

Habitat Herald

A Publication of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

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www.loudounwildlife.org

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Batty About Bats

by Nirmal K. Khalsa

"But, Mom, why can't I keep bats in the refrigerator?"

"No."

"But why not?"

"Just no."

I never did get a satisfactory answer to that. I was sure, however, if she just saw how soft and cute (in an alien sort of way anyway) they were, she'd relent. But she never got close enough to even a stuffed one to find out.

Mark Twain, by the way, agrees with me that "a bat is beautifully soft and silky", and he had as little luck convincing his mother as I did (though I must admit his practice of leaving bats in his pocket for his mother to find was perhaps not the best introduction).

Maybe I should have taken the scientific tack and pointed out how many mosquitoes and other crawly nasties they eat at night. Birds are well known as insect eaters of the daytime, but what happens at night? Right, bats. One bat can easily eat 1,000 mosquitoes every hour; a large bat colony (and they can contain millions) eats literally tons of insects every night.

Bats are the only true flying mammals. Those you'll see in this area are largely pipistrelles, which roost behind siding and shutters (or in bat houses), little brown bats and big brown bats, and like most bats, they eat insects. Though they can see quite well and navigate and hunt visually if their ears are blocked, they usually use echolocation to catch their dinner and to fly safely. In other parts of the world there are bats that eat nectar, fruit, and a few that eat small animals like mice, fish and frogs. Some of these don't even have echolocation abilities since they are active during the day and live above ground.

Like all mammals, bats can carry diseases (including rabies) and parasites. And as with any wild animal, it's safest to stay out of their way, especially if they're acting strangely. Bats prefer to avoid people,

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The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) group of volunteers who share a common goal of protecting and perpetuating natural habitats for the benefit of both people and wildlife. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board meets the first Tuesday of each month. Board meetings are open to all members. For more information, or to suggest topics for discussion at upcoming meetings, contact Phil Daley.

You can also visit us at:

www.loudounwildlife.org

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

by Phil Daley

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Vacant		
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Spring is here, supposedly, and despite the cool temperatures as I write this, I see signs everywhere that the seasons are changing. The maples are in bloom, as are the Lenten roses; some daffodils have their yellow faces looking up at us, and even the elm buds are starting to swell. The snowdrops and winter aconites are just about done. Yes, and the drab olive goldfinches, who have been at the feeder all winter, are showing a few bright yellow feathers.

Spring is also a time when people look for new challenges, and unfortunately for LWC, one of our most active members is heading back to her home state to pursue a graduate degree. Patty Sally, our children's program chair, and her husband Dominic are going back to Minnesota, where Patty hopes to work on her Master's in conservation biology, natural resources, or some related field. We will miss not only her exceptional work with the youth in Loudoun and Fairfax counties, but also the outstanding articles she has written for the *Habitat Herald*. We wish her the very best in her new adventure. Keep in touch, Patty.

As spring unfolds, we notice the increased activity and calling of the red-shouldered hawks in the woodlot next door, and often wake to the noise of a flock of crows as they harass the barred owls, residents here for the past 20 years. What a racket, but I prefer it to the electric alarm on the dresser. We've even heard some spring peepers several weeks ago, one warm, rainy evening. By now, the early salamander mating migrations are over, but if you venture out, you should be able to find lots of jelly-like egg masses in many of the shallow

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Batty About Bats...*Continued from page 1*

and a healthy one will do its best to get as far from you as possible. Though they're considered a main carrier of rabies in Virginia, wild bats have less than a 1/2% incidence of the disease. (See page 4 for more information about rabies.)

On the whole, you have nothing to worry about. People come from all over the country to watch bat lights at Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico and at the special Congress Bridge sanctuary build for them in Austin, Texas, and are never bitten or attacked.

We do expect bats, however, to keep to their own space. We have greatly altered their habitat, but usually don't appreciate it when they take advantage of our buildings and move in. If one is flying around in your house, open all the doors and windows and then sit down; the bat will find its way out.

And if bats are congregating in your attic, the simplest way to exclude them is to cover all openings from the outside with a piece of screen attached only at the top. (Be sure you don't have a nursery colony; if you do, wait until the babies are able to fly out on their own.) The bats will be able to wiggle out, but can't get back in. Or you might mount some bat houses on your house or nearby trees--bats really prefer a house built to their needs over your attic--and they may move out on their own.



We must, of course, take up the touchy subject of vampire bats. Yes, they do exist. No, there aren't any in the US; they live only in Latin America.

