

# **Wildlife Rehabilitation Procedures Manual for Volunteers**

Property of: \_\_\_\_\_



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## **BIRDROOM PROCEDURES**

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## **APPENDIX**

# INTRODUCTION TO WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Humans have been helping distressed wild animals for centuries. Their efforts to save these creatures resulted in varying degrees of success because little was known about wildlife care. Since environmental issues started to become a great concern in the 1970s, wildlife rehabilitators have emerged all over the world, and wildlife rehabilitation has come a long way in a short time.

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## DEFINITION OF WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Wildlife rehabilitation is the process of rescuing, raising and providing medical care for orphaned, sick, displaced or injured wild animals with a goal of releasing them back to their natural habitats. For rehabilitation to be deemed successful, these released animals must be able to truly function as wild animals. This includes being able to recognize and obtain the appropriate foods, select mates of their own species and reproduce, and show the appropriate fear of potential dangers (people, cars, dogs, etc.).

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## WHO IS A REHABILITATOR?

A wildlife rehabilitator is any person who carries out the above activities. In all areas of the United States, state and/or federal permits are required to handle migratory birds, native mammals, reptiles, amphibians or marine mammals and sea turtles.

Volunteers at WildCare are licensed under our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Department of Fish and Game, and work under the supervision of our Animal Care Staff. It is illegal for any unlicensed individual to be in possession of wild animals. It is also illegal to possess any feather or body part from any federally protected bird species.

WildCare is one of many community agencies dedicated to wildlife rehabilitation and public education. Professional organizations like the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association, the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council, and state organizations like the California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitation are working to improve education, networking and communication with governing agencies.

At WildCare—as at agencies like ours around the world—our goal is release. We provide release back to the wild, or if that is not possible, the release through a swift, painless death.

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## THE ROLE OF THE REHABILITATOR

Good rehabilitators do more than simply care for the needs of individual animals. One of your most important roles is as an “Ambassador of Wildlife.” In many cases, you will be the first contact someone has with the professional wildlife community. What you say to an individual, either on the phone or in person, may be crucial to the way that person views wild animals and conservation problems forever after. Don’t take this responsibility lightly!

People, in general, are relatively uneducated about the realities of wildlife biology. One of our main duties is to educate them. Rehabilitators must serve as a source of accurate biological and legal information, but must also be sensitive to the concerns of the person with whom they are dealing.

# STRESS IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

Stress is a fact of life in wildlife rehabilitation. To the injured animal under stress, it can be a matter of life or death. To volunteers, stress can mean anger, upset, burn out, or the loss of a valuable volunteer to a less stressful volunteer experience.

A period of captivity for a wild animal means an equal period of prolonged psychological stress. Noises that we take for granted like voices, radios, or telephones are foreign to wild animals. Movement and sounds should be kept to a minimum when working in the wards. The doors to the animal wards should be kept shut at all times.

One of the most common threats and most intense forms of stress endured by captive wild animals is repeated or prolonged eye contact. Most predators go after their prey with their eyes on it, often stalking and/or watching it first. When a person looks at a wild animal and walks toward it, the person is mimicking predatory behavior and upsetting the patient.

Finally, as anthropomorphic as it sounds, put yourself in the wild animal's place and let that be a guide. If you were a wild animal, you would want as few human interactions as possible. You would not want potential predators eyeing or approaching you, especially when you have no means of escape.

Every time you were handled, you would want it to be swift and non-traumatic. As a wild animal, you would have had no understanding of being petted by a human; a hand reaching over your head would be extremely threatening. You would dread the touching, and would want humans to resist the urge to pet you. Finally, you would want your period of captivity to be as short as possible so that you could return to live free in the wild.

Working in a wildlife hospital is stressful. Our patients instinctively hide their pain, and may die in our hands without so much as a sound. One emergency can interrupt another, and it can seem out of control. (It's not.) It may seem there are not enough volunteers to finish the work. (It always gets done.) You may feel like you are expected to do more than you are able or know how to do. (You aren't.) The list of stressors is endless. How do you cope?

Just stay calm and concentrate on doing the best job possible on each task you undertake. Ask for assistance and answers from staff and senior people. Don't worry about the next shift or the rest of WildCare. Trust that the agency has a system to assure that every animal will be cared for. You are not expected to stay longer than your four-hour shift nor to know how to do things you haven't been trained to do. Find ways to keep yourself interested and motivated. Take classes so you can help with more skilled tasks, and return fresh and enthusiastic next week on your regular shift.

Your time and effort make a huge difference to our patients and, though you may be tired when you leave at the end of your shift, you can feel good about what you've done to help these animals.

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## REDUCING STRESS IN CAPTIVE WILD ANIMALS

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NWRA NEWSLINE. Article  
written by Kathy Deering, DVM.*

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## REDUCING STRESS AS A VOLUNTEER

# GENERAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

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## WILDCARE MISSION STATEMENT

*WildCare advocates for wildlife for a sustainable world.*

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## VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

Clinic volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Our Student Volunteers (ages 12 – 17) work with the Education Department and have very different responsibilities, schedules and expectations placed on them. All volunteers must sign a liability waiver and read and understand this manual.

All volunteers must provide proof of a current tetanus shot. If working with rabies-vector species, you must provide proof of pre-exposure rabies inoculations to the Volunteer Coordinator. If you are immune-suppressed, or have any specific concerns, we recommend that you contact your personal physician prior to working with the animals. Pregnant women are not allowed to volunteer with the animals in WildCare's wildlife hospital.

Shirts, shoes, and socks must be worn at all times. Sandals and open-toed shoes are not permitted in any animal area. Dull colored clothing is preferred—do not wear red as it is a stressful color for some animals. Do not wear any perfume or hand lotion while working your shift.

Smoking is not permitted inside the gates of the WildCare property. The use of alcohol and/or drugs at WildCare is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Photographing or videotaping rehabilitation patients without specific prior permission from the Director of Animal Care is strictly prohibited.

Basic Skills training classes must be completed as soon as possible. A schedule of classes is posted regularly. California Department of Fish and Game regulations require every wildlife rehabilitation volunteer to complete one approved continuing education class each year. Volunteers will not be allowed to work with animals until the requirement is met.

Volunteers are expected to maintain a professional, courteous relationship with co-workers, visitors and callers. As you are a representative of WildCare, your volunteer ID badge must be worn while working at WildCare. If you have questions about our volunteer policies or procedures, consult the Volunteer Coordinator or Medical Staff.

If you have any problems with your fellow volunteers, supervisor or staff members, please discuss them with the Volunteer Coordinator or the Director of Animal Care. Problems should be resolved in a timely manner so we can work together effectively to resolve issues.

# GENERAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

## VOLUNTEER ATTENDANCE

Your scheduled volunteer time is an essential part of our program. If you cannot work on your regularly-scheduled shift, or cannot continue as a volunteer, we need to know so that we can find a replacement for you.

### Signing In

The **Sign-in Sheet** is used to determine our staffing needs and to track volunteer promotions. The number of volunteer hours you donate also influences the amount of funding we receive, so please do sign in every time you volunteer. If you drop in to work at times other than your regularly-scheduled shift, please sign in on upper section of p. 3 on the **Sign-In Sheet** at the front desk.

### Absences

As soon as you know that you will not be able to work your regular shift, indicate the date of your absence on the **Sign-in Sheet** in the area that you would normally sign in on that day. If you must miss a scheduled shift, you must notify your supervisor and the Volunteer Department as far in advance as possible. Write your intended absence date on the **Vacation Schedule** in the hospital and mark yourself “out” on the **Sign-in Sheet** so as not to be considered a no-show. In the event of an unforeseen emergency, please call the front desk and ask to have the person notify your supervisor and write your absence on the **Sign-in Sheet**.

### No Show/Excessive Absenteeism

A volunteer who does not show up for more than three shifts and has not notified their supervisor and/or the Volunteer Department prior to those shifts will be terminated. Excessive absenteeism may be defined as being absent two or more weeks in any given month with or without notification. If your absenteeism is deemed excessive, the Volunteer Coordinator will speak with you about your commitment level. Records of your hours and absences are kept by the Volunteer Coordinator.

### Termination

WildCare is an at-will agency and has the right to terminate a volunteer if the volunteer fails to uphold WildCare’s policies. In general a volunteer will be warned prior to termination. A volunteer has the right to appeal a termination with either the Volunteer Manager or the Director of Animal Care.

### Upon Departure

Upon leaving the program for any reason, please contact your Supervisor and the Volunteer Coordinator. We would appreciate your feedback on your volunteer experience here.

# PUBLIC CONTACT AND TELEPHONE TECHNIQUE

You are representing WildCare. Always be helpful and professional when dealing with the public. Your response may determine whether or not a finder brings an animal in for treatment and will influence how the caller feels about our organization.

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## INCOMING CALLS

WildCare's phone system has six lines.

**Calls that come in on lines 3, 4, and 5 are callers who have used the business line: 415-453-1000.** These calls should not be answered to give the caller the chance to choose an extension.

**Calls that come in on lines 1 and 2 are public callers who have dialed 415-456-SAVE (7283).** Always answer promptly and professionally, saying, "Good morning, WildCare" and your name.

**Calls that come in on line 6 are callers who have dialed the inside line: 415-455-1070.** This line never goes to voice mail and will usually be a colleague calling for a hospital contact. Always answer this line as professionally as you would a public line, it may be a veterinarian or official caller.

**Always put a line on hold when speaking to anyone other than the caller.** Do not attempt answer wildlife questions unless you are confident that you can give correct information to the caller (See Animal-related Calls, p. 9).

All calls from the California Department of Fish and Game, the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife, or any other government agency should be referred to the Director of Animal Care.

All calls from any member of the media should be referred to the Communications Manager or the Director of Animal Care.

Callers wishing to volunteer should be encouraged to sign up for an orientation online at [www.wildcarebayarea.org/volunteer](http://www.wildcarebayarea.org/volunteer) or by telephone with the Volunteer Coordinator at x21.

Employees' extension numbers are located next to the phone. If unavailable, transfer to voice mail. If taking a message for someone who doesn't have voice mail, please remember to include the date and time of the call and your initials.

**To transfer a call,** do not press hold. Press TRAN; then enter the extension. To transfer a call directly to voice mail, press VM TRAN; then enter the extension number.

