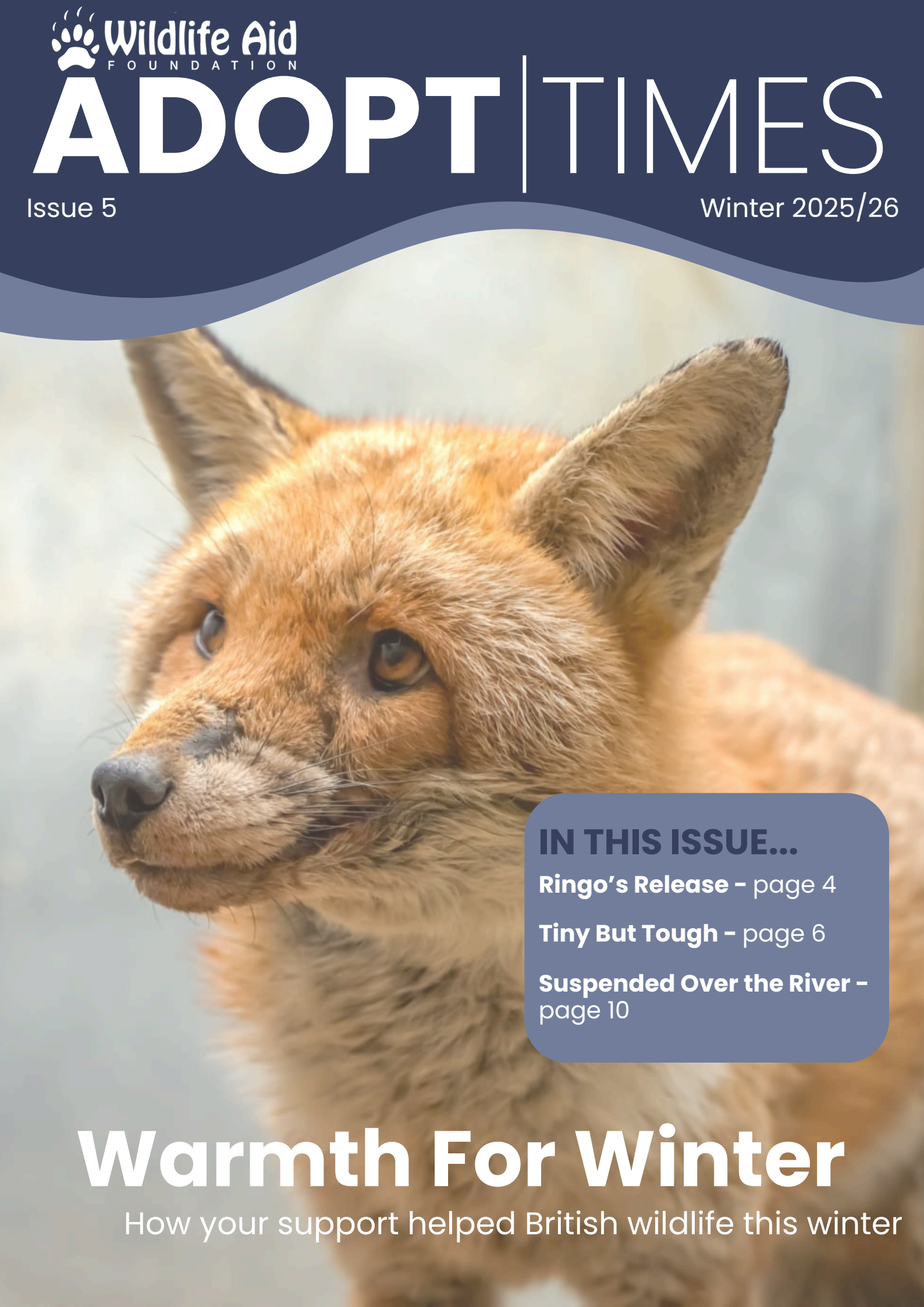
Wildlife Aid FOUNDATION

ADOPT TIMES

Issue 5

Winter 2025/26



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Warmth For Winter

How your support helped British wildlife this winter

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifth edition of Adopt Times.

