



Information Packet for Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation Veterinarians

Thank you for considering providing veterinary care for New York City's wildlife! We have prepared this information to answer some of your questions, and hopefully make clear what we are looking for in a partnership with you.

Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation's mission is to provide compassionate, quality care to urban wildlife in need, with a special focus on wild mammals, and to provide public education programs that foster peaceful coexistence between humans and wildlife.

Our Goals

Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation has incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, and we are in the process of obtaining tax-exempt status. We are working to build a network of support and guidance from both the wildlife rehabilitation community and the general public, as well as working with nonprofit professionals and New York City Parks Department officials to obtain information, create working protocols, and establish general stability as a unit.

Our immediate goals are:

- To help as many injured wild mammals as possible with the limited resources currently available to us
- To fundraise for current and future projects
- To educate the public about wildlife
- To spread awareness about our organization

Our ultimate goals are:

- To open a fully functional rehabilitation center in New York City
- To obtain a Rabies Vector Species (RVS) License for the purpose of rehabilitating bats and other RVS animals
- To provide career opportunities for experienced wildlife care professionals
- To provide training and opportunities for volunteers and rehabbers
- To pair with New York City schools and community groups to offer education programs regarding wildlife and environmental awareness



Our Story

UUWR began as the idea of three wildlife rehabilitators who regularly met for dinner after work. Following many discussions, they concluded that the orphaned and injured mammal wildlife of NYC had very few sources of assistance, and they decided to fill that void. Conversation quickly turned into action; founders Adair, Mai and Cathy decided to seek out the services of a pro bono lawyer, and the organization Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation was established in April 2014. UUWR received 501(c)3 tax-exempt status in July 2014.

Even without a dedicated facility, UUWR has already begun to improve the quality of life of NYC's wild mammals; our ability to achieve this goal will increase exponentially once we obtain a dedicated facility. Currently we are only able to rehab out of our homes.

We hosted a launch party to announce our presence to the city. Over 100 people showed their support by taking part in a raffle and silent auction while enjoying cocktails in a swanky East Village establishment that generously donated space to bolster our cause. We used this launch party to establish connections with public officials, the health department, and the parks department to obtain their continued support as UUWR grows to meet our mammals' needs. The founders of UUWR value community involvement, and we are excited to be developing strong working relationships with like-minded New Yorkers and organizations.

In helping UUWR, you are helping NYC as a whole. In addition to rehabilitation, we wish to educate the public on how to coexist peacefully with the wildlife around them. In the future, we hope to conduct educational programs that will encourage young people to appreciate and value the wonders of the natural environment in NYC. Most of all, we endeavor to create an establishment which compassionately cares for all New Yorkers, humans and animals alike.



Two of our founders, Cathy Wolfe and Adair Moran >

What it Means to Work With Wildlife

“It must be clearly understood that rehabilitators are neither trained nor licensed to diagnose and treat an animal’s ailments except under the direction of a veterinarian. Medical or surgical treatments are the domain of licensed veterinarians.” This is an excerpt from the official study guide given to wildlife rehabilitators by the DEC in order to pass the test to receive a wildlife rehabilitator license. Many wildlife rehabilitators have years of experience treating wildlife under veterinary supervision. Specifically, they may have experience treating certain illnesses, conducting blood, fecal, and other medical tests, and casting or splinting injuries; however, rehabilitators cannot function without the guidance of a trusted vet. We understand that by allowing UUWR to operate under your license, you are placing a great deal of trust in us, and that is not something we take lightly. Please be assured that we regard your license, career, and reputation with the utmost respect.

UUWR has a strict policy of adhering to all state and federal laws regarding wildlife rehabilitation, and this includes laws regarding non-releasable wildlife. We do not adopt non-releasable animals out as pets; this is both in keeping with state law, and in the best interest of the animals. The following excerpt was also taken from the DEC study guide: *“The purpose of treating wild animals is to release healthy, normal individuals back to their wild existence. Often the kindest consideration that can be made for badly injured wildlife is to opt for euthanasia early in the decision-making process. Sometimes non-releasable animals can be placed in appropriate captive facilities. But placement in good, duly licensed situations is hard to come by, especially for common species. The decision to send an animal to spend the remainder of its life in captivity must not be taken lightly.”* UUWR supports this wholeheartedly, and wants to note that euthanasia is a common occurrence in our field. While euthanasia is a difficult reality of wildlife rehabilitation, it is a reality all wildlife care professionals must accept in order to do what is best for the animals.

