Strengthening collaborations with wildlife rehabilitators

By Emily Bouwer, Director of Animal Care & Facilities, The Zoo in Forest Park

Gabry Tyson, Assistant Executive Director, The Zoo In Forest Park & Education Center

We will discuss our inaugural Wildlife Summit, held in March 2026, which brought together nearly 100 wildlife professionals from across Massachusetts and Connecticut for collaboration, networking and professional development.

The half-day conference was designed specifically for licensed wildlife rehabilitators and other wildlife professionals. Attendees participated in a variety of roundtable discussions covering key topics such as conservation methods, bird strike prevention, reptile care, carnivore care and an “Ask a Vet” session. The day also included a behind-the-scenes zoo tour, offering insight into The Zoo’s animal care practices, as well as a “swap shop” where rehabilitators could exchange supplies to support their work.

The presentation will discuss how zoos can effectively work with rehabilitators and others to support displaced wildlife through safe, permanent placement after an injured or orphaned animal is no longer considered a candidate for release back into the wild.