

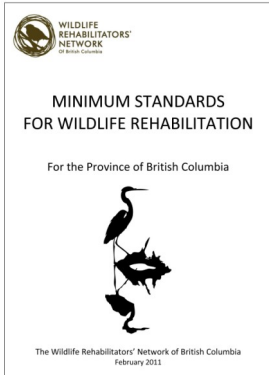
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**WILDLIFE
REHABILITATORS'
NETWORK**
Of British Columbia

Feedback Wanted!



As you may remember, in 2010, the Board of Directors tasked itself with updating several documents, one of which was the WRNBC Guidelines for Protocol of Care.

By now, you should have received a copy of the new guidelines to review. (If not, you can request one from Meghann Cant at mbcant@yahoo.com.)

We welcome your feedback on the document. Feel free to send your comments and suggestions to mbcant@yahoo.com by **June 30, 2011**. Whether you have a lot or a little to say, we want to hear it!

NWRA Symposium 2011

By Angelika Langen, WRNBC President



As we have come to expect, the organizers of the NWRA Symposium outdid themselves again this year. Taking place this time in Albany, New York, the event sported an unbelievable choice of 96 presentations and 14 workshops. There were more than 400 attendees from across the United States and Canada, as well as international participants from Brazil.

As is to be expected, the devastating Gulf oil spill was on everyone's mind and we had a chance to meet some of the incredible people who worked tirelessly to save the



affected wildlife. Besides the chance to learn new things, I think the biggest asset that this symposium offers is the opportunity to talk to other rehabilitators. We often get so lost in our work that it is rejuvenating to hear others speak about their challenges and victories, as it gives us new hope and energy to carry on. It is also an opportunity to extend our network and have more people to fall back on with our questions when faced with a problem. You know the saying: shared troubles are half the trouble!

I encourage all of you to mark next year's dates in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and start now to look for education and travel grants that will allow you to attend the NWRA Symposium in 2012.



2011 WRNBC AGM

By Mia Cirotto, RAHT, WRNBC Director-at-Large

This year, the WRNBC Annual General Meeting was hosted by Elizabeth's Wildlife Center in Abbotsford. Elizabeth's was established in 1986 and became a non-profit in 1999. Elizabeth Melnick, the facility's founder and primary caregiver, opened her house to host our icebreaker on Friday evening. Wildlife rehabilitators from all over BC gathered together to network and share knowledge with their peers.



Once again, WRNBC was able to offer two bursaries: the travel bursary and the education bursary. Kimberly Reid was this year's recipient of the travel bursary, which aided in her long journey from the northern coastal community of Stewart.

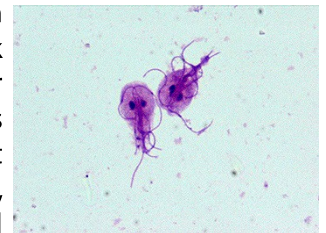
Sean Daley, an Animal Health Technology student from Thompson Rivers University, received the education bursary. Sean sent a letter thanking WRNBC for their financial support, with his regrets for being unable to attend the AGM.



Over two days, presentations were given from members of WRNBC and experts within various regulatory agencies. The talks included an informative presentation by the volunteer coordinator at Elizabeth's Wildlife Center. Cait Nelson from the BC Ministry of Natural Resource Operations (MNRO) gave us an update on the research she is conducting on otter ecotoxicology. She is currently working on her thesis project which investigates the ecological impacts of pollutants in coastal river otters. With her research, Cait hopes to improve knowledge of river otter ecology and develop tools to aid in monitoring ecosystem integrity. I spoke about the basics of aquatic bird rehabilitation. This talk was geared toward centres that have little contact with seabirds on a regular basis. It presented the requirements to care for

aquatic birds in captivity and formulated a plan to deal with captivity-related problems. Hopefully next year there will be a second portion to advance the skills learned in 2011.

Next, Christina Carrieres from the BC SPCA Wild Animal Rehabilitation Centre in Metchosin led a discussion on sustainable rehabilitation, a talk which encouraged everyone to think about how they can minimize the impact their centres have on the environment. Our clinical pathology and parasitology knowledge was tested with Melanie Gordon's presentation and wet lab on laboratory techniques. Everyone who participated in the wet lab had an opportunity to refine their parasite identification and hematocrit reading skills, as well as expand their laboratory knowledge. The talks from the first day were wrapped up with Kimberly Reid's presentation on necropsies which was followed by a wet lab the next day. In this lab everyone had an opportunity to participate in a guided necropsy.



Also on day two, Brent Gurd from BC MNRO spoke about the laws and regulations governing wildlife in BC. He also added a reminder for all centres to submit their "roll-over animal" dispositions (for example, the 2009 animals still in care when 2009 reports were due should have had their dispositions recorded in the 2010 report). This was followed by a roundtable discussion on government relations, led by WRNBC President Angelika Langen, where members could voice their concerns to the Board of Directors, as well as have some questions answered by Brent.

