



# On Track...

Summer 2020

## So You Need Help and You Need Help Getting It: Volunteer Recruitment 101

By: Melissa Anahory

Volunteers! They are the backbone of many, if not all, wildlife rehabilitation facilities. These amazing folks donate their gift of time and countless skills to the work that we do, but where do you find valuable and reliable help? Whether you are an at home rehabilitator or part of a large facility's team, we can all appreciate extra help. I have been the volunteer recruiter for Woodlands Wildlife Refuge for many years and below I will outline the top five best (and most efficient) ways to recruit volunteers.

1. Press Releases – Write up a quick description of the positions you have available, who to contact for more information, and any orientation dates or a website where interested people can find out more. Send this to local radio stations and newspapers and many of them will post it. Yes, its free!
2. Social Media – This is a great tool for spreading information quickly regarding both long-term and short-term volunteer opportunities. Need some extra hands building an enclosure or have a one-day opportunity (such as helping at a fundraising event) coming up? Post it on social media and ask your friends and followers to share! If posting on Facebook/Instagram utilize hashtags to have your post visible to people interested in that topic (i.e.: #NJwildlife)
3. Volunteer recruitment websites – There are a few websites out there specifically geared towards recruiting volunteers and posting opportunities. Volunteer Match is free and the one I recommend most but there are others (<https://www.volunteermatch.org/>). It is also totally free to post volunteer opportunities on the popular site IdeaList (<https://www.idealists.org>).
4. Colleges – Many colleges have their own recruitment websites for volunteers and interns. Contact your local colleges and advisors for information on recruiting students. Many colleges offer course credits to volunteers and interns and some even require their students to volunteer in order to complete their degree! Some advisors will even email your opportunity out to their students.
5. Outreach events – This one is a bit more time consuming, however, worth it if you are able. Attend volunteer fairs, job fairs, and events such as earth day festivals and local community days for your neighboring towns. Meeting people face to face, explaining the work you do and why it is important for the community goes a long way! Have volunteer applications available and assign other volunteers to attend these types of events on your behalf if you can!

Do you have any other volunteer recruitment tips, tricks, or resources to share? Email it to me at [melisana@gmail.com](mailto:melisana@gmail.com) for inclusion in future newsletters!



## NJAWR Scholarship Recipient: Valerie Pallecchia

On December 11th 2019 while cleaning the animals at work, I received an email from NJAWR titled “Scholarship Decision Enclosed!”. With a nervous breath and with my thumb hesitantly hovering over my phone to open it, I received a text message from my Director Lori Swanson asking if I read my email. I took another deep breath and clicked, where I was greeted with “Congratulations!”. I was so excited to have received the scholarship allowing me to travel to the 2020 NWRA Symposium in South Padre Island, Texas.

Now that the first obstacle was complete, it slowly dawned on me that there was a second... flying. I could feel my chest tighten and my heart start to race, and it was then this all became real. With the help of a doctor, my supportive family, Lori and Mike O’Malley, I made it through one of my biggest fears.

The first full day there, I had my field trip. I had signed up for the “Exploring for Reptiles” field trip where Clint from Gladys Porter Zoo led our group through trails in search for reptiles. We also met up with some researchers from the local university and were able to watch them take samples and collect data on the Rio Grande Siren. The following days were filled with amazing lectures. The amount of information I was able to receive, all in one place, was unbelievable to me. I was eager to learn about the development of a Modified Avian Coma Score led by Sarah Reich, the Staff Veterinarian at Willowbrook Wildlife Center. While the study’s results are still being assessed, the thought of having a scoring system to determine prognosis of head trauma in raptor species is very exciting. Sarah also led an in-depth lecture on avian ophthalmology. I came away knowing so much more about common diseases and eye anatomy than I ever thought I would. We also attended a fantastic capture myopathy talk led by Dr. Nicki Rosenhagen, the veterinarian at PAWS Wildlife Center who shared some very interesting case studies as well as causes and effects capture myopathy has on the body, some additional monitoring tools, and innovative treatment options. We also participated in an avian necropsy workshop led by Rebecca Duerr, Veterinarian and Research Director of International Bird Rescue. We received extensive information on how to properly do necropsies as well as had hands on experience performing them ourselves.

I am so grateful for the opportunity I received by being awarded the NJAWR annual scholarship. With all of the things I learned, I know I will be able to further help our patients at Woodford Cedar Run, as well as be a better leader to the other volunteers while passing on the information I learned.