If you're reading this, it's because you continue to care deeply about the animals whose stories fill these pages - and because you choose to support them. That support really does matter, and we're incredibly grateful to you for it.

As the days shortened and the seasons quietly turned, we entered a particularly testing time for our wildlife. Many young animals were facing their very first winter, and it's often harder than it looks. Routes that felt familiar in summer suddenly became risky as the evenings drew in, food was more difficult to find, and the colder weather demanded new ways of coping. We saw this reflected in the number of juvenile animals arriving with us - not because anything had gone wrong, but because learning how to survive takes time.

While the intensity of orphan season had eased, our work continued, shaped by the quieter but no less important challenges of the colder months. Your ongoing support through adoptions, donations, or simply staying connected with our work, helps ensure we're there for wildlife whenever we're needed.

Thank you for being part of our Wildlife Aid community, and for caring so much, all year round.

With warmest wishes,
Lou



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INSIDE WAF

by Beatrix Sami



As a local resident, I have always been aware of the existence of the Wildlife Aid Foundation. I knew that I could take injured wildlife there, and rest assured that whatever I brought would receive the best treatment, whatever the outcome.

When I joined the Wildlife Aid Foundation, in 2022, as a volunteer on reception, it was because I have always loved animals, particularly hedgehogs, and I respect nature and am in awe of the wonders it shows us. I started off just doing one shift a week but that eventually turned into three shifts a week, plus more when the need arises, because I absolutely love being there.

I have - and still do - learn so much, and I find it incredibly fascinating to watch the vets treating wildlife - they are always happy to answer my questions! I have also had the honour of being a Home Carer, meaning that I have looked after orphaned rodents and birds. This involves feeding them and looking after them until they can be returned to WAF or released. Of course, not every orphan survives - the same as not all patients that arrive at the hospital survive - which is sad, but, for me, I take comfort in the fact that they were found and brought to the hospital and did not pass away alone or in pain.

I have also helped out on evening animal husbandry shifts, which involves feeding patients. One of my favourite parts is crop feeding pigeons, doves and corvids - loud and messy though they are! I have also occasionally done fox rescues, which, although sad, as they are in desperate need of help, is rewarding, too, because it's one more animal that has been helped.

My favourite part of the year is orphan season, it's incredibly busy and pretty manic, you don't know at times if you're coming or going, but it's incredible to be part of it and, each year, my identifying of baby birds gets a little bit better because, believe me, it can be incredibly hard to differentiate between a sparrow or a robin, for example, when they are hatchlings!

I am so proud and happy to be part of such a wonderful organisation that is not only like a school on wildlife, but has also given me the opportunity to get to know so many people, some of whom have become true friends, and I will continue to be part of it for a very long time to come.

Interested in volunteering?
Scan the QR code to see all the roles we have availble.

Scan me

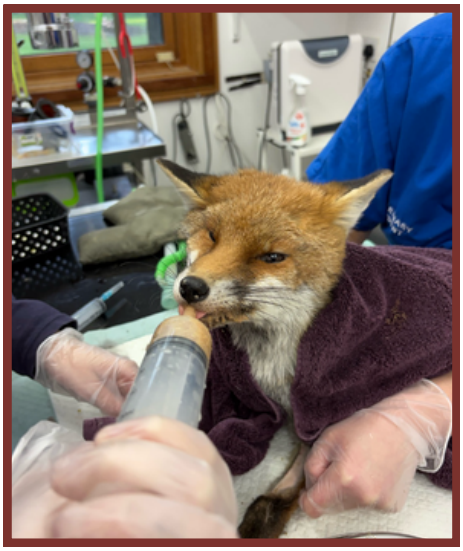
Fox News

Ringo's Release



This little fox was brought to us on the 15th of December, weak, dehydrated, dazed and suffering from severe diarrhoea. Upon inspection, our vet, Raul, discovered that Ringo had contracted Giardia, a microscopic parasite that infects the intestines.

