



ADOPT-AN-ANIMAL INFORMATION

WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT OUR ANIMAL AMBASSADORS?

Bear Creek Nature Center is home to various native and exotic wildlife. Some of our animal ambassadors are former pets that are retired, and some are wildlife that are unable to return to the wild. Many of our animal residents are rescued or rehabilitated through partnerships with organizations like the Georgia Reptile Society and Chattahoochee Nature Center.

Each of our animal ambassadors is in need of individual attention and care that we can only provide through supporters and volunteers. While not everyone is able to volunteer and handle our residents, our Adopt-an-Animal program is one way that anyone can contribute to enriching the lives of our resident animal ambassadors.

WHAT IS THE ADOPT-AN-ANIMAL PROGRAM?

Through Adopt-an-Animal, you or someone on your behalf, may purchase a one-time gift to support an animal. When you designate your adopted animal, your funds will go directly to the care of that animal for a year. This sponsorship program is a great way to give to local wildlife education efforts, the care of an animal in need, and to gift in honor of environmental enthusiasts in our community. Each adoption is a \$30 minimum \ (but can be your chosen total allotment).

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

For each one-time adoption (\$30 minimum gift), the following are included in the package:

- A certificate of adoption
- A personal "thank you" note from the animal to the adopter
- A photo of your adopted animal
- +\$5 for an additional wildlife-themed gift note from you to the recipient
- *If you are a teacher or group leader and have a classroom or club seeking long-term adoption for one of our animals, please speak to our staff. We welcome groups to adopt our animals as well!*

If you would like to make recurring financial gifts or would instead like to contribute physical or material assistance, please consider becoming a Donor. Visit our website Get Involved or speak to one of our staff to learn more.

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HOW DO I ADOPT-AN-ANIMAL?

- *On the phone* - Call us to place an order with our staff at 770-306-0914.
- *In-person* - Visit the center and speak to one of our staff representatives.

WHO ARE OUR ANIMAL AMBASSADORS?

View our Animal Ambassador Bios to meet our animal ambassadors in need of support. You can find updated needs and information on our website at bearcreeknaturecenter.org as well as occasional features of our animal residents on our Facebook & Instagram (@bearcreekATL) and Youtube channel (Bear Creek Nature Center).

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ANIMAL AMBASSADOR BIOS

(Updated August 2023)

MISHA

Species: Russian Tortoise, *Testudo horsfieldii*

Background: Misha was adopted in 2020 in partnership with the Georgia Reptile Society. Russian Tortoises are land turtles with unique features such as front claws (for digging long burrows), and flat, elephant-like back feet (for grazing for miles in a day)! While Russian Tortoises are native to mountainous desert regions in the Middle East and Central Asia, you might find many similarities between Misha and Georgia's State Reptile the Gopher Tortoise.



Status in the Wild: Vulnerable

Current Wishlist:

- Garden bed supplies for growing dandelions, clovers, and other turtle-safe weeds for all of the turtle friends at BCNC: soil, seeds, and other supplies welcomed
- Enrichment toys such as golf/ping pong balls, food-stuff balls, hides, and sunning rocks

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SENOIA & CHIEF MCINTOSH

Species: Eastern Box Turtle, *Terrapene carolina* (Subspecies: *carolina*)

Background: Senoia (top) and Chief McIntosh (bottom) are our resident box turtles. Both came from Chattahoochee Nature Center through their wildlife rehabilitation program. Both Senoia and Chief McIntosh were surrendered from bad care situations and are unable to return to the wild. Unlike most of the freshwater turtles of the southeast, box turtles spend most of their time on land. They love to snack on worms and brightly colored fruits on occasion in addition to their salads.

Status in the Wild: Vulnerable

Either one or both Box Turtles can be adopted for the price of one gift.



Current Wishlist:

- To have a larger outdoor enclosure that is predator-proof, and stocked with plants, hides, and space to roam during the warm seasons
- Garden beds & supplies for growing dandelions, clovers, and other turtle-safe weeds for all of the turtle friends at BCNC
- Enrichment toys such as golf/ping pong balls, food-stuff balls, hides, and sunning rocks

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OBSIDIAN

Species: Eastern Kingsnake, *Lampropeltis getula*

Background: Obsidian is a young kingsnake who came to live at BCNC in 2023. He is the main kingsnake often found in yards all over Georgia, and his cousin the California kingsnake has also been represented at the center through our now-retired snake named Echo. Both carry the “king” term because, in the wild, they are known to prey on other snakes, including venomous snakes. Eastern Kingsnakes have a variety of black and yellow or black and white patterns in the wild that will vary with color, pattern, and boldness often by geographical location and age.



