



Wildlife
Rehabilitation
Ireland

2025 Annual Report

www.wri.ie

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION IRELAND Annual Report

For the period ended
31st December 2025

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Company Information

Directors 2025

Aidan Lynch (Chairperson)

Mark Muir (Treasurer)

Cormac O'Connor (Company Secretary)

Michael Gunn

David Duffy

Aoife Corcoran

Emma Higgs

Sean Conlon

Karen Mahon

COMPANY NUMBER

555237

CHARITY NUMBER

20991

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER

20142551

REGISTERED OFFICE

10 High Meadows,

Duleek,

Co Meath, Ireland

Tel: 086 159 2097

www.wri.ie

Director's Report

2025

Dear Staff, Volunteers, and Supporters,

It is a privilege to present Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland's Annual Report for 2025. As we look back on the year, we can see how WRI continued to grow in confidence, depth, and impact. The past twelve months brought a wide range of activities across education, sector support, community engagement, veterinary collaboration, wildlife crime prevention, and our continued efforts to establish Ireland's first Wildlife Rehabilitation & Teaching Hospital.

2025 was a year of strong momentum, marked by progress on multiple fronts. We supported wildlife rehabilitators through expanded training opportunities, discounted course places, strengthened relationships with the IWRC and Scottish SPCA, and new teaching aids funded through grant support. Our work with the veterinary sector deepened further, with articles published in the Veterinary Ireland Journal, increased engagement with veterinary partners, and new pre-course training for vet delegates.

Public outreach also grew significantly. WRI delivered school talks, retirement-group sessions, biodiversity workshops, and a broad range of online webinars alongside partners including the Irish Wildlife Trust, Hedgerows Ireland, the Irish Peatland Conservation Council and others. We participated in events across the country – from Electric Picnic to Flavours of Fingal and university Green Weeks, while our monthly contributions on LMFM helped bring wildlife welfare and biodiversity issues to a wider audience.

Our work in wildlife crime and PAW Ireland expanded meaningfully in 2025. Awareness stalls, university collaborations, stakeholder meetings, targeted submissions, and outreach with national bodies helped strengthen understanding of wildlife crime issues across Ireland. The PAW Ireland App usage continued to grow steadily, reflecting both public interest and the need for clearer reporting pathways.

A major focus for the year was the continued development of the Wildlife Rehabilitation & Teaching Hospital. Considerable work took place behind the scenes: architectural surveys, ecological assessments, visual impact studies, meetings with planners, community information sessions, and the management of a complex planning process. Although the application did not satisfy Meath County Council and was rejected by them, the organisation responded with a strong and detailed appeal, a collective effort that reflects both our resolve to get this Teaching Hospital built and our belief in the national importance of this project.

Throughout 2025, we also strengthened our internal systems. The board and staff team met regularly to progress governance, finance, HR and planning. The continued upgrading of WRI's website and communications tools improved our public presence and supported better engagement with volunteers, supporters and wider communities.

As we look ahead to 2026, we do so with renewed energy and optimism. The foundations laid in 2025, in training, outreach, partnerships, governance, and the hospital project, position WRI to deepen its impact in the year ahead. Our achievements this year reflect the dedication, professionalism, and generosity of our volunteers, staff, board members, supporters, and partners. Your commitment continues to drive WRI forward and strengthens our vision for a national framework that protects and supports Ireland's wildlife.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Vision and Company Overview

Founded in 2010

Established in 2010, Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland in professionalising wildlife rehabilitation in Ireland, improving standards, building national capacity and advocating for stronger wildlife protection.



Mission

Our mission is to promote and advance wildlife rehabilitation, welfare and protection

Vision

We envision a world where people recognise both the intrinsic value of wildlife, and that protecting biodiversity is fundamental to life on earth

Aims & Objectives

- Provide training and education
- Rehabilitate wildlife
- Develop a Wildlife Rehabilitation & Teaching Hospital
- Support monitoring and research
- Assist rehabilitators
- Reduce threats to wildlife



Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Hello — We Are WRI

Working to protect, support, and strengthen Ireland's wildlife and the people who care for it.



About Us

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland (WRI) is dedicated to improving wildlife welfare through education and sector support.

What We Do

Through our programmes – WildlifeCrime Ireland, Wild schools and Wild Watch – we.

- ✓ Build skills and capacity within Ireland's wildlife rehabilitation sector
- ✓ Provide educational tools and training for carers, vets, students and communities
- ✓ Promote public engagement and understanding of wildlife welfare
- ✓ Support national efforts to reduce wildlife crime

What's Next?

Ireland is one of the few European countries without a dedicated wildlife hospital. WRI is working to change that.

Find Out More

Visit www.wri.ie to learn about our training, events, resources and ongoing projects.

Key Pillars of Our Work



Raising Awareness & Inspiring Action

WRI played a central role in 2025 in increasing public understanding of Ireland's wildlife, habitats, and the threats they face, from habitat loss to illegal persecution.

Throughout the year, our educational programmes and outreach initiatives empowered communities to recognise and report wildlife crime, and to identify sick or injured wildlife in need of assistance.

These efforts promoted a culture of respect, responsibility, and guardianship, while challenging outdated or harmful narratives surrounding species such as badgers, corvids, foxes, and raptors.

In 2025 we continued to work closely with communities, landowners, and stakeholders to foster a shared sense of ownership of Ireland's biodiversity, encouraging both rural and urban communities to play an active part in protecting it.

We also raised the visibility of underrepresented species and issues through targeted campaigns and media engagement, highlighting concerns such as badger baiting, poisoning, and habitat destruction.



Building Capacity through Training and Resources

In 2025, WRI continued to strengthen national capacity by delivering webinars, workshops, and practical resources that helped both professionals and the public treat wildlife safely and responsibly.

We provided CPD-accredited training for veterinary and ecological professionals, shared updated guides and toolkits to support best practice in wildlife handling, reporting, and advocacy, and developed educational modules designed to build long-term skills in animal welfare and conservation.



Making a Measurable Difference



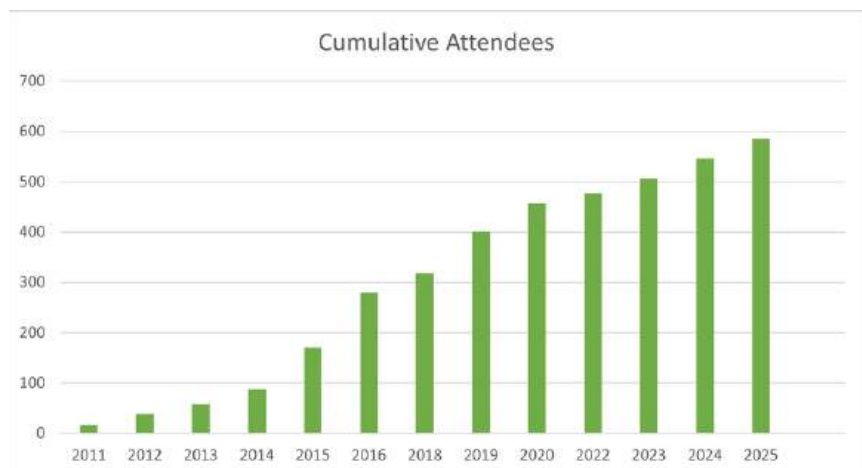
A Track Record of Growing Engagement

Our events have grown from a modest gathering of 17 delegates in 2011 to a nationally recognised platform welcoming over 1,100 participants by 2025 including attendees from the UK and mainland Europe. This growth reflects not only increased demand for cross-sector collaboration in wildlife and environmental protection, but also the trust placed in us as a coordinating body. Our reach has expanded from local to international, helping shape professional practices and awareness across borders.

13
Years of
Growth

1,100+
Participants

Our courses achieved nationwide reach, with participants attending from 19 of Ireland's 32 counties (59%), demonstrating strong geographic representation across the island.





Education: **Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation Course**

In October 2025, Senior Veterinary Surgeon Liam Reid from the Scottish SPCA, WRI's Instructor for the two-day Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation Course, delivered training to a highly engaged group of participants in Bettystown, Co. Meath.

The programme provides a comprehensive foundation for individuals passionate about wildlife care, equipping participants with essential knowledge and practical skills to contribute safely and effectively to the rehabilitation of injured, sick and orphaned wildlife. Delegates travelled from across Ireland and represented a broad range of backgrounds, including NPWS staff, ecologists, students and members of wildlife and animal welfare organisations.