Ringo was syringe-fed and placed in an incubator. His bloods revealed he had severe anaemia, therefore, treatment was given for this.



The vets continued to force-feed Ringo, and kept him in the incubator until he gathered strength and began eating on his own. He was then moved into a pen and monitored closely from there.

During rehabilitation, our vets became concerned with Ringo's behaviour, as he didn't seem afraid of people. This is a negative sign, as, at Wildlife Aid, we must ensure all animals under our care remain wild. This is for the animals' own protection. However, eventually, Ringo began to exhibit natural fox behaviour - he would run away whenever anyone entered his pen.

With peace of mind that Ringo did not have any neurological issues, he was given the all-clear for release.



Recovery was a long, slow process, however, after 6 weeks in care, Ringo was finally released on the 27th of January! We wish him all the best on his journey back into the wild.

To see more on Ringo's release back into the wild, you can join our Patreon! Just scan below:

Scan me

A True Survivor



Taking three weeks to catch, this is no ordinary fox! This fox was named 'Scar' by our vet, Judith, because of the large scar across his face.

However, Scar was not brought to the hospital for this reason. He was actually brought in due to a puncture wound on his left leg, which had become infected and swollen.

Upon closer examination, Judith found that Scar was also missing a toe, had an old, healed fracture in the same injured leg, and was missing a piece of his lip, along with a long scar stretching across his face. Henceforth, he was known as a 'true survivor'.

Judith got to work clipping and cleaning the wound and then Scar was placed in a pen so the healing process could be monitored. Scar was described as 'very feisty' when the vets tried to assess his wound.

Despite his attitude, his leg wound healed up very well and Scar was released on the 9th of December 2025! We wish him all the best on his return to the wild, and hope he continues to thrive.





Since Jan 2025, Your adoption has helped....



633

Foxes

Did you know?

Red foxes have scent glands on their feet to mark well-used trails and make them easier to find at night!

Hedgehog Headlines

Tiny But Tough



On the 2nd of November 2025, the hospital saw three tiny hoglets brought into our care. They had arrived as a result of their nest being disturbed. Sadly, one of the three hoglets sustained a severe back injury from a garden fork, which caused irreparable, unsurvivable damage.

The remaining two hoglets appeared to be well – each weighing-in at about 110g, which was very small for the time of year! They were transferred to a dedicated home carer, where they could receive continuous care to carry on developing.



On 24th November 2025, the two hoglets, now three times their original size, were returned to our hospital from home care, after developing severe diarrhoea and weight loss. This raised significant concern for our veterinary team, and they were immediately placed under urgent care for further treatment. Blood and green slime were found in the hoglets' poo, suggesting salmonella bacterial infection.

Since being in urgent care, both hoglets began putting on weight, eating fine and their faeces looked a lot better!



After a couple of weeks had passed, both hoglets were big enough to be placed in their own hutches. Hedgehogs are placed into hutches shortly before release.

Finally, on the 12th January 2026, the pair were released!

We wish them all the best and hope they can bring their bravery into the wild.

Healing Takes Time

When this hedgehog first arrived, it was clear he had been struggling for some time. His face was badly swollen, especially on the right side, with an underlying abscess. Beneath his jaw, the lymph node was enlarged, and several teeth were rotten, making it painful for him to open his mouth, fully. His eyes were swollen, too, and the conjunctiva inflamed, though he still responded to his surroundings and didn't behave as if he was blind. Ticks covered his body, and his low body condition told a story of hardship.



Treatment began, immediately. He was given antibiotics and pain relief, treated for parasites, supported with fluids, and the worst of the dental damage was addressed with the removal of a rotten tooth. Despite everything, that very evening he surprised everyone by eating biscuits, in his cage!