If you are thinking that you cannot help UUWR because you have no experience working with wild mammals, we understand, and we can assist you by sharing our connections to experienced wildlife vets, as well as research materials. There is a wealth of information available on the wildlife issues you are likely to encounter, and veterinarians without experience in the realm of wildlife have much to offer. You will be amazed at the similarities these wild mammals have to their domestic counterparts.



How You Can Help Urban Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation

By donating basic services: UUWR is in need of veterinarians who can donate supplies and services such as occasional phone consultations, X-rays, blood tests, cremation, casting, suturing, splinting, prescriptions, and surgeries.

By offering cremation and euthanasia services: UUWR needs establishments that can offer cremation and euthanasia services, free of charge, to our rehabilitators.

By being our emergency/backup vet: If you are unable to donate a large amount of time, but would like to be involved at some level, this is a great option. When our primary vet is unavailable, you can offer your services for a wildlife emergency on a donation or reduced-fee basis. We would also be grateful for any emergency phone consultations and other basic services that you could provide.

By being our primary vet: UUWR is currently seeking a relationship with a vet who can donate services on a regular basis. Our ideal candidate will help us establish protocols, write prescriptions, acquire necessary supplies, conduct the majority of wildlife procedures, and serve as the primary consultant for most of the animals that come under our care. This is a unique opportunity to help build and shape our operation from the ground up, playing an instrumental role in making our goal a reality.

Who We Are

Cathy Wolfe, President and Founder:

Cathy Wolfe is a NY state licensed wildlife rehabilitator (class I) with rabies vector species training. She has a bachelor's degree in environmental studies with a specialization in conservation from the University of Colorado, Boulder. While pursuing her degree, Cathy interned at Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, receiving a provisional wildlife rehabilitator license which later included rabies vector species, concentrating on bats. She was quickly hired as the Mammal Nursery manager and her job included handling the releases of all of Greenwood's thousands of animals, writing protocols, designing charts, and training and educating volunteers and new employees. When Cathy moved to New York she was hired by the Wild Bird Fund to write protocols regarding mammals as well as train staff and volunteers on mammal husbandry. Over her nine years of working in the field of wildlife rehabilitation Cathy has worked with squirrels, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, bats, skunks, rabbits, chipmunks and marmots, and some bird and turtle species. She also received a wildlife rehabilitation license in Australia and completed a biology program in Costa Rica.

Adair Moran, Founder and Social Media Manager:

Adair Moran is a NY state licensed wildlife rehabilitator (class I) with rabies vector species training. Adair spent her childhood rescuing stray cats, dogs, baby birds, and any other creature who needed care. She moved to NYC to pursue a career in acting and stunt performing. While working in the performing arts, she frequently found and rescued distressed birds, which sparked her interest in wildlife care. She began reaching out to experienced

licensed wildlife rehabilitators for training and guidance. In 2012 Adair received her NY state wildlife rehabilitator's license, and she became a staff member and educator at the Wild Bird Fund. Since receiving her license, Adair has hosted squirrels, opossums, birds, cottontails, and other animals, which she rehabilitates and releases. She enjoys furthering her wildlife care education by attending lectures and workshops at wildlife rehabilitation conferences.

Zhong Huang, Rehabilitator/ Opossum and Eastern Cottontail Rabbit Specialist:

In addition to a BA Degree in biology from Connecticut College, Zhong Huang is a NY State licensed veterinary technician and wildlife rehabilitator (class I). For over three and a half years, she has worked with many species of wild birds, mammals, and turtles from small songbirds to peregrine falcons and from tiny field mice to porcupines. She has volunteered hundreds of hours as a wildlife rehabilitation intern in Maine to not only care for wildlife, but to standardize turtle and squirrel husbandry protocols. She managed and trained staff and volunteers at the Wild Bird Fund while developing and establishing protocols, charts, and instruction manuals that are still in use today, as well as teaching their first annual baby songbird feeding and husbandry classes. Zhong currently works as a full time licensed veterinary technician at an AAHA accredited animal hospital while working as a home-based wildlife rehabilitator who specializes in raising neonatal Eastern cottontail rabbits. As a wildlife rehabilitator, she hopes to obtain a NYS Rabies Vector Species license in the near future.

Jennifer Topolski, Treasurer and UUWR Wildlife Rehabilitator:

Jenny Topolski is a NY state licensed wildlife rehabilitator (class I) with rabies vector species training. She has been a home-based rehabilitator since 2013. Her full-time work is as an independent jeweler and small business owner of Topolski Jewelry, but she has always enjoyed working with animals- domestic and wild. She is hoping to pursue a veterinary technology degree starting in the fall 2017 semester, in order to further her education of animals.

**Thank you so much for considering helping our organization!
We can't wait to hear from you!**

