



EAST SUSSEX
WRAS
WILDLIFE RESCUE

The Rescuer

SUMMER 2025 EDITION

REG CHARITY 1108880



EAST SUSSEX
WILDLIFE RESCUE AMBULANCE
SERVICE
UNIT 2
THE SHAW BARN
WHITESMITH
EAST SUSSEX
BN8 6JD



24 HOUR RESCUE LINE: 0300-10-26-999

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: 01825-873003

[HTTPS://WILDLIFEAMBULANCE.ORG](https://wildlifeambulance.org)



Trevor's Review

Content:

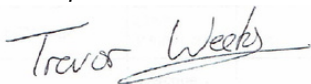
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Firstly our apologies for the lack of newsletters so far this year, its been extremely busy behind the scenes with lots going on. We're still working on the possibility of a new Hospital, our charity shop in Eastbourne has had a refit and many other changes too. More on that later in the year!

Our hard working staff and volunteers are already looking after numerous babies or various ages, and we have been inundated with jackdaws and woodpeckers this year!

As you will see from the newsletter, we have been hard at work helping the wildlife of East Sussex, and our centre has been running at full capacity on numerous occasions - we are still looking to get a new centre off the ground with bigger and better facilities, but this all takes a frustratingly long time. We are moving forward but still need more support, so if you can help or make a donation please do as it will be very much needed.



Trevor Weeks MBE
Founder & Operations Director.

WRAS's mission is to save, care and protect our precious and endangered wildlife across East Sussex. Our vision is to be the leading provider of veterinary care and treatment to all wildlife in East Sussex.

When Spring Sprung.

Scan to donate



Our first arrival of the season was a tiny robin nestling that had fallen from its nest in an Eastbourne garden. Not long after, more birds followed from Brighton, Coastway Vets, Falmer, and Woodingdean—kindly delivered by our friends at Brighton & Hove WARS.



Blackbirds quickly began arriving too, including a nestling from a local vet and three young ones from Hailsham and Rushlake Green. It's not just birds keeping our team busy—our dedicated Care Team has this year taken in over 20 orphaned fox cubs and even a young badger cub, having to provide round-the-clock care at home when they are really young.

As always, we're working closely with other rescue organisations to transfer young animals where needed, helping to prevent bullying between cubs of different sizes. A heartfelt thank you to South Essex Wildlife Hospital for accepting our badger cub, who was rescued by Katie at around 8pm on March 27th after being found weak and wobbly near Roberts Hill, Winchelsea. Badger Trust Sussex reached out for our help when other contacts weren't available.

We've also admitted huge numbers of corvid nestlings this season so far—likely the result of the unseasonably warm March and early April weather.

Our orphan rearing team is always looking for extra hands to assist with feeding and cleaning. Check out the volunteer page on our website to find out how you can help feed the hundreds of hungry mouths too. www.wildlifeambulance.org/volunteer or email volunteers@eastsussexwras.org.uk if you have any questions.



Lonely Cub finds company!

Scan to donate



When you're not feeling your best, sometimes all you need is the comfort of a friend.

This little traumatised fox cub was brought to WRAS on April 12th after being rescued alongside a sibling on Sandringham Drive in Hove. Both cubs were in poor health, with one suffering from chest wounds and trauma, and both believed to be orphaned. Sadly, the sibling did not survive, leaving this little boy alone.

Unfortunately, WRAS did not have any other cubs of a suitable size to pair him with, so he was placed in an incubator to cozy up with a teddy bear. When caring for cubs, it is crucial to keep them with others to prevent domestication, as well as to ensure they are matched with cubs of similar size to avoid bullying, which is common in nature where the weakest or smallest often do not survive.



Each year, WRAS receives fox cubs that are sick, injured, or orphaned, often due to mothers being hit by vehicles, attacks from dogs and cats as cubs begin to emerge from dens, or even persecution at times.

Every spring, the fox population increases, leading some people to worry about overpopulation. However, like all carnivores, they are self-regulating and limited by the availability of food and territory. Cubs simply replace the adults lost each year. Although a fox can live for up to eight years, the average lifespan is believed to be around 18 months.

