



“Saving the heart of Ontario’s wetlands”

October 12, 2018

Dear Friends,

Saving Turtles

The hospital has been extremely busy again this year, with numbers exceeding those of 2017! Thanks to the many Good Samaritans who bring the turtles to us, and the many First Response Centres we have established across the province, plus our army of phenomenal volunteers, we have been able to help almost **900 turtles** so far this season! This shows that **public awareness** and **stewardship** is the key, and the reason more turtles are being helped annually. In other words, **YOU are the reason we are making a difference!** Due to the life history of turtles (LONG lives, slow to mature, with few making it to maturity) the number that are being helped each year buys time to ‘fix’ the problem. More and more is being done to allow safe access across roads with ‘ecopassages’ but it will take time. Unlike other species that have quicker maturity and higher offspring survival, every single adult turtle makes a difference on a population level. So rehabilitation truly is conservation, and every turtle we return to the wild is vital.

The high number of admissions was much more manageable this year, thanks to our new 1,000 square feet Intensive Care Centre. This new ICU was made possible by a bequest by Gail Grace Christie, and we thank Gail and her family so very much for this needed addition!



View of 1/4 of the new ICU, which has been full all season!

While most of the hospital admissions are trauma cases, some are not...



This is a BEFORE (left) and AFTER (right) photo of a snapping turtle brought in by a member of the public who noticed an unusual growth in his mouth. This was surgically removed and sent for pathology- it was not malignant luckily, so he will be going home in the spring!

Our work in the hospital not only helps to reverse some of the effects of road mortality on turtle populations, but it also allows us to monitor the health of turtles throughout the province. Shown to the right is a painted turtle brought to us for the world's largest ear abscess! We admit many of these cases per year and we are documenting them to help determine their cause in wild turtles. This abscess was surgically removed, and he has gone home! We also survey for other diseases such as Ranavirus, and are compiling a province-wide survey of the results.



This is a typical injury seen in snapping turtles injured on the roads – the photo at **left** shows the wound shortly after it occurred. Since they are so large, snapping turtles tend to suffer from scraping injuries on top of the shell, rather than the shell fractures of other species. The photo at **right** shows the same turtle almost ready for release – it has scarred in well with good nursing care. Our Registered Veterinary Technicians work tirelessly to manage these wounds, and each wound requires daily bandage changes; pain management and fluid therapy is also always carried out.



Releasing turtles is the best part! We always try and get the 'finders' involved in the release wherever possible. We also have a network of amazing volunteers who drive all over the province to get them home again. Pictured on the right is one of these wonderful people- Margo Tant, who donned waders to get that perfect spot for release!



Babies! We are currently hatching the 4000 eggs that were collected from turtles admitted to the hospital. These will be kept for a varying amount of time and then returned to their mother's wetland. Our field studies are showing that these turtles do very well and will help to augment adult populations, with time.

It costs approximately \$1,500 PER DAY, to run our Conservation Centre. All of our programs are equally important, and work together to reverse the decline of Ontario's 8 turtle species (all of which are currently listed 'at risk' federally). Our programs include **EDUCATION, HOSPITAL, HATCHLING, and FIELD STUDIES.**

We make every donation dollar count and our administration expenses are low (please see our Annual Report on our website, for details), so you can be assured that your donation dollars will go directly to our turtle programs.

As a Registered Charity, **we rely on donations from the public, such as you.** Please help us to support the care of the 800 turtles that will be overwintering with us, and fund our vital conservation programs.

With Sincere Thanks,

Dr. Sue Carstairs

Executive and Medical Director,

Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre – Charity number 857524409 RR 0001

Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre is the operating name of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre

Yes! I want to support the next turtle that needs help!

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

I would like to make this donation: **This One Time** **Monthly**

Please complete if your **contact information has changed**

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please charge my **credit card**

Please find enclosed my **cheque**
(payable to Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre)

Credit Card type: _____ Card Number: _____

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Painted Turtle Going Home!

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