



Cornell University

Cornell Wildlife Health Center

# JANET L. SWANSON WILDLIFE HOSPITAL



M. Groo

## A WILDLIFE HOSPITAL

The Janet L. Swanson Wildlife Hospital is a veterinary hospital dedicated solely to the treatment of ill or injured native wild animals. Based at Cornell University and affiliated with the Cornell University Hospital for Animals, the Swanson Wildlife Hospital serves wild patients that are often brought to us by concerned citizens who come across wild animals in distress.

We also work with a growing network of licensed New York State wildlife rehabilitators who help to rescue and rehabilitate native wildlife.

## HEALING THE HELPLESS

Our patients arrive entangled in fishing line, weakened by environmental pollutants, battered by motor vehicles, debilitated from disease, or even injured by people's pets. From chickadees to cottontail rabbits, bobcats to bald eagles – we take them in and work to address the unique situation each patient finds itself in.

Without an owner to look after them, and with a natural instinct to flee or hide, wildlife patients are often critically ill by the time they are rescued and transported to us. While these patients often require intensive care and complex treatments, we work diligently toward a goal of release back into the wild.

## TEACHING AND TRAINING

As a university-based hospital, we have a passion for education and are dedicated to training future leaders in wildlife medicine. Through our robust student volunteer program, over 70 veterinary and undergraduate students each year receive hands-on experience treating wildlife patients and learning valuable clinical skills. In addition, veterinary technician students from accredited programs statewide are able to earn credit towards their degrees while learning about wildlife in our structured preceptorship, which is the only program of its kind in the nation.

Graduate veterinarians pursuing board certification in zoological medicine are trained by experienced faculty to perform state-of-the-art medicine and surgery on a wide variety of wildlife species, while learning about a range of disease conditions. We also work to improve the skillsets and knowledge of our colleagues in wildlife rehabilitation – through close collaboration on individual cases as well as provision of continuing education at annual conferences.

## ADVANCING WILDLIFE MEDICINE THROUGH RESEARCH

Through innovative research projects as well as collaborations with scientists across and outside of Cornell, we contribute new information to the field of wildlife

medicine that improves our understanding of wildlife health and our ability to care for our patients.

From developing new tests for rodenticide toxicity in hawks, to evaluating new surgical approaches in hellbender salamanders and snapping turtles, to more fully characterizing ocular lesions in birds of prey, we will continue to foster evidence-based interventions that will improve the welfare of and outcomes for our hospitalized wildlife patients – while generating new knowledge of relevance at the population level.

## TREATING INDIVIDUALS, CONSERVING POPULATIONS

As a community service, we cultivate the involvement of concerned citizens in supporting the value and conservation of wildlife. Additionally, we function as an important monitor of wildlife and ecosystem health, as each individual patient admitted to the Janet L. Swanson Wildlife Hospital offers important clues regarding the health of wildlife populations as well as the environments they live in.

Finally, through collaboration with wildlife biologists, rehabilitators, New York State entities, and others, we play key roles in investigating and improving our collective understanding of native wildlife health.



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