And no, they don't suck out your blood; they actually make small slashes in skin (usually of cattle) and lap up the blood as it oozes out. In fact, studies are underway to isolate the substance in bat saliva that keeps the blood flowing as they feed. It could be a valuable anti-coagulant for human use.

If you're interested in learning more, contact Bat Conservation International (BCI) at www.batcon.org or the Organization for Bat Conservation at www.batconservation.org. Both have informative magazines, educational programs, programs for bat research in your own back yard, bat houses for sale, and of course, donation opportunities. BCI also offers fascinating field study workshops around the world.

And if my child wanted to keep bats in the refrigerator, what would I say? Well, I have to admit it would be a "no", but only because, you understand, I'm thinking of the welfare of the bats....

Help Wanted - Volunteers Needed

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is an all volunteer organization with no office or other physical location. Volunteers work out of their homes and/or lead programs or field trips. And we always need more volunteers!

Children's Programs. Schedule, plan and coordinate all details of children's education programs, which include six or more classes per year. A two-year commitment is preferred.

Membership. Recruit, track and recognize LWC members. Would work closely with the Secretary and Treasurer. A two-year commitment is preferred.

Public Relations / Publicity. Coordinate and design materials to raise awareness of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and its events. A two-year commitment is preferred.

Event assistants. Staff LWC information booths and tables at community fairs and other events.

To volunteer, contact Phil Daley (540) 338-6528 or phidaley@aol.com.

A Word...*Continued from page 2*

woodland pools and water-filled depressions. If you are lucky enough to find some, keep an eye on the location and you may also experience them hatching into young salamander larvae. If you don't get a chance to get outdoors, we hope you will us for one or more of our upcoming programs.

Speaking of programs, Joe Coleman advised me that we had 17 people show up for our bird walk at Banshee Reeks, the biggest turnout yet. May, and June should provide even better birding. Remember these walks start at 8 a.m., the second Saturday of every month. Both novice and experienced birders can enjoy these walks, and no experience or reservations are needed. Just show up with a pair of binoculars and enjoy a wonderful morning out of doors.

For those of us who are supplementing our feathered friends' diet with feeders, remember not to stop at the first sign of warmer weather. Both resident and migrating birds often rely on your easy handouts until natural foods are more abundant. This is also the time for you to put out your hummingbird feeder, as these feisty little guys start arriving in very early April and need food sources, as many of our flowers aren't in full bloom yet.

Our fifth year of water monitoring kicked off on March 31st. This has been one of our most successful and intensive volunteer efforts, with more than 50 people involved. Check the schedule for the spring training sessions and join a team -- it's lots of fun and an important endeavor. Fred Fox and Gem Bingol, our water projects co-chairs, have been busy working on a memorandum of understanding with other organizations and county staff agencies to improve the availability and use of the data collected by all the entities involved in water-quality assessments. Thanks to them and all the volunteers who put forth time and effort to keep Loudoun's streams healthy.

One last reminder: Your board of directors meets at the ANS's Rust Sanctuary the first Tuesday of every month. These meetings are always open to members and interested individuals. We welcome you to join us whenever you can.

Enjoy spring!

Rabies Q and A

WHAT IS RABIES? Rabies is an infectious viral disease that affects the nervous system of humans and other warm-blooded animals. A wide variety of mammals can contract the disease, but it is most often noticed in dogs, cats, foxes, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, bats, and livestock. Worldwide, more than 30,000 humans die of rabies each year, and 99% of cases result from contact with dogs. In the United States, due to highly successful dog vaccination programs, transmission from dogs is now rare, eliminating the vast majority of human cases.

HOW IS RABIES TRANSMITTED? Rabies is nearly always transmitted by a bite. Careless handling of unfamiliar or wild animals is the primary source of rabies exposure. Rabies cannot be transmitted by simple contact with feces, blood or urine. However, it can be transmitted by an animal's infected saliva or brain tissues and a human's

open wound or mucous membranes of the eyes, nose or mouth.

HOW CAN RABIES BE PREVENTED? Dog and cat vaccination is the best prevention. Children should be taught never to handle wild or unfamiliar animals, even if they appear friendly. People at increased risk of exposure because they handle wild animals should receive pre-exposure vaccinations.

WHAT IS THE RECOMMENDED TREATMENT FOR EXPOSURE? Modern rabies treatment is highly effective and relatively painless. Post-exposure rabies prophylaxis should begin as soon as possible after exposure. A series of six injections is given over a 28 day period.

If you have additional questions, please contact your local Health Department.