To answer questions regarding animal behavior, refer to the "Living with Wildlife" section in the Phone Information binder located at the front desk. If you cannot advise a person about nuisance wildlife issues, don't guess. Refer the caller to our Wildlife Solutions Specialist at x23.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

Familiarize yourself with the resources and numbers in the Telephone Information binder in the reception area and with the staff at WildCare (see Organizational Chart on p. 47.)

# PUBLIC CONTACT AND TELEPHONE TECHNIQUE

If a clinic client makes a donation, note the amount on the top of the yellow page of the Patient Record and in the log book. Initial both entries. Put the money or check in the donation box at the front desk. WildCare accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover credit cards, but we do NOT accept American Express. Any major donation inquiries should be referred to a member of the Development Department.

All visitors and clients must remain on the museum side of the counter at all times. Neither the Clinic nor the Birdroom are open for public viewing. Exceptions are made only at the discretion of management staff.

Except for service dogs, no domestic or exotic pets are allowed in the courtyard or hospital.

Log all wildlife calls in the Wildlife Call Log located near the telephone. Enter the date and time of the call and as much information as possible from the caller, including email address and mailing address. Initial the entry.

If a caller is inquiring about an animal they brought in for treatment, ask for the animal's intake number and look it up in the Birdroom or Clinic log. Remain positive and sympathetic—especially if the animal died or was euthanized. If the reason for euthanasia is unclear, clarify the reasons with staff before returning to the call. Thank the caller for caring enough to check.

If the caller has an injured, orphaned, or ill animal, ask them to bring it to us as soon as possible. (If the caller believes a baby animal has been abandoned, ask for assistance from a Supervisor or staff member. Many species leave their young for extended periods of time to forage.) Emphasize the effects of stress and the importance of visual barriers and hands-off transfer (don't hand-carry the animal). The animal should be kept in a warm, dark, quiet place with a minimum of noise and conversation during transport.

If a caller from Marin cannot or will not transport an animal, refer them to the Marin Human Society (MHS). In any emergency with an animal hazardous for the general public to handle, ask the caller to contact the MHS. Callers from outside of Marin County should be referred to the proper county agency listed in the Phone Information binder at the front desk.

If a person is bitten by a mammal, especially a bat, they need to contact their physician immediately and then contact the MHS.

Occasionally, the caller is reluctant to bring in the animal for professional care and wants information on how to care for the animal at home. Please seek assistance when handling these calls. Politely emphasize the following points: The sooner an animal receives proper professional care, the better its chances for survival. Constant care by experienced personnel may be necessary to save the animal. The caller will not be charged for professional services; we do not treat "owned" animals.

Wildlife is considered property of the State of California. It is against the law for anyone to possess wild animals without the proper permits.

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## ANIMAL-RELATED CALLS

# LOGGING ANIMALS IN AND OUT

Ask the rescuer to complete the lower section on the back of the Patient Record. These forms are located underneath the front counter. While the rescuer is completing the card, remove the animal from the intake area as soon as possible. NEVER OPEN A CONTAINER OR EXAMINE AN ANIMAL AT THE FRONT DESK!

## **DO NOT LEAVE INJURED ANIMALS AT THE FRONT COUNTER!**

If the rescuer would like to release the animal, stamp the front and back of the Patient Record with the stamp found in the drawer at the front desk “Call Finder for Release.” Let the rescuer know that every effort will be made to contact them when the animal is ready for release; however, release conditions may be modified according to each animal’s specific needs and are determined by the Director of Animal Care and/or the Assistant Director of Animal Care.

### **ADMITTING SONGBIRDS**

Passerine birds (songbirds) the size of pigeons or smaller are treated in the Birdroom and are logged in separately from all other patients. Both the Clinic Log and the Birdroom log book are located at the front desk. Other small species, such as shore birds and saw-whet owls, are treated in the Clinic.

While the rescuer is completing the card, take the container with the bird into the Birdroom. Inform the shift Supervisor or senior person in charge that the animal needs to be admitted and that the rescuer is completing the card. When you return (without the bird), ask the rescuer to provide as much information about the animal as possible, i.e., whether it was caught by cat, hit a window, hit by a car, where, when, etc. Verify whether food or water was given to the animal, what kind and how much, and how long the rescuer has had the animal. It is very important to get as much information as possible since this will help determine the best medical treatment the animal should receive—or if care is really necessary.

Write the animal’s information in the Birdroom log book at the next available number. Do not skip numbers! Include the species if known; if you are unsure of the species, write your guess IN PENCIL. Also write that number on one of the brochures (with envelopes) and give it to the rescuer so they will have their animal’s WildCare patient number.

Separate the yellow copy of the Patient Record from the card-stock copy and place the yellow sheet in the “Patient Records” basket at the front desk. These forms are entered into WildCare’s Filemaker Pro database by data entry volunteers (let us know if you would like to learn how to enter yellow sheets!) Bring the completed card to the Birdroom and match it with the correct bird for intake.

### **ADMITTING ALL OTHER PATIENTS**

Birds the size of crows or larger and all other animals are treated in the Clinic. The Clinic log book is located at the front desk.

While the rescuer is completing the card, take the container with the animal into the Med Room and inform the shift Supervisor or someone medically trained that an animal needs to be admitted.

# LOGGING ANIMALS IN AND OUT

Return to the rescuer without the animal. Write the next available number in the Clinic log book and include the species (if known). Write that number on the brochure to be given to the rescuer. Check that the rescuer provided complete information about the animal on the card., i.e., caught by cat, hit a window, whether food or water was given, etc., since this will help determine the best course of treatment. Transfer the rest of the relevant information to the log.

Separate the paper copy of the Patient Record from the hard copy and put it in the “Patient Records” basket at the front desk. These forms are picked up by the Membership Department. Bring the completed card to the Med Room and match it with the correct animal for intake.

If you discover an animal that has died, first inform your Supervisor or a staff member. They may wish to examine the animal to determine cause of death. Following their determination, animal bodies are frozen and periodically cremated. Occasionally, bodies are kept for taxidermy or necropsy class purposes. A staff member will clarify any special circumstances. Be assured that bodies are not released from WildCare except under rigid regulations determined by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service and/or the California Department of Fish & Game.

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## WHEN PATIENTS DIE

Clinic bodies are wrapped in plastic bags and placed in the freezer located in the Storeroom, NOT the freezers located in the Laundry Room, Kitchen, or Isolation Ward. Always check with staff before disposing of a body.

Except for pigeons and rats (which may have been poisoned), small bodies which have not been medicated and are not contagious can be used as animal food. These bodies are bagged, labeled “okay to feed out,” and put in the freezer.

When a patient is no longer in our care, the card is logged out and disposition recorded. As a licensed non-profit agency, accurate statistics are required for funding purposes as well as licensing requirements.

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## CLOSING OUT A PATIENT RECORD

1. Verify you have correctly matched the animal to the Patient Record.
2. Complete the disposition information. Circle the disposition code, write the date and site of release or transfer. Disposition codes are as follows: AWOL (escaped); CONS (consultation); DON (donated); EXP (expired); REL (release); TR (transfer); EU (euthanized); DOA (dead on arrival) .
3. Locate the Patient Record number in either the Clinic Log or Birdroom Log and write the disposition information at the far right side of the log entry.
4. In the upper right hand corner of the Patient Record, put your initials under “LB” to show that the Patient Record has been checked out in the Log book.
5. Place checked-out Clinic Patient Records in the wire basket on the rounded shelf under the front desk to be entered into Filemaker.

# HEALTH, HYGIENE AND SAFETY

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION READ THE VOLUNTEER HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES PROVIDED IN THE APPENDIX OF THIS MANUAL.**

Never touch any animal you have not been properly trained to handle. Never perform any task or procedure that you are uncomfortable about. Immediately report any safety hazards to the Supervisor or WildCare staff.

Hands and nails should be thoroughly scrubbed frequently. Antibacterial soap should be used after handling a potentially contagious animal to avoid transmission of pathogens to other animals. Wash hands before eating as well as before and after using the rest room.

Perfumes and colognes should not be worn because they can be overwhelming to the animals and other volunteers. Hand lotions should not be used since oils from these products can compromise feather quality in birds.

Be sure your tetanus inoculations are up to date.

Pre-exposure vaccines for rabies are required ONLY if you plan to HANDLE rabies-vector species and carnivores such as bats, foxes, raccoons or skunks. Proof of vaccination must be submitted to the Director of Animal Care. You do not need a rabies vaccine to clean cages, but you do need to wear full protective clothing: raccoon gloves and protective eye wear.

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## **PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

When washing cages, tables, dishes, or other equipment with disinfecting solutions such as bleach or Synphenol, the use of rubber gloves is required to protect your hands from contamination and irritation. Rubber gloves must be removed before handling any animal.

Protective leather gloves should be worn when handling any raptor, carnivore or squirrel. Latex gloves must be worn when handling water-proof birds. Never use rubber gloves as they may compromise feather quality.

Wear dull-colored washable work clothes because volunteers are constantly exposed to soiling, snagging, and tearing. Smocks or aprons are available to give some protection to your clothes.

Close-toed shoes and socks are required. No open-toed shoes or sandals are permitted. You should have a pair of shoes worn only at WildCare.

Face masks are required when cleaning raccoon cages and are recommended while cleaning all other cages and aviaries. You may wish to wear a face mask if you have allergies or respiratory problems.

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## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES— 911**

Fire extinguishers are located throughout the building (see Facilities Map, p. 42). A map is also posted near the Clinic telephone. Please familiarize yourself with their locations as all emergency exits. Emergency numbers are kept in front of the Phone Information manual located at the front desk. Volunteer emergency contact information is kept in the file cabinet next to the Volunteer Coordinator's desk.

# HOSPITAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEER WORK

Only 5% of the workers at our organization are paid. That means that 95% of everything done at WildCare is accomplished by volunteers. While many volunteers prefer working directly with the animals, there are numerous support tasks that also need to be done regularly to keep the hospital functioning correctly and safely. We value initiative in our volunteers, and we are especially grateful to those who are willing to help out with maintenance and support.