Over the next few days, he continued to eat well. By November, he had already gained weight, though the abscess remained large. It was clear this wouldn't be a quick fix; he would need patience, ongoing antibiotics, and careful monitoring.



His eyesight wasn't perfect, his left eye seemed to have very little vision, but he navigated his space confidently, moving without confusion.

A few days later, while the swelling had improved, something new was noticed: instability in his jaw. X-rays revealed a jaw fracture, already showing signs of healing with callus formation.

By the end of November, he was thriving. The abscess had healed completely, his jaw fracture was stable, and he ate eagerly and without difficulty. His vision wasn't perfect, but he avoided obstacles well. With his strength restored, he was moved into a hutch to begin acclimating for life outdoors.

Thankfully, after everything, he was released on the 6th of December.

Since Jan 2025, Your adoption has helped....



518

Hedgehogs

Did you know?

Hedgehogs are actually lactose intolerant!

Badger Bulletin

Badger Clan Update

Remember the badger clan that was headed to its soft release site?

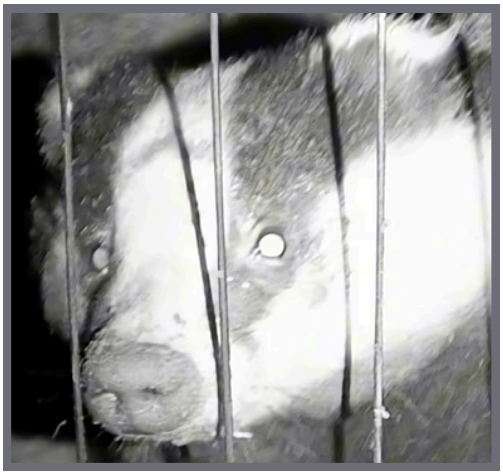
On the 14th of October, the clan received a traditional WAF treat of earthworms to wish them goodbye, before they were sent to their soft release site. Since then, they have been eating well, playing, and enjoying being closer to nature.

You can watch how the badgers have been enjoying their soft release by scanning the QR code, below.

Did you know?

During winter, badgers go into torpor - a state of reduced activity and metabolism (similar to hibernation). During torpor, they sleep in their setts, conserving energy by lowering their heart rate and emerging occasionally to eat. Thankfully, during winter, we see fewer badgers, due to torpor, therefore, have less casualties to report!





Scan me

Soft Release Sites

What is a soft release site?

Animals acclimatise in a secure enclosure or aviary, on your land, before being released to the wild. The soft release site owner will provide food and water during and after release, until independence.

RELEASE SITES NEEDED!

We are in need of release sites for later in the year, to ensure the badgers we rescue are able to acclimatise, safely.

What is needed?

- **Site:** Provide a quiet, safe, disturbance-free area
- **Dogs:** Keep dogs away or on a lead and well clear at all times
- **Freezer Space:** Provide freezer space for storing frozen chicks and quail
- **Contact:** Only attend for feeding and cleaning - no handling or interaction
- **Food and Water:** Provide daily food and clean water, following hospital guidance
- **Observe and Report:** Monitor from a distance; report any concerns, immediately

If this is something you are interested in, please contact us!

Interested in helping with soft release?
Scan the QR code, below, for ways to get in touch.

Scan me





Since Jan 2025, Your adoption has helped....



62
Badgers

Did you know?

Badgers love earthworms and may eat over 200 worms per night!

Owl Tweets

Suspended Over the River



We were called to rescue a barn owl that was suspended over the River Wey, tangled in fishing line. Thankfully, Surrey Fire and Rescue were able to come to our aid with a boat!

Back at Wildlife Aid, our vet, Raul, carefully freed the owl from the tangled fishing wire. On closer inspection, we discovered the wire was tightly wrapped around his feathers but, thankfully, had not cut deep into the wing. This gave us hope that there would be no lasting damage, just some swelling that needed monitoring.