LOUDOUN STREAM MONITORING PROJECT

Classes and Programs

The water quality of Loudoun County's streams is integral to the well-being of local wildlife and is an indicator of overall ecosystem health. Most of Loudoun County's streams support diverse communities of aquatic life, but in the nation's third-fastest growing county, these irreplaceable resources are under daily threat of destruction and need constant vigilance. Streams and shoreline habitats provide food, shelter, and travel corridors for animals and many of the migratory bird species that make their seasonal journeys across our landscape.

Stream Monitoring classes are taught by Dave Harrelson of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Cliff Fairweather of Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS). As our volunteer base grows, the LWC, in partnership with ANS, Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District and the North Fork Goose Creek and Catoctin Watershed Committees, plans to establish stream monitoring teams for every watershed in Loudoun County. These program are made possible, in part, by grants from the Virginia Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Please join us for one of our sessions.

They are educational, good for the environment, and fun for the entire family.

Classes are held at the Webb Sanctuary in Clifton, VA and at the Rust Sanctuary in Leesburg, VA — *Sign up is required.*

To register for any of the classes, contact Cliff Fairweather at (703) 803-8400 or cliff@audubonnaturalist.org.

MACRO-INVERTEBRATE IDENTIFICATION I

Tuesday, May 22 (7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.) Rust — classroom

Sunday, June 10 (1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.) Rust — classroom / field (*Sycolin Creek — Please bring waterproof boots if you would like to help collect specimens.*)

Benthic macro-invertebrates, boneless creatures that live under flowing water are important indicators of aquatic ecosystem health. Learn how to identify the major groups of these organisms, including aquatic insects and crustaceans, to the taxonomic level of Order (e.g., *Ephemera* or Mayflies).

STREAM MONITORING PROTOCOL PRACTICUM

Sunday, June 23 (1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.) Rust — *we will carpool to a nearby stream. Please bring boots or sneakers for wading.*

Using the data collection protocol developed for the ANS Water Quality Monitoring Project, participants will learn how to gather abiotic data (temperature, pH, and several habitat assessments) and use a D-frame net to collect stream organisms.

PROTECTING LOUDOUN'S STREAMS AND WATERWAYS

If you are interested in becoming a stream monitor, please fill in the following form and mail it to:

Stream Monitoring Project
c/o Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District
30-H Catoctin Circle, SE
Leesburg, VA 20175
FAX: (703) 443-0187

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

If neither of those streams is available, are you willing to help monitor a site

List the Classes and Dates you are interested in:

Class	1st Choice	2nd Choice

List the Stream you are interested in monitoring:

1st Choice	2nd Choice

designated by the Project? q Yes q No

Are you interested in being one of our Team Leaders? q Yes q No

Would you be interested in helping us with some of our administrative functions (typing, maintaining our database, or record-keeping)? q Yes q No

For more information on any of the programs please contact:

Loudoun Soil & Water Conservation District (703) 777-2075
 Audubon Naturalist Society — Cliff Fairweather (703) 803-8400

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Space is limited for many of these programs.

Please call the designated program contact for further information and to reserve your spot.

LOUDOUN COUNTY INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY WALKS, May 12, 2001. In Celebration of International Migratory Bird Day, the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is sponsoring a variety of different bird walks on May 12, 2001. All of the walks will begin at 8:00 a.m. and last until about 11:00 a.m. May is the height of migration and birds that are rarely seen pass through our area. We have picked four diverse areas which reflect the rich diversity of Loudoun County's environment and the birds that can be found here. **Registration Required:** contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jandkcoleman@erols.com to sign up or get additional information.

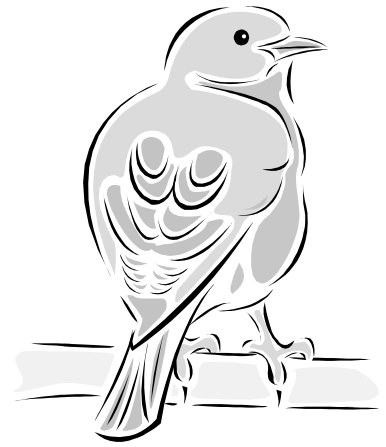
BANSHEE REEKS and the DULLES WETLANDS: a nature preserve and wetlands mitigation project in the heart of Loudoun County, about six miles southeast of Leesburg. Over 120 bird species were seen in this part of Loudoun County when the Virginia Society of Ornithology held their annual meeting here two years ago.