Status in the Wild: Least Concern but a protected species in Georgia and many southeastern states

Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment items such as hides
- Funds for food

JAKE

Species: Eastern Black Rat Snake, *Pantherophis alleghaniensis*

Background: Jake was a rescue that was surrendered to wildlife rehabbers as a juvenile snake and was one of the founding animal ambassadors of BCNC in 2020. He has a calm and personable personality common to ratsnakes. Jake represents one of the most common snake species that Georgia residents may encounter. Ratsnakes are known for their curious natures, and flexibility; they often find themselves in a variety of predicaments climbing a host of objects and exploring interesting areas that they come across.



Status in the Wild: Secure

Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment items such as hides, toys, hammocks, rocks, sticks, etc
- Funds for food

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MAIZE, AMBROSE, & ARGENTUM

Species: Corn Snake, *Pantherophis guttatus*

Background: Corn snakes are related to rat snakes, and are a common species found domesticated through the exotic pet trade. Our three corn snakes represent some of the great diversity of domesticated colors that are seen among this species. These different colorations and patterns are often called “morphs” in the pet trade. The most common corn snake to see in the wild around Georgia is a red rat snake or a yellow rat snake. Like most rat snakes, corn snakes are very curious and intelligent individuals who can use their smarts as well as their flexible bodies and strong muscles to climb, swim, and lunge for their prey. They are known to be very social and curious as well, which can sometimes put them into strange situations like being found in human dwellings in all sorts of poses and scenarios.

Our three individuals are:

- Maize the Blood Red Morph (top)
- Ambrose the Amber Morph (middle)
- Argentum the Platinum Morph (bottom)

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment items such as hides, toys, hammocks, mazes, etc
- Funds for food



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GUESS

Species: Red-Tailed Boa, *Boa constrictor*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Guess was found by citizens in a trash can and recovered by DNR officials. The Georgia Reptile Society took her in for rehabilitation. She was treated for a rare infection which has stunted her growth but her prospects look well with care. In late 2020, BCNC took Guess in as an animal ambassador to provide a permanent home to recover and gain her confidence. In the wild, boas are native to South America and reach sizes of 6-10 feet. Though nocturnal, they are sometimes found basking in the day.



Current Wishlist:

- Funds for food; Enrichment through hides or decoration within enclosure
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ROCHESTER

Species: Dumeril's Ground Boa, *Acantrophis dumerilli*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Rochester came to reside at BCNC through partnership with the Georgia Reptile Society's rehabilitation program. He arrived around the same time as his exhibit neighbor, Guess. Dumeril's are unique boas with an ashy appearance on their back scales that helps them to camouflage into the leaf litter of their native home. In the wild, Dumeril ground boas are found only on the island of Madagascar and feed on a variety of animals including small mammals, birds, and lizards.



Current Wishlist:

- Funds for food; Enrichment through hides or decoration within enclosure

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MONTY

Species: Ball Python, *Python regius*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Monty came to BCNC through the Georgia Reptile Society rehabilitation program. She is a sociable snake who likes to stretch out on the carpet, play in mazes or jacket pockets, and enjoys being near humans. As pets, ball pythons are known to be curious and affectionate. In the wild, they are native to the grasslands and open forests of Central and West Africa. At BCNC, Monty likes many opportunities to get in touch with her wild side as she explores the center on “walks” with our volunteers and naturalists.



Current Wishlist:

- Funds for food and enrichment items to explore
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SUNNY

Species: Bearded Dragon, *Pogona vitticeps*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Sunny came to BCNC in 2023 through the Georgia Herpetological Association and Rescue. She is a vibrantly colored bearded dragon. Like many “beardies” as they are often called in pet care circles, she has a relaxed personality akin to a lap dog or a lap cat and is very curious. She is one of the first animal ambassadors that visitors meet and she enjoys being able to survey all that is happening around her. They are known to In the wild, bearded dragons are native only to the continent of Australia and there are a variety of different species. In domesticated world of bearded dragons as pets, there are also many color variations. Sunny has some bits of yellow, orange, and blue/grays.



