

ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal Control Officer Kelly Jones and back up Animal Control Officer Emma Massa attended the Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts (ACOAM) Academy this year, graduating in October as Certified Animal Control Officers.

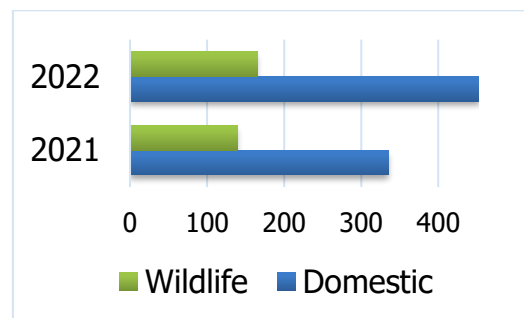
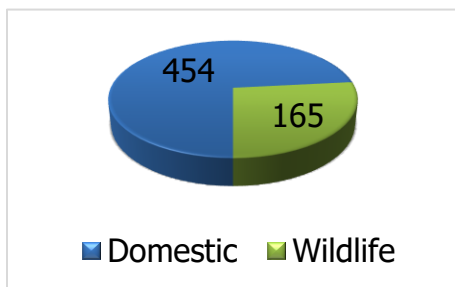
Animal Control receives the majority of its calls through dispatch. Some calls and information come through email, social media, and radio. Each call gets logged in dispatch as well as through ACO records for statistical and logistical purposes. This ensures that all calls get recorded, responded to, followed up on, and resolved or referred out to other agencies. This also allows for easier identification of repetitive incidents and habitual offenders, which can then be the focus of further outreach to aid in compliance. Actions that ACOs may take to enforce compliance with Massachusetts General Laws and Sterling Town Bylaws include citations, hearings, and criminal complaints. Animal Control violations, which start as civil matters, can escalate to criminal matters and could result in arraignments and warrants.

Call Volume

In 2022, Animal Control received 491 calls with 619 animals involved. This is 133 more calls and 144 more animals than 2021.

The ACO logs and tracks calls based on animal type. The two types are domestic animals and wildlife animals. A domestic animal is any animal that is owned, including pets, service animals, farm animals and working animals. Wildlife animals are any animal that is wild, including game, birds and mammals.

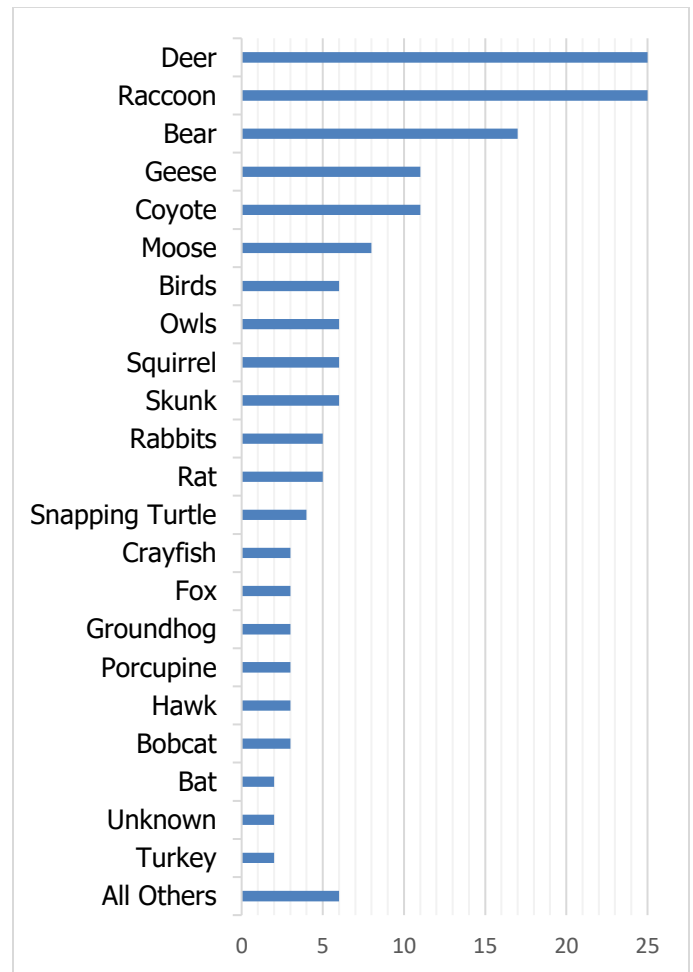
Of the 619 animals involved in calls this year, 454 were domestic animals and 165 were wildlife animals.