The course combines veterinary-led guidance, best-practice protocols and practical handling principles to ensure wildlife is treated appropriately, reducing harm and improving welfare outcomes. By building competence and confidence, the training supports earlier intervention, appropriate referrals and improved animal welfare standards nationally.

Following the course, participants receive a detailed resource pack and follow-up support. This continued engagement enables some delegates to become actively involved in wildlife rehabilitation, while others use the knowledge gained to rescue wildlife appropriately or to inform their future career paths, and many to feel, in their own words, "confident to attempt to provide care" when encountering wildlife in distress.

<https://wri.ie/introduction-to-wildlife-rehabilitation/>



Education: Advanced Wildlife Veterinary Treatment Course

In November 2025, WRI partnered with Duggan Veterinary Supplies to deliver the Advanced Wildlife Veterinary Treatment Course, strengthening collaboration between wildlife rehabilitation and the veterinary sector. The partnership helped showcase best practice in wildlife care and provided veterinary professionals with specialist training in treating injured wild animals.

Through support from M1 Drogheda Chamber Skillnet, eligible delegates were also able to avail of a 30% training subsidy, improving accessibility and enabling wider participation from veterinary professionals nationwide.

The two-day course was delivered by UK wildlife and exotics specialists Vicki Baldrey and Mark Naguib, both RCVS-recognised experts in zoological and wildlife medicine. The programme is designed to provide veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses with in-depth knowledge of modern treatment approaches for mammalian and avian wildlife following first aid and stabilisation.

The training strengthened clinical decision-making, appropriate referral pathways and awareness of zoonotic risks, particularly in the context of emerging diseases and the ongoing avian influenza panzootic. Enhancing veterinary capacity in wildlife medicine supports improved welfare outcomes for injured wildlife while also reinforcing public health safeguards within clinical settings.

The course was hosted at Duggan Veterinary Supplies' training facility in Thurles, with WRI honoured to be selected as Duggan's charity partner. Duggan Veterinary Supplies provided extensive administrative and organisational support, delivering the course as part of their wider programme of professional veterinary training. Notably, this was the only wildlife-focused course included within their extensive training calendar, and WRI is very grateful for their support in making the training possible.

Evaluation feedback highlighted increased confidence in managing wildlife casualties, improved understanding of zoonoses and strengthened awareness of disease precautions. Delegates travelled from across Ireland, demonstrating continued national demand for structured, specialist wildlife veterinary training. <https://wri.ie/wildlife-veterinary-treatment-course/>

Education: University & 'Wild Schools'

University College Dublin – Wildlife Module Delivery (2025)

In 2025, WRI continued its long-standing partnership with University College Dublin, delivering specialist wildlife treatment and first aid training to 40 final-year veterinary nursing students. Now in its tenth year, this collaboration ensures that wildlife care remains firmly embedded within professional veterinary education in Ireland.

UK wildlife veterinary nurse Aneesa Malik travelled to lead the hands-on practical sessions, guiding students through safe handling, clinical nursing techniques and best-practice treatment approaches for wildlife casualties. The sessions were extremely well received and focused on building both competence and confidence in managing injured wildlife within clinical settings.

As a direct result of evidence gathered through WRI's 2013 Wildlife Veterinary Health Survey, wildlife treatment is now a compulsory component of the veterinary nursing curriculum. This ensures that each graduating cohort enters practice equipped with the knowledge and practical skills required to respond appropriately to wildlife emergencies.

Student feedback continues to reflect the value of this training:

"The wildlife module was one of the most practical and relevant parts of our course. I feel much more prepared to handle wildlife cases safely and confidently when I qualify."

By strengthening professional capacity at undergraduate level, WRI continues to improve wildlife welfare standards nationally while supporting safer, more informed veterinary practice.



Teaching Materials – Wild Schools (2025 Reach and Impact)

In 2025, WRI's Wild Schools resource continued to expand its national reach through Scoilnet, supporting teachers in delivering structured, curriculum-aligned learning about Irish wildlife and biodiversity.

Developed by WRI's Education Officer, the resource includes engaging videos, worksheets, debate prompts, quizzes and clearly defined project goals. It also features an instructional video and workbook guiding students in creating wildlife-friendly spaces within their school or community.

Following approval by the Department of Education and translation into Irish, the resource is accessible to schools wishing to teach it as Gaeilge. Its continued uptake in 2025 reflects strong demand for accessible, high-quality biodiversity education that empowers young people to engage actively with wildlife protection.



Practical Action Focused

Students supported to create wildlife-friendly spaces in schools and communities



Classroom Ready Resources

- Instructional video
- Student workbook
- Worksheets and quizzes
- Debate prompts
- Wildlife action project template



Nationwide Reach via Scoilnet

Available to schools across Ireland through the national education platform

Our People: Ongoing Training & CPD

Webinars & Tutorials

In 2025, WRI team members and directors participated in a wide range of webinars and online learning sessions to build capacity, stay informed, and strengthen the organisation's work. These sessions support ongoing professional development and ensure the team remains up to date with best practice in charity governance, wildlife rehabilitation, and organisational management.

Many of these sessions are provided by The Wheel, Ireland's national association for community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises, of which WRI has been a member for several years. The Wheel offers regular training opportunities for members, covering topics such as governance, data protection, project management, and organisational development.

WRI team members also regularly attend webinars hosted by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC), a leading international body supporting wildlife rehabilitators. These sessions provide valuable insights into wildlife care, rehabilitation standards, and emerging best practices within the sector. WRI has maintained a long-standing relationship with IWRC and continues to benefit from its training programmes.

Examples of webinars attended during 2025 include sessions on mindfulness and wellbeing in the charity sector, making the most of organisational memberships, data protection in charities, annual report preparation, project management, and training linked to the IWRC Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator programme.

To ensure learning is shared across the organisation, WRI maintains a dedicated training email address through which relevant opportunities are circulated to team members and directors. Particularly useful sessions are also shared with our wider community through social media, helping to spread knowledge and encourage sector-wide learning.



Community Outreach: Schools

St Patrick's National School - School Talk

Advanced Wildlife Veterinary Treatment Course in March 2025, WRI visited St Patrick's National School, Dublin, to deliver an interactive Wild Schools session focused on Ireland's native wildlife and the importance of conservation. The visit formed part of our wider education and outreach programme aimed at fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of local biodiversity among young people.

Students were introduced to a range of native species through engaging storytelling, interactive discussion and practical guidance on how they could make their school grounds and homes more wildlife-friendly. The session encouraged curiosity, responsibility and positive environmental behaviours.

A particular highlight was the opportunity for students to handle WRI's taxidermy specimens. This hands-on experience provided a rare chance to see and carefully touch Irish wildlife up close in a safe and respectful setting, sparking curiosity, thoughtful questions and lively discussion throughout the classroom. For many pupils, it was their first time encountering native species in such detail, transforming classroom learning into a tangible and memorable experience and reinforcing the importance of protecting Ireland's natural heritage.



'Fighting Words' Talks (2025)

St. Marys school

In January 2025, WRI continued its partnership with Fighting Words, the creative writing organisation, to deliver educational sessions that combine storytelling with wildlife conservation.

Through this collaboration, students explore the lives and habitats of Irish wildlife such as badgers, bats, puffins and foxes, using imagination and narrative to better understand the challenges these species face. By stepping into the perspective of native wildlife, participants are encouraged to consider issues such as habitat loss, human impact and biodiversity protection in an accessible and engaging way.

These sessions are designed to foster both creative expression and environmental awareness, supporting literacy development alongside a deeper connection to Ireland's natural heritage.

The partnership reflects WRI's commitment to interdisciplinary education, demonstrating how the narrative arts can be used as a powerful tool to strengthen empathy, understanding and long-term engagement with wildlife conservation.



Community Outreach: Retirement Group

In March 2025, WRI was invited to speak to the **East Meath Active Retirement Association (EMARA)**, a vibrant group of approximately 50 members who meet monthly in Julianstown. The talk focused on the wildlife found in East Meath, highlighting local species, the pressures they face and the practical steps individuals can take to support biodiversity in their own gardens and communities.

Many attendees are keen gardeners and engaged enthusiastically in discussion about pollinators, habitat protection and wildlife-friendly practices. A key theme was the impact of pesticides and garden chemicals on wildlife and the wider ecosystem.

Following the session, several members expressed that they would no longer use pesticides in their gardens, having gained a clearer understanding of the risks posed to wildlife. This shift towards wildlife-friendly gardening represents tangible behavioural change, contributing directly to safer habitats and the protection of local biodiversity.