Following are some of the many support tasks that we ask everyone to do on a regular basis to keep the hospital running:

- Dishes
- Laundry
- Flatten any dirty cardboard boxes which are unsuitable for use as animal dens or carriers. Place in the dumpster area outside the back gate.
- Clean cages in the cage-cleaning area behind the Birdroom. Cages need to be cleaned, sanitized and put away during every shift.
- Straighten up the Volunteer Lounge and make sure human dishes are washed and put away when dry.
- Restock supplies in all the wards including towels, tissues, paper towels etc. If we are out of anything, alert your supervisor or a medical staff member.
- Clean refrigerators. Check with a Supervisor, and discard questionable or unmarked items.
- Tidy and restock Marin Humane Society drop-off shed.

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## ONGOING TASKS, ORGANIZATIONAL PROJECTS

Following are some ideas of projects for the slow season or for volunteers who would prefer not to work with animals. If you see something that bothers you, it probably bothers other volunteers too. Check with your Supervisor or the staff person in charge to be sure that someone else has not begun work on a similar project and that the idea is a good one.

- Organize the front counter.
- Wash glass doors and windows in the hospital; sweep Exhibit Hall and displays.
- File Patient Records in numerical order. Clinic and Birdroom Patient Records are filed in separate drawers in the small filing cabinet in the Volunteer Lounge. Input patient record data in the data base. Ask the Hotline phone person or the Volunteer Coordinator for instructions.
- Straighten up the Volunteer Lounge.
- Restock supplies. If we are out of anything, alert the Medical staff.  
Exhibit Hall bathroom: towels, soap, toilet paper  
Clinic/Birdroom: newspaper, cardboard carriers, perches, towels, forms
- Glue loose screens to Birdroom baskets with a glue gun.
- Organize Birdroom and Wards A, B, and C shelves and counters.

# BEGINNING YOUR SHIFT

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As a new volunteer, it will take a little time to get used to the physical layout of the facility. Please take time to look at the map at the end of this manual. Familiarize yourself with our policies and programs by reading the brochures, newsletters and information posted on bulletin boards in the Volunteer Lounge and near the front desk. Subjects of current interest to volunteers are shared regularly in “WildCare Updates” emails from the Volunteer Coordinator. Please be sure and check your email on a regular basis and especially before your shift! Copies of the “WildCare Updates” emails will be posted in the Volunteer Lounge for those without email.

Personal belongings should be kept in the Volunteer Lounge. Please leave purses and bulky backpacks locked in the trunk of your car. Cell phones must remain in the Volunteer lounge on vibrate. WildCare is not responsible for loss or theft of personal items kept in the Lounge or in your car.

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## SIGN IN

Start your shift by signing in on the Animal Care Sign-In sheets located on the front counter. Look for your name and telephone number(s) printed under your assigned day and shift. If your name is not on the list yet, please PRINT your name and telephone number(s) under your assigned day and shift. You will be added to the roster on next month’s log sheets.

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## BADGES

All staff and volunteers are required to wear their name badges. As a new volunteer, your badge will be waiting for you on the corkboard in the hall. If you don’t have one, check with the Volunteer Coordinator or your supervisor. At the end of your shift, please return your name badge to the board in the Lounge.

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## COMMUNICATION

Check the bulletin board in the Volunteer Lounge for special events. Check the bulletin board near the intake area for notices of WildCare classes.

Report to your shift Supervisor so that (s)he can coordinate the work with the available staff. If you must leave your shift early, please let your Supervisor know at the beginning of your shift so they can schedule the work accordingly.

If you are unhappy with the area where you are volunteering, contact the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss other options. If you have any questions regarding the Clinic, ask your shift Supervisor, the Volunteer Coordinator, or a medical staff member.

If any information on your Volunteer application changes, advise the Volunteer Coordinator.

If you have comments, suggestions, and/or ideas to share, please leave us a note in the suggestion box. An organizational structure is in place: (1) Supervisor, (2) Volunteer Coordinator, (3) Director of Animal Care or Assistant Director of Animal Care, (4) Executive Director. You are an essential contributor to the growth of WildCare!

# KITCHEN/LAUNDRY PROCEDURES

Dishes and laundry should be done all day long. All volunteers on a shift should work to keep these two tasks from piling up. For dishes, use generic dishwashing detergent; Dawn dishwashing detergent is used only for washing oiled birds. **DO NOT MIX BLEACH WITH DISHWASHING DETERGENT!** This mixture creates hazardous gas! Use gloves when doing dishes and laundry.

Clean up after the person before you. Volunteers working with wildlife are easily distracted and forget to put things away. Try to notice things that have been sitting out for hours and bring them to the kitchen or throw them out. Learn where items are stored so you can return them to the proper place.

Clean up after yourself! Avoid leaving unused food out on the counter as it will attract flies and ants. Wipe off the counter when you have finished preparing food. Please leave the kitchen clean for the next shift.

Scrape food into the trash and rinse dishes. Wash dishes in hot water and detergent in the left-hand sink. Water should be hot enough to require gloves. Soak cleaned dishes in the left-hand sink which has been filled  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with cold water and 2 cups bleach. Allow entire load of dishes to soak in bleach for 20 minutes (set timer above sink.) Rinse off clean sterilized dishes in middle sink with hot water. Stack dishes upside down in dish drainer to air dry. Don't towel dry. When dry, organize them in stacks on the storage shelves.

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## WASHING DISHES AND TUBING SYRINGES

Dirty raccoon dishes are collected on the rack on the left side of the sink to be washed separately. Do not mix raccoon dishes with other dishes until they have been sterilized. Wash raccoon dishes when all other dishes are finished, then empty all sinks and wipe with bleach. Allow 20 minutes before starting new dishwasher, then rinse sink thoroughly with hot water and refill.

Clean tubing syringes are not bleached, but are left to soak in the pan of dilute Nolvasan. Follow instructions posted at that location. (To change solution, see "Preparing Nolvasan Soak," p. 20.) Syringes must be completely rinsed and flushed with plain water before using to gavage-feed an animal.

Wash and disinfect the counters as part of the kitchen procedure.

Follow the instructions on the washing machine for the correct amounts of soap and bleach. Front-loading washers can be stuffed firmly with laundry. Except for raccoon laundry, all laundry is washed and rinsed in cold water. Wash raccoon laundry separately from other laundry in **HOT** water. Use gloves for all laundry.

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## WASHING LAUNDRY

Gently shake out dirty laundry into the laundry bins to get rid of dried feces and dirt, and to double check for any animals. Use a scraper to remove crusted-on dirt. Exceptionally soiled towels can be hosed off outside before laundering. When doing laundry, work all the way down to the bottom of one bin. This prevents pungent "aging" and its consequent unpleasant odor.

Clean lint filters on dryers before every new load. Fold clean towels and stack neatly on the shelves or restock them in the wards.

# WARDS A, B, C

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

Remember, you are volunteering in a wildlife hospital—a unique opportunity! Animals in our care are suffering, so please keep your voice down any time you are within hearing range of a wild animal.

Vita-lights are installed in all the wards to provide full-spectrum lighting for our patients. These lights must be left on during the day to be sure a proper photo-period is maintained. Fans are always left on for ventilation. Ward doors must remain closed at all times.

If you notice any unusual animal behaviors or conditions, i.e., bleeding, not eating, injury not noted on patient record, etc., inform the shift Supervisor or a staff member immediately.

Learn the correct procedure for each task you undertake; don't just follow what the last person did—they may have made a mistake!

One side of all cage doors should be covered while you are working in a ward to minimize human contact and stress to the animals. This also lowers stress in the event predators and prey are caged across from each other.

Always return leather gloves, buckets, and other cleaning equipment to the ward for which they are marked. Return rubber gloves to appropriate bins, i.e., raccoon, laundry, dishes. If you find objects left out of place from a previous shift, return them to their proper place.

Do not stuff trash containers to overflowing. Empty trash containers when they are full or when you finish cleaning the ward (whichever comes first). Discard tied bags into the dumpster outside the back gate near the East Aviaries. Place dark plastic bags in the trash containers. Trash bags are located in the cupboard above the dishwashing sink.

Sweep the floors and mop with dilute bleach only. Use mops and buckets labeled for each ward, Birdroom and Isolation Ward. Empty and turn over all buckets after cleaning the wards.

If you are unable to complete the entire ward before your shift is over, inform staff or Supervisor where you left off and what needs to be finished.

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## MOVING ANIMALS **NEVER TOUCH AN ANIMAL YOU ARE NOT TRAINED TO HANDLE!**

Attend a Captive Care class & the Wildlife Handling and Restraint class. Patient handling should be kept to a minimum, so moving the animal to a clean cage should be combined with any other procedure requiring handling. Have clean towels, food and water ready to place in the clean cage.

Rabies-vector species (bats, foxes, raccoons and skunks) can be **HANDLED** only by volunteers who have received rabies pre-exposure vaccinations. Inoculations are not required to clean cages.

Animals will attack according to their natural defense mechanism. Ask for assistance and instruction before trying to move an animal. Carnivores or birds

# WARDS A, B, C

with talons or sharp or strong bills may attack with claws, talons, beak or teeth. Thick leather gloves are proper protection for the trained handler.

Spear fishing birds such as loons, egrets, herons or grebes may attempt to strike at your eyes. Control of the head is essential for the trained handler. Safety glasses are available, but are not a substitute for proper training in correct handling techniques.

If the caged animal is in a box or you can safely herd it into one, close the lid and lock the tabs shut. Leave the animal in the box while you are cleaning the cage. Always open the box (carefully!) on the floor—NEVER at eye level!

Mark your initials in the appropriate box on the Task Board outside Ward A BEFORE beginning each task. Follow this order to clean the wards.

1. Turn on the ward lights and begin your walk-through.
2. Check each cage and incubator for occupancy. Inform the medical staff of any dead patients; log them out on the card and intake log, and dispose of the body following the protocol on p. 11 of this manual.
3. On the front upper right-hand corner of the Patient Record, check the yellow dot to see whether any special procedures (fecal sample, x-ray, blood work) are required. Fecal samples are easily collected from the soiled cage. Check with a Supervisor or staff member to coordinate.
4. Update all Feeding Schedules.

Every animal should have a blue Feeding Schedule OR a green Emaciation Tubing Schedule. Animals with a blue Feeding Schedule may also have a yellow Tubing/Hydration Schedule.

For those animals with blue Feeding Schedules, list the food remaining in the cage directly to the right of the entry for the previous day.

