



# The GHS Guardian

The Guelph Humane Society Newsletter

Spring 2016

*"123 years of ensuring the welfare of all animals and preventing cruelty and suffering"*



## It's Baby Season for Wildlife!

It's the time of year when animals start building nests and excavating burrows! Soon enough you'll see baby animals out and about!

Baby wildlife look so small and defenceless so it's natural to want to help them when you see them on their own. However this can lead to lots of baby animals mistakenly being kidnapped and brought in by well-meaning individuals!

### Did you know?

Many baby animals become independent at a young age! Birds can fledge as early as 10 days and baby rabbits are still super tiny when they leave the nest! If a baby animal is furry, has its eyes open, is mobile and able to move about easily, and shows a fear of humans than it's most likely able to care for itself!

If you find a baby animal that you think might need help then call the Guelph Humane Society. We will be able to guide you towards the right course of action and determine whether the animal needs to come in!

For a baby animal, its best chance of survival is with the mother, so it's important we're not taking babies away from their mother accidentally! There are a few instances when the baby absolutely needs help:

- The animal is wounded
- The animal is cold and/or lethargic
- The animal is covered in fleas, maggots or flies

- The animal has been in the mouth of a cat or dog (even if no obvious wounds are present)  
If you call the Humane Society, and it is determined that the baby animal needs to come in, then there are a few key things you need to remember:

#### 1) **NEVER** offer food or water:

- If a baby animal is in shock, is cold or dehydrated, then it cannot digest food or water. Giving it any can cause gastric upset and bloating.
- Animals have very specific diets. Offering something that cannot be properly digested can cause constipation, diarrhea, bloating and death. **NEVER** offer cow's milk.
- It is very easy to improperly feed a baby animal. Improper feeding can cause them to accidentally inhale the food/milk/water. This is called aspiration and can cause pneumonia and even lead to death.

#### 2) Wear gloves while handling the baby and handle as little as possible:

- Gloves help to minimize the transfer of potentially harmful bacteria or parasites between you and the animal.
- Gloves protect you from bites and scratches. Even babies can be feisty, and remember that raccoons and skunks are rabies-vector species!
- Handling is very stressful for the baby. Minimize this stress by handling them only when needed. Never pet or cuddle them.

#### 3) Transport them in a proper container:

- A box that can close and prevent the animal from climbing out is needed.
- Line the box with a towel or blanket.
- Provide a heat source such as a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel or a microwavable heating pad wrapped in a towel.

# Can You Answer These Common Wildlife Questions?

## Q1: I noticed a raccoon in a dumpster and I think he is stuck. What can I do?

Raccoons are very good climbers and very curious. Sometimes this can lead to them finding themselves stuck in deep dumpsters, window wells, or even on top of roofs with no way out/down. To help them get out, you can:

- A. Wait and they'll likely just jump out on their own.
- B. Lower a plank of wood into the dumpster and give the raccoon space and time to climb out on their own.
- C. Bang on the walls of the dumpster so that they climb out.
- D. Put your hand in/ jump in to help them out.

**A1: B)** Lower a plank of wood into the dumpster and give the raccoon space and time to climb out. This could take a while (they may wait until after dark). If the raccoon looks sick or injured, or has been there over 24 hours, call your local humane society.

## Q2: What do I do if I have an encounter with a coyote?

- A. Run away as fast as you can to out-run it.
- B. Play dead. Coyotes are very aggressive and will attack unless they think you are dead.
- C. Make lots of noise, make yourself look big, walk slowly and don't turn your back to it.
- D. Try to confine and bring it into the Humane Society. It may actually be a large dog.

**A2: C)** Coyotes and foxes are usually quite nervous around people and will not get too close, but in urban areas they can get habituated to people and less nervous. If this happens, it is a good idea to make lots of noise, make yourself look big, walk calmly (don't run!) and don't turn your back to the animal. You can report the sighting to the City of Guelph through their website or 311GIS (which is an app for your phone, where you can post by-law concerns within the City of Guelph). If the animal is not backing away and seems threatening, contact the police. If the animal looks sick or injured, however, contact your local humane society or wildlife rehabilitation centre.



## Q3: How do I know if a raccoon has rabies?

Cases of rabies in raccoons and skunks have been confirmed in recent months in the Hamilton, Burlington, & Niagara Falls area. As of the end of March, there have been no cases in the Guelph area.

- A. It is out walking around during the day.
- B. It is walking up to people and pets.
- C. It is foaming at the mouth.
- D. A biopsy of the brain must be done.