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**ATTENTION:**  
Wildlife Rehabilitators,  
Stay informed about the  
SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic  
with the NWRA

<https://www.nwrawildlife.org/page/COVID-19>



## President's Message

I want to thank everyone who currently serves on the NJAWR Board of Directors and to those who have previously served. Without your commitment, NJAWR would not be here today to assist the wildlife rehabilitation community.

Nominations for the 2020 NJAWR Lifetime Achievement Award are now being accepted. Nominees do not have to be a NJAWR member. *If you previously selected someone who did not win this year or in a previous year, please consider nominating them again for another chance to win this award!* The 2020 NJAWR Lifetime Achievement Award forms are available [here](#).

Nominations for the 2020 NJAWR Rising Star Award are now being accepted. Again, nominees do not have to be a NJAWR member. Please take the time at some point before the annual deadline (October 31st) to nominate someone from your facility that is consistently working hard. *Recognition of someone's hard work and dedication is paramount for continued success.* The 2020 NJAWR Rising Star Award forms are available [here](#).

Interested in becoming an NJAWR board member? Look no further! Nominations for becoming an NJAWR board member are now being accepted. You do not need to be a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, but you must be an NJAWR member before being nominated. We are looking for active board members from an array of backgrounds. For more information, please go [here](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read this message and for being a part of NJAWR.

Stay healthy and safe!

Cheers,  
Denise Hassinger, MSc.  
NJAWR President



## Snake Overload!

By: Heather Freeman

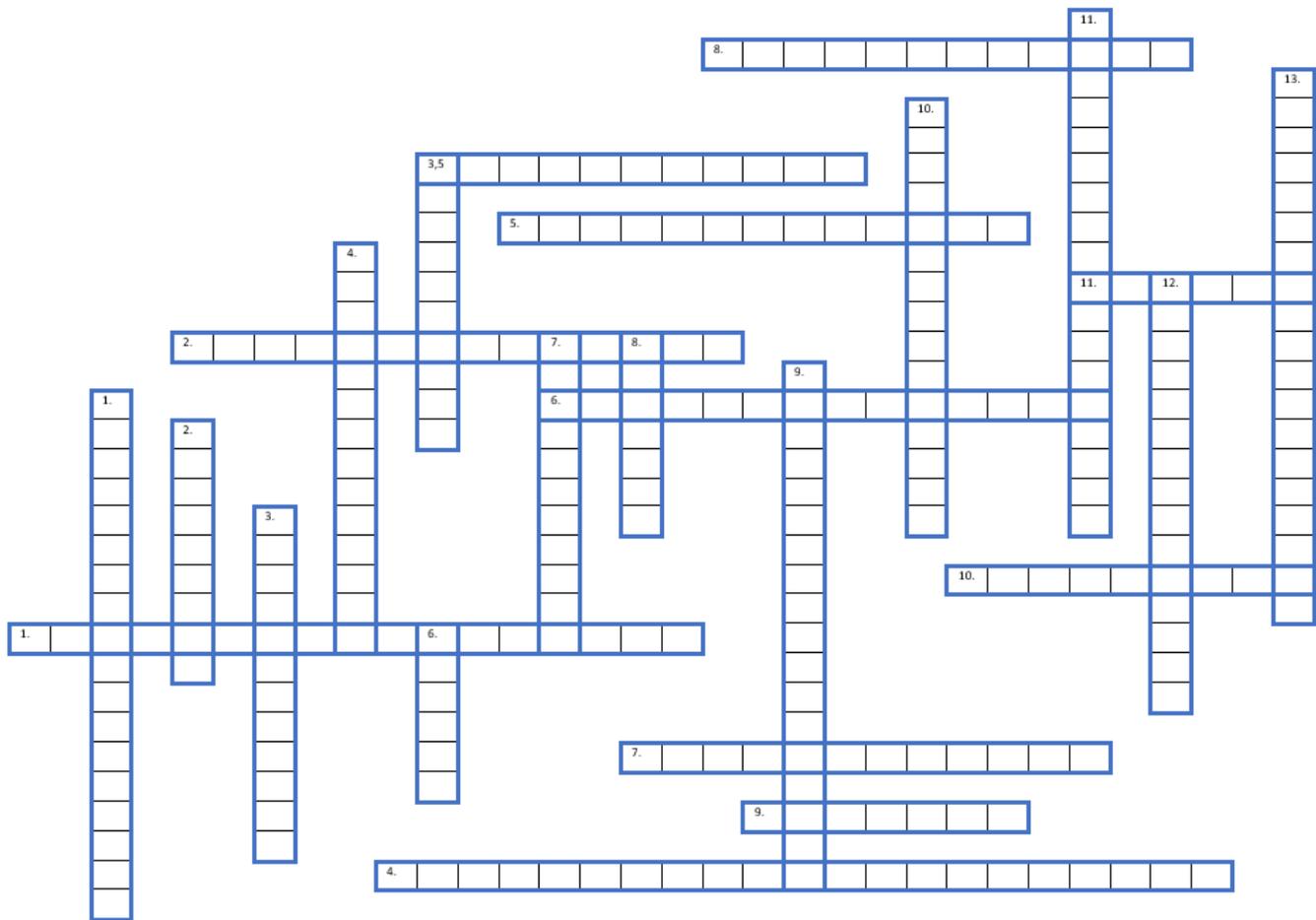
Every year we prepare ourselves, volunteers, and facility for the busy season. We know the spring season brings in the orphaned infants that need our care. One busy season in particular was, however, very different. In early April, Woodlands Wildlife Refuge received a call from the state Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. There was a situation where many snakes were displaced by construction and needed temporary housing until the weather was warm enough for release. All the snakes of New Jersey hibernate for the winter and most do not emerge until May. Being one of very few rehabilitators in New Jersey that is licensed to work with snakes, we were glad to step up to the challenge. We were privileged to have the opportunity to work with the ENSP and the University of Pennsylvania while these snakes were given microchips and transmitters as part of their greater research project. Over 155 snakes of various species, including, ringneck, black racer, garter, black rat, copperhead, and milk snakes, arrived for a long day of processing. Each and every one needed a full examination for possible injuries, housing, special diets and specific lighting. Most stayed in our care for six weeks, and some remained longer, before being successfully released. During all that time we continued to receive those orphaned raccoons, squirrels, rabbits, and more, that we already expected for the busy season!