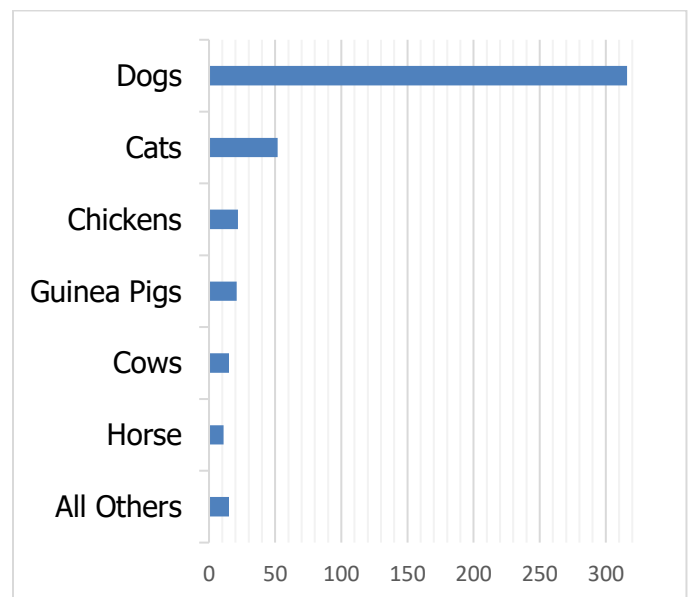
Animals

The 454 domestic animals and 165 wildlife animals involved in calls were:

#	Wildlife Animal
25	Deer
25	Raccoon
17	Bear
11	Geese
11	Coyote
8	Moose
6	Birds
6	Owls
6	Squirrel
6	Skunk
5	Rabbit
5	Rat
4	Snapping Turtle
3	Crayfish
3	Fox
3	Groundhog
3	Porcupine
3	Hawk
3	Bobcat
2	Bat
2	Unknown
2	Turkey
1	Beaver (All Others)
1	Snake (All Others)
1	Bees (All Others)
1	Mole (All Others)
1	Opossum (All Others)
1	Bald Eagle (All Others)



#	Domestic Animal
316	Dogs
52	Cats
22	Chickens
21	Guinea Pigs
15	Cows
11	Horse
2	Pigs (All Others)
2	Roosters (All Others)
2	Cockatiels (All Others)
2	Bunnies (All Others)
1	Goose (All Others)
1	Goat (All Others)
1	Parakeet (All Others)
1	Dove (All Others)
1	Camel (All Others)
1	Ferret (All Others)
1	Muscovy Duck (All Others)