**A3: D)** It is not too unusual to see a raccoon awake during the day, especially during mating season.

Two viral diseases that raccoons can become infected with are distemper and rabies. Rabies & Distemper are quite

indistinguishable in terms of their symptoms. A biopsy from the brain of the deceased animal is the only way to find out if an animal is positive for rabies. If a raccoon is displaying any of the following symptoms, call your local humane society and try not to go too close (this could be distemper, rabies, or an injury): walking in circles, stumbling, limping, walking up to people and pets, curled up in a ball for long periods of time, sleeping in open space, crusty eyes, nasal discharge, foaming at the mouth, discolouration of the nose or paws, clumpy/dirty fur, or is shaking.



**Q4: What do I do if a bird hits my window and is on the ground not moving but still alive?**

- A. Gently put it in a shoebox or a paper bag and wait 1 hour before checking on it again.
- B. Take it inside and try to give it food and water.
- C. Bring it to the humane society right away.
- D. Try to put it in a nearby tree.

**A4: A)** Gently put it in a shoebox with air holes or a paper bag and wait 1 hour before checking on it again. Sometimes birds will be in shock after they have hit a window, and need some time to recover. It is a good idea to put them in a paper bag or a box to make them more hidden from predators. Put the box in a dark and quiet area. Check on it in about 1 hour, after it's had some time to relax.

If the bird has woken up and seems to be ok, you can release it from the box or the bag, but if it looks injured at all, you should call the humane society.



## Opossums are Great Actors!

Opossums like to pretend they are very vicious when threatened. They hiss, bare their teeth and even drool as if they are rabid. If their defense mechanism of acting vicious does not work, they will play dead.

Playing dead is an involuntary response to threat in which the opossum enters a comatose state, their limbs become very stiff as if exhibiting rigor mortis and they even produce a scent that makes them smell like they are rotting. This makes predators think that they are dead and less desirable as a food source.

This state can last up to 40 minutes, at which point most predators will lose interest and the opossum is able to come back to life.



## Volunteer Spotlight



We want to send a huge thank you to Angela Nosal who went above and beyond and took on a huge initiative in an effort to raise funds for the animals at the Guelph Humane Society. Angela's passion for the welfare of animals shone through with her efforts in coordinating The Royal Kitty Music Fest – a concert event of live music with great Canadian talent: Baracuda, Noah23, Babylon Warchild, Muneshine, Derek Christoff, and Pigeon Hole. All performers played with such high energy and had their hearts in the cause. An amazing night of great music with people who care.

Thank you, Angela, for putting so much time and effort into helping those animals who need it the most.



# Happy Tails



“Our girl, Ubu, has now been with us for about 5 months. It's not an easy task to describe the love you have for your furry family member, all I can say is that it was love at first sight. Right there and then it was decided that she just had to join our family. After 5 months Ubu has gotten her own routines and habits which is such a joy to watch and she even knows our different routines.

She loves going for long walks and luckily so do we. We have enjoyed so many adventures due to Ubu's encouragement and energy level. We are excited to experience the camping seasons ahead. She loves her nylabones, her toys, her little squeaky toys (oh, those squeak, squeak, squeak toys) and she goes absolutely nuts for the Kongs that we fill for her as a treat.

The Guelph Humane Society is a little bit of paradise. The sense of compassion that the volunteers and staff have is amazing and we couldn't have managed bringing Ubu home without their help. Thank you to the entire GHS team for helping us and showing so much support! Much love” – The Flood family and of course Miss Ubu Flood.

“We have had Tory for just over a year now. She was very skittish and would not be around anyone, even us for a long time. She would run and hide in the closet away from everyone.

Now she has come a long way. She is not sociable with others other than my wife and me, but she loves to cuddle with me when it's quiet.

She loves her toys and will play all the time, even 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, but it doesn't bother us. She likes to sleep with me or on her pillow in one of the window cells we have set up for her.” – Jim LeDrew



“Hi friends, Houdini the Education Rabbit here!

