

# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***What is Florida Wild Mammal Association Inc. (FWMA)?***

Florida Wild Mammal Association (FWMA) is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of injured/orphaned wildlife. FWMA is equally committed to educating the public on wildlife issues.



## ***How and when did FWMA start?***

FWMA was incorporated in August 1994 and moved to Wakulla County in 1995. FWMA was founded by the Beatty family as a place to bring sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in need of treatment and care until recovered and subsequently released back into their natural habitat.

## ***Who runs FWMA?***

FWMA is run by a board of directors. Jessica Beatty is the Executive Director. She and her family own and live on the property. They oversee the daily operations as well as the animal caregiving staff and volunteers.



The facility is maintained through the efforts of participants in the FWMA Youth Education Program. It is only because of the hard work of students and other young people in this program that FWMA is able to care for the many wildlife patients that are brought into the facility every day. The Youth Education Program is in turn supported by dedicated volunteers who help by cleaning cages, picking up supplies, presenting educational programs, animal rescue, performing bookkeeping functions, supporting fundraising events, preparing publications, and helping with the general care of the animals. Through the services of both the young people and volunteers, FWMA is able to remain open and care for the growing number of animals it receives each year. Thank goodness for these very special people who give so freely of their time to help our community.

## ***Where is FWMA located?***

FWMA is located on 6 acres in the city of Crawfordville. The center provides wildlife rescue services and education programs to Wakulla County and to three additional rural counties including Franklin, Jefferson and Taylor. This section of Florida coastline extends from Perry westward to Port St Joe and includes an area commonly known as the Forgotten Coast. The property was rezoned as a wildlife hospital in 1996 and consists of 28 outdoor enclosures, 3.5 acres of deer pens, a small kitchen/laundry room, a baby bird room, an isolation room and a medical room.

## ***How can I contact FWMA?***

By phone: (850) 363-2351

E-mail address: [choppaotta@aol.com](mailto:choppaotta@aol.com)

Website address: [www.fwma.org](http://www.fwma.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/pages/Florida-Wild-Mammal-Association/281494464924](https://facebook.com/pages/Florida-Wild-Mammal-Association/281494464924)

Or write to: FWMA, 198 Edgar Poole Road, Crawfordville, FL, 32327.



### ***When is FWMA open?***



Unfortunately, FWMA is not open to the general public due to permit restrictions. Volunteer hours are seven days a week, 8am to 12 noon. Animal rescues are performed by volunteers on a limited basis. Therefore if you find sick, injured or orphaned wildlife, please bring them to the center as quickly as possible. (Remember... animals such as baby birds need to eat every 20 minutes – the first hours are critical to survival).

Please do not feed or provide water for any animal that you have found – the wrong treatment, however well intended, can be fatal. You may call the center 24 hours a day for advice about animal emergencies.

### ***What type of animals does FWMA care for?***

Although we are called Florida Wild Mammal Association, we take care of all native wildlife including birds. FWMA also receives exotics and some farm animals on a limited basis.

FWMA does not provide care for people's pets. In 2016 FWMA provided care for:

- 434 wild birds (including hawks, owls, songbirds, seabirds and water fowl)
- 461 mammals (including deer, opossums, squirrels, flying squirrels, beavers and bobcats)
- 36 reptiles (including box turtles, gopher tortoises and water turtles)
- 70 exotics, domestics & farm animals (including turkeys, pigs, ducks and exotic turtles)
- 27 permanent education animals (animals who cannot be released back to the wild)

Nearly sixty-six percent (65.95%) of the animals brought to the facility were released back into the wild, transferred to other permitted wildlife sanctuaries or were adopted out through various sources. Almost nine percent (8.95%) remained in care at FWMA. Overall, nearly seventy-five percent (74.9%) of the animals brought to FWMA survived.

### ***What is the charge for taking care of wildlife patients?***

There is no charge to bring any animal to FWMA for treatment. Animals are treated until they are recovered and ready to be released. For those with injuries considerable enough to prevent their return into their natural habitat, FWMA either places them with another permitted education facility or provides a permanent home at FWMA where they often become the stars of our educational programs. Most of the animals brought to FWMA are sick or injured and require veterinary care, natural diets and special caging. The cost of running the facility is significant. All donations are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible.



