

Spring 2018

Dear Friend of Wild Care

As I write this, we are busily preparing for the arrival of orphans. Our first baby squirrels of the season have arrived, on the tail of several harsh winter storms. So far this season we have successfully reunited over five litters of squirrels back with their mothers after their nests were found on the ground, the remnants of felled trees lying all around them.



*“Through our Wildlife Helpline, Wild Care’s staff work hard to keep wildlife in the wild, whenever possible.” S. Ellis*

In 2017, Wild Care received an astounding 1,716 animals through our door. Of those animals, 745 (44%) were orphans. Orphans are displaced due to tree felling, habitat destruction, free-roaming cats, storms, and more. We strive to reunite orphans back with their parents, but our efforts are not always successful. But, not all is lost. Orphans always have a place at Wild Care.

Orphans do take a lot of work! Baby songbirds, for example require hand feeding every 20 minutes in our nursery beginning at 6AM every day by our caring staff and volunteers. Orphaned squirrels that are still pink, eyes closed and helpless, require round-the-clock feedings, much like a human infant.



*The first nest of orphaned squirrels of the season. Photo by Niki Walley.*



*Orphaned Chimney Swifts receive specialized care.*

Then there are species that require even more *extraordinary* efforts... Chimney Swifts are one such example. Chimney Swifts are a species that once nested abundantly on Cape Cod, but has suffered massive population declines due to the loss of their natural nesting and roosting sites in large tree hollows. Chimney Swifts have also suffered a loss of their *artificial* nesting and roosting sites in chimneys. As more and more chimneys are capped, swifts have no place to go. Sadly, this long distant migrant that was once abundant in Cape Cod skies, is quickly becoming a rare sight.

Last year, Wild Care successfully raised nine orphaned Chimney Swifts. Now, nine birds may not seem like very many to you, but each bird was fed every initially every 30 minutes from dawn till dusk, and fed a minimum of 100 mealworms per day for over 30 days. That’s 9,000 mealworms per week! Because these “aerial insectivores” only eat insects in flight in the wild, Wild Care staff hand feed them until the very moment they were released. Chimney Swifts are also extremely social, and migrate as far south as Peru in the winter. Because of this, it is critically important to release them into an existing swift roost, or a migratory flock of swifts or swallows.

*We put the “care” in Wild Care!*

This species' strange, magical lifestyle and eating behaviors make them an extremely challenging species to rehabilitate. Because of our success, Wild Care has been recognized as *the* go to place for orphaned Chimney Swift care in Massachusetts. We were even invited to speak on the care of orphaned swifts, at the Wildlife Rehabilitators Association of Massachusetts' (WRAM) Annual Conference at Tufts University on March 10<sup>th</sup>, a tremendous honor.

What an amazing day it was last fall, when Jennifer Taylor, Wild Care's Animal Care Coordinator, noticed a migratory flock of swallows circling over Wild Care. She immediately released our swifts into the flock. Up they went, swirling, twirling, and twittering in the sky, just as they were meant to be. We are so grateful to get nine of these incredible birds, so critical to a declining population, back into the skies! This is just one example of the miracles that happen at Wild Care every single day. These miracles would not happen without you, and your monetary support.

*Please consider making a donation today.  
There are many ways you can help...*

- **Make a one-time donation** - Help us through the remainder of our busy season.
- **Become a Monthly Sustainer** - Support our wildlife patients into the future! Sign up at <http://www.wildcarecapecod.org/donate-today/>.
- **Consider Legacy Giving** - Make Wild Care a beneficiary of your estate. Contact Executive Director Stephanie Ellis, [sellis@wildcarecapecod.org](mailto:sellis@wildcarecapecod.org).
- **Attend a Wild Care event!** [www.wildcarecapecod.org](http://www.wildcarecapecod.org)

If you are already a Monthly Sustainer - we are grateful for your support!  
We deeply appreciate your willingness to support the work and mission of Wild Care.

**Thank you for donating now, and helping us to keep the "Care" in Wild Care!**



Stephanie Ellis, Executive Director  
Wild Care, Inc

### **South African Braai at Karoo**

Enjoy a South African Bar-B-Q & live music by Sarah Burrill. Vegan & Vegetarian options. Special owl and turtle guests!

Sunday, May 6th 4:30 - 8 PM

\$75 per person

Karoo Restaurant, 3 Main St. #32B, Eastham  
Details at [www.wildcarecapecod.org](http://www.wildcarecapecod.org)

### **Swooping In for Wild Care**

A fundraising event for Wild Care at the Addison Art Gallery. Raffle, refreshments. A portion of proceeds from all art sales will benefit Wild Care.

Saturday, June 9th 5:00 - 7 PM

(Meet the artists for a live demo at 3 PM)

Addison Art Gallery - 43 South Orleans Rd., Rt 28  
Details - [www.wildcarecapecod.org](http://www.wildcarecapecod.org)