I was hired as the Humane Education Rabbit back in October. I have a very important job to teach people about responsible pet ownership. I have been the boss of a lovely human named Sarah, the Humane Education Coordinator, for just over five months now. A few months ago she decided that I was doing such a great job that she adopted me into her family. I have spent many months and holidays with my new family and I am so excited to finally have my forever home!! Do not fret though, I will still be coming to all of our programs here at the shelter! Lots of love” – Houdini

“Tandy, formally known as Pickles, is doing great in her new home. She is fitting in really well with our dog, Katie. She is very curious and playful, and it didn't take long for her to settle in and gain the weight she was missing. Here is a picture of them getting cozy on Katie's bed.” – Asha Perry



# Can you Match the Baby/Juvenile Wildlife to the Adult?



1



A American Robin



2



B Grey Squirrel



3



C Cottontail Rabbit



4



D Opossum



5



E European Starling



6



F Crow



7



G Skunk



8



H American Goldfinch



9



I Raccoon

Answer Key:

1.G, 2.H, 3.I, 4.A, 5.B, 6.F, 7.C, 8.E, 9.D

## Barn Cat Program



Have you heard about the Guelph Humane Society's Barn Cat Adoption Program?

This program is in place for cats that would not be suitable for a home environment but would make the perfect Barn kitty!

If you have a barn or know someone looking for a barn cat that is spay/neutered, microchipped and vaccinated, please email [adoptions@guelphhumane.ca](mailto:adoptions@guelphhumane.ca) or call the shelter at 519-824-3091.

Our Barn Cats are available at no cost, although we do encourage a donation to help towards spaying/neutering other cats in the Program.



# What to consider before choosing a Family Pet!



Getting a new pet is an exciting experience. What can be more joyous than adding a new family member to your home? Choosing the **right** pet is an important aspect of accepting a new member into your family. It's essential that the relationship between pet and owner be beneficial, as it is detrimental to an owner-pet bond when the pet is more of a burden than a joy.



Whether you are considering a cat or dog, young or old, big or small, there are always going to be some that match your home and lifestyle more than others. This is why it is important to take the time learning about different animals and breeds to narrow down what might be a good match. Some questions to ask yourself before bringing home a new pet include:

- How much time and energy can I commit?
- How much money can I afford to spend on a pet?
- Do I foresee my family situation, daily schedule or living environment changing in the near future?
- What medical needs will your animal need when you first get them? Do they need to be spayed/neutered, microchipped and/or vaccinated? How much will this cost?
- Depending on the pet, they will vary in lifespan – are you willing to take care of an animal for up to 20 years?

Most importantly, always do your **research** when considering any pet. Getting a pet according to what suits your life right now might not be good for where you plan to be in a couple of years.

## Goldfish & Fish



Fish make amazing pets and are very low key. Once you have the proper set up they are easy to take care of. However, creating the right environment is key to letting your fish strive to live a long healthy life. Each goldfish requires 10 gallons of water, so if you want 2 goldfish you will need a 20 gallon tank – a tiny fish bowl does not make the cut! Also, fish poop a lot, so they need a proper filter to help with water filtration and regular cleaning. Depending on what kind of fish you would like to have, this will let you know how you will need to set up your tank environment (freshwater, salt water, heated tank, plants etc.).

## Rabbits, Guinea Pigs & Small Rodents

Many families adopt or buy small animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, rats or hamsters as a way of giving children responsibility or a companion. They need to be socialized, and should have time to spend outside their cage. Their cage needs to be cleaned on a regular basis, which takes time and supplies, such as wood shavings, newspaper, hay and toys. These small animals still require a level of commitment as they have necessities that need to be fulfilled to allow them to have an enriched and happy life.





## Puppies & Dogs

Puppies are cute and fun, nobody can deny that! But, they are also a huge time and financial commitment. Raising a puppy is like raising a baby, except babies wear diapers so they don't poop on your expensive carpets. Puppies are great if you have a lot of time to spend training them and give them the attention they need. Training classes are crucial when owning a puppy. This helps prevent bad manners/behavior for when your puppy grows up into a full grown dog and their mannerisms are not so "cute" anymore. Before getting a puppy, decide how you and your family feel about a full grown adult dog. Will the kids still want to play fetch with a 70 lb golden retriever once it is no longer small, cute and bouncy?

If you're looking for an adult dog, consider the breed, age and behavior. Some breeds, like Border Collies and Australian Shepherds, need an active home where they are getting more than two 30 minute walks a day. They benefit from dog parks where they can run and backyards where they can play fetch. If you work for most of the day, consider adopting a dog like a Miniature Poodle or Chihuahua – you don't need to commit as much time and energy to exercise. Senior dogs also tend to require less exercise; for many, a calm walk before and after work is sufficient.