Community Outreach: **Bat Walk**

Excellent numbers joined us in June for our evening Bat Walk along the River Boyne at Rossnaree, co-hosted with the Kildare Bat Group and led by Anna Collins.

Walking at dusk with an experienced guide, participants of all ages had the opportunity to discover more about these remarkable and often misunderstood animals. As daylight faded, we used specialised bat detectors to listen for echolocation calls and identify species in real time.

On the night, attendees were able to see and hear several local species, including the brown long-eared bat, common soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat skimming low over the river, and the distinctive Leisler's bat.

The walk provided a unique chance to learn about bat life cycles, feeding behaviour and roosting habits, while also highlighting the importance of protecting river corridors and mature trees that support bat populations.

It was a memorable evening that combined education, connection with nature, and the simple magic of watching wildlife emerge at dusk.



Awareness Raising: Nanny Clean and Biodiversity Talk

On 17 May, Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland partnered with Sonairte National Ecology Centre to deliver a community biodiversity talk and clean-up along the River Nanny.

The event began with an outdoor talk exploring local biodiversity, the importance of healthy river ecosystems, and the impact of litter and pollution on wildlife. Participants learned about the species that rely on the River Nanny and the simple actions communities can take to protect freshwater habitats.

Following the talk, volunteers took part in a hands-on clean-up of the riverbank, removing litter and helping to improve the local environment. The day combined practical action with education, encouraging a stronger sense of stewardship for local wildlife and waterways.

It was a positive, community-led event that highlighted how small, collective efforts can make a meaningful difference for nature.



Awareness Raising: Biodiversity – **A Rubbish** **Year!**

Team Up Clean Up

Our initiative continued throughout every month in 2025, bringing together WRI volunteers and local residents from Meath, Louth and Dublin each month to clear litter from the Boyne River estuary and surrounding areas.

Removing marine litter is vital for protecting wildlife, coastal habitats and public health. Plastic and other debris can be ingested by animals, causing injury or death, while toxins from waste can enter the food chain.

These regular clean-ups make a practical difference on the ground and strengthen community responsibility for our shared natural environment.



Boyne Estuary

TEAM UP TO CLEAN UP!

JOIN US ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 10AM TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THIS SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION.

- Friday, 26th September, 2025
- Tower Rd, Mornington, Co Meath, A92 F2NF
- 10:00 am. May change due to tide times

Created by the goddess Boann and home to the Salmon of Knowledge, as the beautiful Boyne River joins the sea she leaves a wildlife rich inter-tidal habitat of salt marshes and mud flats which are home to otters, migratory and resident birds such as brent geese, redshank, shelduck and many more.

www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004080

Enquiries@wri.ie

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland



WRI Estuary Litter Picking Stats 2025

At the Boyne River Estuary in 2025:

MONTHLY EFFORT



2 Hours Per Session



4-8 Volunteers

AVERAGE COLLECTION



Approx. 10 Bags of Rubbish

ADDITIONAL ITEMS REMOVED



Chair, Carpet, Traffic Cones, & More

ANNUAL IMPACT:

 **150** Hours of Voluntary Labour

 **120** Bags of Rubbish

 Approx. **1 Tonne** of Waste



Awareness Raising: Heritage & Folklore

Photography Talk

As part of Heritage Week, WRI organised a Heritage & Folklore Photography Talk directly prior to our AGM at Bettystown Civic Centre. The event was open to the public and free of charge, ensuring accessibility for the wider community.

The event was co-hosted by wildlife photographer Andrew Kelly (akellyphoto.com), who delivered an engaging talk on native Irish wildlife. Through powerful imagery and storytelling, he explored Ireland's species, habitats, helping attendees to deepen their understanding of our natural heritage and the importance of biodiversity protection.

The event encouraged community participation, intergenerational learning and greater appreciation of local wildlife. By providing a free, inclusive space for learning and discussion, WRI strengthened public awareness and fostered a stronger connection between people and the natural environment.



Heritage Week
Through the Wild Lens
CAPTURING IRELAND'S HIDDEN WILDLIFE

**23rd
AUG
25**

CORBALLIS ROOM
BETTYSTOWN CIVIC BUILDING

AGENDA:
10:00 - BOARD MEETING
11:00 - AGM
12:00 - LUNCH
13:00 - PHOTOGRAPHY TALK
14:00 - FINISH

The poster includes four small images: a bird on a branch, a bridge over water, a badger, and a bird of prey in flight.



Awareness Raising: Festivals & Shows

Flavours of Fingal

In July 2025, Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland hosted a stall at Flavours of Fingal at Newbridge Demesne, Dublin.

Across the weekend, we spoke with hundreds of visitors about Ireland's native wildlife, what to do if they find an injured wild animal, and how everyday actions can help protect biodiversity. Our educational materials and specimen displays drew strong interest, particularly from children and families.

The event was a valuable opportunity to connect with the public, raise awareness of wildlife rehabilitation and wildlife crime, and encourage greater understanding and respect for the natural world.





Bringing Wildlife Crime into Public Focus

In 2025, WRI continued to raise public awareness of wildlife crime and how it can be reported. Through social media campaigns and public engagement, we highlighted key threats facing wildlife and encouraged reporting to the authorities, especially via the PAW Ireland App and the website wildlifecrime.ie.

Throughout the year, WRI also engaged directly with the public at a number of events and information stalls focused on wildlife crime awareness. Our first outreach event of the year took place during Green Week at **Maynooth University** in March, where two members of the WRI team spoke with students continuously over several hours, reflecting strong interest and engagement on the topic.

Further awareness stalls were held at **University College Cork** during Green Week in April, at the **Ardnaculla Summer School** in County Clare in May, and at **Sea Week in Connemara National Park** in October, where WRI hosted a two-day biodiversity and wildlife crime stand, following an invitation from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

These events formed part of WRI's efforts to take wildlife crime awareness on the road, engaging directly with communities across Ireland. By speaking face-to-face with members of the public, WRI shared practical information on wildlife crime, reporting mechanisms, and the role individuals can play in protecting Ireland's wildlife. This programme of outreach helped demonstrate WRI's national reach and impact, bringing wildlife protection messages directly to communities across the country.





Electric Picnic – Global Green Village

WRI attended Electric Picnic from 28–31 August, hosting a biodiversity and wildlife crime awareness stall in the Global Green Village.

As an Irish Environmental Network (IEN) member organisation, WRI was supported by IEN to participate in the event and engage with festival attendees. The stall provided an opportunity to raise awareness about Ireland’s wildlife, highlight the issue of wildlife crime, and share information about how the public can help protect native species.

Throughout the weekend, the WRI team engaged with a large number of festival-goers, particularly young people, through interactive activities and conversations about wildlife conservation and the importance of recognising and reporting wildlife crime. A roadkill awareness campaign formed a key part of the stand, where visitors could use animal masks created by WRI and take photos in the campaign’s red car “selfie frame,” sharing them online while learning about the impact of road traffic on wildlife. The activity helped spark conversations about habitat loss, illegal persecution of wildlife, and the simple actions individuals can take to better protect biodiversity.

Events such as Electric Picnic provide an important platform for reaching new audiences and encouraging greater public understanding of wildlife protection and environmental responsibility.





Retail Partnership – Sonairte Shop

Towards the end of 2025, WRI began selling a small range of merchandise through the shop at Sonairte – The National Ecology Centre. Items available include WRI-produced bird boxes, t-shirts, small “Fox in a Box” packs and Christmas calendars.

The “Fox in a Box” packs featured hand-knitted foxes made by a young supporter who created them as a small fundraising initiative for WRI. Each fox was presented in a simple gift-style pack accompanied by a “Fun Fox Facts” postcard, adding a light educational element to the item.

This initiative provides an additional way for supporters to engage with WRI’s work while helping to raise funds for wildlife education and rehabilitation activities. A percentage of sales is retained by Sonairte, with the remaining proceeds supporting WRI’s work.



Wildlife Crime & Wildlife Health **Surveys**

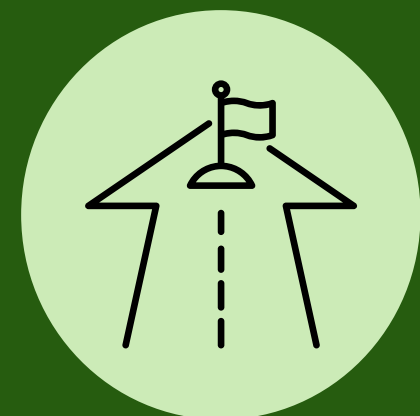
During this period, WRI undertook work to better understand both wildlife health issues encountered by veterinary professionals and public awareness of wildlife crime in Ireland.