Foxes are typically seen as independent animals rather than pack creatures. While siblings may spend time together, they tend to go their separate ways after the dispersal period in late autumn. They are very curious animals and have learned to adapt as humans encroach further into their natural habitats. According to the Fox Project, the most recent scientific research shows that the fox population has declined by 41% since 1995. This fox cub won't be alone for long, as WRAS collaborates closely with other rescues throughout the South East to help ensure that cubs find suitable groups when they are on their own.

To donate scan the QR code using a smart phone or call 01825-873003, or visit our website.



Founders Raffle:

Win a Stay on a vineyard, wine tasting and meal!

2025 marks a special milestone for East Sussex WRAS, and we need your support to ensure our charity continues to thrive.

In September 2024, our founder Trevor Weeks celebrated 40 years of helping wildlife. This dedication has been the foundation of WRAS's success, and in March 2025, we proudly mark 30 years as a community charity.

Over the past four decades, we've rescued and cared for more than 77,000 wildlife casualties, a staggering achievement made possible only through the generosity of people like you.



Trevor is running his Founders Raffle this summer and you can win:

- 1) A stay at Rathfinny Wine Estate along with wine tasting and a meal for two.
- 2) Health Club Pass for 2 at the Grand Hotel Eastbourne.
- 3) Gift Voucher worth £150 for a “Just A Mini” photoshoot with Judith Stewart Photography.
- 4) Wild bird food gift bag and £25 gift voucher for Paws-n-claws Uckfield.
- 5) £20 Love2Shop Vouchers.

Will you help WRAS continue meeting the needs of today and grow to tackle the challenges of tomorrow? Your support is crucial in helping us care for thousands of animals every year and to expand our capacity to meet increasing demand.

To buy raffle tickets online head to:

<https://go.rallyup.com/eastsussexwrasfoundersraffle>

Anniversary Messages.

This is first in a series of articles features messages from local dignitaries, celebrities and the local community.

“As a massive animal lover I want to give a big shout out to East Sussex Wildlife Rescue Service. They do a wonderful job. I want to say a huge thank you on behalf of every little fury and feathered creature in this country and if you can support them please do.”

Peter James, Author



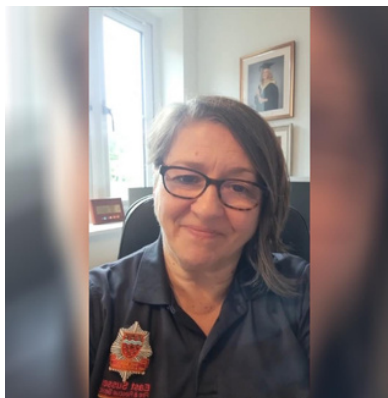
“Congratulations to everyone at East Sussex Wildlife Rescue & Ambulance Service for your 30 years hard work and dedication. I know that Trevor and all of your volunteers team are doing a brilliant job. I know how important animal welfare is for so many people out there. So thank you for your hard work and keep at it.”

James MacCleary, MP for Lewes



“I wanted to congratulate Trevor Weeks and all the volunteers of WRAS for all the excellent work that you do on a daily basis, to rescue and care for and return to the wild where ever possible, wild animals. Although to acknowledge the fact that on a number of occasions you have also helped East Sussex Fire & Rescue with a number of humanitarian rescues as well. Congratulations everybody.”

Dawn Whittaker, Former Chief Fire Officer



Deer rescued near Argos Hill

Scan to donate



On March 23, 2025, WRAS received a report about a fallow buck with its antlers caught in rope at a property located between Argos Hill and Mark Cross.

Upon arrival, the deer was spotted moving over a wide area with blue rope attached, which posed a significant challenge for the rescue team and was potentially very dangerous. Fortunately, the deer leaped over a stock fence and into a more confined space, allowing the rescuers to shorten the rope by wrapping it around a fence post.

As the rescuers approached, the deer attempted to flee but became further entangled in bushes, giving the team an advantage. The deer was soon under control, enabling the rescuers to safely access its antlers. However, they faced the tough task of cutting away the rope, which was extensive. What felt like hours was actually minutes as they worked through the nightmare entanglement.