## Kittens & Cats

Cats come in all kinds of colors and personalities. Kittens are great if you are prepared to care for them for the next 20 years. Kittens can be high energy and are curious of their surroundings. It is important to be aware that it is a natural reaction for your cat to scratch its nails against an object. Your furniture may fall victim to this, so make sure to have scratching posts and toys to keep your kitten entertained.

While some adult cats can be just as playful and energetic as kittens, adult cats tend to be more independent and can handle being alone for the majority of the day. Many even prefer their alone time! Like people and dogs, cat's personalities differ vastly. Some cats are very social and like to snuggle on the couch with anybody – these are "lap-cats". Some cats are social and like to be around people but don't like to be picked up and held. On the other end of the spectrum we have cats who are anti-social, hide a lot and may not like children. Somewhere in between there are cats who are confident and like to be with people but two gentle strokes on the back is enough and after that you'll get a brief swat.

## Pets Are Not Toys!

If you are considering getting a pet and you have children, it is very important that you teach your children how to respect animals. Some animals have more patience than others. Even if your 10 year old lab tolerates your 3 year old pulling on his tail, it doesn't mean you should allow that behavior, as it causes the dog stress and is disrespectful. Some children have never learned how to handle animals appropriately, and you'll want to take that into consideration. For example, a touch-sensitive dog or an independent cat who doesn't like to be held may not fit in well in a home with a bouncy toddler who wants to grab the animals.



## Do Your Research & Ask Questions!

The key to finding the right pet for your family and lifestyle is to do your **research and ask questions!** Any rescue is looking out for the best interest of the pet and your family. They want to ensure that the pet is the right match for your family's lifestyle to ensure that the animal is finding their forever home.

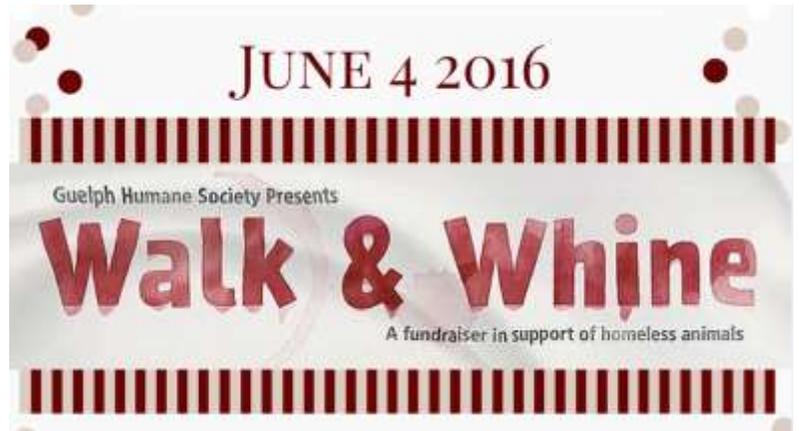


# Upcoming Events & Programs



## Fur Fair & Marketplace! Sunday April 24<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am – 4:00 pm University Centre – 50 Stone Rd E, Guelph

Join us for our 1st Annual Fur Fair & Marketplace! It is a fun filled day for the whole family! We will have over 50 vendors, games and activities! Not to mention our Nature Corner where everyone can learn about our wild life friends!



## Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2016

The Guelph Humane Society Annual Walk & Whine is our largest fundraising event of the year! It is a fun filled day of exclusive tastings such as wines, crafts beers and spirits. Guests have the opportunity to try Downtown Guelph's best venues in this unique event.

Join our Facebook and Twitter to keep posted! Tickets on sale soon!



## Summer Critter Camp



The Guelph Humane Society is offering Summer Critter Camp for children ages 6 to 12. The camp will involve animal interaction time, animal crafts, games and activities! Camp is hosted at the Guelph Humane Society, spaces are limited! Register soon to reserve your spot!

When is Critter Camp? There are 8 weeks of Critter Camp being offered.

Weeks for the 6-8 years old:

- July 4 – 8
- July 18 – 22
- August 8 – 12
- August 22 – 26

Weeks for the 9-12 years old:

- July 11 – 5
- July 25 – 29
- August 15 – 19
- August 29 – Sept 2

Thank you to our Sponsors!



Registration can be completed online at [www.guelphhumane.ca](http://www.guelphhumane.ca), or at the GHS - 500 Wellington St. W. Guelph ON, N1H 6L3

For more information and booking, contact the Education Coordinator via phone at 519-824-3091 or [spawelko@guelphhumane.ca](mailto:spawelko@guelphhumane.ca)