

History of North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre

The North Island Wildlife Recovery Association (NIWRA) partners with the citizens of Vancouver Island to maintain a facility for the care of ill, injured and orphaned wildlife and to educate the public on wildlife and environmental issues.

On Christmas day in 1984, Robin Campbell, NIWRA's founder, discovered a severely injured Great Horned Owl entangled in a neighbour's fence. Spirit, as the Owl was later named, became the first of many casualties at the original facility, known to locals as **Buckley Bay Wildlife Recovery Centre** (by the Denman Island Ferry).

Two years later, in 1986, the newly-formed association moved to an eight-acre parcel of land in Errington, BC, and changed its name to **North Island Wildlife Recovery Association**, with the intention of serving the north end of Vancouver Island, BC. We would soon discover that animals as far away as Saskatchewan would arrive at the Centre.

NIWRA's rescue and recovery response gained international interest when a local farmer left a euthanized cow in a field instead of burying it not realizing that eagles would feed on the carcass. Neighbours began calling NIWRA when they found lifeless eagles lying on the ground. Due to the tremendous support of the community and the media, NIWRA, its volunteers and veterinarians were able to save and release 25 of the 29 eagles that were found.

Over the years, NIWRA has developed expertise in numerous areas: wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, short-term rehabilitation of bear, wolf and cougar, oil spills, and much more. Because of this experience, we have been able to develop extensive educational programs for the public.

Visitors to the Centre have also been able to witness the ongoing growth and development of our physical structures as well.

- We built the largest eagle flight cage of its kind in Canada (measuring 140' x 30' x 20') and have successfully housed and rehabilitated hundreds of eagles in preparation for their release (1991).
- The Arthur Knowles "Museum of Nature", a mortise and tenon timber frame structure, was built (1995).
- NIWRA created the Vancouver Island Black Bear Rehabilitation Program where bears have been successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild ever since (1997).
- The May Neish "Wildlife Learning Centre" was constructed, in keeping with NIWRA's mandate of education for the public (2001).
- A 30' x 30' treatment centre was constructed by donations from caring individuals, service clubs, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, and the Vancouver Foundation (2005). This centre is named after Dr. Malcolm McAdie in honour of the countless hours he has donated helping wildlife here at the centre.
- The Magical Field of Stones, a Native Plant Wildlife Garden and the Ravensong Canoe are more recent additions to Centre (2014-2016).

Our centre has truly developed into a world-class tourist destination and a remarkable wildlife rehabilitation facility offering educational programs delivered by enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers.

We hope you enjoy your visit and will learn to love and respect wildlife as we have.

Robin and Sylvia Campbell
and NIWRA Board of Directors