HORSEPEN PRESERVE: several hundred acres of river bottomland and upland forest immediately to the west of Algonkian Regional Park in eastern Loudoun County. This under-visited area has proven to be an excellent site for both migrants and breeding birds.

BALLS BLUFF: the site of one of Union's worst defeats in the Civil War and the nation's smallest National Cemetery also happens to be rich birding habitat along the Potomac River on the eastern edge of Leesburg. We have seen everything from nesting orioles to flocks of turkeys in this park.

BLUE RIDGE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP: 900 acres of nature preserve privately owned and located about five miles south of Harpers Ferry. This preserve includes a wonderful variety of habitats from mountain slopes covered in mixed hardwood forest to wet meadows and ponds on the valley floor. Because of its proximity to the Potomac River and the Blue Ridge Mountains this area promises to be a rich birding area.

The different walks will be led by Tom Bjorkman, Joe Coleman, Phil Daley, John Drummond, Mary Ann Good and Jack Hugus.



LOUDOUN'S STREAMS: HOW HEALTHY ARE THEY & WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THEM, Tuesday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Rust Sanctuary. Learn about the health of Loudoun's streams how you can play a role in their protection. In addition to a short slide show on stream ecology and our monitoring program uses stream creatures as indicators of water quality. There will also be a description of Loudoun County's Citizen Silt Watcher's Program and how you can participate in it. **Please note that this program will be held at the Audubon Naturalist Society Rust Sanctuary on Children's Center Road.**

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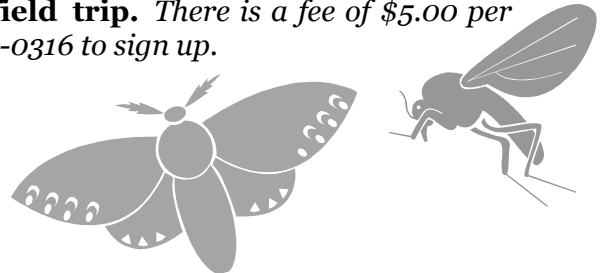
BIRDING BANSHEE, Saturday, June 9, 8:00 a.m. Join the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve and Park near Leesburg for a bird walk. Because of its rich and varied habitat, this part of the County is a birding hot spot and one is never sure what one will find. Please bring binoculars. *Questions - Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jandkcoleman@erols.com.*

BUTTERFLIES AT BANSHEE, Saturday, June 16, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Join the Friends of Banshee Reeks and the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for their first ever regular Butterfly Walk. We will investigate Banshee's natural environs and identify all of the different butterflies we can find. If you own binoculars please bring them. *Questions - Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jandkcoleman@erols.com.*

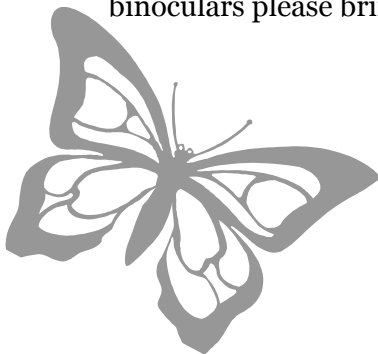
BIRDING BANSHEE, Saturday, July 14, 8:00 a.m. Join the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve on its regular monthly bird walk. Please bring binoculars. *Questions - Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jandkcoleman@erols.com.*



INSECTS OF THE NIGHT, Saturday, July 14, 1999, 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Explore and discuss the fascinating world of night insects at Banshee Reeks with Cliff Fairweather of the Audubon Naturalist Society. Cliff will begin the night with a discussion of the fascinating world of night insects. After dark, with the aid of a black light and flashlights, we will explore a world unfamiliar to most of us, but important to all of us. **Registration is required for this fee-based field trip.** *There is a fee of \$5.00 per person for this field trip - contact Banshee Reeks at 703-669-0316 to sign up.*



BUTTERFLIES AT BANSHEE, Saturday, July 21, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Join the Friends of Banshee Reeks and the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for their regular monthly Butterfly Walk. We will investigate Banshee's natural environs and identify all of the different butterflies we can find. If you own binoculars please bring them. *Questions - Contact Banshee Reeks at 703-669-0316.*



LWC Annual Meeting

Tuesday, July 10, 2001

7:30 pm

Location to be determined

Look for details on our website or contact Phil Daley at (540) 338-6528 or phidaley@aol.com.

West Nile Virus Alert: Is It Time, Once Again, To Drain The Swamps?

by Bruce McGranahan



With the approach of warm weather comes the return of those pesky little insects that buzz about your head and in the case of the mosquito, also contribute a stinging, itchy bite. This spring will probably bring with it a renewed concern over the threat of West Nile Virus (WNV). The common household mosquito, *Culex pipiens*, has been the primary focus of emergence and spread of WNV in the United States.