A national Wildlife Crime Survey was carried out to explore public awareness of wildlife crime, experiences of witnessing incidents, and barriers to reporting offences. The survey generated valuable insights into how members of the public understand wildlife crime and what support or information they feel is needed to encourage reporting. The data is currently undergoing detailed analysis and will form the basis of a dedicated report to be published later this year.

Alongside this work, WRI also conducted a Wildlife Health Veterinary Survey, launched in October 2023 and aimed at veterinary clinics that have encountered and treated wild animals. The survey gathered insights on diagnosis, treatment approaches and clinical observations to help improve wildlife care and better support veterinary professionals working with wildlife.

Survey distribution and follow-up calls took place throughout 2023 and 2024, with results compiled during 2025. A PhD student who attended WRI's introductory wildlife course is currently analysing the data and developing the findings into a formal report.

These surveys will help inform WRI's future work in education, training and awareness-raising, supporting both veterinary professionals and the wider public in protecting Ireland's wildlife.





Wildlife Rehabilitation & Teaching Hospital

2025 Progress Update

The vision of a dedicated Wildlife Rehabilitation and Teaching Hospital has been part of WRI's long-term aim for many years. In 2021, WRI established and operated a wildlife hospital for a year, demonstrating both the demand for such a facility and the organisation's capacity to deliver it.

After having to vacate the Garlow Cross site at short notice, WRI worked to re-establish a facility in Mornington. However, planning issues ultimately prevented the hospital from opening. Since 2022, WRI has continued the search for a permanent and suitable location.

Following a positive ecological site assessment at the end of 2024, 2025 marked a renewed and focused effort to progress plans for a permanent Wildlife Rehabilitation and Teaching Hospital.

Following the identification of a suitable site in Mornington, we brought together a committed team of professionals including an architect, hydrologist, structural engineer and environmental scientist. Together, they carried out detailed site assessments to ensure the proposal was environmentally responsible, practical and in keeping with best standards.

In May, specialist visualisation consultants visited the site to carry out drone surveys and measurements to support the planning application. During the year, WRI and the landowner agreed terms for purchase of the site, subject to planning permission, an important and encouraging milestone.

A planning application was submitted later in the year. Although it was refused at local authority level, we took detailed professional advice and lodged an appeal with An Coimisiún Pleanála, supported by additional environmental information and technical clarification.

We were determined that the process would be open and transparent. An online information session was held for local representatives, followed by a well-attended public information evening where our team presented the plans and answered questions directly.

While not everyone shared our view, the discussions were respectful and constructive, and we remain grateful to those who engaged with us.

Behind this work was a small but dedicated WRI team. Without a Maintenance Manager or operational site staff, the project was progressed alongside ongoing responsibilities in outreach, education, administration and advocacy. The commitment, professionalism and resilience shown by the team throughout a complex and demanding planning process deserves recognition.

This year has highlighted both the complexity of delivering new wildlife infrastructure in Ireland and the clear need for higher standards of wildlife care. The proposed hospital is not simply a building. It represents a centre of excellence, a national resource to support rehabilitators, and a commitment to ensuring that injured and orphaned wildlife have access to the care they need.

The work continues into 2026 with patience, persistence and belief in the importance of what we are striving to achieve.



cllrsharontolan invited you to be a collaborator on their post.

Review

Item	Description	# of Pages	Value	WRI's Value
Application - Client Letter	planning application cover letter	1	340 €	340 €
Application Form - Part A		1	70 €	70 €
Certificate of Incorporation	Application	1	540 €	540 €
Drainage Retention Drawings	Circles and utilities drawing	1	407 €	407 €
Drawings - General	drawings of enclosure	1	349 €	349 €
Drawings - General	5006 road entrance plan 1:200 @ A3	1	439 €	439 €
Drawings - General	5007 site area elevation 1:200 @ A3	1	505 €	505 €
Drawings - General	5008 site north elevation 1:200 @ A3	1	678 €	678 €
Drawings - General	5009 site south elevation 1:200 @ A3	1	603 €	603 €
Drawings - General	5010 site west elevation 1:200 @ A3	1	514 €	514 €
Landowner consent	consent letter	1	110 €	110 €
Landscape Plans	5001 (2) site location map 1:100 @ A3	1	479 €	479 €
Landscape Plans	5004 site plan A 1:200 @ A1	1	153 €	153 €
Landscape Plans	5005 site plan B 1:200 @ A1	1	443 €	443 €
Neighbour Notice	neighbour page	1	424 €	424 €
NIS	NIS report	1	1238 €	1238 €
Other Assessments	utility and utilities report	1	187 €	187 €
Other Assessments	planning application report	1	888 €	888 €
Other Assessments	WRI operational manual	1	4770 €	4770 €
Photo Montage	Aerial photo montage	1	16000 €	16000 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA300 ground floor plan 1:100 @ A3	1	204 €	204 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA302 first floor plan 1:100 @ A3	1	200 €	200 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA303 elevations 1:100 @ A3	1	220 €	220 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA300 elevations 1:200 @ A3	1	340 €	340 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA301 elevations 1:200 @ A3	1	360 €	360 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA302 ceiling and insulation units 1:200 @ A3	1	540 €	540 €
Plans, Sections, Elevations	GA303 workshop unit 1:200 @ A3	1	300 €	300 €
Pre-Planning Details	Application	1	398 €	398 €
Sections	5011 site section A 1:200 @ A3	1	527 €	527 €

7 ❤️ 1 💬

cllrsharontolan Well done to Emma Higgs and all the team from Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland! Last night they held a very informative, open and engaging public meeting to outline their plans for the first Wildlife Hospital in Ireland to be built in



Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Wildlife Hospital Information Evening

Discover What's Coming to Mornington

Thursday 11th September | 7:00pm - 8:00pm | Boyne Valley Hotel, Drogheda

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland (WRI) invites you to an open public evening to share our plans for a Wildlife Teaching Hospital & Nature Education Centre right here in Mornington.

Come along to:

- Hear what we're planning and why it matters
- Learn about the future hospital and how it will help Ireland's wildlife
- Ask questions and find out how to get involved

All welcome – local residents, nature lovers, and anyone curious about wildlife care and conservation.

enquiries@wri.ie | www.wri.ie



Education & Outreach – Webinars and Online Events

Events – Webinars

During 2025, WRI organised and hosted a series of online webinars exploring key topics in wildlife conservation, biodiversity, and environmental protection. These events brought together experts, partner organisations and members of the public, helping to share knowledge and encourage discussion on issues affecting Ireland’s natural environment.

The webinars were organised and co-hosted with partner organisations and specialists working in conservation, research and wildlife protection.

Webinars held in 2025 included:

Hedgerows and Wildlife Conservation – February

Organised and co-hosted with the Irish Wildlife Trust and Hedgerows Ireland, exploring the importance of hedgerows for biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

“Sniffing out a Solution: How Detection Dogs are Revolutionising Wildlife Conservation” – March

Organised and co-hosted with Ciarán Cronin of WildEye, in collaboration with UCD, highlighting the growing role of conservation detection dogs in wildlife research and protection.

Environmental DNA (eDNA) and Wildlife Monitoring – April

Organised and co-hosted with wildlife geneticist Dr Dave Duffy and Marine Biologist Bogna Griffin, exploring how environmental DNA techniques are transforming wildlife monitoring and conservation science.

Protecting Ireland's Bogs – 28 May

Organised and co-hosted with the Irish Peatland Conservation Council, focusing on the ecological importance of peatlands and the need to protect these vital habitats.

These webinars brought together experts from Ireland and beyond, helping to share knowledge, highlight emerging research, and encourage greater public understanding of the challenges facing wildlife and habitats today.