Animals with a green Emaciation Tubing Schedule should have water only . . . **NO FOOD!** If you find a Patient Record with a blue Feeding Schedule and a green Emaciation Tubing Schedule, immediately verify the correct protocol for that animal with a staff member. Emaciated animals are critically ill and are tubed with a special formula. If they are given food, too much energy is expended trying to digest the food rather than on recovering and their chances of survival are lessened.

5. Check the Patient Record for information about injuries and the Feeding Schedule for any special directions. If there is no Feeding Schedule, verify with a staff member what schedule is required for that specific animal. Extra forms are located either in the wall file in each ward or in the drawer under the front desk.

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**PREPARING  
TO CLEAN  
WARD A  
WARD B  
WARD C**

# WARDS A, B, C

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## PREPARING SYNPHENOL OR BLEACH

Use appropriately marked buckets for each ward. Fill the bucket marked "Plain" with hot tap water. In the bucket marked "Synphenol," add 15cc of Synphenol to exactly one gallon of hot water. Bleach is used to clean raccoon cages at the dilution of 1 cup bleach to 2 gallons of cold water. A syringe, bottle of Synphenol, one-gallon pitcher and bleach are located on the shelves above the kitchen sink. Put a rag in each bucket.

NOTE: If a raccoon is in the ward with other animals, you can use bleach on all the cages, cleaning the raccoons last. When using bleach, clean the cage with bleach solution, then wipe off the bleach with plain hot water and let air dry.

## PREPARING A CLEAN CAGE

See "Cage Set-Up", p. 21. Focus on one animal at a time! Be sure you are setting up each cage correctly. Don't assume the person before you set up the cage for this animal the right way!

Prepare a clean cage with newspaper and towels, and include any necessary extra items such as nets, perches, nest boxes, greenery, etc. Prepare species-specific food and fresh water using appropriate dish ware as listed in the diet book hanging from the kitchen dish shelf. The amount of food listed on the diet chart is for one animal, unless otherwise specified. Multiply by the number of animals in the cage. Record the specific amount of food given on the blue Feeding Schedule. Do not overfeed. Do not underfeed.

Never move any animal until you are properly trained. Try to coordinate moving an animal with tubing, medications, or other procedures. When ready, transfer the animal to a clean prepared cage. If multiple animals are in one cage, count Patient Records and then count heads; make sure all are accounted for.

In the busy season when no clean cages are available, temporarily place the animal in a cardboard carrier lined with a towel. Do not leave an animal wrapped in a towel in the carrier while you clean a cage.

## CLEANING A CAGE

Remove dishes and any other items from the dirty cage. Take dirty dishes to the kitchen, scrape, rinse and stack for washing. Live food, such as goldfish and mealworms, are the only items ever recycled. **All uneaten seed and food items should be disposed of. Absolutely no dish ware should be re-used.**

Carefully remove boxes and furnishings from the dirty cage. Inside the cage, gently shake out towels and newspaper to check for burrowing animals. Shake feces, food, and any other solid items from the towels into the trash before putting the towel in the dirty laundry basket. Remove dirty seabird nets from the frame, shake into trash and place in laundry basket. Discard newspapers.

Clean the cage with hot tap water (or dilute bleach for raccoons). Be systematic and do the cleanest parts of the cage first. Begin at the top, then sides, door, and bottom, removing all organic matter. Wipe down the net frame.

Wipe with prepared Synphenol in the same order as above (or rinse with hot water for raccoons). Do not towel-dry the Synphenol off the cage. Let air

# WARDS A, B, C

dry. Repeat for net frame. When cleaning with bleach, rinse the cage by wiping it with clean, hot water and let air dry.

Line the entire cage bottom with one clean, dry towel that has no strings or holes. For seabirds on nets, omit the towel and place the netted frame over a piece of newspaper.

Clean all cages in the ward following the same steps.

If there is a resident in the incubator, use proper handling procedures to move it to a holding box or a clean cage.

To clean the incubator, lift the top lid or open the sliding door and remove dishes, boxes, perches, or greenery from the dirty incubator.

Inside the incubator, gently shake out the towels and newspaper to check for sleeping or burrowing animals. (This eliminates any chance of dropping an animal.) Shake feces, fruit, food, and any other solid items from the towels into the garbage can before putting in the dirty laundry basket. Discard the newspaper in the garbage can. Count Patient Records and then count heads to make sure you have accounted for all patients.

Wipe both compartments of the incubator with hot tap water. DO NOT use bleach in the new incubators. Be systematic and do the cleanest parts of the incubator first. We suggest you clean the lid, around the sides including the door, then the bottom, removing all organic matter.

Wipe both compartments with dilute Synphenol in the same order as above. Let sit for 20 minutes; rinse completely and let air dry.

*NOTE: If possible, Ward A and the Birdroom should always have one incubator clean and turned on at all times.*

When all animals have been placed in clean cages, begin final clean-up in the ward. Check that all dirty dishes are taken to the kitchen.

Take dirty laundry to the laundry room and separate into barrels marked "Other Laundry" or "Raccoon Laundry." If the washing machine and/or dryers have stopped, begin new loads following instructions found on each appliance and the laundry protocols on p. 15. Remember to shake out all towels before putting in the washing machine. Return the empty laundry basket to the ward.

Dump dirty water and Synphenol into the middle kitchen sink. Rinse out and return the buckets to the ward. Turn buckets upside down.

Every day, empty the trash, sweep and mop the floors according to the protocols on p. 20.

Walk through the ward one last time to check that ALL animals are properly housed, fed, and watered. Cover half of the front of the cage with a towel that has no strings or holes. This allows light to enter but provides privacy from another animal, possibly a predator, in a facing cage. Leave lights on during the day.

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## CLEANING INCUBATORS

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## FINISHING THE WARD

# MISCELLANEOUS CLEANING PROCEDURES

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## FLOORS

Wards should be swept and mopped at the end of the cleaning routine. The entire hospital, including hallway and entryway, should be swept and mopped at least once a day.

Use dilute bleach solution on all hospital floors at a dilution of ½ cup to one gallon of hot water. When finished, dump dirty water into the far left kitchen sink. Rinse out and return the bucket to the proper ward.

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## TRASH AND RECYCLING

Empty trash cans when nearly full. Empty small garbage bags into the larger bags. Tie bags closed and take to the dumpster outside the back gate.

Place new dark garbage bags in the all ward cans. Double bags are used in the kitchen bin only. Small white bags are for smaller desk-size cans. Bags are located in the cupboard above the kitchen sink.

Empty boxes and dirty carriers should be broken down and taken to the dumpster area for recycling. Check hallway, Birdroom, the area outside the Med Room. San Francisco Animal Care & Control carriers are NOT recyclable because the cardboard is oiled. If carriers can be wiped clean, restock the wards with them.

Recycling bins for paper, glass, cans, and #1 or #2 plastic are located in the Volunteer Lounge. Please crush all soda cans before placing in the bin. These bins should be emptied at the end of the day and rinsed out. Large recycling cans are near the dumpster located through the back gate by the East Aviaries. Glass and plastic can be placed in the same can.

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## STERILIZING OUTDOOR AVIARIES AND RUNS

Clean aviary thoroughly, following protocols outlined in “Cleaning Outdoor Aviaries”, p. 24.

Sterilizing is usually done only when an aviary is empty. Floors should be swept or raked first, then hosed clean. Be sure to clean all walls, ledges, perches, and the inside of the door. When everything is clean, the entire aviary—walls, ceiling, floor, perches and door—is sprayed with Synphenol using the garden sprayer attachment. Move and sterilize all wood including tree stumps and plants.

When sterilizing seabird enclosures, all rubber mats should be scrubbed, sterilized and hung up off the floor to dry. When sterilizing raccoon enclosures, bleach is used instead of Synphenol and is also left to air dry.

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## STERILIZING CARRIER KENNELS

Soiled plastic kennels are collected outside the back door of the Birdroom to be cleaned and sterilized. Take carriers apart to clean but keep track of all pieces. Wash and scrub thoroughly; sterilize with a dilution of 1 part bleach to 30 parts water and place on drying racks to air dry. When putting dry kennels away, keep the screws with the appropriate kennel by screwing them into the top or the bottom section. Stack clean, dry kennels in the kennel storage area in a way that prevents the collection of water (and mosquito breeding).

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## PREPARING NOLVASAN SOAK

Tubing syringes in the kitchen are left to soak in dilute Nolvasan between uses. Nolvasan soak is replaced daily. Use ¼ cup of Nolvasan in dishpan of water.

# CAGE SET-UP

## GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CAGE SET-UP

Different species have different requirements for comfort, privacy, warmth, and food presentation. Meeting these requirements will not only speed recovery—in many cases, it is the difference between life or death. Always learn the correct cage/food set-up. Do not just follow the way the cage was set up by the last person. That person may not have been correct!

Any cage, incubator, or brooder with cardboard boxes or animal carriers inside should have towel(s) underneath the box or carrier and also inside the box or carrier. These “nest boxes” are to provide privacy and should always face away from the front. Cardboard carriers that can fall closed and keep a small animal out should be fixed open with a draped towel for privacy.

Heating pads should not be placed on newspaper (a fire hazard), and should always be covered with a towel.

1-2 towels	most mammals and water birds
cardboard box or small carrier	denning animals (squirrels, opossums, raccoons, foxes) roosting owls (screech, burrowing, barn)
perches	perching birds, hawks, owls, perching waterfowl
net	diving water birds (pelagic)
branches	small hawks, owls, crows, ravens, squirrels
dishes	species-specific dish ware is indicated on the diet charts located in the kitchen; these requirements must be followed unless otherwise noted

The following are general guidelines. For more information on special caging, you should attend the Rehabilitation Skills Class, *Captive Care for Wildlife*.

## SPECIAL CAGING NEEDS

### Raptors

Any standing raptors should have either a wood, Astro-turf-covered perch, or branch perch in their cage of the correct size to allow the foot to wrap comfortably without overlapping toes. Check with the shift Supervisor or a staff member if you have any questions.

### Reptiles and Amphibians

Turtles, snakes, lizards, and other herpetiles may need a daily heat source to help them bring their body temperatures up to a level that enables them to digest food. A heating pad, heat lamp or period of time basking in natural sunlight may be necessary. Heat rocks are unacceptable as they may cause thermal burns. In all cases, the herpetile must be able to move into and out of the heat. Check with staff or Supervisor.