Once the rope was removed from the deer's likely escape route, a controlled release was initiated, allowing the deer to dash across a track and into a wooded area and away.

Folly Wildlife Rescue also asked WRAS to attend a deer entangled near Tunbridge Wells but sadly members of the public cut the deer free and released it, running off with line attached.

If you would like to join or team of volunteer rescuers checking our volunteering opportunities on our website.



Making a lasting impact on local wildlife



As a registered charity we rely on donations and gifts left in wills (legacies) to continue our work. Leaving a gift to East Sussex WRAS in your will can make a significant impact, which can range from replacing a veterinary ambulance to helping fund a new hospital and rescue centre. To include our charity in your will, you need to include the charity name and charity number. Seeking professional advice when writing a will is recommended to ensure your wishes are met.



Help us make the switch!

If you have a monthly donation which set up more than 2 years ago, it is likely to be a standing order. We are asking our supporters to help us save time and money by switching over to direct debits. We have partnered with Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) who offer direct debit services to charities at discounted prices, which makes the recording and processing quicker and more efficient.

To set up a Direct Debit scan this QR code or head to:
<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/24454>

Alternatively go to our website, fill in one of our new donation forms, or call 01825873003. **Don't forget to cancel your old Standing Order with your bank.**



Let their memory live on!

Scan this QR code if you want to make a donation in memory of a lost loved one. We will display a leaf on our memory tree in our reception for every person remembered.



Find out more about leaving a gift to WRAS in your will, on our website
www.wildlifeambulance.org



HM Lord-Lieutenant visits East Sussex WRAS

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, visited WRAS on 13th March to mark the charity's 30th anniversary. During his visit, Mr Blackman toured the Casualty Care Centre where he met trustees, staff, and volunteers. Founder Trevor Weeks demonstrated the equipment used by WRAS rescuers and explained the variety of wildlife rescue calls the charity receives.

Amy Davis, WRAS's Rescue Coordinator, spoke to the Lord-Lieutenant about the emotional challenges faced by the public when contacting the charity, particularly those dealing with phobias and anxiety about certain species. Mr Blackman also observed the care provided to injured wildlife, including an owl being prepared for an X-ray by WRAS vet Clarissa Wu.

Katie Nunn Nash, Lead Casualty Manager, explained how WRAS helps prevent suffering by offering free veterinary care, reducing the need for the public to attempt rehabilitation themselves, which can often cause further harm. The Lord-Lieutenant also met Ellie Langridge, WRAS's Volunteer Coordinator, to learn about the role of our students and volunteers.

Volunteer Duty Rescuer Heather Clark shared personal insights into the vital role WRAS plays in supporting the local community during distressing rescue situations.

Following the visit, Mr Blackman remarked, "It was a great pleasure to see first-hand the incredible work being done at WRAS. I was truly impressed by the professionalism, commitment, and quality of care provided by Trevor, the staff, and the volunteers. East Sussex is fortunate to have such a high-calibre wildlife rescue service."



For further information and to support WRAS's anniversary year go to <https://wildlifeambulance.org/anniversary-appeal-2025/>

Charity Shop Re-fit!

Scan to donate



What an amazing day of celebration it was as the WRAS Charity Shop officially reopened its doors on May 26th, following a much-needed refurbishment to mark our 30th anniversary. We were honoured to welcome Alan Knight, OBE—President of International Animal Rescue and long-time WRAS supporter—who kindly cut the ribbon and declared the shop open. The event was brought to life with fantastic entertainment from The Howlerz, joined by the vibrant Anderida Border Morris dancers, adding energy and colour to the day.



A huge thank you goes to shop manager Faye Carrick, Rachel Digby-Lees, and our dedicated team of volunteers whose tireless efforts made the reopening such a success. The newly refurbished shop now boasts improved lighting, a modernised layout, and extra display space—creating a more enjoyable shopping experience.

