

R.O.C.K. - Rehabbers Offer Care and Kindness

Wildlife Rehabilitators are aware of the many perils facing individual wild animals in their daily existence. Some can be avoided by personal steps that we can take - others need to be dealt with through education or lobbying efforts.

Wildlife rehabilitators are **licensed by state game agencies, yet they are given no support**, and they

are **not allowed to charge for their "services."** Sadly, animals often come to the attention of rehabbers when they are found by people who either don't want them near their house or don't know how to help them. When the DEC, DNR or police are called, they normally recommend killing or letting the animals die; and most veterinarians cannot take time from their busy schedules.

Friends of the Feathered and Furry Wildlife Center

By E. M. Fay

Wildlife in New York State, as elsewhere, is under constant pressure from human residents who share the region with them. As more people move from urban centers to "the country," more and more natural habitat is taken away from the animals who lived there first. Their food sources are depleted, too, whether they are herbivores, carnivores, or omnivores, because the food chain for *all* of us starts with plants, so when forests and meadows are cut down and paved over everyone who depended on those resources goes hungry. Plus, as we transect formerly wild lands with innumerable roadways, far more animals are killed as they cross to find water and food sources.

To add insult to injury, many of the humans who live in rural and suburban areas don't know how to live peacefully with wildlife. Sometimes, they are frightened or annoyed by wild neighbors who pass through yards - animals who, after all, are only trying to find food and homes for themselves and their young ones. Those not willing to share the land with wildlife often either try to eradicate it themselves with poison, bullets, traps, and other lethal means, or they call government authorities such as the DEC or police and ask them to "get rid of" whatever wild neighbor is, to them, a "pest."



The sad consequence of all this is ever-increasing numbers of injured and orphaned wildlife. For over 20 years, many unfortunate victims of human thoughtlessness have been cared for by licensed wildlife rehabilitator and educator, **Barbara “Missy” Runyan**.

Missy established Friends of Feathered and Furry Wildlife Center in Greene County as a “second chance” haven for helpless animals of all kinds. Animals are brought to FFFWC from all over the state. Missy has received calls at all hours of the day and night, asking her to pick up various individuals. Sometimes, helpless bear cubs are orphaned and left to starve when their mother is shot dead for merely searching for food in a dumpster.

Despite the difficulties, Missy makes every effort to respond. As she says, “Regardless of how they got here, they need our help!” Not all animals can be saved, but she strives mightily, and a remarkable number of them are rehabilitated and released back to their wild habitats. Those she cannot save are compassionately and respectfully euthanized.

Wildlife Rehabilitation is not for the faint of heart!

FFFWC has handled geese, ducks, woodpeckers, owls, fox, deer, falcons, snakes, songbirds, rabbits, hawks, turtles, and others. Besides the heart-rending aspect of much of the work, each species requires special diet, housing, environmental stimuli, antibiotics, recovery caging, and vet care, among other things. Countless hours are spent, day and night, feeding, cleaning, changing bandages, and caring for these innocent beings.

FFF Wildlife Center can not continue their work without donations.

Visit: <http://www.fffwildlifecenter.com>

You can also “friend” FFFWC on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/fffwildlifecenter>