# FEEDING

Fresh food, water, and new dish ware is offered daily to every animal at WildCare. If there are any live mealworms left from the previous day's feeding, they should be collected, placed on a fresh slice of apple for hydration, and placed back into the same cage or basket with the same animal(s). To reduce the possibility of pathogens being transferred from one animal to another, never place mealworms back into the bin or large feeding bowl without checking with staff.

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## FOOD PREPARATION IN THE CLINIC

Always check the animal's card for any specific directions before preparing food. Record all food eaten and all food given on the feeding schedule. Be exact!

Clinic diets are printed in a book located on the kitchen shelf. Diets for wild animals in rehabilitation differ significantly from those in captivity and are listed separately from the diets for our permanent educational residents.

Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator to prevent spoilage.

Clean the cutting boards with soapy sponge between each use to avoid contamination. The cutting boards are appropriately labeled for meat and vegetables. Never mix the cutting boards.

Mash should be clearly labeled with type of mash (Gull, Flamingo, Raptor, Opossum, etc.) and the date and time it was made. Mash must be kept refrigerated and should be used within 48 hours (2 days). Out-of-date mash should be discarded. Replace with fresh if needed.

Always use older (but not expired) produce first. Cycle older produce to the front of the fridge to be used up.

All food containers must have securely fitting lids to keep out rodents and ants. Unused food from cans should also be placed in a tightly covered jar and clearly labeled with the contents and date opened.

Clean all refrigerators regularly, throwing away unmarked, questionable or obviously stale items.

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## WATER

Although some wild animals obtain their daily requirement of water through their solid diet alone, water can undoubtedly contribute to the rehabilitation of any animal. While some species may rarely be seen actually drinking, they are commonly observed standing, bathing, and preening in their water bowl. These behaviors not only improve their physical condition but also encourage a healthy psychological state which is a very important component of healing.

Every animal at *WildCare* is offered fresh water daily unless directed otherwise by your supervisor or medical staff.

Exceptions are those awaiting surgery and/or those too unstable, debilitated, or weak to lift their own heads. Please be aware an animal can drown in less than 1" of water. To help prevent this, small stones can be placed in the dish with the water.

# CARE OF LIVE FOOD

Live food plays an important role in rehabilitating our patients. Some animals will only eat live food, so the use of live food may tempt them to eat. Even though destined to be food, all live animals we keep deserve the best quality of life we can provide.

## **Tubiflex Worms**

Tubiflex worms look like tiny earthworms that live in fresh water. They are fed to marsh birds that hunt in the mud for these little creatures. Tubiflex worms are kept uncovered in a shallow pan in the refrigerator. The water is changed daily to replenish the oxygen. Carefully pour out the old water, then gently flush the worms with fresh filtered water from the spigot to the right of the “human sink” in Ward A. Rinse until the water looks clear, then pour off all but a scant  $\frac{1}{2}$ "—just enough to cover the worms. Return to refrigerator.

## **Mealworms**

The mealworms are kept in containers in the kitchen and Birdroom. In the kitchen the container has two compartments, one for growing worms and one for worms that are ready to use. Worms should only be removed from the “worms to use” compartment.

The worms will smother and overheat if the bran substrate gets deeper than 8". When it begins getting too deep, sift out the substrate over the trash, being careful not to throw away the worms. Maintain 3 – 6 sliced pieces of potato, apple, carrot or other durable produce in the bins to give the worms moisture.

## **Goldfish**

Oxygen and filtration is the most important thing to goldfish in a tank. If the filter is not functioning, they will die quickly. Feed goldfish daily. If water level is low from evaporation, replace it with filtered water from the spigot to the right of the “human sink” in Ward A. Tank must be thoroughly cleaned weekly.

When giving goldfish to a patient, be sure they are swimming in plenty of water so they don't suffocate.

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUTDOOR AVIARIES

For all cages, you will need a cage key which is hung next to the kitchen refrigerator. Remember to lock the cage and return the key when you are finished.

When choosing to work on an outdoor cage or aviary, you are responsible for both cleaning and feeding the animal(s). No foods (except live foods and unsoiled non-perishable seeds and grains) are recycled. All dish ware must be properly cleaned or changed daily.

Move quietly and calmly in the presence of any animal. It is always important to note whether or not an animal is eating or whether their behavior indicates a possible problem; i.e., a non-flying songbird, a wet or waterlogged water bird, a raccoon with a runny nose, etc. Report any problems to the shift Supervisor or a staff member. It is always better to err on the side of caution. Keep an eye open for any holes in walls or ceilings which could admit rats or allow an animal to escape.

### **Clinic Records Board**

The Clinic Records Board has been developed to track all animals not housed indoors. This includes Permanent Residents and outside cages and aviaries. The Clinic Records Board is NOT used for Patient Records for animals housed in Wards A, B, or C, or the Birdroom.

The alpha /numeric lettering on the clips reflects the cages and aviaries where animals are located. These cards and feeding schedules must be updated as carefully as those in the wards inside. Please make sure Patient Records are securely clipped and placed in the correct location.

### **Working in Outdoor Aviaries**

Before entering any aviary, look in first, locate the correct number of animals, then step in. Be sure to close the door securely behind you to prevent escapes. Move slowly and quietly. For the E-1 through E-10 aviaries, make sure the door to the walkway is closed securely so that if a bird escapes from an individual aviary, it can be caught in the enclosed area. NEVER have both doors open at the same time. Face masks should be worn when sweeping/hosing outdoor aviaries.

### **Cleaning Outdoor Aviaries**

Live food, such as goldfish and mealworms, are the only items ever recycled. Dispose of all uneaten food items except for unsoiled, non-perishable seeds and grains. Absolutely no dish ware should be re-used.

On cement floors, sweep up spilled food each morning. During the summer months, the floor should be hosed down to clean away feces and cool off the aviary in the afternoon. During the cooler months, hose off only those areas where there are droppings. All obvious feces should be scrubbed off walls, perches, and ledges.

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

On gravel floors, rake up and discard spilled food or other organic leavings. Wash the gravel with the sprayer attached to the hose. Rake the entire floor so all gravel is turned over and exposed to natural light, then spray gravel again to wash the top layers of gravel and encourage the natural filtering process that this flooring has been designed for. UV light (natural sunlight) is one of the most effective (and cheap!) disinfectants available.

In enclosures with rubber mats, mats should be turned over and scrubbed, and the floor beneath the mat should be hosed clean.

NEVER SPRAY WATER ON BIRDS. Birds may be MISTED periodically, on the authorization of a staff member. Monitor animals as you work, and leave the aviary if they show signs of stress, such as open-mouth breathing or frantic behavior. Minimize hosing any wood to restrict the growth of fungus.

Flightless birds, if grounded, may hide behind, in, or under stumps or branches. Always check that the number of animals in an aviary agrees with the number of cards on the wall.

As you are cleaning any outdoor enclosure, check the surrounding area for dishes, towels, kennels, keys, and other items which may have been forgotten by the previous volunteer. Return the items to their proper places.

To sterilize, see “Sterilizing Outdoor Aviaries and Runs,” p. 20.

Read “General Information about Outdoor Aviaries” (p. 24).

The East Aviaries are located between the Waterfall pen and the back gate, are used exclusively for songbirds. The Kitchen Aviary is at the right of the back gate, facing the East Aviaries. These may have songbirds or other animals.

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**EAST AVIARIES  
E1 through E10  
Kitchen Aviary**

## Cleaning the East and Kitchen Aviaries

Remove old food and water dishes. Follow procedures for “Cement Floors and Gravel floors,” pages 24-25. See your Supervisor or a staff member before operating the pressure washer in the East Aviaries. Refer to the full Hospital Procedures Manual for instructions.

## Feeding East Aviaries

Refer to the Aviary dry erase board detailing the number and kind of birds that are currently being housed in the East Aviaries and their respective diets.

Printed feeding charts are located in the Birdroom. Determine the number of birds in the aviaries and their species. Go into the Birdroom to determine the diets for each species and multiply the amount of food for one animal by the number of animals in the aviary. Bring enough food for all the birds in the aviaries. For songbirds, dishes such as pie pans are usually most appropriate for mealworms and water. Calculate quantity of food by the number of birds.

To carry everything to the aviaries, get a large tray and stack clean dishes on it along with the various foods. Take a large plastic pitcher for water. It can

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

be filled at the hose in the aviary walkway. Seed, gravel, and hen scratch bins are located underneath the East Aviary counter. If these supplies are low, please refill the bins. Remember to close the bins tightly to keep out pests.

Remove dirty dishes. Sweep up the old food. Put in fresh food and water under cover in the event of rain. In almost every case, dishes should be placed on the ground. For insectivores such as woodpeckers and swallows, mealworms can be put on shelves in addition to a supply on the ground for birds who do not fly well. Never re-use any dish ware, seed, fruit, or water! The only food item ever recycled is mealworms. If there are any live mealworms left from the previous day's feeding, they should be collected and placed back into the same aviary with the same animal(s). To prevent the transfer of pathogens, never return mealworms to the bin or large bowl.

Replace greenery as needed, for example, when it becomes heavily soiled or dried out.

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## **NORTH AVIARIES N-1 through N-7**

Read "General Information about Outdoor Aviaries" (p. 24).

The North Aviaries are located outside the Birdroom. There can be a variety of different species housed here. N-1, N-2 and N-3 are typically used for raptors, mammals and crows. N-4 through N-7 usually hold ducklings. Check the Task Board located by Ward A to identify the occupants. If these cages hold deer, DO NOT DISTURB!

### **Cleaning North Aviaries**

Remove old food and water dishes. Follow procedures for "Gravel Floors," (p. 24). Carefully change towels or blankets daily. N-4 through N-7 aviary pools can be filled with water. The "drains" in the pools are actually pumps. Only the Facilities Manager is authorized to run the pumps. Check with your Supervisor for information on cleaning.

### **Feeding North Aviaries**

Check the Task Board to identify the occupants. Food requirements are listed on the diet charts hanging in the kitchen. Assemble the food in appropriate dish ware, unlock the aviary, and place the food and water inside.

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

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## WATERFALL PEN

Read “General Information about Outdoor Aviaries” (p. 24).

This enclosure is located to the far left of the East Aviaries. It is generally used to house recovering water birds such as gulls, ducks, geese, etc.

### **Cleaning the Waterfall Pen**

Many water birds will regurgitate when stressed; hose before feeding.