### ***How many animals are treated at FWMA each year?***

Animal interactions with humans increase proportionately as the population grows. Interactions with people, domestic pets, man-made structures as well as being displaced by development are the main causes of injuries to our wild neighbors. FWMA provided care for 1028 animals in 2016 and is anticipating a similar caseload of over 1000 wildlife patients in 2017 - an incredible increase when compared to statistics in 1995 when we treated 73 animals.

***What types of injuries are most common in the animals FWMA receives?***



Wildlife injuries, such as being hit by cars, caught in fences, caught by cats or dogs, are becoming part of our daily caseload. In most cases animals become sick, injured or orphaned due to interaction with humans and/or their pets. Natural disasters such as the wrath of storms that have ravaged the Florida Panhandle are just as deadly to wildlife as they are to humans. We also see many animals caught in fishing lines, shot, made sick from pollutants, and hung in fences. Although most of our patients are brought in because of the aforementioned reasons, we have also provided care for animals suffering

with West Nile, Distemper, Tetanus and Lung Flukes. These animals are but a small percentage of our overall intake. FWMA works closely with Wakulla County Health Department and Wakulla County Animal Control during outbreaks of any disease.

***What is the busiest time of year for FWMA?***

FWMA maintains a full schedule year round. But our busiest time of the year is from April through September and is what we refer to as “Baby Season”. An assortment of orphaned wildlife is brought to the center during this time. Many of these patients are baby birds who require hand-feeding every 20 minutes from sun up to sun down. Therefore, the nursery remains open from 7am to 7pm every day until Baby Season ends. At the end of Baby Season, the nursery is closed. The nursery requires 13 staff hours per day.



The main facility is open year round and requires 12-13 staff hours per day to maintain numerous outdoor habitats and the medical room. Baby squirrels, baby opossums, baby foxes, baby raccoons and baby deer arrive on a daily basis too, dehydrated and in need of continual 24-hour care. The phone literally rings non-stop !! .....this is a great time to volunteer!!! Along with feeding the patients, all their cages must be cleaned on a daily basis too.

### ***Does FWMA offer any education programs?***

Our organization offers the local community a wide variety of educational programs. The FWMA Youth Education Program is administered at our center and provides young people with the unique opportunity to learn about wildlife while working in a hands-on environment. Features of this program include:



- **Outstanding Wildlife Learning Students (OWLS):** FWMA offers a work program for youths who are chosen from our diverse volunteer programs and are in need of the financial support we can offer in exchange for taking care of the animals and their habitats.
- **Scholarship Service Hours.** FWMA is approved to provide local students with the opportunity to earn community service hours towards various scholarships.
- **Juvenile Justice.** FWMA partners with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice to allow young adults to complete their court-ordered community service hours while learning useful vocational and life skills.
- **Exceptional Student Education Program.** The Wakulla Employability Skills Training (WEST) Program is a locally run program that provides training and mentoring to students with disabilities at Wakulla High School. The students who work at FWMA are given the opportunity to reach their full potential while learning important vocational and life skills.
- **High School – High Tech Club.** FWMA partners with Wakulla High School’s High School High Tech club (HSHT). The HSHT club’s goal is to provide career exploration opportunities for disabled students during their high school years so that they are prepared to follow their dreams after they graduate. One of the opportunities we provide is a paid internship with local businesses and/or non-profit organizations. A number of students participate over the summer months. Students work a 40 hour week with FWMA feeding and caring for the rescued animals and cleaning their cages. This is a great benefit to both FWMA and the students. The students learn responsibility and job skills that are immeasurable.
- **Other Groups / Partnerships.** Partnerships with FSU Environmental Group, Americorps, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts Troops allow young people to participate in work/education days at the facility. These focus on larger projects such as cage building, maintenance, and repair and clean up days.