Current Wishlist:

- Bearded dragon harnesses and leash
- Heat and UVB lamp bulbs
- Superworms as treats

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LEO

Species: Leopard Gecko, *Eublepharis macularis*

Status in the Wild:

Background: Leo came to the center through partnership with the Georgia Reptile Society. He is partly blind which makes feeding time just a little difficult but he loves interacting with our staff and volunteers. Unlike some wild gecko species, leopard geckos cannot scale walls because they lack the sticky toe pads to do so. Leopard geckos are ambush predators that use their good hearing and sight to catch bugs and avoid predators.



Current Wishlist:

- Heat and uvb lamp bulbs
- Calcium D3 supplement
- Fun hides and enrichment

GORBI

Species: European Legless Lizard, *Pseudopus apodus*

Status in the Wild: Not Threatened

Background: Gorbi is one of the founding animal ambassadors at BCNC. He was wild-caught as a juvenile for the pet trade but was rescued. He eventually made his way to BCNC in his adulthood. Lizards and snakes are differentiated by more than just the presence of legs. To name a few: lizards have hinged jaws (snakes can unhinge to eat larger objects), lizards have eyelids that blink, and lizards have ear openings on the side of their heads.



Current Wishlist:

- New Hides to burrow in
- Fresh substrate to burrow in

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OMAR

Species: Egyptian Uromastyx, *Uromastyx aegyptia*

Status in the Wild: Vulnerable

Background: Omar is an example of the largest Uromastyx lizard species in the world. He was a rescue who was rehabilitated. He eventually made his way to Bear Creek Nature Center from his foster parents who hoped that he would be a great addition to the team of animal ambassadors at the center.

Current Wishlist:

- New hides or hammocks for enclosure
- Food donations



WEIRD AL

Species: American Alligator, *Alligator mississippiensis*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Weird Al came from an alligator farm (alligators are a domesticated, bred farm animal in parts of the US) and now resides at BCNC in 2020 since he was two months old. He is learning to socialize and target train with food. The American Alligator is the only Crocodylian species that lives in North America. In the wild, alligators are one of the few reptile species in which the mother has parental care for her young for a time after they are hatched. American Alligator females protect their clutch from predators including other alligators until they are large enough to go out on their own.

Current Wishlist:

- Outdoor pond enclosure with native plants and a personal pond to be in during the warm months
- Water filters and filter replacements



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ARCHIE & JUGHEAD

Species: Australian Green Tree Frog, *Ranoidea caerulea*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Archie and Jughead came to BCNC as rescues from Georgia Herpetological Association and Rescue. The two frogs are sociable and enjoy changing their colors depending on where they are hiding. They are nocturnal and feed on a variety of insects. Australian Green Tree frogs have a unique coating with chemicals that scientists study to understand human medicine and resistance to diseases that other amphibians are more susceptible to.



Current Wishlist:

- Live grubs or funds for live grubs for a varied diet and enrichment
- Coco coir bedding for enclosure

GREEN TREEBEARD & GANDALF THE GRAY TREE FROG

Species: American Green Tree Frog, *Hyla cinerea* (top)
Cope's Gray Tree Frog, *Dryophytes chrysoscelis* (bottom)

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Both of our native tree frogs are common frogs that can be found in Georgia. Both are climbers who can often be spotted among reeds such as river cane or near wetland or stream areas during the night when they also come out to sing loud songs through the spring and summer. Treefrogs are social and vocal and some nights during the summer one may hear hundreds of them communicating to one another either to find a mate or to claim territory.



Current Wishlist:

- Live grubs or funds for live grubs for a varied diet and enrichment
- Coco coir bedding for enclosure

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DANICA PATRICK

Species: Loggerhead Musk Turtle, *Sternotherus minor*
(sometimes referred to as stripe-necked musk turtle)

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Danica is one of several native freshwater turtles that came to BCNC in 2023. She is a loggerhead musk turtle which are known for their large heads that have frills that come down from her chin (known as barbels). They can be found in riparian habitats which are stream and other water-related habitats. She feeds on a variety of invertebrates like snails.