FREE WEBINAR

SAFEGUARDING NATURE

HEDGEROW PROTECTION & CONSERVATION

Speakers

- Kieran Flood**
Irish Wildlife Trust
- Mark McDowell**
Hedgerows Ireland
- Aoife McPartlin**
Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Thursday, 27 February 2025
19:30 - 20:30

WWW.WRI.IE
Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland



PROTECTING IRELAND'S BOGS

CONSERVATION, CRIME AND RESTORATION

Speakers

- Nuala Madigan**
Chief Executive Officer
Irish Peatland Conservation Council
- Mark McCorry PhD MCIEEM**
Ecology Manager
Bord na Móna
Peatland Climate Action Scheme



FREE WEBINAR

SNIFFING OUT SOLUTIONS

HOW DETECTION DOGS ARE REVOLUTIONISING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Speaker

- Ciarán Cronin**
Wildeye
Ecology field work and surveying

Wednesday, 26 March 2025
19:30 - 20:30

Click on link to register

WWW.WRI.IE
Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland



FREE WEBINAR

ENVIRONMENTAL DNA ONE HEALTH

BRIDGING WILDLIFE, ECOSYSTEMS & HUMAN WELLBEING

Speakers

- Dr. David Duffy**
Assistant Professor of Wildlife Disease Dynamics
University of Florida
Whitney Laboratory
- Bogna Griffin**
Marine Biologist
Scientific & Technical Officer
Marine Institute, Sligo

Wednesday, 30th April 2025
19:30 - 20:30

Registration via Zoom link

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Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Strategic Collaborations & **Community Stakeholders**

Collaborative Conservation Efforts

At WRI, we continue to work closely with government bodies, statutory agencies and local communities to strengthen wildlife welfare and rehabilitation across Ireland.

Through engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, local authorities and academic institutions, we contribute to national efforts to protect wildlife through proactive conservation work and by supporting the rehabilitators, veterinary professionals and volunteers who provide care for injured and orphaned wildlife.

We remain committed to supporting veterinary professionals, wildlife rehabilitators and members of the public by providing practical training, accessible resources and trusted guidance.

By building strong partnerships and encouraging community involvement, we are helping to grow a more informed, skilled and connected network of people dedicated to safeguarding Ireland's wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.



GARN
GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR
THE RIGHTS OF NATURE



**PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION AGAINST
wildlife crime**





Networks & Partnerships

Irish Environmental Network

WRI has been a member of the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) and the Environmental Pillar since 2017. Through this coalition of environmental NGOs, we contribute to a collective voice advocating for stronger environmental policy and practical action at national level.

Membership enables WRI to bring frontline insight from wildlife rehabilitation into wider environmental discussions, highlighting how habitat loss, pollution, climate pressures and wildlife crime directly affect animal welfare.

Being part of the Environmental Pillar ensures that wildlife welfare is represented in national policy conversations on biodiversity, planning and environmental protection. We are grateful for the continued support of the IEN, including core funding, which helps sustain our advocacy and operational work.



The Wheel

WRI has been a member of The Wheel, Ireland's national association of community and voluntary organisations, since 2016. The Wheel provides essential support in governance, compliance, strategy and organisational development.

Throughout 2024, we engaged regularly with online training sessions and webinars covering governance, communications, advocacy and digital tools. These opportunities continue to strengthen our internal systems and ensure that WRI operates to high standards of accountability and effectiveness.



Scoilnet – Wild Schools Resource

Scoilnet, managed by the Department of Education, is Ireland's official online portal for teachers, providing curriculum-aligned resources for primary and post-primary education.

WRI's Wild Schools Resource is available through Scoilnet and supports students in learning about Irish wildlife, habitats, human-wildlife interactions and practical conservation. The resource includes species profiles, quizzes, audio-visual materials and project ideas designed to make wildlife education engaging and accessible.

Making this resource available through a trusted national platform ensures that accurate, science-based wildlife information reaches classrooms across Ireland.



Meath Environmental Network

WRI has been a member of the Meath Public Participation Network, specifically the Meath Environmental Network (MEN), since 2014. MEN brings together community groups and organisations across County Meath to promote environmental awareness, sustainability and local action.

The network plays an important role in connecting local organisations, sharing information and supporting grassroots initiatives aimed at protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

WRI values its membership of MEN as part of our wider commitment to community engagement and collaborative environmental work within County Meath.

International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council



WRI maintains international links through our membership of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC), a global organisation dedicated to advancing standards in wildlife rehabilitation through education and professional development.

Our connection with IWRC dates back to 2010, when WRI facilitated IWRC training courses in Ireland before going on to develop our own nationally tailored wildlife rehabilitation training programmes. In 2025, we continued to participate in IWRC-hosted webinars and professional forums, ensuring that our work remains informed by international best practice and emerging research in wildlife care.

Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature



Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature

In 2025 WRI continues its membership of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN), an international network advocating for legal frameworks that recognise the inherent rights of nature.

Being part of this global movement reflects WRI's belief that wildlife rehabilitation does not exist in isolation, but sits within a broader framework of environmental responsibility, legal protection and ecological justice. Our membership aligns with our long-term commitment to strengthening the protection of wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.

Supporting Wildlife Rehabilitators

Although WRI has not yet been in a position to reopen to wildlife admissions, our support for rehabilitators across Ireland continued throughout 2025. Many carers remain under sustained pressure, managing high volumes of calls and admissions, often with limited resources.

Our volunteers monitored the WRI inbox daily, offering practical advice and, where possible, referring cases to appropriate rehabilitators. While we may not always be the ones physically receiving an animal, we remain part of the support system that helps ensure wildlife receives timely and appropriate care.

Throughout the year, we followed up with advice and guidance to course delegates, maintaining contact particularly with those who had recently completed our wildlife training programmes. This ongoing support helps reinforce learning and builds confidence in handling real-life cases.

We also provided direct assistance to several rehabilitators, supplying food and essential equipment where needed, and awarding a number of course attendance grants to help reduce financial barriers to training. These practical supports strengthen the national rehabilitation network and ensure that carers working on the front line feel supported, connected and valued.

Supporting Veterinary Professionals



WRI continues to act as a point of guidance for veterinary professionals throughout Ireland. Through email correspondence and case-based discussion, we provide advice on wildlife presentations that may be less familiar within general practice.

Where specialist input is required, we are fortunate to draw on our long-standing relationships with experienced UK wildlife veterinarians. Their willingness to provide expert advice ensures that even complex cases can benefit from informed, evidence-based guidance, improving outcomes for wildlife patients.

We remain deeply grateful to our UK veterinary instructors, who generously contribute their time and expertise, whether delivering training, responding to queries, or supporting clinical decision-making. Their continued involvement plays an important role in building veterinary confidence and strengthening standards of wildlife care across Ireland.

Veterinary Ireland Journal Contributions

In 2025, WRI was proud to contribute three professionally written articles to the Veterinary Ireland Journal, Ireland's leading publication for veterinary professionals.

These articles focused on wildlife medicine and rehabilitation, providing practical clinical guidance, case-based insight and evidence-informed discussion to support veterinary practitioners who encounter wildlife patients in everyday practice. The content addressed common wildlife presentations, decision-making in treatment and referral, and the importance of collaboration between veterinary professionals and licensed rehabilitators. The published articles can be accessed here:

- **Veterinary Wildlife Article 1 – March 2025**

<https://wri.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/WRI-VIJ-Veterinary-Wildlife-Article-1-March-2025.pdf>

- **Veterinary Wildlife Article 2 – October 2025**

<https://wri.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/WRI-VIJ-Veterinary-Wildlife-Article-2-October-2025March-2025.pdf>

- **Additional wildlife-focused content available via the Veterinary Ireland Journal search platform:**

<https://www.veterinaryirelandjournal.com/component/finder/search?q=wildlife&Itemid=101>

WRI has been contributing to the Veterinary Ireland Journal (VIJ) since 2011, sharing knowledge and practical guidance with veterinary professionals across the country. Through this long-standing collaboration with a respected national veterinary publication, WRI continues to promote best practice, raise awareness of wildlife welfare considerations, and support improved outcomes for wildlife patients across Ireland.



Media & Publications

In May, WRI was featured in the Veterinary Ireland Journal (VIJ) in relation to the veterinary training course held in Thurles in partnership with Duggan Veterinary Supplies, where WRI participated as the charity partner.

Rather than a standard article, the publication included a larger feature highlighting the course and the importance of training veterinary professionals in wildlife care and rehabilitation.

Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime

WRI has been a member of the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW Ireland) since its inception in 2020 and remains an active member in 2025. PAW Ireland brings together statutory bodies, non-statutory organisations and other stakeholders with a shared commitment to tackling wildlife crime through education, publicity and collaborative action. New member organisations joined the partnership during 2025, further strengthening the collective voice addressing wildlife crime in Ireland.

At WRI, we are deeply concerned about the continued incidence of wildlife crime across the country and remain committed to playing a constructive role in reducing it. We believe awareness raising is central to this effort, not only to inform the public but also to encourage the reporting of offences. Increased reporting can support investigations and, where appropriate, prosecutions that act as meaningful deterrents.

