
- construction of stairs for trailer
- construction of squirrel nesting boxes
- construction of squirrel and raccoon enclosures
- installation of cupboards in clinic
- construction of insulated pig houses
- construction of insulated rabbit hutches
- web cam installation
- fundraising
- event planning
- newsletter production
- maintain animal sponsorship program
- create and conduct education programs

Qualifications/Requirements

- 16 years of age or older (or with parental assistance)
- Strong comprehension of English
- Interest in and respect for the unique needs of wild animals
- Updated tetanus vaccination

Volunteers are required to attend a General Orientation Session at CCWR and will be interviewed thereafter.

Training

All training for General Support Volunteers is given on site.

Timeframe

Because there is generally less training involved in the General Support position, Volunteers have a little more flexibility in the days and hours they choose to volunteer each week. However we would like a firm commitment and timeline for projects.

In addition, all high school students who are interested in Wildlife Care will be asked to spend their first 40 volunteer hours in General Support. This allows students to have a sound introduction to CCWR and gives them an opportunity to decide if continuing on at the centre is something they would like to pursue.

Location

CCWR in Dunrobin, but projects may be done off-site

Benefits

- Experience a unique placement that fits well with individuals new to volunteering
- Assist sick, injured and orphaned wildlife without being directly involved in their care
- Earn a reference letter based on your efforts
- Expand knowledge of native species in regards to natural history, diet and behaviour
- Complete community service hours while potentially earning an opportunity to enter into Wildlife Care
- Contribute your skills to a worthy cause