Due to the bird's excellent recovery, our vet, Judith, decided he was ready to be released. On the 16th of November 2025, this barn owl was released back into the wild, in a familiar location. This is a wonderful success story, showcasing an incredible recovery, but it also serves as a powerful reminder of the harm litter can cause to our wildlife. Please, always dispose of your litter and fishing wire responsibly, to help protect these beautiful creatures.





Roadside to Release

This tawny owl was, unfortunately, another victim of a road traffic accident. We see a lot of these, here, at Wildlife Aid, and, whilst we understand accidents can happen, we like to remind people to, please, slow down when driving.

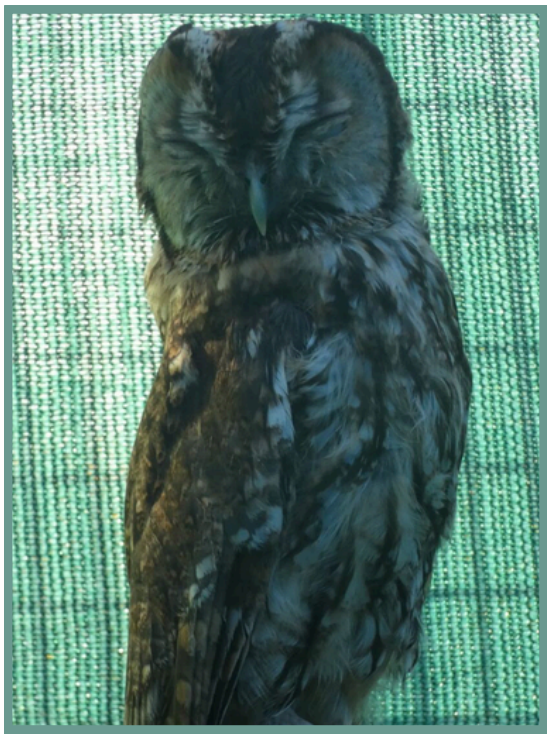
Luckily for this tawny owl, he arrived at our hospital with no obvious wounds and no fractures. He was, however, very quiet and did not want to eat a lot.

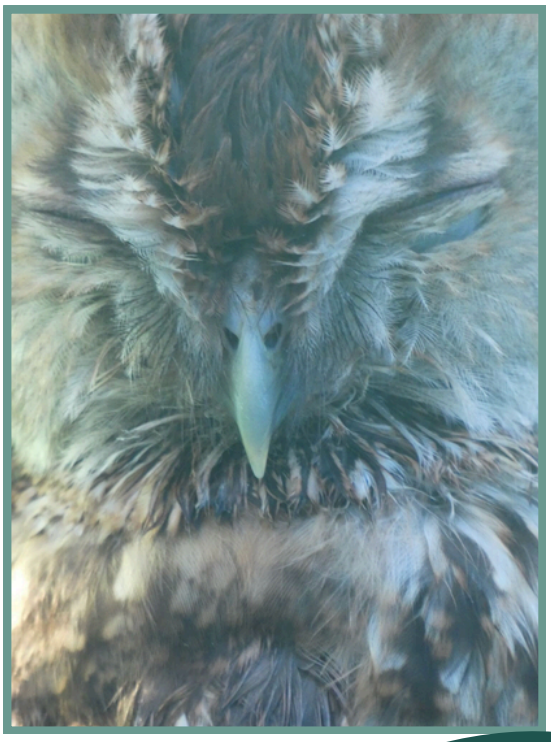
Our vets provided him with supplements made especially for animals that are having trouble eating or digesting after an illness, and he was monitored closely on his food consumption and general behaviour.

After being monitored for a few days, our vets noticed he was looking a little brighter, so he was moved to an aviary, where his flying abilities could be assessed.

After a while, he began eating all his food overnight and flying around the aviary. It was then decided he was ready for release.

On the 31st October, this lovely tawny owl was released back into the wild, where he belongs. We hope he can continue to fly with no more collisions!