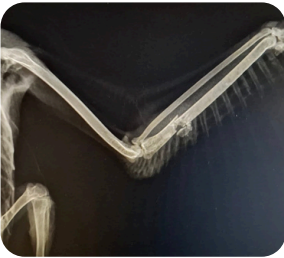


Patty, one of our long-standing volunteers, shared: “I volunteer on a Monday and you’ll usually find me steaming away preparing the clothes for sale. I feel like I’m making a real difference helping both the wildlife in need with the income we raise, and the environment by selling preloved clothes. The improvements to the shop will make a huge difference, and we’re all excited to see how our work will continue to help wildlife in need.” Alan Knight joined us at 10am to celebrate this milestone in WRAS’s journey. The shop plays a vital role in supporting our rescue work across Sussex. Every purchase made truly helps save lives.



If you would like to volunteer or donate good quality items to our shop give them a call on 01323 643111

Unusual Visitor on the mend.



Not a patient we see every day, this beautiful Godwit was admitted to our care after being found at Shoreham Harbour with an injured wing. These striking wading birds are not commonly seen at our centre, so it was a surprise to have one arrive needing treatment. X-rays confirmed a fracture to the ulna bone in her left wing, likely caused by a collision or impact. Her wing was carefully bandaged to restrict movement and allow the bone to heal.

We're pleased to say the fracture has mended beautifully, and the bandage has now been removed. She's beginning to stretch and exercise the wing again, and while it's still early days, her progress is promising. We're hopeful for a successful release soon.

Duckling Rescues



Every April, WRAS rescuers receive numerous calls for duckling rescues. Rescuing orphans can often be quite challenging, as seen with a group at Valley Road Ponds in Newhaven, where the mother was tragically killed on the nearby roads. The dense vegetation made it difficult for the rescuers, who spent hours trying to catch the little ones.



Not every call involves orphans; mothers frequently nest in gardens before trying to navigate to nearby ponds and rivers. While we can sometimes escort them safely, there are occasions when this poses too much risk, leading us to catch and relocate both the mother and her ducklings. This was the case on April 28th, when we helped a mother and her ducklings at Pevensey.

News in brief.

Love your weekend!



Did you catch our appearance on Alan Titchmarsh's popular programme Love Your Weekend on Sunday 27th April? Our team was invited to showcase the vital work we do rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing local wildlife. Viewers were given a behind-the-scenes look at our Casualty Centre, meeting some of our incredible volunteers and a few of our animal patients. Alan and his team were wonderfully supportive, helping highlight the importance of protecting British wildlife. The programme has already brought in new supporters and raised much-needed awareness of the challenges facing our local animals. Thank you to everyone who tuned in and continues to support our mission — and a huge thank you to Love Your Weekend for giving us this fantastic opportunity!



Two Mistreated pigeons.



WRAS has stepped in to assist two pigeons that were mistreated. On April 8th, Coastway Vets reached out to WRAS regarding a pigeon involved in a domestic assault. Then, on April 16th, The Beacon Security contacted WRAS after discovering a woman wandering with a wild pigeon stuffed in her pocket.

Sussex Police were called to both incidents, resulting in an arrest, with one individual facing charges of cruelty. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff at The Beacon, who consistently support and assist WRAS when wildlife requires help on their premises.

Our veterinary surgeons are heavily supported by an amazingly dedicated and experienced Care Team. A vital part of our team.



Woodpecker Window Strikes.



It's not every day we see a woodpecker admitted to our care—so we were surprised when four arrived within just 24 hours, each from different locations and all victims of window collisions!

Woodpeckers are specially adapted to withstand the impact of drilling into trees, but when they accidentally fly into windows, the resulting concussions can be more severe and take longer to recover from compared to other birds.

They often don't do well sadly, but we always try our best and some of these will hopefully be released back to the wildlife once fully recovered.

A Lucky Escape from Deadly Netting



A duck had a narrow escape after getting its head caught in netting over a pond. Its efforts to free itself only made things worse, tightening the net around its neck and causing painful damage to the skin.

Fortunately, it was found just in time. After a few days of treatment and care, the duck made a full recovery and has now been safely released back into the wild.

Suspected Catapult Attack in Hailsham

On May 23rd, East Sussex WRAS rescuers were called to Lindfield Drive in Hailsham following a report of an injured gull. The bird was found with blood on its side and a dropped wing. It was quickly located, carefully secured, and transported to our Casualty Centre for assessment and treatment.