“Mosquito” is a Spanish or Portuguese word meaning “little fly”. The life cycle of the mosquito begins with an egg. Eggs are laid one at a time, and in the case of the *Culex*, laid in rafts of 200 or more that float on the surface of water. Within 48 hours, most eggs hatch into larvae equipped with siphon tubes that hang from the water surface. Larvae molt four times before entering the pupal stage, a resting, non-feeding stage in which the pupa takes about two days to turn into a fully formed adult. Now the mosquito introduces itself to humans, as the adult female requires a blood meal to develop fertile eggs. *Culex* usually live for only a few weeks during the warmer months. Females that emerge late in the summer search for sheltered areas where they hibernate until spring. Warm weather brings them out again in search of water on which to lay their eggs.

Standing water is essential to the mosquito’s life cycle. Last summer brought concerns over wetlands that had been preserved within various residential communities in the county. Some citizens believe these mosquito breeding grounds should be drained to reduce the risk of WNV. Let’s examine the facts.

WNV is deadly to birds, especially crows, and has a far greater impact on birds than humans in North America, with 60 bird species -- including merlins, great horned owls, catbirds, warblers, gulls, swans and at least one bald eagle -- testing positive to date. The chance of humans becoming seriously ill from WNV is very small. Most humans overcome any infection from WNV by the normal response of the immune system. According to the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*: “Even in areas where mosquitoes do carry the virus, very few mosquitoes—much less than one percent -- are infected. If the mosquito is infected, less than one percent of people who get bitten and become infected will get severely ill. The chances you will become severely ill from any one mosquito bite are extremely small.”

Wetlands are part of the natural history of Loudoun County, especially east of Leesburg, where poorly drained soils and a high water table in what was once a large sea result in an abundance of natural wetlands and standing water. Those who do not understand the benefits of wetlands view them as merely unkempt areas that should be filled and manicured into parks or lawns. Wetlands provide enormous benefits, including storing floodwaters, removing sediment and pollutants from storm-water runoff, and recharging the groundwater. Wetlands have been likened to the “kidneys” of a watershed, acting like a sponge to retain and break down pollutants through biological activity, plant uptake, and soil infiltration.

What’s more, wetlands and the transitional habitat along wetland margins are one of nature’s most prolific ecosystems, supporting remarkable biological diversity. While wetlands can provide breeding habitat for mosquitoes, they also support mosquito controls. Mosquitoes form a major part of the diets of fish, birds, bats and other wildlife. Fish are useful predators of mosquito larvae, while predacious insects like the dragonfly help control adult mosquitoes. Natural controls should always be preferred.

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West Nile Virus...continued from page 9

Some simple measures you can take to protect yourself and others from WNV without compromising the environment:

- Find and eliminate common mosquito breeding sites around the home, such as air conditioner drain outlets, birdbaths, containers, clogged roof gutters, old tires, tree holes, wading pools, and anything that can hold water long enough for the mosquito larvae to complete their life cycle.
- Educate others on the importance of maintaining habitat for mosquito predators like fish, birds and insects. Help others to understand the benefits of wetland areas rather than seeing them as a potential threat.
- Discourage the use of pesticides designed to control adult mosquitoes. Pesticides should be a last resort, when all other controls have been exhausted. According to the *American Bird Conservancy*, spraying pesticides in urban and suburban areas does little to reduce the spread of WNV and may breed resistant strains, reducing their effectiveness when they may be the only option. Pesticides have direct, toxic effects on wildlife and beneficial insects, such as butterflies, bees and dragonflies, and on most aquatic life.
- If you find a dead bird, avoid handling it, or use gloves or a plastic bag to protect your hand. Report it to the Loudoun County Health Department at (703) 777-0234.
- Make sure doors, windows and screens are tight. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors at dawn or dusk and use repellents to protect bare skin.
- Avoid insect electrocutors; these devices are ineffective against mosquitoes but do effectively kill beneficial insects.

What You Can Do

Help control the West Nile Virus by:

- Reducing standing water in your yard
- Unclogging/cleaning your gutters
- Emptying unused swimming pools
- Changing birdbath water at least weekly
- Reporting sick or dying birds to the county health department

Reduce exposure to mosquitoes by:

- ! Limiting outdoor activity at dawn and dusk
- ! Wearing long pants and sleeves when in mosquito infested areas, like swamps
- ! Applying insect repellent with 20-30% DEET sparingly to skin and clothing

What to Do When You Suspect West Nile Virus

Contact the Wildlife Rescue League hotline at (703) 440-0800 for information about who to contact in the case of sick, dying or dead birds. You can also contact your county Health Department or the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries / Department of Natural Resources for information.