Since Jan 2025, Your adoption has helped....

35
Owls

Did you know?

Owls can turn their heads 270 degrees!

Deer Daily

This female roe deer was reported to us after being discovered trapped in a fence between the M25, a canal, and a busy railway line - a frightening and dangerous situation for any wild animal.

Our amazing rescue and veterinary team responded, immediately, heading straight to the scene to free the distressed deer and assess her condition.

On arrival, they were met by a concerned member of the public, who was accompanied by his two dogs. To help minimise any additional stress, we, kindly, asked for the dogs to be moved away from the area.

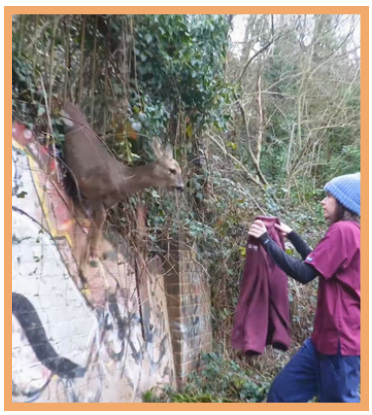
It's important to remember that frightened animals experience the same fight, flight or freeze response that we do. When an animal appears still, it doesn't always mean they are calm; they may simply be frozen in fear. If you ever encounter an animal in distress, please, be mindful of this and help reduce noise and activity around them, where possible.

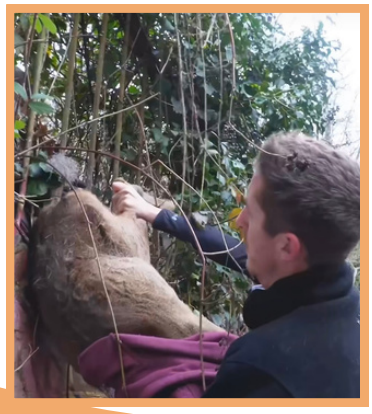
Our wonderful vet, Judith, gently covered the deer's eyes to help keep her calm, before administering a light sedative, allowing the team to safely and carefully free her from the fence.

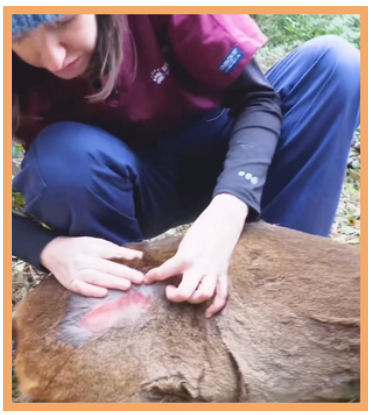
Once released, she was given a thorough examination. Thankfully, she had sustained no fractures, only minor rashes to her hips,where she had been trapped.

When Judith was satisfied that she was stable and ready, the sedation was reversed. The team monitored her closely, until she was back on her feet and able to return safely to her surroundings.

Thanks to the swift actions of our dedicated team, and the compassion of the member of the public who alerted us, this beautiful roe deer was given a second chance. We wish her a safe and peaceful future, back in the wild.









Pigeon Post

The Perfect Pair

These two were brought to us on separate occasions, but for the same reason, and only one day apart!





Unfortunately, these two wood pigeons were both found fallen from their nest and, as they were only young nestlings, they would need our care, if they were to survive.

Early on, illness and poor feather development caused setbacks, and their future was uncertain.

With veterinary support, however, their damaged feathers were carefully removed to give new ones the best chance to grow.

Progress has been slow, but it's happening! Their weight has increased, they're feeding well, and new feathers are coming through — just not enough, yet, for flight.

For now, they remain safely in an aviary, still needing time before they can take to the skies. A gentle reminder that rescue isn't always quick, but patience can make all the difference!



Fancy Footwear

This pigeon was brought to our care after suffering wounds to his left flank and knee. There were no obvious fractures to his leg, however, is was suspected he wasn't using it, due to the pain he suffered elsewhere.