DALE EARNHARDT

Species: Eastern Mud Turtle, *Kinosternon subrubrum*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Dale is one of several species that may be found along Georgia's waterways. His species can often be found in the wild eating an omnivorous diet with protein and greens. He gets a variety of items at BCNC to mimic this natural diversity.



YOSHI

Species: Eastern Musk Turtle, *Sternotherus odoratus*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Eastern Musk Turtles are similar to many of the southeast's other freshwater turtles as far as habitat and diet. One of the things that makes musk turtles unique is they are known for excreting a "musk" or a very stinky smell as a defense mechanism. Like many other species of freshwater turtles, their greatest threat in the wild are human interactions like habitat loss or pollution/pesticides which affect the cleanliness of the water.



Current Wishlist for all Turtles:

- Outdoor pond enclosure with native plants and a personal pond to be in during the warm months
- Water filters and filter replacements; Funds for diverse food

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OWLBERT EINSTEIN

Species: Eastern Screech Owl, *Megascops asio*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Owlbert came to BCNC through partnership with Chattahoochee Nature Center. He was injured wildlife that was rehabilitated. At BCNC, just as he would in the wild, Owlbert likes to forage in his enclosure for various insects to snack on. Eastern Screech Owls are known for their wide variety of vocalizations that they use to communicate.



Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment toys, perches, and activities for enclosure
 - Materials for enclosure upkeep
 - Funds for food
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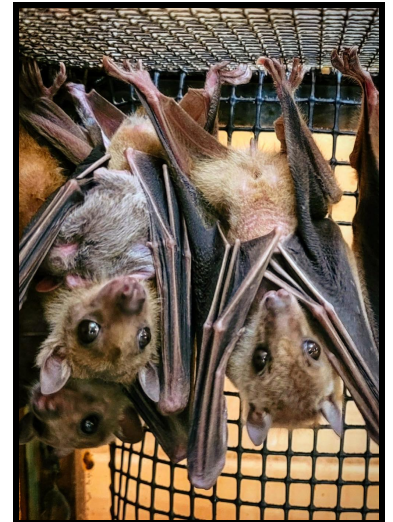
BOBBY & THE FRUITS

BOBBIE, POMMI, PAPAYA, MANGO, KIWI, & MELLIE

Species: Egyptian Fruit Bats, *Rosettes aegypticus*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Our fruit bats were born in captivity, and now reside at BCNC as ambassadors for their species. They are sociable creatures who communicate to one another through a variety of verbal and non-verbal means. Egyptian fruit bats are native to coastal regions of Africa. Bats are social creatures, and Egyptian Fruit Bats have been recorded to include up to 9,000 individuals in a single colony! Kiwi and Mellie were both born at BCNC through joint efforts with fellow bat educator, Vicki Smith with A-Z Animals.



Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment toys, perches, and activities for enclosure
- Fruit donations; Recycled newspaper to refresh enclosure substrate

TUTTLE

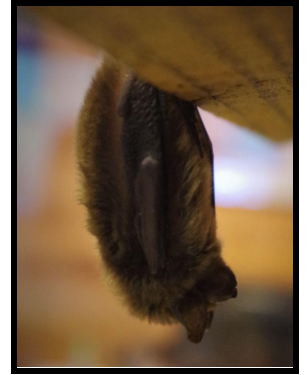
Species: Big Brown Bat, *Eptesicus fuscus*

Status in the Wild: Least Concern

Background: Tuttle is a rescue that was rehabilitated at AWARE Wildlife Center. He is missing part of his wing due to an encounter with a house cat and cannot be released back into the wild. He now resides at BCNC. Georgia is home to sixteen species of bats, including the Big Brown Bat. Big Brown Bats provide many ecological services that benefit humans including managing agricultural pests. This natural insect-management saves the agricultural industry billions of dollars each year, and ultimately helps to provide food and resources to our country's population.

Current Wishlist:

- Enrichment toys, perches, and activities for enclosure
- Paper towels/newspaper for enclosure substrate



NY KALALAO

Species: Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches, *Gromphadorhina portentosa*

Background: Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches are detritivores meaning that they help to break down organic material. They are found only on the island of Madagascar off the southern coast of Africa.



LAS CUCARACHAS

Species: Death Head Cockroaches, *Blaberus craniifer*

Background: Death Head Cockroaches are found on the forest floors of Mexico and Central America.

