



Maryland's 1<sup>st</sup> and Only  
Licensed Veterinary Hospital for Wildlife

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Second Chance Wildlife Center Becomes Maryland's First and Only Licensed Veterinary Hospital Exclusively for Wildlife.**

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**Clarksburg, MD - April 24, 2026** - Nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation organization Second Chance Wildlife Center, Inc. (SCWC), currently celebrating its 31<sup>st</sup> year of service, proudly announced today that it has officially been licensed by the State Board of Veterinary Examiners as the **first and only Veterinary Hospital Exclusively for Wildlife in the state of Maryland** - marking a major milestone for the organization and for wildlife care across the region. **The organization will also continue to operate as a permit-holding wildlife rehabilitation facility.**

Becoming a licensed wildlife hospital recognizes the facility's advanced veterinary medical capabilities, ability to appropriately house and care for a variety of species, and a highly trained wildlife medicine and rehabilitation staff (including a full-time wildlife veterinarian). This groundbreaking designation comes shortly after SCWC moved all operations from a farmhouse in Gaithersburg, Maryland to a brand-new, custom-designed facility at 26400 Haines Road in Clarksburg in December 2025.

"Achieving this license reflects the unwavering commitment of Second Chance Wildlife Center and its supporters to providing comprehensive and compassionate care for injured, ill, and orphaned wildlife," said Maureen Smith, President of Second Chance Wildlife Center, "and **it elevates our organization's role from a traditional rehabilitation center to a fully recognized veterinary hospital; capable of delivering a higher level of diagnostic, surgical, and long-term treatment services.**"

Each year, SCWC treats over 2,500 animals representing over 120 species (138 in 2025), including birds of prey, songbirds, small mammals, reptiles, and more. With patient admissions rising significantly in recent years, the need for advanced, centralized wildlife medical care has never been greater. Patient admissions this year-to-date are currently up by over 70% compared to this point in 2025.

"We have a front-row seat to the impacts on native wildlife secondary to habitat loss, illness, and human-caused injuries," said Dr. Natalie Zimmerman, SCWC's Director of Veterinary Medicine. "Becoming an officially licensed veterinary hospital for wildlife allows us to provide a higher caliber of care for our native wildlife and serve as a critical resource for the entire wildlife community in Maryland. Our new facility is equipped with a dedicated surgical suite, x-ray capabilities, advanced care modalities such as hydrotherapy and laser therapy, the ability to climate control individual rooms to meet various species' needs, and the only large flight enclosure in Maryland specifically for conditioning raptors and other large avian species. We are thrilled to achieve this major milestone and offer full-service veterinary care to both our wildlife patients and our wildlife rehabilitation collaborators!"

As a licensed hospital for wildlife, Second Chance Wildlife Center will:

- Provide enhanced medical and surgical care for complex cases
- Expand diagnostic capabilities, including imaging and laboratory services
- Strengthen partnerships with veterinarians, state and federal wildlife agencies, other wildlife rehabilitators, and conservation organizations
- Participate in and contribute data to wildlife research projects
- Offer training for future wildlife professionals and educational opportunities for the public
- Increase public and media access to expert guidance on wildlife-related issues

Second Chance Wildlife Center remains committed to its mission of rehabilitating and releasing healthy wildlife back into their natural habitats while educating the public on how and why to protect wildlife and to responsibly coexist with native species and migratory birds. Its new Education and Engagement program will launch May 1, 2026, offering presentations and hands-on workshops to groups of all ages in the region.

Community support continues to play a vital role in sustaining this work. Donations, volunteers, college interns, and sponsorship make it possible for SCWC to respond to the increasing demand for wildlife rehabilitation and deliver life-saving care to wildlife in need.

For more information, to support the mission, or to learn how to help wildlife in your community, visit [www.SCWC.org](http://www.SCWC.org) or send an email to [info@scwc.org](mailto:info@scwc.org). You can also follow SCWC on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com.SCWC.org](http://www.Facebook.com.SCWC.org) and on Instagram at [@SecondChanceWildlifeCenter](https://www.instagram.com/SecondChanceWildlifeCenter) for wonderful photos and video shorts of the organization's work in action.

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**About Second Chance Wildlife Center.** Founded in 1995, SCWC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation and hospital facility dedicated to the treatment and release of injured, ill, and orphaned native wildlife and migratory birds. It is licensed to operate under permits issued by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and to operate as a Hospital by the Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (a division of the Maryland Department of Agriculture). The facility is open for patient admissions every day from 10a-4pm, including weekends and holidays. Because the campus is a wildlife medical facility, no animals are on public display, and no public tours are offered.

SCWC is a member of the International Wildlife Rehabilitators Council, the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association, and the Maryland Wildlife Rehabilitators Association. SCWC is proud to hold the highest ratings in financial management and transparency awarded by two of the top charity evaluation organizations, Charity Navigator and Candid.

In December of 2025, after over two decades in a rented farmhouse in Gaithersburg, Maryland, SCWC opened at its new, custom-designed medical campus location on 4.8 acres at 26400 Haines Road, Clarksburg, MD 20871. This new facility was fully funded by private donations.

Through expert care, public education, and community engagement, SCWC works to ensure a healthier future for wildlife, ecosystems, and people.

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**PHOTO ON NEXT PAGE (HI-RES JPEG AVAILABLE ON REQUEST)**

**Photo Credit: Ian Morrison**

**Caption:** Second Chance Wildlife Center's Dr. Natalie Zimmerman, Director of Veterinary Medicine and Hannah Wilson, Clinic Director, perform a surgical procedure on an Eastern Box Turtle at the non-profit organization's new facility in Clarksburg, Maryland.