In addition to onsite programs at the center, FWMA offers educational opportunities throughout the community. These include:

- **Project Learning Tree.** This program is hosted by the St. Marks Refuge to educate elementary school children about wildlife and the environment, and FWMA participates by bringing our educational animals as a tool to help spread environmental awareness.
- **Outreach programs.** During the year we are asked to provide educational program in our schools, local libraries, and to participate in community events. This involves taking our educational animals and materials offsite and may include setting up an educational booth with interactive activities.

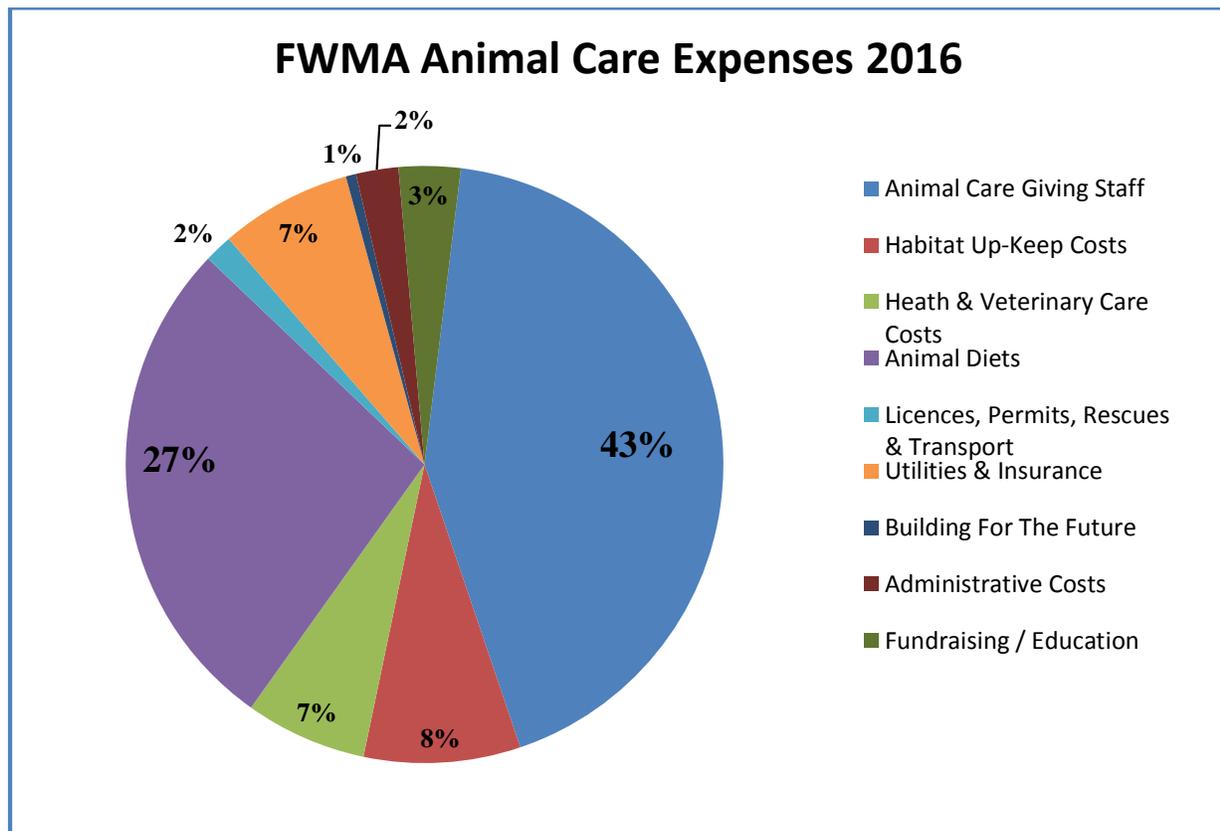


***How is FWMA funded?***

FWMA has over 400 generous members that provided \$38,065 in donations during 2016 and our Facebook page has over 2800 followers. Last year FWMA raised \$30,813 through fundraising activities such as t-shirt sales, Christmas tree sales, yard sales, Golf Gone Wild, silent auctions and online fundraisers. Grants totaling \$109,750 were received from private foundations and nonprofit organizations. FWMA does not receive funding from county, state or federal government agencies.