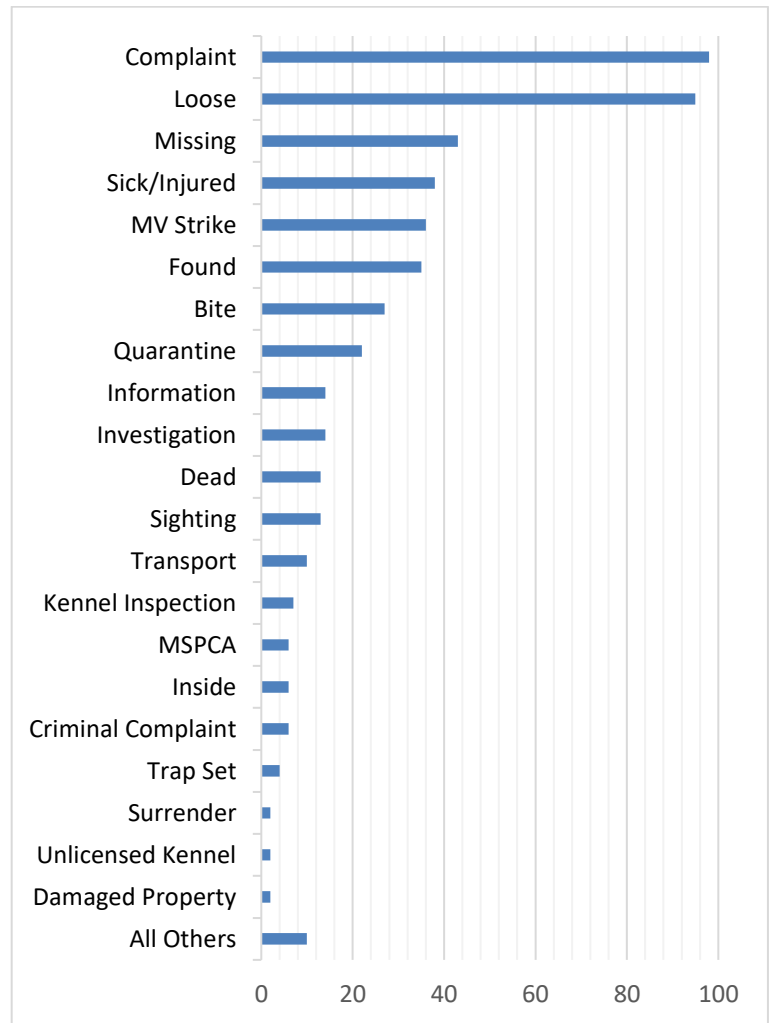


Call Reasons

The majority of Animal Control calls are categorized as complaints/concerns which include barking complaints, animal welfare checks, improper dog waste disposal, and other issues. The second most common call is for loose animals. A loose animal is any animal that is outside of its housing or enclosure, or off of its property and unattended when reported to Animal Control. While the majority of loose animal calls are for dogs, we do get an occasional horse, cow, pig, or other farm animal. Found animals are different from loose animals, as found animals are any animal that was loose but has been contained, caught, or otherwise under control but not in the owner's possession when reported to Animal Control.

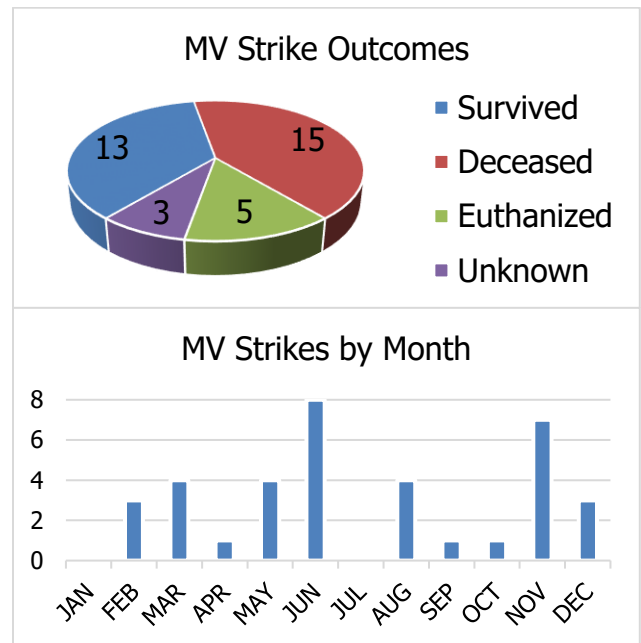
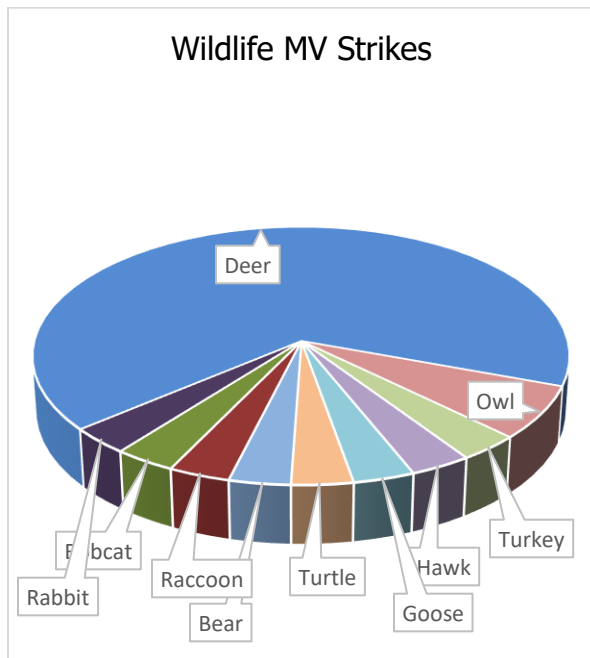
The reason for the 491 Animal Control calls are broken down by call type:

#	Reason
98	Complaint/Concern
95	Loose
43	Missing
38	Sick or Injured
36	MV Strike
35	Found
27	Bite/Possible Rabies Exposure
22	Quarantine
14	Inquiry/Information/Assistance
14	Follow-Up/Investigation
13	Dead
13	Sighting
10	Transport
7	Kennel Inspection
6	MSPCA
6	Inside Home/Business/Vehicle
6	Criminal Complaint/Court
4	Trap Set
2	Surrender
2	Unlicensed Kennel
2	Damaged Property
1	Stuck/Trapped (All Others)
1	Vet Emergency (All Others)
1	Red Cross RCC (All Others)
1	Illegal Hunting (All Others)
1	Infestation (All Others)
1	MAF Voucher (All Others)
1	Unsafe Transport (All Others)
1	Abandoned (All Others)
1	Left in Hot/Cold MV (All Others)
1	Mutual Aid (All Others)



Motor Vehicle Strikes

Of the 36 motor vehicle strikes of animals, 6 were domestic animals and 30 were wildlife animals. The domestic animals were 4 dogs and two cats; 3 dogs succumbed to their injuries and the others survived. The wildlife animals that were struck by vehicles included: 20 deer, 2 owls, and a turkey, hawk, goose, snapping turtle, black bear, raccoon, bobcat and rabbit.



Interagency Involvement

Sterling Animal Control works with numerous agencies and departments as well as rescues, shelters, veterinarians, and fund providing charities. In 2022, ACOs transported 29 animals to veterinarians for both emergency and non-emergency care. This included Tufts Wildlife Clinic, Tufts Small Animal Hospital, VCA Abbott, VCA Sterling, and Westford Animal Hospital.

Animal Control worked with the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA), Environmental Police and Mass Wildlife on cases this year. We have contacted and worked with numerous other Animal Control Officers from across Massachusetts on numerous calls/cases to include Auburn, Rutland Regional, Lancaster,

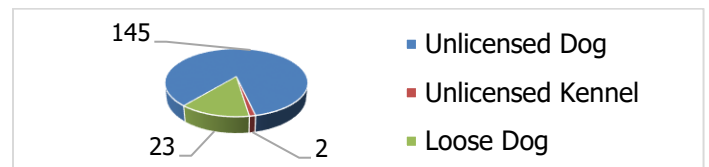
Clinton, Holden, Sudbury, Worcester, Leominster, Fitchburg, Dedham, and Marlborough.

This year we worked with and received support and assistance from Worcester Animal Rescue League, Sterling Animal Shelter, Broken Tail Rescue, Newhouse Wildlife Rescue, Hope Haven Pet Rescue and Hidden Pond Farm Equine Rescue. We have received assistance and funding for animal care from the Massachusetts Animal Fund for spay/neuter vouchers and Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) for stray animal care.

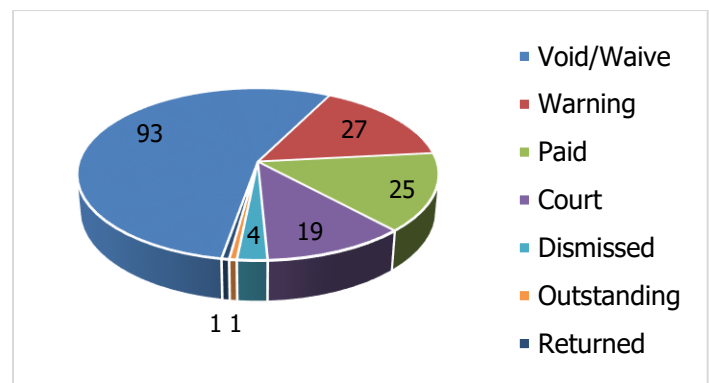
Citations

The Sterling Animal Control Officer issued 170 citations this year, 27 of which were warnings. These citations totaled \$15,200 in fines and were issued for the following violations:

Citations	Violation	Penalty
145	Unlicensed Dog	\$50-\$500
23	Loose Dog	\$50-\$500
2	Unlicensed Kennel	\$500



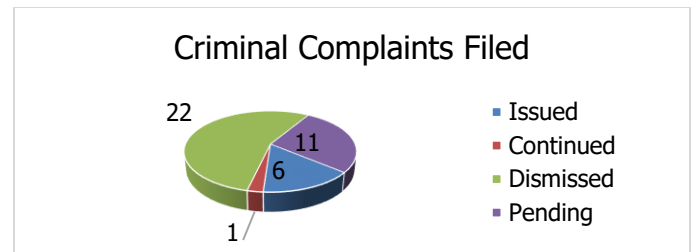
Number	Status	Total
93	Void/Waived	\$8,850
27	Warning	\$0
25	Paid	\$2,100
19	Court Pending	\$3,100
4	Dismissed	\$1,000
1	Outstanding	\$50
1	Returned	\$100.00
169		\$15,200



Court Cases

ACO Jones submitted 40 Criminal Complaints through the Clinton District Court for unpaid citations and unlicensed dogs. Of these, 6 were issued, 1 was continued, 22 were dismissed (licenses were obtained and citations were rectified prior to court appearance) and 11 are pending. Of the complaints issued, one went for arraignment and resulted in a bench warrant due to the party failing to show.