Through our involvement in PAW Ireland, particularly within the Education and Publicity Subgroup, we continue to advocate for greater visibility of wildlife crime issues and stronger protections for Ireland's wildlife. In addition, WRI provides administrative support to the partnership. Our Secretary also serves as PAW Ireland Secretary, and WRI responds to all emails received through the PAW Ireland contact channels, ensuring timely communication and coordination across members.

Our continued participation reflects our belief that wildlife protection requires coordinated action, shared responsibility and sustained commitment across sectors.



SWWR Caring for Wildlife Conference

Secret World Wildlife Rescue Conference – UK

In February 2025, two members of the WRI team attended the annual Caring for British Wildlife conference hosted by Secret World Wildlife Rescue in the UK.

WRI has maintained a long-standing collaborative relationship with Secret World over many years, including reciprocal visits, sharing standard operating procedures, discussing rehabilitation facility design, and hosting their team as speakers at WRI conferences. Through our grant support, Irish rehabilitators have also been able to attend training opportunities with Secret World.

The conference brought together wildlife rehabilitators, veterinary professionals, conservationists and students to exchange knowledge and practical experience. Topics covered included wildlife rehabilitation techniques, veterinary case studies, conservation challenges and the legal considerations involved in wildlife care. Sessions also explored safe wildlife handling, clinical assessment of injured animals and approaches to improving welfare outcomes during rehabilitation.

Attendance at the conference provided an opportunity to strengthen professional links, learn from experienced practitioners and remain informed about evolving best practice in wildlife rehabilitation. International collaboration of this kind continues to play an important role in strengthening wildlife care standards in Ireland.

Saturday 7th - Sunday 8th February 2026

VENUE: Holiday Inn, Taunton (J25 of M5)



Animal Law Conference – Birmingham, UK

In June 2025, WRI's Executive Director attended the two-day Animal Law Conference held in Birmingham. The conference is the UK's national event on animal law and was co-hosted by the UK Centre for Animal Law and the Animals, Nature & Society Research Group at Birmingham City University.

The event brought together academics, lawyers, NGOs and animal protection organisations to discuss emerging legal developments affecting animals and wildlife. The programme included keynote presentations, panel discussions and workshops covering topics such as wildlife and environmental protection, legal approaches to animal rights, animal welfare regulation, and enforcement challenges.

Several sessions were particularly relevant to WRI's work, including discussions on wildlife crime and the need for stronger legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms. The conference also explored wider themes such as animal protection in public decision-making, legal personhood for animals, and new legal approaches to improving animal welfare.

Attendance provided an opportunity to hear from leading experts in the field, exchange ideas with colleagues working on animal protection across the UK and internationally, and remain informed about evolving developments in animal and wildlife law.



Wildlife Crime – Persecution

Wildlife Persecution

Wildlife persecution remains a serious issue across Ireland. Protected species such as badgers, birds of prey and hares, along with vulnerable habitats, continue to be affected by illegal poisoning, trapping, shooting and habitat destruction.

These crimes threaten individual animals and undermine wider conservation efforts. Although public awareness is growing, many offences still go unreported or undetected, making enforcement challenging.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) plays a vital role in investigating wildlife crime, often under difficult circumstances. While prosecutions can be difficult due to the need for strong evidence and limited resources, ongoing collaboration with An Garda Síochána and specialist training initiatives continue to strengthen enforcement.

WRI recognises and supports the important work of NPWS in protecting Ireland's wildlife.



Wildlife Crime – Collaboration



Working Together to Combat Wildlife Crime

WRI continues to play an active role in wildlife crime prevention through our engagement with the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW Ireland), particularly within the Education & Publicity Subgroup. These meetings focus on strengthening prevention efforts, improving reporting mechanisms and increasing public awareness.

In 2025, WRI joined other PAW representatives in a meeting with the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA) regarding its national Policing Priorities survey. It was noted that the survey did not reference animals or wildlife crime. Drawing on sector experience and findings from WRI's wildlife crime survey, PAW highlighted the importance of recognising wildlife crime within national policing priorities. A written submission was subsequently made recommending that wildlife crime be included in future policing frameworks.

During the year, WRI also maintained email communication with An Garda Síochána regarding procedures for reporting wildlife crimes, highlighting the difficulties many members of the public face in knowing which authority to contact and the need for clearer reporting pathways.

WRI also welcomed continued engagement between An Garda Síochána and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), including a joint workshop held at the Garda College, an encouraging step towards stronger cross-agency collaboration in tackling wildlife crime.



Wildlife Crime – **Education**

Wildlife Crime Awareness Materials

In 2025, WRI continued to promote public awareness of wildlife crime through the distribution of illustrated wildlife crime awareness leaflets developed for PAW Ireland. Originally commissioned from illustrator Aga Grandowicz, the series comprises five species-specific leaflets covering bats, badgers, birds, deer and hares, along with an overview leaflet on wildlife crime. The materials are designed to help the public recognise, understand and report illegal activities affecting native wildlife.

During the year, a reprint of the leaflets was funded through a community grant in the Donore area of Co. Meath, enabling wider distribution across Ireland. The leaflets were also shared at the various events and information stalls attended by WRI throughout the year.

To further extend their reach, the leaflets were shared with other members of PAW Ireland so they could also distribute them at events and outreach activities, helping to increase public awareness of wildlife crime and how it can be reported.

Education – Wildlife Crime Conference video

While the Wildlife Crime Conference took place in October 2024, its impact extended well into 2025 through the production, development and dissemination of this educational resource.

Throughout 2025, WRI worked with G-Fox Media Ltd to develop the conference content into a structured video resource, ensuring the expertise shared on the day could reach a far wider audience than those in attendance. The conference brought together enforcement agencies, veterinary professionals, government departments and conservation organisations from across Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK, reinforcing the importance of coordinated action in tackling wildlife crime.

This promotional video highlights the themes and discussions from the Wildlife Crime Conference, including enforcement, prosecution, surveillance, emerging threats and the importance of interagency collaboration. By making this material accessible beyond the conference itself, WRI continues to raise awareness, showcase collaborative efforts and support wildlife protection nationally.



Wildlife Crime – Meetings & Talks

Wildlife Crime & PAW Ireland – Meetings, Engagement & Advocacy

Throughout 2025, WRI continued to play an active role in addressing wildlife crime through its involvement with **PAW Ireland (Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime)**. This work includes collaboration with enforcement agencies, NGOs, community groups and policymakers to raise awareness, share information and develop practical responses to wildlife crime in Ireland.

During the year, WRI participated in a range of PAW Ireland meetings and working group discussions, including regular multi-agency meetings with the growing PAW Ireland network, which now includes over a dozen partner organisations. These meetings help coordinate responses to wildlife crime, share intelligence and develop public awareness initiatives.

WRI also engaged with international partners, including discussions with the **UK National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU)**, drawing on their experience to strengthen wildlife crime reporting and awareness initiatives in Ireland.

A number of stakeholder meetings and workshops were also attended during the year. These included a meeting at **Lough Boora**, where organisations came together to discuss ongoing wildlife crime concerns in the area and explore possible responses and awareness strategies.

WRI also engaged with a wide range of organisations and community representatives to explore education and outreach opportunities related to wildlife protection. This included discussions with groups working in youth engagement, mediation and community outreach, with the aim of developing future educational initiatives focused on wildlife care and awareness.

As part of this work, WRI delivered a presentation to a regional meeting of the **National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC)** in Mullingar, outlining the role of PAW Ireland and encouraging wider participation in the partnership. This engagement contributed to NARGC joining PAW Ireland, marking an important step in strengthening cross-sector collaboration to address wildlife crime.

WRI also met with a Member of the European Parliament to share information on wildlife crime and wider animal welfare issues, helping to raise awareness of these topics at European level.

Alongside these activities, WRI contributed to wider biodiversity policy discussions, including submitting recommendations to **Meath County Council** as part of the development of the Meath Biodiversity Action Plan.

In addition, WRI engaged with international wildlife rehabilitation colleagues to discuss standards for certification and authorisation of staff working in wildlife rescue centres, helping to inform ongoing discussions around professional standards within the sector.

Other Meetings & Engagement

Throughout 2025, WRI attended a number of meetings, site visits and events to support networking, collaboration and knowledge sharing across the biodiversity and environmental sector.

In March, WRI hosted a site visit from **Ben Malone, Biodiversity Officer** with Meath County Council. Discussions included wildlife crime, roadkill reporting, biodiversity initiatives and the development of WRI's wildlife hospital project.