Photo of a ringneck snake from  
Woodlands Wildlife Refuge, Pittstown, NJ

# Birds of New Jersey Crossword Puzzle

By: Adriana Manchen



Test your bird knowledge! Fill in the full, common name of birds found in New Jersey to complete the puzzle. Be sure to omit spaces and hyphens.

## ACROSS:

1. I inhabit meadows and grasslands, eat insects from the ground, nest on the ground, and am known for the beautiful black "V" that I display on my chest.
2. I am a graceful and large wading bird. I am often seen moving slowly, but I can be lightning fast when spearing my dinner.
3. Our flocks are known for our honks.
4. I am a skilled tree climber, often sighted sideways or upside down and am easily recognized by my nasally call.
5. I am a migrant; the males of my species are a vivid blue when in New Jersey.
6. I am a sandpiper, but my plumage makes my ID unmistakable. My kind spends a lot of time devouring horseshoe crab eggs in May on the Delaware Bay. We get our name from our ability to turn over rocks and other items in search of food.
7. I am a fast, little bird that feeds on the wing. You might find me nesting in your chimney this summer!
8. Berries are my favorite and my name comes from how my wing tips look. They have the appearance of having been dipped in candlewax.
9. I am the most colorful corvid found in New Jersey.
10. As the national bird, I would like to declare that bald is beautiful!
11. Also called the fish hawk, I am a bird that is well adapted to flying with my catch in an aerodynamic manner.

DOWN:

1. I am the smallest owl found in New Jersey.
2. I am tiny, but mighty and my name denotes I enjoy nesting in cavities around people’s homes.
3. During take-off, my wings make a whistling sound. When nesting, I only lay two eggs per clutch.
4. I have a mammal in my name and a crest on my head.
5. As an aquatic bird, I am like an Olympian in the water, but am very awkward on land. Sometimes, people think I am hurt if I land on a paved surface (thinking it is a body of water) and fail to get up to get away. Really, I am just not built to walk on land.
6. I am a migrant shorebird with black legs and a long, black bill that droops at the end.
7. Many consider me pesky, but I am just trying to get by. I am a large, robust scavenger with a bill strong enough to crack open mussels.
8. My kind are a big deal down at the Delaware Bay. We come from far away to fatten up on horseshoe crab eggs. Some of my kind are considered “moonbirds,” the most famous of whom was B95.
9. I am tiny, I am twitchy, and the males of my species have a fierce, red crown when excited.
10. I am the smallest falcon in North America.
11. I am the largest woodpecker in New Jersey.
12. Intensity is my middle name. I can reach speeds of 200 mph as I dive towards my prey and then strike them with my foot to stun or kill them.
13. My appearance and my penchant for making “mixes” of other birds’ songs have earned me the nickname of “Little Mockingbird.”

