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April 16, 2011



ASPEN  
VALLEY  
WILDLIFE  
SANCTUARY

### Spring has Sprung at AVWS

In 1557 a gentleman by the name of Thomas Tusser compiled a collection of writings he called A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry. In the April Husbandry section he wrote:

Sweet April showers  
Do spring May flowers

I am guessing that Mr. Tusser had not been exposed to the Muskoka region when he penned this beautiful sentiment. As I write this newsy piece, it is a dark, cold, wet miserable day. The wet snow/rain is being driven against the windows by the harsh wind and the ground becomes more treacherous by the hour.

Well too bad, that's the reality of working in wildlife rehab. The bears, now awake, need to be fed as do the fawns, the raccoons, the wolves, the lion and the lynx. Looking out the window I can see Brenda and Hannah now at Subira's enclosure, taking her the daily special. Knowing Subira my guess is the princess lion will be nowhere to be seen being quite content to while away today inside her snug little castle. Bit of a fair weather girl, is our Subira.

Regardless of the weather, the babies are arriving. It is interesting that last autumn we were inundated with late baby squirrels and it would appear that we are picking up this spring right where we left off as the first to arrive and by far the largest number of babies to arrive is squirrels.

Right along with the arrival of the spring babies is the arrival of the spring volunteers. These are such wonderful people that they should give so much of themselves, their time and their energy to help us care for the animals. As of this writing, we have with us an amazing young couple from Belgium Hannah and Thomas who shall be with us for about six weeks. Also we have with us a lovely woman named Jan R. who is here for the second time having spent a week with us last fall and liked it so much she is back for TWO MONTHS! This weekend we are expecting the arrival of two more volunteers, Marta

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from Montreal who is here on an internship from Vanier College and the Jennifer who hails from Scarborough is an animal lover and advocate. Over the next few months we shall enjoy the company of a number of volunteers. We have people arriving from England, Germany, Holland, Austria and some part timers from good old Ontario!

We welcome them all!

Lots of good things are happening here at AVWS. We have a new addition to the Permanent animal roster. His name is Chip and he is a six year old chipmunk that had been kept as a pet since he was found on a construction site. He is quite the character, loves attention and no doubt shall enjoy meeting one and all on visitors' days this year.

Thomas has spent his first two weeks working on "redecorating" and enriching the owl enclosures. His work is remarkable! We shall see Elly's and Gandalf's reactions as soon as the weather warms up and they can be safely moved to their new digs. Hannah is working to create a more exciting and enjoyable atmosphere for the skunks including lots of places to hide and lot of enrichment. Visitors shall enjoy seeing these great improvements. Next on the list is Subira's enclosure. Thomas and Jan K. are putting their heads together to create a world of fun for the big cat.

Some really great news is the turnaround in compliance here at AVWS. Last fall, we were visited by the MNR for the annual inspection and review. For the first time in anyone's memory, AVWS is in full and complete compliance with the Minimum Standard Requirements to Rehabilitate in Ontario. Not bad huh? We are so pleased and proud. Everyone has worked incredibly hard to accomplish this feat. Kudos to Jan K., Brenda, Steve, Ed, Joe, Marilyn and all of those who have helped along the way. To the guys from the MNR, Bart and Mark, we thank you for working with us in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

So, while the weather is cold and crummy, the animals are warm and content and all is right at Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.

More in a couple of weeks.....