Remove old food and water dishes. Hose down the entire area, hosing away from the pool. Hose down as much of the planter area as possible. Time permitting, turn over the mats. Use a scrub brush to remove feces from mats or wood, if necessary.

The drain near the hose faucet is not a drain at all, but a “sink”—a hole into the ground that does not run into the sewer system, but drains slowly. Use the long-handled rubber scraper to push standing water outward to the “moat” surrounding the enclosure. If the concrete becomes slippery with overgrown algae, a small amount of chlorine bleach ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) can be mixed into the last of the water. Let it stand to kill the algae for 10 minutes or so before pushing into the moat. Flush with plain water.

The pool should be overflowed daily when in heavy use by letting the hose run into it. For instructions on periodic draining and cleaning of the pool, ask a staff member.

### **Feeding Seabirds in the Waterfall Pen**

The number and species of animals in the pen are listed on the Task Board. Food requirements are listed on the diet charts hanging in the kitchen. Assemble the food in appropriate dish ware, unlock the cage, and place the food and water in various areas. Depending upon the number and species of animal, there should be more than one feeding area within the pen.

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### **Cleaning the Pelican Playgrounds**

## PELICAN PLAYGROUNDS

Be aware of open doors and where the bird is; it is very easy for birds to escape from the playgrounds.

Remove old food and water dishes. Clean slowly and always give the animal somewhere to go in the playground. Hose the bottom and sides thoroughly. Lift the edges of the mat and hose well underneath. Clean out the drain at the back inside the playground. If playground is occupied by water birds that do not have any type of leg or wing wrap, you can lightly spray them.

### **Feeding water birds in the Pelican Playgrounds**

Food requirements are listed in the diet book in the kitchen. Assemble the food in appropriate dish ware, open the playground, and place the food and water inside.

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

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## OPOSSUM PENS **Cleaning Opossum Pens**

Read “General Information about Outdoor Aviaries” (p. 24).

The Opossum Pens are located across from the North Aviaries. Opossums are non-aggressive by nature. Their main defense mechanism is to show their teeth, drool, and play dead, but they are capable of delivering a cutting bite.

Put all opossums into animal carriers and close securely. Small opossums may be able to crawl through the holes of the animal carrier. Remember to count heads! Check inside black tubing and in hammocks.

Remove old food and water dishes. Remove soiled newspapers and towels. Remove dirty litter pan and empty contents into opossum latrine bucket. Smell is important to opossums, so only clean what is dirty. Spot clean cages with dilute Nolvasan if necessary, being sure to check upper wire ledges and remove any feces. When all cages are cleaned, empty bucket into drain behind the birdroom and rinse sink. Be sure carrier has 1-2 clean towels inside and one towel draped over top. Place towels on shelves for alternate sleeping areas.

### **Feeding Opossums**

Opossums are fed late in the day unless specific instructions are given to the contrary. Food requirements are listed in the diet book in the kitchen. Assemble the food in appropriate dish ware and place the food and water inside. Be sure there is enough food for all occupants.

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## RACCOON RUNS Mammal Run

Read “General Information about Outdoor Aviaries” (p. 24).

Raccoon Runs #1 and #2 are located outside the laundry room door. The Mammal Run is located in front of and to the left of the Waterfall Pen.

Special cleaning and feeding protocols have been established for dealing with raccoons. These instructions MUST be followed exactly for the health and safety of both the volunteer and the animal. If you are unsure how to deal with raccoons, ask the shift Supervisor or a staff member for assistance. Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has not had rabies pre-exposure inoculations TOUCH OR HANDLE a raccoon!

### **Cleaning Raccoon Runs**

Wear a mask, disposable gloves and disposable booties when cleaning the raccoon runs. Discourage the animals from approaching you by not speaking to them or engaging them in any way.

Most of the raccoons that are housed in the runs are juveniles nearing time for release. Their cages have been designed to accommodate a wet and a dry side to provide opportunities to build foraging skills. The wet side will always be near the drain. Use a hose only in this side.

Cleaning should be done in the morning, whenever possible, to remove all attractants for flies and wasps. Special rakes, brooms, brushes, and shovels

# OUTDOOR AVIARIES

provided for raccoon cages are hanging inside the double door. You will also need a plastic trash bag from the kitchen and the hose from the rack near the door.

Use the rake, scoop and trash bag to collect any food that has been left in the run from the night before except the bowl of dry puppy food. Discard all uneaten food.

Rinse the emptied dishes into the drain. Empty the wading pool into the drain, taking care not to get the straw wet. Remove any pieces of fish from the drain area and rinse out the wading pool before refilling it about five inches deep.

If the dry straw has been contaminated by food, urine or feces, dispose of it and refresh it. When all organic waste has been removed, hose the feeding area on the wet side, directing any residue toward the drain.

Raccoons will typically use one or more latrine areas. Several litter boxes, filled with a substrate of potting soil or straw, are provided in each run to make it easier to clean the runs. Be sure to check all litter boxes (including inside the nestbox) and look for places they may have been using as latrine areas. If the substrate in a litter box is dry, use disposable gloves or a pair of tongs to remove all the feces and put it in the plastic trash bag. If the substrate is soaked, discard all the contents into the trash bag and use the hose to rinse the litter box. Replace the substrate with older straw from the beneath the platform. If necessary, add fresh dry straw to the nest box and underneath the platform.

If the raccoons have been using a latrine area outside the litter boxes, clean the latrine area and place another litter box in the area they have been using.

When the run is clean, tie the trash bag and carry it immediately to the dumpster. Be sure there is a bowl of dry puppy food available at all times.

## Feeding Raccoons

Juvenile raccoons are learning to forage for food during the night. They are fed in the evening to encourage nocturnal behavior and to reduce the food's attractiveness to the yellow-jackets and flies. All food except a bowl of dry puppy kibble is hidden around the enclosure. Feel free to get creative.

Food requirements are listed in the diet book in the kitchen. Assemble the food in a large carrying tray any time in the afternoon and store it in the refrigerator until dark. Be sure there is enough food for all occupants.

Dry puppy food should be provided in a large bowl in the amounts listed in the diet book. Place it under the platform on the dry side of the enclosure.

Eggs, whole mice, nuts, clusters of grapes, chicks, firm fruit, snails, large mealworms, etc. should be hidden in or under logs or hung from cage walls or branches. Smelt, clams or other seafood should ALWAYS be in the wading pool.

One or more clean water dishes can also be provided in the enclosure in case the wading pool becomes contaminated.

# BIRDROOM PROCEDURES

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Birdroom is a specialized Ward of the hospital that follows many of the same procedures used in Wards A, B, or C in the Clinic. Sections on lighting, ventilation, working around animals, washing dishes and laundry, etc., all follow the protocols established for Clinic Wards with minor modifications relating to the small size of the patients.

Wards A, B, C, General Information, p. 16

Washing dishes, p. 15

Washing Laundry, p. 15

Cleaning Incubators, p. 19

Finishing the Ward, p. 19

Miscellaneous Cleaning Procedures, p. 20

Wash your hands thoroughly after handling any bird(s) which may be contagious. If you have allergies, you may wish to wear a mask. Masks are located in the marked drawer of a file cabinet in the hallway outside the Med Room.

NEVER pick up a bird with rubber gloves. Rubber compromises feather quality in birds. If gloves are necessary, use ONLY latex gloves.

When a bird gets out of a basket or cage, don't panic! This happens to everyone—staff and Supervisors—no matter how much experience they have. Just say "BIRD OUT" and make sure all three doors are closed (Clinic, Isolation Ward, and Outside). Get a net and gently capture the bird.

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## LAYOUT OF THE BIRDROOM

Incubators are located against the back wall. These are for nudies and other birds that need help thermo-regulating. If possible, one empty incubator should be turned on at all times.

Wire cages along the walls contain juvenile birds learning to self-feed.

The two tables in the center of the birdroom house baskets of young birds that are being syringe-fed.

Birds that are completely self-feeding are housed outside in the East Songbird Aviaries to strengthen flight skills. See East Aviaries (p. 25.)

The Isolation Room contains high-stress, adult and/or contagious birds. Use all posted precautions when working with contagious birds.

Supplies such as towels, newspapers, baskets, and foods are kept in various places. Familiarize yourself with these locations so all supplies can be obtained from or replaced in their proper place.

# BIRDROOM PROCEDURES

Birdroom diets are printed on cage cards. Diets and appropriate dish ware are also posted on the wall above the incubators. Do not improvise on any diet or dish ware without authorization from a staff member.

Mealworms are for birds that are primarily insectivores. Give mealworms a grape or a small apple piece in their dish to keep them hydrated and fed. Mealworms should be placed in crocks with vertical sides to prevent escape. Keep away from the water and off heating pads.

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## FOOD PREPARATION IN THE BIRDROOM

### Patient Record

On intake, assign a card number to the bird from the Birdroom Log Book at the front desk. Enter the card number in the upper left-hand corner of the Patient Record and enter the requested information in the Birdroom Log Book immediately. This prevents duplicates.

### Cage Card

Select appropriate Cage Card for the species. Fill in the date and card number, whether self-feeding or hand feeding, and if the bird is an adult, juvenile, fledgling, or nestling.

### Banding

All birds must be banded. Carefully slip the appropriate-sized band around one leg of the patient. Record band number on Patient Record, in the Log Book, and on the Cage Card. Band number includes a color code (for example, "B" for Blue) followed by a number.

### Medications

If medications are prescribed, put a red dot on the Cage Card and Patient Record and complete the information indicating type and quantity of medication and length of time prescribed. Spartrix should be given to all birds upon arrival. Spartrix (when available) and Panacur should be given to mockingbirds and robins upon arrival. Follow dosage charts on wall.

### Follow-Up

Procedures requiring follow-up, such as wraps or evaluation, should be noted by placing a yellow dot on the Cage Card and the Patient Record with the date and type of follow-up needed. Record this information with the card number and the species in the appropriate column on the Follow-Up Board.

### Fecal / Wet Mount

All pigeons and doves require a fecal and a wet mount. If a fecal or wet mount cannot be completed on intake, place a yellow dot on the Cage Card and Patient Record with the date and procedure needed. Be sure to record this information along with the card number and the species on the Fecal / Wet Mount Board in the Isolation Ward. Birds without completed lab work should be placed on the green "Intake Area" shelf located next to the counter until lab work can be performed.