ACROSS:

1. EASTERN MEADOWLARK
2. GREAT BLUE HERON
3. CANADA GOOSE
4. WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH
5. INDIGO BUNTING
6. RUDDY TURNSTONE
7. CHIMNEY SWIFT
8. CEDAR WAXWING
9. BLUE JAY
10. BALD EAGLE
11. OSPREY

DOWN:

1. NORTHERN SAW WHET OWL
2. HOUSE WREN
3. MORNING DOVE
4. TUFTED TITMOUSE
5. COMMON LOON
6. DUNLIN
7. HERRING GULL
8. RED KNOT
9. RUBY CROWNED KINGLET
10. AMERICAN KESTREL
11. PILEATED WOODPECKER
12. PEREGRINE FALCON
13. BLUE GRAY GNATCATCHER



## Become a Board Member!

We are always looking for NJAWR members to join the team!

Find out how to join [here](#).



Photo of a woodduck from Freedom Center for Wildlife, Inc., Cinnaminson, NJ

## The Inimitable Tardigrade

By: Steve Schulze, MSc.



I never thought I would find bears living in my backyard, and I certainly did not expect them to make their home in a patch of moss, but it is in this microcosm – complete with miniature predators and prey – where one might readily find tardigrades, or, as they are more commonly known, water bears. Their peculiar gait and outward appearance, both resembling that of a bear, has fascinated and delighted the casual and serious observer for over 250 years. Most recently, they have garnered a pop-culture fanbase for their presumed indestructibility. I can say from experience that they are mortal, but remain a distinctive representative of wildlife on the microscopic scale.

Pictured is a tardigrade photographed with a scanning electron microscope. This specimen is a whopping 0.5 mm long, complete with eight legs that terminate in claws. The mouth, an oval-shaped structure at the blunt end of its body, might be used to capture other invertebrates in its community or to feed on plants or fungi. Some species are even cannibalistic! The “water” in its moniker refers to its need for a film of water to be active; it respirees by exchanging oxygen with the water through its skin-like cuticle. This is not restricted to freshwater, however. There is another group of tardigrades found

exclusively in the marine environment that feed on algae on barnacles or presumably other detritus in the depths of the ocean. These are otherworldly in appearance, with elaborate appendages and structures that are thought to be sensory organs or to provide buoyancy. While little is known about the ecological role of tardigrades, researchers have fervently studied the mechanism behind their famed resilience in extreme environments: cryptobiosis.

Cryptobiosis is a state of suspended metabolism. When a tardigrade’s surroundings become unfavorable, it will completely desiccate, and its bodily functions will cease until favorable conditions return. This capability has been shown to exist in tardigrades from the most varied of environments – from the deep sea to the Himalayas, from tropical rainforests to subtropical deserts, and from pole to pole. Understanding this process might be useful in medicine as a means to preserve human organs for transplantation without the need for refrigeration or to breed drought-tolerant crops.

If you come across a bit of moss or lichen, pick it up and imagine the microworld within. If you have access to a dissecting microscope, soak your sample in water in a small dish for about an hour. Then, remove some water from the bottom with an eyedropper, and, in a separate glass dish, view it under at least 20x magnification. For best viewing, swirl the water to concentrate particles to the center. Use a black background (construction paper will do) and illuminate from the sides, not the bottom. Enjoy the critters you might find!



## Six Foxes

By: Heather Freeman



A large litter of fluffy balls came in to our care! They were six red fox kits at about three weeks old. They were found outside a park area with no den around and no adult foxes nearby.

Local animal control picked them up and brought them to us at Woodlands Wildlife Refuge. They were all very thin, dehydrated and weighed in at a mere 250g (under nine ounces) each. The first several days they were in critical condition, receiving fluid replacement therapy, and warmth.

Before long they transitioned to nutritional formula milk replacement and then weaned to natural solid foods as they grew. We worked closely with our veterinarian for their care. During this time they moved to slightly larger housing as they outgrew each one. Their road to recovery was not without a few bumps. They needed deworming medications, treatment for minor skin ailments, and extra monitoring. During their care indoors viewers were able to watch them grow on our live stream camera!

Once fully weaned, they moved into an outdoor enclosure to prepare for release. When release day finally came, all six darted out and ran off into the sunset.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Red Fox:

- Eyes open eight to nine days
- Average litter size five
- Body temperature 100-103 degrees
- Wean at seven to eight weeks
- Both mother and father care for young
- They are born very dark coated and slowly become reddish orange with black socks and markings, but always have a white tail tip from day one!
- Adults mate in late fall and early winter
- Kits are born in March
- Omnivorous, they eat many small rodents and other animals, but also vegetation
- Adults average 12 pounds