However, as our team was leaving the area, they made a second, more distressing discovery—a second gull lying dead near the common pond. Due to the nature of its visible injuries, the body was also brought back for further examination.

A photo may say a thousand words, but in this case, an x-ray told the whole tragic story. Inside the deceased gull, we found a large ball bearing—believed to have been fired from a catapult—lodged within the body. This injury would have caused immense suffering and ultimately led to the bird's death.



The injured gull was also x-rayed and found to have a serious fracture to the coracoid bone, as well as a wound in the same area. The similarities strongly suggest that both birds were victims of the same deliberate and brutal attack. Sadly, despite receiving care, the injuries proved too severe and both birds lost their lives.

We are seeing an increasing number of cases involving the intentional harm of wildlife. These attacks are not only cruel but completely unacceptable. This incident has been fully documented and reported to Sussex Police for further investigation.

Wildlife crime is real and rising—and it must stop.

Our work is only possible thanks to your support, you are the true heroes - keep up the good work!

Early Morning Crashed Swan

Scan to donate



A juvenile swan that crash-landed on the Southerham Roundabout near Lewes on 18th June was successfully rescued and later released by WRAS, with vital assistance from Sussex Police. The incident happened around 6:40am on the A27. WRAS received a flood of calls from members of the public and Sussex Police about the distressed bird. “It became impossible to answer all the calls while trying to get to the scene,” said Trevor Weeks who was on-call and responded.



Sussex Police were already on site, keeping watch over the swan. Officers then stopped traffic in all directions, allowing Trevor to approach safely and capture the bird without risk to anyone.



The swan, believed to be a young bird still building its flying confidence, was taken to WRAS's Casualty Centre at Whitesmith. There, Lead Casualty Manager Katie Nunn Nash carried out a full examination. Fortunately, the swan had only minor superficial grazes and no keel or limb injuries. Later that morning, the swan was released to a quieter stretch of the River Ouse, likely where it had originally intended to land.

“This incident really highlights how important cooperation between the public, emergency services, and wildlife charities can be,” said Trevor. “We’re incredibly grateful to Sussex Police and everyone who called in to help.”

Did you know WRAS now deals with numerous calls for the RSPCA, who are now no longer 24 hours a day.

Surgery to remove fishing hook.



Amidst the usual summer admissions of catted birds, nestlings birds, window strikes and more, our amazing Care Team and vet found themselves performing an emergency surgery to extract a fishing hook from a gull.

The bird was found near Lottbridge Drove in Eastbourne, with fishing line protruding from its mouth and was contained by staff from Birchwood Ford.

On examination the hook couldn't be seen down the throat but the team suspected it was lodged further down out of sight. X-rays were taken to ascertain the hook's exact location revealing that it remained in the neck and had not moved deeper into the body.

With this information, the team decided to proceed with surgery to remove the hook. The operation was successful; they successfully extracted the hook, along with the fishing line and food blockage.

The gull will be closely monitored as it recovers and hopefully will be released soon.

Let your legacy live on by leaving a gift to WRAS in you Will.
www.wildlifeambulance.org or call 01825-873003

Two for the price of one on swans.

On June 9th, East Sussex WRAS received a report about a swan entangled in fishing line on the River Ouse at Barcombe Mills. An Initial rescue attempt from the bank was unsuccessful, so a strategic water-based rescue was planned for the following day. Unfortunately when first checked the swan had disappeared but luckily did it reappeared later in the day.

A team of six rescuers employed a Kayak, and inflatable boat to attempt rescue. Eventually the swan was guided into a narrow tributary making rescue easier. After securing the swan, they carefully removed the fishing line wrapped around its beak, but it required further treatment due to damage.

In a surprising turn of events, while packing up, a second swan crash-landed in front of rescuers onto the busy Barcombe Mills Road, causing rescuers to spring into action and perform a rapid rescue.

Both swans are now safe and receiving care, with hopes for their recovery and release back into the wild. This incident underscores the dangers of discarded fishing line and the ongoing efforts needed to protect wildlife. Donations to support their work can be made at www.wildlifeambulance.org.