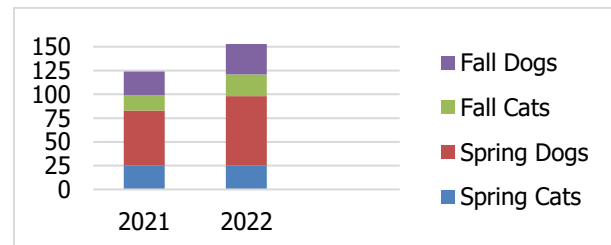
Amount	Outcome
22	Dismissed
11	Pending
6	Issued
1	Continued



Rabies Clinics

Two rabies clinics were held again this year. The first was held at the VCA Sterling and the second was held at the Sterling Police Department with Mid-State Mobile Veterinary Clinic and Dr. Michelle Bianco. The spring clinic brought in 25 cats and 73 dogs for 98 total and the fall clinic brought in 23 cats and 32 dogs for 55 total. In total, 153 animals were vaccinated through these clinics this year.

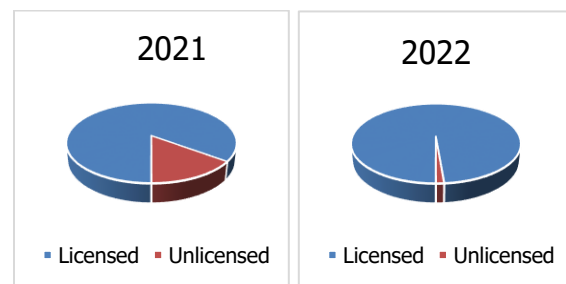
	Cats	Dogs	Total
Spring	25	73	98
Fall	23	32	55
Total	48	105	153



Dog Licensing

Dog owners licensed 1,586 dogs, leaving only 21 dogs unlicensed; this is 98% of known dogs in town licensed in 2022. In 2021, only 1,308 dogs were licensed and 228 known dogs were unlicensed. Licensing enforcement was increased this year through email, telephone, and mail contact with owners, citations, and court action. The numbers for this year show a large increase in compliance from 2021 as a result of these efforts.

Year	Licensed	Unlicensed	Total
2021	1308	228	1536
2022	1586	21	1607



Intakes

The number of intake animals this year was 38; 33 domestic animals and 5 wildlife animals. These are animals that are taken possession of by ACOs for various reasons. This includes strays that are picked up, injured wildlife that are transported to vets or rehabbers, and pets that are found and held until the owner is located. Below are some of the animal intakes from 2022.



ACO Training

In the ACOAM Academy, the ACO's received 96 hours of classroom and hands-on field training. Training and topics covered in the academy include:

- Equipment Handling
- Capture Techniques
- Bite Prevention
- Officer Field Safety
- Pet First Aid & CPR (certification)
- Civil Liability
- Chapter 140
- Courtroom Procedures
- Zoonotic Diseases
- Large Animal Handling
- Massachusetts Animal Fund & ACO CEUs
- Rabies Quarantines
- Barn Inspections
- The Link/HAVEN
- Animal Inspector Duties
- Rabies Protocol
- Report Writing
- 4th Amendment Exceptions
- Media Relations
- Investigating Cruelty Complaints
- Animal Hoarding
- Forensic Veterinary Investigations
- Animal Behavior
- Animal Identification
- Animal Disaster Preparedness
- Small Animal Handling
- Communications Skills
- Wildlife Laws
- Reptile Training and Handling
- Compassion Fatigue

Additional training and certifications obtained and held by Sterling's Animal Control Officers include:

- BLS Provider CPR/AED

- Canine & Feline CPR & First Aid
- Farm Animal Investigations
- Animal Control Institute's Core Competencies Training
- Emergency Animal Sheltering
- FEMA IS100 Introduction to the Incident Command System
- FEMA IS700 Introduction to the National Incident Command System
- FEMA IS10 Animals in Disasters: Awareness and Preparedness
- FEMA IS11 Animals in Disasters: Community Planning
- FEMA AS111 Livestock in Disasters
- Introduction to Disaster Animal Services
- Large Animal Rescue
- Nero's Law Training