WRI also attended the **Environmental Pillar Plenary meetings** organised through the **Irish Environmental Network (IEN)** in February, June, September and December. These meetings provide an opportunity for member organisations to share updates, collaborate and stay informed about environmental issues and initiatives across Ireland.

In February, WRI attended the opening of the **East Meath Civic Centre**, strengthening links with local authorities and community organisations in the region.

In September, WRI attended a talk in Skerries by ecologist **Marie-Louise Heffernan**, which explored the impacts of wind farms on bird populations and wider ecological considerations.

In November, at the request of the **Animal Manager at the DSPCA (now the NSPCA)** who had attended WRI's Introductory Wildlife Rehabilitation Course, WRI carried out a site visit to the organisation's facilities to provide guidance on potential improvements to their wildlife rehabilitation infrastructure.

This was followed by a Zoom meeting in December to review proposals and discuss practical recommendations for improving their facilities and strengthening wildlife care capacity.

Veterinary Engagement

In December, WRI met with the Clinical Director of AllPets Veterinary Hospital, part of the IVC Evidensia veterinary group with clinics across Ireland and the UK, to explore opportunities to promote wildlife awareness and education among veterinary professionals.

The discussion focused on how WRI resources and guidance on wildlife care could be shared with veterinary teams through IVC's internal intranet platform. This would help ensure that veterinary staff have access to information on responding to injured wildlife and can direct members of the public to appropriate support when wildlife is brought into clinics.

Strengthening relationships with veterinary networks is an important part of WRI's work, helping to improve knowledge sharing and support for wildlife care across the veterinary sector.

Organisational Development – **Digital & Communications**

WRI Website Update – 2025 Progress

During 2025, Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland upgraded its website to a modern WordPress platform, improving both its public presentation and internal capacity to manage content independently. The new platform provides greater flexibility, improved accessibility and a stronger foundation for future growth.

This work was supported through Capacity Building funding awarded by the Irish Environmental Network (IEN), which enabled WRI to work with digital specialists OSDM to upgrade and update the website. The project also focused on strengthening WRI's online presence by helping drive traffic to the site and to a developing online shop through improved social media integration.

Alongside this upgrade, WRI strengthened its social media and digital communications systems, enhancing consistency across platforms and increasing engagement with supporters, veterinary professionals and the wider public. Improved integration between channels is helping to direct audiences more effectively towards WRI's education resources, campaigns and developing online shop.

Preparation also began on the launch of new digital fundraising initiatives, including symbolic wildlife adoptions. These developments represent an important step in diversifying income streams, supporting long-term sustainability and expanding opportunities for meaningful public engagement.

Communications: **Websites**

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

www.wri.ie

WRI's main website provides a range of resources relating to wildlife rehabilitation and conservation. It includes guidance on wildlife casualty procedures, volunteer forms for rehabilitation establishments, information on wildlife careers, publications and further education opportunities. These resources aim to support individuals actively involved in wildlife rehabilitation and conservation across Ireland.

Wildlife Crime Ireland

www.wildlifecrime.ie

The Wildlife Crime Ireland website provides information to help the public recognise and report wildlife crimes. The site offers guidance on identifying offences affecting wildlife and habitats, along with clear information on how suspected incidents can be reported to the relevant authorities.

Irish Wildlife Matters

www.irishwildlifematters.ie

WRI developed the wildlife first aid website Irish Wildlife Matters (IWM), launched in May 2010, to address the lack of easily accessible information on wildlife rescue and first aid in Ireland.

The site provides practical guidance on the rescue, first aid, rehabilitation and release of commonly encountered Irish wildlife casualties, offering an accessible online resource for members of the public and those involved in wildlife care.

Communications: Radio & Campaigns

Wildlife Wild Watch

Each month, WRI's Education Officer Aoife McPartlin joins Gerry Kelly on LMFM's Afternoon Show to talk about Ireland's incredible wildlife. From seasonal species to conservation advice, Wild Watch helps listeners connect with nature and take simple steps to protect it.

Topics discussed during the year included bird migration, peregrine falcons and the Irish hare, along with practical guidance on supporting wildlife throughout the seasons.

LMFM reaches approximately 120,000 daily listeners across Meath, Louth, Dublin, Monaghan and Northern Ireland. The segment is also released as a podcast, available on Spotify, Acast and Apple Podcasts, extending the reach of these wildlife conversations beyond the live broadcast.





Newsletter & Publications – Quarterly E-Newsletter and Social Media

Our communications channels play an important role in how we connect with the public and share information about Ireland's wildlife. Through our quarterly e-newsletter and active social media presence, we provide wildlife updates, promote educational content, and encourage community action.

Across our social media platforms we publish posts five times each week, covering awareness campaigns, seasonal wildlife tips and reminders, conservation news, and guidance on how the public can help injured or vulnerable animals. Through engaging posts, videos and graphics, we raise awareness on topics ranging from wildlife rescue advice and seasonal guidance to reporting wildlife crime and celebrating biodiversity. These channels also help promote events, webinars and volunteer opportunities, encouraging people to get involved in protecting wildlife.

With over 21, 000 followers across Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky and X, our digital reach continues to grow, enabling us to connect with new audiences and advocate for Ireland's wildlife every day.



Social Media Posts

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland Before setting out to build nesting spaces, or erect nest boxes, it's important to understand the diverse needs of different bird species.

Ensure your nest box is positioned away from bird feeders and out of direct sunlight, 3-5m of the ground with a clear flight path.

Check out each slide to see the type of nest boxes certain birds prefer.

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [zoodraws_comic](#) and others

February 24, 2025

Add a comment...

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland It does not matter if your County Council or your neighbour.

NO ONE should be cutting trees or hedg after 31st August. It is illegal to do so.

If you question this illegal activity and a perpetrator is exempt, they must be able they have received a licence (derogation from the NPWS).

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [businessforbiodiversityirl](#) and others

March 6, 2025

Add a comment...

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland From the tiniest insects to the squirrels leaping through our trees - every part of our ecosystem plays a role in keeping Ireland wild and wonderful.

But this treasure is fragile.

Urban sprawl, pollution and habitat loss are all taking their toll on the wildlife we often take for granted.

The good news? Small, mindful actions can make a big impact.

- Protect green spaces
- Leave no trace when you explore
- Plant native species
- Be kind to the creatures we share our home

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [tristan.bane](#) and others

July 9, 2025

Add a comment...

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland Slow down for wildlife.

As young foxes head out to find new homes this autumn, they're crossing roads more than ever - often for the very first time.

Badgers too are on the move - foraging more frequently as they build up winter fat stores and seek out potential mates.

It only takes a second to make a difference.

Please drive carefully, especially at dawn and dusk when wildlife is most active.

#DriveWithCare #FoxesOfIreland #BadgerWatch #WildlifeAwareness #WIL #SlowDown #ProtectWhatMatters #GiveWildlifeABreak #AutumnInIreland

ireneq253 [Like](#) [Reply](#)

tinafarrelohara Beautiful fox [Like](#)

View insights [Boost post](#)

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland Seachtain na Gaeilge! Le haghaidh tuilleadh eolais tigh chuig [www.ie.ie](#)

#bhachula #nádú #smag25 Edited - 4/5w See translation

View insights [Boost](#)

Liked by [letsfundit.ie](#) and others

March 12, 2025

Add a comment...

wildiferehabireland Wildlife Habitat Check-in

Mid-summer might be buzzing with life, but many wild creatures still need our help.

Now's the perfect time to check in on your garden or green space and make sure it's still working with nature, not against it.

Clean and refill bird baths
Top up and clean feeders
Leave wild corners untouched
Keep hedgehog highways clear
Make space for shade and water

Small steps, big difference.

Let's keep Ireland's wildlife safe, supported and

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [carlow_kilkenny_green_party](#) and others

August 8, 2025

wildiferehabireland

wildiferehabireland They're not just pretty boundaries.

Hedgerows are some of the most important and overlooked habitats in Ireland.

They protect wildlife, support pollinators, connect fragmented landscapes and even help us fight climate change.

But they're under threat. Over-trimming, removal and lack of awareness are putting countless species at risk.

We're breaking down why hedgerows matter — and how you can help protect them.

- Wildlife corridors

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [woollymammothdesign](#) and others

June 12, 2025

wildiferehabireland What the Wildlife Act Protects

Ireland's Wildlife Acts protect many native species, especially during vulnerable periods such as breeding, hibernation and winter survival.

This includes all birds, as well as Otters, all bat species (and their roosts), pine martens and red deer. Their nests, dens, holts and roosts are also legally protected.