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## ADMITTANCE PROCEDURES

# BIRDROOM PROCEDURES

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## **KEEPING TRACK OF PATIENTS IN THE BIRDROOM**

### **Moving Birds**

Birds must be weighed whenever they are moved to a different location. Record this information on the Patient Record. If going outside, also designate which aviary the bird has been moved to. Move the Cage Card with the bird. Update the white kitchen board next to the Tubing Schedules Board.

### **Filing Cards**

For patients housed in the Birdroom, the Patient Record is filed numerically by the card number in the top drawer of the file cabinet. New patient cards are filed behind the "Intake" tab; those on meds or follow-up (red or yellow dots on cards), are filed behind the "Med/Follow-up" tab; all others are filed behind the appropriate species tab. Birds in outdoor aviaries will have their cards clipped to the appropriate aviary clip on the Clinic Records Board.

### **Check Out**

When checking out a bird, for whatever reason (see "Closing Out a Patient Record," p. 11), remove the Cage Card and place it in the Cage Card box to be recycled. The Patient Record must be pulled and all disposition information must be completed. This information must also be recorded in the Birdroom Log Book. Put Patient Record in the bottom drawer to be filed later.

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## **SETTING UP A CAGE**

The size of basket or cage is proportional to the bird it will house. Place the appropriate size newspaper on the bottom and cover with a single layer of paper towel. For adult birds, cover the front half of the basket with a towel for privacy. If necessary, use clothes pins to anchor a net to a basket.

Verify any special caging requirements with the Supervisor or a staff member: donut, nest, perch size, washcloth pad, etc. Birds which are too small or disoriented can drown in their water dish in less than 1" of water. To eliminate this risk, place small pebbles in a low, flat water dish. Pebbles are located on the sink counter. If a heating pad is required, only the back half of a basket or cage should be on the heat.

Use properly sized food dishes for each species. Charts are located on the wall above the incubators. Place food at the front of the basket or cage, not under perches or on heating pads.

# BIRDROOM PROCEDURES

Please see diet charts and ask your Supervisor for specific food preferences for each bird species.

- Mash is fed to all baby birds. Different mashes are used for different species. Check with your supervisor to determine which mash to use.
- Water
- Wild bird seed, finch seed, hen scratch (Seed eaters must have tiny pinch of gravel)
- Mealworms
- Fruit, berries, broccoli
- SuperPreen and oyster shell flour on all foods (VERY TINY PINCH)

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## WHAT BIRDS EAT

At the beginning of a feeding round, verify that you are feeding the appropriate mash and that the set-up and food in the cage are correct by checking the cage card. Reset the timer to the correct time as shown on the table or shelf card. Try to finish feeding before the timer goes off, but it is better to feed correctly and take a little extra time than to rush. The birds are not going to starve IF you always start in the same place and follow the same path around the table or shelf so no cages are missed.

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## BABY SEASON FEEDING ROUNDS

Pay attention to the individuals. Make sure the correct number of birds is in the cage or basket. Count cards . . . count beaks! Be watchful for any birds which may have mash on feathers. Feather quality can be compromised if mash is left to dry. Clean off any mash not in a bird's mouth. If you notice anything unusual—a sick, fluffed up, or injured bird—tell the shift Supervisor or a staff member. If you find a dead bird, follow the procedures outlined on p. 11—“When Patients Die.”

Using tweezers, hand feed worms to baby robins, swallows, mockingbirds and all other insectivores. In addition, put worms in a crock in the cage or basket.

Spot clean with every round, replacing soiled cage material.

Immediately following a feeding, baby birds will maneuver their bottoms up over the edge of a nesting basket and defecate. Sometimes they don't quite make it and feces falls back into the nesting basket onto the bird(s). If this occurs, change the tissue in the basket and clean any feces off the bird(s).

Gaping baby birds are fed with syringes. Pigeons and doves are tube fed. The techniques require skill and practice. Volunteers must receive personal training from a qualified Supervisor or staff person. Never attempt to feed baby birds unless you have been properly trained.

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## SYRINGE FEEDING

# BIRDROOM PROCEDURES

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## **CLEANING BASKETS AND CAGES**    **Cleaning Baskets in the Birdroom**

Each basket is thoroughly cleaned once each day in the morning. Spot basket cleaning should go on all day as birds are being fed. Baskets (as well as perches and wood) that need to be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized (always between occupants) are collected under the Med Table along with the dirty laundry.

Prior to beginning the basket-cleaning rounds, set up a holding basket with newspaper, paper towel, and basket cover. BEFORE removing any items from the dirty basket, move the bird(s) into the holding basket.

To clean a basket, remove all food dishes, newspaper, and toweling. Empty spilled seed or food into trash. Replace newspaper and toweling. Insert a fresh nest for nestlings. Provide fresh food and water. Place the bird(s) back into the cleaned basket and replace cover.

Discard the paper towel from the holding basket, replace it with a fresh one, and move on to the next cage. Follow this procedure for any birds housed in baskets.

## **Cleaning Wall Cages**

Remove all food dishes and discard old food except mealworms. See "Feeding," p. 22. Pull out bottom tray (if available) and replace soiled newspaper with fresh, cleaning up any spilled food trapped under the paper. Always cover newspaper with paper towels.

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## **STERILIZING BASKETS AND CAGES**    **Sterilizing Birdroom Baskets and Wire Cages**

Use the bins outside the back door of the Birdroom. Fill one bin with clean water from the hose and the second with synphenol at the dilution of 15cc Synphenol per gallon of water.

Bring all dirty baskets, perches, clothespins, wood and basket covers outside and wash all organic matter off with plain water. Do not wash wood inside. Do not soak bark; use scrub brushes, if necessary, to remove any dried-on droppings. Dip clean items in Synphenol and hang on clotheslines or stack on racks to air dry. Do not rinse off Synphenol.

To clean wire cages, wash thoroughly with sprayer nozzle on hose, using scrub brushes if necessary to dislodge dried food or feces. Use a rag or brush to cover cage liberally with Synphenol. Stack to air dry.

Discard water and Synphenol in the sink or the drain of the Pelican Playground when finished.

# FOSTER CARE

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Foster Care is a unique opportunity for volunteers to participate in the care of one or more patients in his or her own home or yard. Opportunities to foster animals are highest in spring and summer. As a Foster Care volunteer you will learn the husbandry and natural history of the species you choose to foster. Having pets will not prevent you from fostering wild animals, but you will need to keep pets and wildlife separated. WildCare provides caging and supplies.

## General Information

Animals are transferred to Foster Care for a variety of reasons. Feeding some young birds may require more skill or more training than we can reasonably provide to all volunteers. Some simply thrive better with one caregiver. Hospital noise and stress are too much for some; others would become too habituated or tame by having a variety of handlers.

There are currently 13 Foster Care teams, handling a wide range of birds and mammals. Each team has differing requirements for housing, feeding schedules and length of time the animal is in foster care. These are outlined in the “Foster Care Teams” section below. Animals are often transferred between team members as an animal outgrows one volunteer’s situation. There is also need for volunteers to “babysit” when foster caregivers want a break.

Because you are licensed by the Department of Fish and Game under the WildCare permit, you must have six months of hospital volunteer experience OR the approval of the Team Leader. You will need a suitable area within your home. This varies with species fostered and age of animals. Refer to the “Foster Care Teams” section below for further information. You must attend the team training session for your species (scheduled just prior to baby season). You must understand and agree to abide by WildCare’s policies on release criteria, educational animals and euthanasia. You must respect the wildness of these animals. These babies are cute, but they need to remain wild.

## Requirements for Foster Care Volunteers

### Bats

WildCare primarily fosters injured adult bats. Because most young bats are transferred to the California Bat Conservation Fund, we are not recruiting additional volunteers for this team.

## Foster Care Teams

### Corvids

Crows and ravens are the primary focus of this team, although we hope to include Stellar’s and Scrub Jays as the team grows. Nestling crows under one week old are hand-fed by syringe every 45 minutes from 7am to dark. They are housed in a cardboard carrier or small kennel in a quiet room. At 2-3 weeks, feedings are spaced out to 60, 90, 120 minutes. At 3-4 weeks, they can be moved to a medium-sized kennel outside during the day with feedings every 3-4 hours. At 4-6 weeks, they will begin to self-feed; housing is a large kennel outdoors in a protected area. Corvids are easily habituated; human contact should be minimal and they should not be raised alone.

# FOSTER CARE

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## **Foster Care Teams, continued**

**Deer**

Adult deer are not candidates for rehabilitation, because they generally do not survive the stress of captivity. Fawns are one of our highest stress species and are raised in special facilities in West Marin. The fawn team needs volunteers to transport animals from WildCare to the West Marin location.

### **Hummingbirds**

These delicate birds require an intense time commitment from hatching to about 3 weeks, when they learn to self-feed and fledge. The young require very little room, and can be transported easily. Hatchlings and nestlings must be fed every 20 minutes, dawn to dusk. At about 3 weeks, they learn to self-feed easily and are gradually moved into larger outdoor caging in a protected area.

### **Opossums**

Infant opossums are tube-fed formula every 3-4 hours during the day with one night feeding for the first week or so. Gradually, time between feedings increases and the night feeding is discontinued. Opossums develop quickly and will generally be self-feeding after three-four weeks. The youngest opossums can be kept in a small pet carrier indoors, and like the other mammals, progress to larger outside cages in a protected area before they are returned to WildCare.

### **Pigeons/Doves**

Nestling pigeons and doves require very little space, and are tube-fed only every 3 hours. Within 2-3 weeks, the birds learn to self-feed with a little help from the foster parent via a “seed bottle.” Housing is initially in small baskets, graduating to larger cages outdoors during the day before returning to the flight aviaries at WildCare.

### **Rabbits**

Rabbits, like deer, are extremely fragile, high-stress animals. Foster parents require extensive training, including medical emergency skills, and must be able to turn over an entire room for up to two months while the animal matures. Rabbits never return to WildCare, but must be released from slow release cages that have provided the animal adequate running space prior to release.

### **Raccoons**

Infant raccoons are bottle-fed formula and housed in plastic carriers. From birth to 2 weeks they are fed 5 times a day with one night feeding. From 3-6 weeks, the feedings move to 3 times daily and solid food is introduced. Housing is in increasingly larger kennels that are moved outdoors during the day. Juvenile raccoons 6-9 weeks old need a very large predator-proof outdoor cage they can live in day and night. Raccoons are very easily habituated; human contact should be minimal and they should not be raised alone. Raccoons are a rabies-vector species; a series of 3 pre-exposure shots are required for volunteers.