During elections, two new members were added to the WRNBC Board of Directors. Myself (Mia Cirotto) and Nel Aird were pleased to be voted onto the Board. As always, the Board loves to hear suggestions, comments and concerns from its members, so feel free to let us know what is going on. All Board members can be reached via email (see page 4 for a full listing of current Board members).

Another successful AGM has come and gone. The WRNBC Board of Directors would like to extend sincere thanks to all those who presented or donated to help make the 2011 AGM possible. Planning is underway for the 2012 AGM and, although details are not firm yet, it promises to be another exciting event!

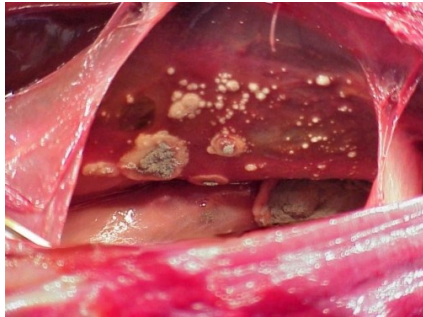
Aspergillus Transmission Update

By Kimberly Reid, WRNBC Director-at-Large

This year's AGM raised some good questions about the spread of Aspergillosis, a common and deadly fungal disease that affects immune-compromised animals, or those not normally exposed to such spores in their natural environment (e.g. seabirds, birds of prey). Two views on potential routes of transmission were discussed. First, that animals in care that contract the disease were exposed to the same environmental conditions and the same stressors, yet the disease ultimately came from the environment. Second, that the disease is contagious and one animal could pass the disease to other animals in care.



To ensure this did not become a source of great confusion to members (myself included!), I contacted Dr. Victoria Bowes, avian pathologist with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, for her thoughts. She did confirm that it is technically possible for one very ill animal to produce and expel *Aspergillus* spores. However, the animal



would likely die before this became a concern, and the amount of spores expelled would be of no greater volume than that already present in the environment. In her opinion, she believes *Aspergillus* infections are due to environmental conditions and considers animal-to-animal contagion unlikely. However, rehabilitators need to consider that conditions within the captive rehabilitation environment (e.g. shared housing with other animals, restrictive caging, reduced air quality, stress) may increase the likelihood of bird-to-bird transmission if the fungus is in the blooming stage, as has been historically experienced in oil spill response.

When asked for a good resource, Dr. Bowes recommended the "Field Manual of Wildlife Diseases" as a must-have for all rehabilitation centres. A print copy is available from the US Geological Survey website for a cost of \$10 USD (plus shipping and handling). However, I also found a free downloadable version of the entire document at http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/publications/field_manual/.

If you have comments, questions or concerns regarding this update, please email me at kimberly78@shaw.ca. I am always happy to discuss!

Coming Soon: New Website!

You asked – we answered! We are currently designing a new website to better serve our members. Of the many new features, we are very excited to offer a password-protected members-only section, where we will upload members-only documents, ask for feedback and much more. Members will receive the year's password each time they renew. If you have ideas for our new website (to be unveiled this fall), email us at wildlife@wrn.bc.ca.

Newsletter Content Coordinator: Lani Sheldon Newsletter Editing: Kimberly Reid
Newsletter Layout and Design: Meghann Cant Newsletter Mailing: Marcy Potter and Nel Aird

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Upcoming Courses

Vancouver Avian Research Centre

www.birdvancouver.com



Bird Monitoring and Banding Workshop

Burnaby, BC

May 6-8, 2011

June 3-5, 2011

The Bird Monitoring and Banding Workshop is a three-day introductory course consisting of presentations, specimen study, field mist-netting, banding and processing. This workshop has been developed for people with little or no bird banding or bird-in-the-hand experience, and provides a fantastic opportunity to see birds up close and personal, and to learn about their plumages, molt sequences and life habits.

Advancing Bear Care 2011

Banff, AB

October 6-9, 2011

www.bearcaregroup.org



During the conference, bear biologists and naturalists will lead hikes into bear habitat and interpret for delegates how bears use the components of the ecosystem to express their daily and seasonal routines. This information will then be brought back into workshops and applied towards improving captive bear husbandry. A three-day trip to visit Northern Lights Wildlife Society in Smithers, BC is also planned.

IWRC Symposium 2011

Fort Lauderdale, FL

November 8-12, 2011

www.theiwrc.org



The theme for this year's symposium is "Rescue and Rehabilitation". There will be a series of workshops and presentations on planning and assisting in emergencies, as well as a series of open sessions on a variety of subjects related to wildlife rehabilitation. Should you wish to present a talk, you can now submit an abstract for review by the IWRC Symposium committee.

What has your Board of Directors been up to?

- Designing the new WRNBC website – to be unveiled in Fall 2011!
- Coordinating local WRNBC educational presentations
- Planning a follow-up meeting with BC MNRO (see Winter 2011 newsletter)
- Developing First Responder Training with the Oiled Wildlife Society of BC

Current Board Members

Angelika Langen, President - angelika@wildlifeshelter.com

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Help us save paper and reduce costs! If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by *email only*, please contact our Membership Secretary, Marcy Potter, at marcy.potter@gmail.com.