***How much does it cost to run FWMA?***

In 2016 it cost approximately \$138,648 to run the facility. The greatest expenses were \$59,421 for animal care staff and \$37,780 for animal feed. Our cost per animal for 2016 was around \$135.



***Can anyone visit FWMA?***

FWMA is a wildlife rehabilitation center complete with the required state and federal permits necessary to carry out its mission. Permit restrictions do not allow us to publicly display rehabilitating animals. Therefore, the facility is not open to the public. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or sponsor and would like to see the facility, please contact us either by phone or email to arrange an appointment.



### *What are the goals of FWMA for 2017?*

**Board of Directors.** To develop a strong Board of Directors to offer guidance, assist with fund-raising efforts, and oversee the governing of the organization.

**Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation.** To provide quality care for the 900 – 1100 wildlife patients received on average per year.

**Public Education.** To continue providing outreach and in-house programs that utilize our permanent animals to act as ambassadors of their species.

**Veterinarian Support.** To secure a new vet and vet clinic that can cover the whole treatment plan for all of our wildlife patients.

**Building for the Future Initiative.** To ensure the sustainability of FWMA long into the future and prepare to expand to meet the growing need for its services.

**Create a more efficient and organized work environment.** By giving the organization guidance and purpose it will also allow us to comply with USFWS and FWC required documents for yearly submittal.

**Review Insurance coverage and revise as needed.** FWMA strives to provide safe working conditions and grounds maintenance to ensure the safety of all of our volunteers, staff and visitors.

### *What major initiatives are underway at the center?*

**Land acquisition: To obtain 10-25 acres or more via donation of property or funds.**

Since its establishment in Wakulla County 21 years ago, the vision at FWMA has always been to obtain land to expand the wildlife medical/rehabilitation facility and facilitate achievement of a long term goal: the creation of a wildlife educational center which would be open to the public and would operate alongside the rehabilitation center. The ideal tract of land would be a 15+ acre parcel that backs up to state or national forest giving a safety net to our releasable wildlife and enough room to divide the education center to be established without encroaching on the rehabilitation process. We



We are urgently seeking a donation of property or funding for this site. Relocating FWMA to its own piece of property will ensure its sustainability for future generations even after the Beatty family is no longer able to commit all of their time and resources to the center.

**Medical facility: To construct a new medical building at the center.**

Funds have already been raised to support this second phase of the project and resources are now directed toward obtaining suitable land where the building can be constructed.

## *How can I help FWMA?*

**Donations.** Monetary donations enable us to provide our services to this region. In-kind donations such as lumber, caging, feed and cleaning supplies (see our wish list on our website [www.fwma.org](http://www.fwma.org)) allow us to use the monetary donations for vet care, expansion of the facility and projects that benefit our wildlife patients in the care they receive.

**Become a Volunteer.** There are many volunteer opportunities at FWMA. For example; cleaning cages, taking care of the animals at the facility, chopping fruit, folding newspapers, picking up supplies, taking animals to vet offices, building bird houses, building habitats, never ending paperwork, fundraising and many, many, many more activities – if you have an interest or talent, we can put it to use!!!! Group workdays and projects are also appreciated. You must be 16 years or older to become a volunteer (unless accompanied by an adult) – the facility itself is not a good place for very young children but there may be projects you can do at home, so please get in touch to find out more.



**Organize a Fundraiser.** Get a group together to organize a fundraising event dedicating the proceeds to FWMA.

**Workdays.** During 2017 we plan to organize several workdays to refurbish and maintain many of our outdoor enclosures. If you would be interested in participating please email Chris at [choppaotta@aol.com](mailto:choppaotta@aol.com)



## Membership Application / Donation Form

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Couple	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friend	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sponsor	\$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Life Member	\$1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	\$_____



- My donation is a gift in memory / honor of: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor an Animal (see the website for details)
- Please send me information about remembering FWMA in my will
- I am interested in becoming a volunteer

Please make checks payable to: **Florida Wild Mammal Association Inc.**

Send to: **198 Edgar Poole Road**  
**Crawfordville, FL 32327**  
**www.FWMA.org**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

All donations are tax deductible.