Fundraising Updates!

Scan to donate



We'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has recently supported East Sussex WRAS. Your kindness and generosity directly help us rescue, rehabilitate, and release thousands of wild animals every year—and we truly couldn't do it without you. A special thank you goes to "Nothing is Real", a fantastic Beatles tribute band from Eastbourne, who kindly donated £150 to WRAS from the proceeds of a recent private function.



We're also grateful to the Lewes Football Club Supporters Group for raising £212.01 at their Quiz Night at the Elephant & Castle pub in Lewes on 9th May—what a great evening! We are honoured that Beechwood Grove Care Home in Eastbourne has chosen WRAS as their Charity of the Year. Our founder, Trevor Weeks, was proud to attend their Flower Festival on 31st May to cut the ribbon and officially open the event.



Another huge thank you goes to Vinehall School in Battle, who donated tins of dog food after taking part in a fun tin-rolling competition! Trevor visited with one of our ambulances to speak to the children before they tested who could roll their tin the furthest down the hill. A big thank you to everyone who supported us at the Arlington Bluebell Walk back in May where we raised over £2,000 for WRAS in the café and donations.

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Fundraising Updates!

Scan to donate



Thanks also goes to Wealden Crematorium for donating £4375 as part of a metals recycling scheme which allows them to donate funds each year to local charities.

Trevor Weeks joined members of Ringmer Bowls Club for an afternoon of bowling. Trevor has offered to join a rival team as his skills were so poor! The club raised £337.00 for WRAS.

Scrap Car Comparison have also donated £3213.76 to WRAS after being their chosen charity for a month which is really appreciated.

The amazing staff at Rathfinny Wine Estate near Alfriston have chosen WRAS as one of their yearly charities again and a recent Bake Sale raised £240.29.



WRAS relies on the support of the local community to help fund it's vital service and every year we get busier and busier. As we move closer and closer to getting a new hospital off the ground we need your help more than ever before.



If you'd like to get involved, organise a bike ride, sponsored swim, cake sale or any other type of fundraising for WRAS please do. If you would like our founder Trevor to attend your events then please get in touch.

E-mail admin@eastsussexwras.org.uk if you are holding an event to raise vital funds for WRAS!

In memory of...



Earlier this year, we mournfully lost yet another icon in the wildlife rescue community. Jacqui Ashby selflessly volunteered at St. Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital, where she offered compassionate care to orphaned baby mammals requiring individual attention. She visited WRAS numerous times, always enthusiastic about sharing her insights and support. Jacqui had a special talent for caring for baby deer. Sadly, she passed away on March 4th at the age of 75, and her absence will be deeply felt by everyone.

WRAS attended the memorial service and the scattering of ashes for Anne Broadhurst, a long-time devoted supporter. Anne often contacted WRAS upon finding sick or injured pigeons, gulls, and hedgehogs at her Ringmer home. A true animal enthusiast, she loved caring for wildlife in her natural garden and, in her later years, enjoyed observing animals through "Live Views" online.



WRAS is affiliated with Much Loved, enabling you to establish a memorial page in honour of your loved one while also helping to raise funds for our charity. For more information, please visit their website: <https://www.muchloved.com/>

East Sussex Wildlife Rescue & Ambulance Service (WRAS)

Casualty Centre: Unit 2, The Shaw Barn, Whitesmith, BN8 6JD.

Charity Shop: 192 Terminus Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3BB.

Registered Address: 8 Stour Close, Stone, Cross, East Sussex. BN24 5QU.

Rescue Line: 0300 10 26 999 **Non-emergency Line:** 01825-873003

E-mail: admin@eastsussexwras.org.uk

Fundraising: fundraising@eastsussexwras.org.uk

Volunteering & Work Experience: volunteers@eastsussexwras.org.uk

Website: www.wildlifeambulance.org

RCVS Premise # 6548370

To make a donation please call: 01825-873003.

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www.youtube.com/user/eastsussexwras

www.twitter.com/eastsussexwras

Thank you to Aspen and International Animal Rescue for their continued support.

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