Our vet, Judith, got to work, stitching up his wound. He was moved to an incubator to be monitored.

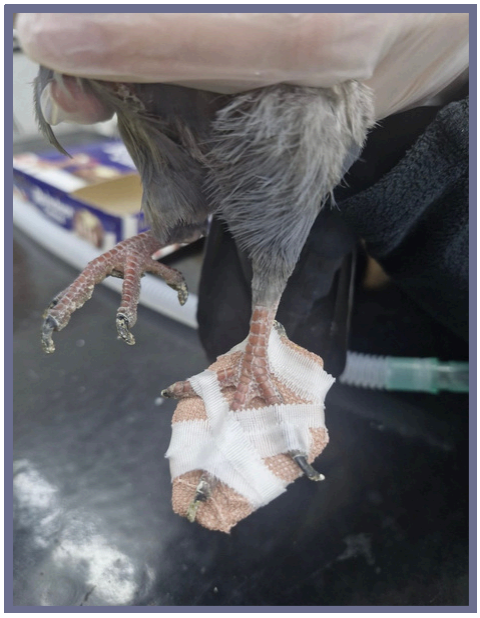
After a few days, his wounds appeared to be healing well, however, he was still not using his foot, so, Judith decided to create a shoe to help him.

Two shoes later, and... success! The shoe was the perfect fit and our pigeon appeared more mobile.

After a couple of days, our vets noticed the shoe had fallen off. However, this didn't matter, as he appeared to be using his foot, perfectly!

He was then moved to an aviary, where he could practice flying, before being released.

On the 24th of December, this pigeon was finally ready for release, just in time for Christmas!





Since Jan 2025, Your adoption has helped....

1,909
Pigeons

Did you know?

There are 5 species of pigeon in the UK

Bat Broadcast

Grounded to Gliding



This brown long-eared bat was found grounded, near Leatherhead.

He suffered from no external wounds or fractures, but was underweight.

With no wounds to fix, this bat was transferred to our friends at Surrey Bat Rescue, to be monitored and cared, for before his release back into the wild!

Did you know?

Bats hibernate during the colder months, surviving on fat they have stored, rather than trying to forage for food.

Because of this, we do not see many bat patients during the winter, which is a positive!





Adoption Impact

At Wildlife Aid, we work with nearly 200 British wildlife species, and your support plays an important part in rescuing and rehabilitating them all. Let's dive into the wild world of some other quirky critters we get to help.

This was ordinary case, here, at Wildlife Aid. Colin was brought into the hospital on the 5th of November 2025, as he was unable to fly. Upon further inspection, our vets discovered that he had a severe sinus infection.

This condition had caused significant discomfort and made breathing difficult for him, which, in turn, affected his overall strength and ability to fly. We know how painful this can be; therefore, the vets came to his aid, straight away, by performing surgery to drain the pus and reduce inflammation. His sinuses were then flushed and closed, slightly. The vets continued to flush Colin's sinuses, until he was flying and ready for release!





Meet Mrs Pocket!

If you follow us on social media, you may be familiar with Mrs Pocket, our hazel dormouse.

She got her name as she was found building a nest inside a gardener's jacket pocket!

Being extremely underweight, she was brought into our care for food and to hibernate, over the winter months.

Currently, she continues to be fast asleep in hibernation, but doing very well.

This yellow-necked field mouse was brought into the hospital on the 30th of November 2025, due to a cat attack. He suffered a large wound on his back, mainly affecting the right flank and right back leg. Although his back leg was damaged, he was still mobile on all four legs, however, was very stressed and alert.

Our vet, Judith, got to work performing surgery to stitch up the wound. It was a successful surgery, and our yellow-necked field mouse looked a lot better. After a while, his wounds healed and he was released back into the wild, where he belongs.





Thank you so much for your continued support.
If you've enjoyed reading our patients' stories,
scan the QR code for more.

Follow us for more - @Wildlifeaid