Leave Wild Animal Mothers Alone

The following article was originally printed in the Alexandria Journal on February 15, 2001 and is reprinted here with kind permission of the author, Adrian Roberts of Bealeton, VA.

March was the beginning of what wildlife rehabilitators call "baby season." We urgently need you to help cope with this artificially created crisis that repeats year after year, always setting new records in terms of orphaned animals and stressed-out rehabilitators.

As the natural environment is destroyed, wild animal mothers move into attics, crawl spaces, outbuildings and under decks.

Homeowners panic and either call in professional trappers/pest control companies, or go to the local hardware store and buy their own traps.

Often, the mothers are trapped and killed or relocated, leaving helpless young to die a slow, painful death from starvation and hypothermia.

The luckier ones are brought to wildlife rehabilitators for a long and expensive course of surrogate motherhood.

Rehabilitators receive no reimbursement from the government for the formula, food, drugs, caging and vet bills, which can easily amount to \$100 or more per animal.

Remember that there are thousands of orphans and only a few hundred rehabilitators in the entire commonwealth of Virginia (even fewer in Maryland, and none in D.C.).

It is all so maddeningly unnecessary.

In the first place, most of the trapping is illegal, at least in Virginia. It seems that everyone has heard of hunting seasons, but few seem to realize that the state prohibits trapping in certain seasons too, a restriction equally applicable to homeowners, professional trappers and pest control companies.

Generally, these "closed seasons" protect raccoon, fox, beaver and other species from being disturbed when they are giving birth and raising young in the spring and summer.

A special permit from a game warden is required to trap at that time. And the permit is for killing the animal or trapping and releasing it on the same property, not for relocation.

In fact, relocating a wild animal is prohibited at any time of year, except by certain state and

!!

Would You Like to Continue Receiving This Newsletter?

If you are not already a member of LWC, you can join now by completing and returning the following form with your payment to:

*Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
PO Box 2088
Purcellville, VA 20134-2088*

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, ST, Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____ **E-mail:** _____

- Membership Fees: (*membership runs from January 1- December 31)
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student* | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family* | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Individual Lifetime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Individual* | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Corporate* | <input type="checkbox"/> \$300 Family Lifetime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Donation \$ _____ | | |

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is an IRS 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Leave Wild Animal Mothers ...Continued from page 11

federal officials, Animal Control and licensed wildlife rehabilitators.

If you see illegal trapping or transporting, don't just wring your hands. Call the state wildlife violations hotline (1-800-237-5712). If they can't respond quickly enough, any peace officer in the state is obligated to enforce the law.

But it should not come down to a matter of law enforcement. In most cases, wild mothers are not taking up permanent residence in the man-made structure. They will move out when their young are mobile.

Then, the homeowner can take steps to seal the entrances to these artificial dens. It can be as simple as putting a \$25 cap on the chimney, or pruning back a tree overhanging the roof.

In the meantime, be patient. It might even turn into a fascinating experience for the entire family. No need to go to the zoo; just peek into your own attic!

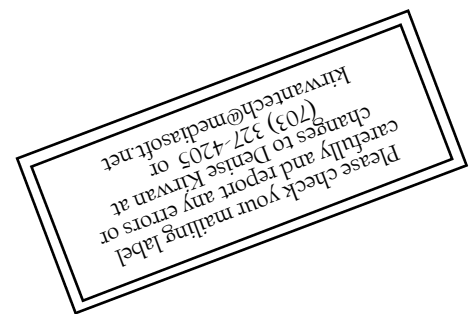
What if mother and young don't move out? There are numerous non-lethal ways of hastening their departure, including noise, artificial light, olfactory repellents, one-way doors, etc. Wildlife rehabilitators will be glad to help. After all, the alternative for them can be long days and nights of feeding and cleaning, trips to the vet and sometimes living in semi-poverty to pay for it all.

Please help stop this cruel and unnecessary cycle of pain and stress for animals and rehabilitators alike.

Who Should You Contact with Wildlife Questions or Problems?

Wildlife Rescue League Hotline
(703) 440-0800

Leslie McCasker
Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator
(540) 338-2133



Address Service Requested

**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
P.O. Box 2088
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