Media

Sterling Animal Control in the news:

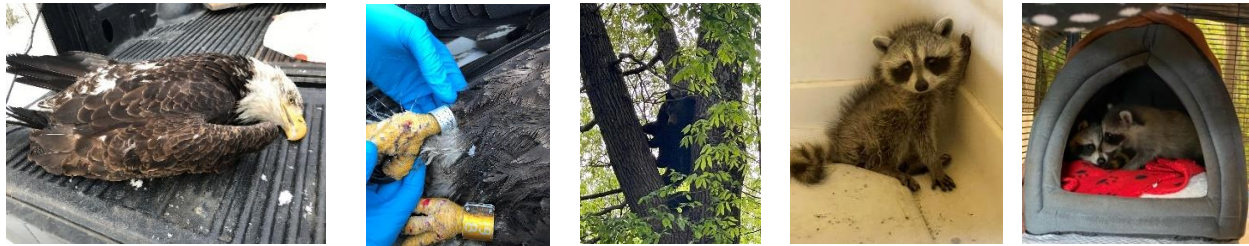
- *ACOAM News* "Illegal and Dangerous Traps" by Animal Control Officer Kelly Jones.
- *Worcester Telegram and Gazette* "Clinton Fire Chief let training take over when rescuing feline patients at Sterling Fire" by Jan Gottesman of the Item.
- *Sterling Meetinghouse News* "New Animal Control Officer in Sterling" by Caroline Lanni.
- *The Landmark* "Wrangling all critters great and small" by Danielle Ray.
- *The Landmark* "Guinea pigs safe after rescue from pond" by correspondent.
- *Boston 25 News* "Investigation underway after 10 guinea pigs rescued from Leominster Pond" by Timothy Nazzaro.
- *Worcester Telegram and Gazette* "Probe looks to find who abandoned 10 guinea pigs at pond in Leominster State Forest" by David Dore.
- *Patch* "Baby Guinea Pigs Abandoned at MA State Park Headed for Adoption" by Neal McNamara.
- *Sterling Meetinghouse News* "Herding Houdini's: Bovine Breaking Out, Moose Get Loose" by Caitlin Reidy.

Noteworthy Cases

In January, ACO Jones worked with MSPCA Nevins Farm to remove a surrendered pig (pictures below by ACO) from a residence in Sterling to their facility in Western Mass.



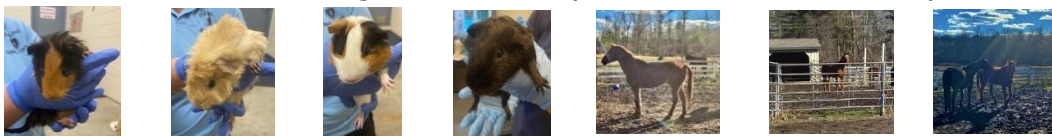
ACO Jones worked with a Mass Wildlife Biologist to retrieve and investigate the circumstances of a deceased Bald Eagle found on the ice at Stuart Pond. The eagle was both state and federally banded (pictures below by ACO). The eagle was believed to have been killed by another eagle in a territorial fight.



ACO Jones worked with Environmental Police to ensure the safety of the public and wildlife when a Mama bear (picture above by ACO) and her two cubs climbed a tree very close to a public roadway in mid-May. Mama and her cubs were able to safely exit the tree and have continued to be spotted and photographed around town.

In July, ACO Jones rescued an orphaned, very young female raccoon (picture above by ACO and Newhouse) from inside a local business. She transported the animal to Newhouse Wildlife Rescue where it was introduced to another young orphaned raccoon so they can grow together until they are old enough to be released in the Spring of 2023.

In September, 10 guinea pigs (pictures below by ACO) were rescued from a pond in Princeton and were transported to Tuft's Small Animal Hospital and then to the Worcester Animal Rescue League, where they would be held until adoptable.



In December, ACO Jones along with a member of the Animal Control Advisory Board transported a surrendered horse (picture above by ACO) from a residence in town to an Equine Rescue Farm in New Hampshire. This was the horse that was getting loose and hanging out with the young female moose.

Respectfully Submitted by Animal Control Officer Kelly Jones