Some actions that may seem harmless, such as disturbing animals, interfering with nesting sites or damaging habitats, can cause serious harm and may be illegal.

Understanding what's protected helps prevent

View insights [Boost post](#)

Liked by [evankernswildlife](#) and 353 others

3 days ago

Marketing & Publications: **Leaflet Redesign**

In January 2025, WRI undertook a redesign of its general information leaflet to better communicate the organisation's work and public resources. The redesign was developed by Woolly Mammoth Design, improving the visual presentation, clarity of messaging and accessibility of information.

The updated leaflet highlights WRI's key initiatives, including the websites of Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland, Irish Wildlife Matters and Wildlife Crime Ireland, and provides guidance on how members of the public can support wildlife protection and rehabilitation efforts. It also includes information on WRI's training events, educational activities and its plans to establish Ireland's first Wildlife Rehabilitation and Teaching Hospital.

The refreshed design supports WRI's outreach work at events, talks and community engagements, helping to clearly communicate how people can access wildlife advice, report wildlife crime and get involved in protecting Ireland's native wildlife.



Financial Support and Funding Partnerships: **Supported by WRI**

Support Provided By WRI

WRI provides small grants of up to €1,000 to wildlife rehabilitators to support their rescue and rehabilitation work. These grants help carers purchase essential supplies, equipment and resources needed to care for injured, orphaned or displaced wildlife. Each year, WRI aims to distribute approximately €3,000 in grants to support rehabilitators across Ireland.

In 2025, WRI also provided financial support to several participants attending our introductory wildlife rehabilitation course held on 11–12 October. These grants helped ensure that individuals who may not otherwise have been able to afford the training were able to participate, supporting the development of skills and capacity within the wildlife rehabilitation community.

In addition to financial support, WRI operates a small-scale mealworm farm to assist rehabilitators caring for insectivorous wildlife. The farm produces live mealworms which are donated to wildlife carers for feeding bats, birds and other insect-eating species in their care.

This initiative helps reduce costs for rehabilitators while ensuring that recovering animals receive appropriate, high-quality nutrition during their rehabilitation.



Financial Support and Funding Partnerships: Donations Received

Thank You

We are deeply grateful to our generous supporters who contributed to WRI's work throughout 2025. Every donation plays an important role in strengthening our capacity to protect and advocate for Ireland's native wildlife.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the Wild Wardrobe charity shop for their generous contribution, which helps sustain WRI's educational programmes and outreach activities.



Financial Support and Funding Partnerships: **Grants Received**

WRI would like to thank all the generous individuals who donated their time and or money during the year. WRI relies on donations and grants to carry out the work we do, so your support is very gratefully received.

We would especially like to thank the following:

Funder Programme	Amount (€)
Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government - IEN Core funding	23,000
Local Enhancement Programme - Meath Co Council	331
Community Grant Scheme - Meath Co Council	900
Carranstown Environmental Project Grant Scheme - Indaver Ireland - Meath Co Council	1,760
Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government - IEN Policy submission	448
Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government - IEN digitization fund	2,097
Change X Grant	3,955
TOTAL	32,491

In September, WRI attended the Carranstown Grant Scheme Awards Night, where community groups and organisations were recognised for their work and contributions within the local area. The event provided an opportunity to connect with other groups, local representatives and fellow grant recipients.

Annual General Meeting – (AGM)

WRI's Annual General Meeting was held on 23 August 2025 in the Corballis Room at Bettystown Civic Building.

The day commenced with a Board meeting at 10.00am, followed by the formal AGM at 11.00am. Members were presented with a review of the year's activities, financial overview, governance updates and progress on key strategic objectives. Particular discussion centred on the ongoing work towards establishing the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Teaching Hospital and the broader challenges facing wildlife rehabilitation in Ireland.

The AGM provided an important opportunity for members to engage directly with the Board, ask questions and contribute to discussion on the direction of the organisation. Maintaining transparency and accountability to our members remains a core principle of WRI's governance.

Following the formal proceedings, members gathered informally over lunch, allowing space for connection, reflection and conversation about the year ahead.

The AGM concluded in the afternoon, following a Heritage Week event held at the same venue, bringing together governance and community engagement in a single, well-attended day.



Strengthening Governance

Clear reporting on finances,
operations and strategic priorities



Looking Ahead

Continued commitment to
delivering Ireland's first Wildlife
Rehabilitation & Teaching Hospita



Community & Connection

Members and supporters coming
together to shape the year ahead

Who We Are: Directors & Team



Dr Michael Gunn | Veterinary surgeon and retired Director of Laboratories at Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine. Scientific Advisor to EU Commission, and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)



Aidan Lynch | Senior Corporate Counsel. Senior member of the EMEA and APAC management teams. Provides support for material commercial contracts, technology, HR, procurement, privacy and regulatory initiatives.



David Duffy | Assistant Professor of Wildlife Disease Genomics, Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience and Sea Turtle Hospital, University of Florida, USA. Ph.D., Zoology, B.Sc. in Natural Sciences.



Aoife Corcoran | B.Sc., Ph.D. BSc Genetics, University College Cork. Technical Writer: European Project Proposal Development. NCFE Digital Marketing. Ph.D. in Cancer Biology.



Emma Higgs | Veterinary Nurse. Founder of Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland. For nearly 20 years has worked in, and become Manager of various wildlife rehabilitation establishments worldwide.



Sean Conlon | CEO and founder of Conlon & Co a modern merchant bank with a focus on capital raising and arbitrage opportunities within real estate finance and investment markets.



Karen Mahon | Environmental Scientist. Director of OCAE consultants who provide agri-environmental consultancy, land management planning, Environmental Impact Studies, Governance, Compliance and Policy.



Mark Muir | Chartered accountant. Financial Controller at Egon Zehnder. Experience preparing risk reports for traders, pension fund analysis, and due diligence of companies.



Cormac O'Connor | Programme Manager Pension Fund Administration. A financial services executive with experience in managing large scale projects across a range of financial service industries spanning operations and technology.

Directors

As WRI continues to grow, a broad range of skills and experience is needed to guide its development. Director recruitment remains open and transparent, with a focus on building a diverse and effective board to oversee the organisation's governance and strategic direction.

In 2025, a new HR and Finance Oversight Director joined the WRI board, strengthening the organisation's governance and supporting the development of volunteer and team structures. A number of introductory and planning meetings were held via Zoom throughout the year as part of this process.

We are extremely grateful to our Directors for the time, expertise and commitment they give to supporting WRI's work. In 2025, the Board met on a monthly basis, with the Annual General Meeting held in August.

WRI Team

WRI is fortunate to have a dedicated and committed team who meet weekly to support the organisation's activities. This work spans many areas, including fundraising, accounts, protocols, education, events, media and IT.

Our core team currently includes two part-time contractors and three regular volunteers, supported by a wider group of external volunteers who assist on an ad-hoc basis with events, campaigns and organisational activities.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributes their time and expertise to WRI. Their ongoing dedication plays a vital role in enabling the organisation to deliver its work and continue growing its impact.

Volunteers, Patrons & Organisational Engagement

WRI values the contributions of its volunteers, patrons and supporters, whose involvement plays an important role in sustaining the organisation's work.

In February, WRI welcomed a student from Drogheda Institute of Further Education, who volunteered with the organisation for several months as part of a post-Leaving Certificate course placement. During this time, he assisted a few days each week and gained insight into wildlife conservation and charity operations.

WRI also continued discussions with the Tús community work placement scheme, exploring opportunities to host a Tús participant to support WRI activities. This process is ongoing.

WRI contacted its patron Sharon Shannon during the year to share an update on organisational activities.

During 2025, **Mary Reynolds** stepped down from her role as a patron of WRI after many years of support, having first become a patron in 2017. The organisation extends its sincere thanks to Mary for her longstanding contribution and encouragement over the years.

In December, WRI held a team and volunteer Christmas gathering at Moran's Pub in Mornington, bringing together the core team and extended volunteers to recognise their work and commitment throughout the year.

During 2025, WRI began discussions with **Cruthú Solutions** regarding potential support for the organisation in the areas of grant writing and content development. These discussions focused on strengthening WRI's capacity to develop funding applications and improve the presentation of organisational materials and communications.

Thank you!

Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland would like to sincerely thank all of our supporters, partners and volunteers. Your time, care and encouragement mean more than we can say. Because of you, injured and vulnerable wildlife across Ireland receive the help they need, and more people are learning to understand and value the natural world around them.

We are deeply grateful for your continued support. We truly could not do this work without you.

Together, we are making a difference.