### Rodents

The youngest rodents need to be fed from a small syringe at frequent intervals (newborns every four hours a day with one night feeding for the first few days) but graduate to longer times between feedings. Initially they can be housed in a small plastic carrier. They become self-feeding within about two weeks and graduate to a covered aquarium. Most can be released in 4 weeks.

### Raptors

The Raptor Team cares for a wide variety of diurnal hawks and nocturnal owls, from tiny kestrels and screech owls to large ospreys and great-horned owls. Most birds in foster care are juveniles housed in kennels that need to be hand-fed cut-up pieces of mouse or chick from a hemostat 1-3 times daily for 1-2 weeks. When fully self-feeding, they are transferred to a slow-release site or flight aviary where food is provided until the bird is able to hunt well enough to maintain itself. Besides foster care volunteers, the Raptor Team needs volunteers with property for slow-release sites, volunteers to help maintain the large flight aviary in Olema and volunteers to handle our educational raptors.

### Skunks

Skunks can spray when they are young but are rarely afraid of their caregivers. Most are already eating on their own when they arrive, but just a little too young to survive without their parents. Those that are too young to be self-feeding must be syringe-fed formula at the same intervals as any other young mammal. They are kept in small pet carriers, graduating to larger cages. They mature relatively quickly and since they have few enemies, can be released earlier than mammals with fewer defenses. Skunks are a rabies-vector species, a series of three pre-exposure rabies shots are required for volunteers.

### Songbirds

Species include bushtits, goldfinches, nuthatches, swallows, towhees, robins and mockingbirds. Songbirds are fed from sun-up to sundown, every 45 minutes when very young, but feedings space out to 60, 90, 120 minutes until most are self-feeding in 2-3 weeks. Space requirements are minimal—a quiet, sunny room. They can be transported easily.

### Squirrels

Newborn squirrels need to be syringe-fed formula every 4 hours during the day with one night feed for the first week or so, but in the second week, the night feeding is discontinued. At 3-4 weeks feedings become farther apart and the animal begins to self-feed. Initially, they can be kept in small pet carriers indoors, expanding to larger cages outdoors in a protected area. At 6-7 weeks and self-feeding, they are transferred to a slow-release site where the foster caregiver provides food for several weeks until the animal learns to forage. The squirrel team needs both foster care volunteers and new slow-release sites.

# APPENDIX

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## **VOLUNTEER SAFETY AND HEALTH RULES**

Working at WildCare involves certain risks associated with handling and treating wild animals that may be injured, diseased, or carry parasites. These health and safety rules must be followed for your protection as a volunteer. If you wish additional information, consult your Supervisor or the WildCare staff.

1. Familiarize yourself with the staff and Supervisor on your shift.
2. Never attempt to perform a task if you are the least bit unsure of how it should be done. Read the Volunteer Manual. Ask questions.
3. Never handle an animal until you have received instruction in the proper handling techniques for that species. Don't peek into closed boxes or covered cages. Animals can injure your eyes.
4. Always wear rubber gloves when cleaning cages or doing laundry or dishes.
5. Don't wear rubber gloves when handling animals. Dirt and germs can be transferred from gloves to feathers or fur.
6. Always wear leather gloves to handle raptors and adult mammals. Use only raccoon gloves for raccoons; do not use raccoon gloves on any other species.
7. Wash hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap before and after eating or using the rest room.
8. Medicate any scratches, cuts or bites immediately and inform the Supervisor or WildCare staff of the injury.
9. Attend Basic Skills Classes for health and safety issues regarding specific types of diseases or kinds of animals.
10. If you suffer from any chronic illness, or are immune-compromised in any way, first discuss your condition with the WildCare staff, and then consult your doctor. If your doctor recommends limiting your participation in the Clinic or Birdroom, we can direct you to another area of interest, such as the Wildlife Hotline or Nature Guides. Pregnant women are not allowed to volunteer with the animals in the wildlife hospital.
11. Immediately report any safety hazards you find to the Supervisor or WildCare staff.

# APPENDIX

## ✓ New Volunteers (0-2 months):

- Read Wildlife Rehabilitation Procedures Manual for Volunteers
- Sign in and out
- Train in telephone procedures
- Tetanus inoculation date \_\_\_\_\_
- Attend Basic Skills class
- Recognize Clinic/Office staff & positions
- Reading patient records
- Read & update diet and tubing sheets
- Understanding the menu book
- Washing dishes
- Laundry procedures
- Recycling procedures
- Reading Task Board
- Cage cleaning
- Cleaning incubators
- Cleaning wards, mopping & trash
- Preparing water bird nets
- Cage set-up for species
- Food preparation
- Care of feeder animals
- Cleaning and setting up aviaries/cages
- Sterilizing outdoor cages
- Care of Wildlife Ambassadors
- Basic identification of wildlife

## ✓ Regular Volunteers (2+ months):

- Recognize approx. age of animal (baby, juvenile, adult)
- Admitting animals from public
- Logging animals in and out
- Disposal of dead bodies
- Attend advanced classes
- Cleaning syringes
- Cleaning med room
- Reading med board
- Assessment of animal condition
- Assessment of whether an animal is eating
- Make gull mash/raptor mash
- Understanding emaciation protocol
- Weighing
- Converting pounds to grams and kilograms
- Tube-feeding water birds

- Tube feeding baby mammals
- Force feeding raptors
- Restraint of...
  - Small Mammals
  - Large Mammals
  - Squirrels
  - Water Birds
  - Raptors
  - Reptiles
- Reading a syringe
- Familiarity with needle sizes
- Drawing up fluids
- Performing fecals and wet mounts
- Administer subcutaneous injections:
  - Birds
  - Mammals
  - Reptiles
- Draw blood
- Physical examinations:
  - Birds
  - Mammals
  - Reptiles
- Take, develop and label x-rays
- Wound management with supervision

## ✓ Senior Volunteers and Supervisors:

- Opening Clinic
- Closing Clinic
- Operation and activation of alarm system
- Rabies inoculations date \_\_\_\_\_
- Shift team building
- Prioritizing volunteer work
- Volunteer training
- Basic mammal anatomy
- Basic bird anatomy
- Tube feeding raptors
- Catching animals in outdoor aviaries
- Administer oral medications
- Administer intramuscular injections:
  - Birds
  - Mammals
  - Reptiles
- Administer oxygen
- Evaluate blood values
- Administer IV injections
- Calculating drug dosages
- Identifying common disease symptoms
- Stabilizing an animal in shock
- Wing immobilization
- Limb immobilization
- Suturing with supervision

## WILDLIFE REHABILITATION VOLUNTEER SELF EVALUATION

## CLINIC SKILLS

# APPENDIX

## WILDLIFE REHABILITATION VOLUNTEER SELF EVALUATION

## BIRDROOM SKILLS

### ✓ New Volunteers (0-2 months):

- Read Wildlife Rehabilitation Procedures Manual for Volunteers
- Sign in and out
- Logging birds in and out
- Basic identification of bird species
- Tetanus inoculation date \_\_\_\_\_
- Attend Basic Birdroom class
- Recognize Clinic/Office staff & positions
- Read & update diet and tubing sheets
- Washing dishes
- Laundry procedures
- Handling of birds
- Cage/basket cleaning
- Proper basket/cage set-up
- Food presentation
- Set up baby bird cages
- Tweezer feeding of baby birds
- Baby bird feeding procedures
- Setting and running timers
- Cleaning bird room, mopping & trash
- Cleaning and setting up aviaries
- Sterilizing outdoor aviaries
- Cleaning incubators
- Reading and moving cage cards
- Disposal of dead bodies
- Make baby bird formula
- Banding
- Cleaning syringes
- Weighing

### ✓ Regular Volunteers (2+ months)

- Recognize approx. age of bird (baby, juvenile, adult)
- Assessment of bird's condition
- Fill out cage cards
- Assessment of whether or not a bird is eating
- Understanding of emaciation protocol

- Converting pounds to grams and kilograms
- Physical examinations
- Wound management with supervision
- Tube-feeding (doves, pigeons)
- Tube-feeding baby birds
- Take, develop and label x-rays
- Reading a syringe

### ✓ Senior Volunteers and Supervisors:

- Opening Birdroom
- Closing Birdroom
- Operation and activation of alarm system
- Prioritizing volunteer work
- Volunteer training
- Basic bird anatomy
- Performing fecals and wet mounts
- Familiarity with needle sizes
- Administer oral medications
- Administer subcutaneous injections
- Administer intramuscular injections
- Administer oxygen
- Drawing blood
- Evaluating blood values
- Administer IM injections
- Calculating drug dosages
- Identifying common avian disease symptoms
- Stabilizing a bird in shock
- Emaciation protocol
- Bird bootie
- Wing immobilization
- Limb immobilization
- Suturing with supervision

# APPENDIX

## Medical Abbreviations

SID	once a day
BID	twice a day
TID	three times a day
QID	four times a day
Q	every (can mean once a day)
QD	every day
EOD	every other day
Q3D	once every three days
Q2H	every two hours
PRN	as needed
UFN	until further notice
IC	intracardial (into the heart)
IM	intramuscular (into the muscle)
IP	intraperitoneal (in the abdominal cavity)
IO	intraosseous (within the bone)
IV	intravenous (into the vein)
PO	per os (by mouth)
SQ	subcutaneous (under the skin)
BAR	bright, alert, responsive
NAI	no apparent injuries
NAR	not alert or responsive
QAR	quiet, alert and responsive
CBC	caught by cat
CBD	caught by dog
FFN	fell from nest
HW	hit window
NOTS	not on the site/no one to sign
LRS	lactated Ringer's solution
ICU	intensive care unit
TX	treatment
FX	fracture
DX	diagnosis

## WildCare Disposition Abbreviations

AWOL	absent without leave (escaped)
CON	consultation
DOA	dead on arrival
DON	donated
EXP	expired
EU	euthanized
REL	released
TR or TRANS	transferred

## WildCare Sign in Log Abbreviations

WT	wildlife technician
IN	intern
SUP	supervisor
CL	clinic volunteer
BR	birdroom volunteer
TR	trainee volunteer
SV	student volunteer
PH	phone volunteer
SP	special projects volunteer
DI	drop in volunteer

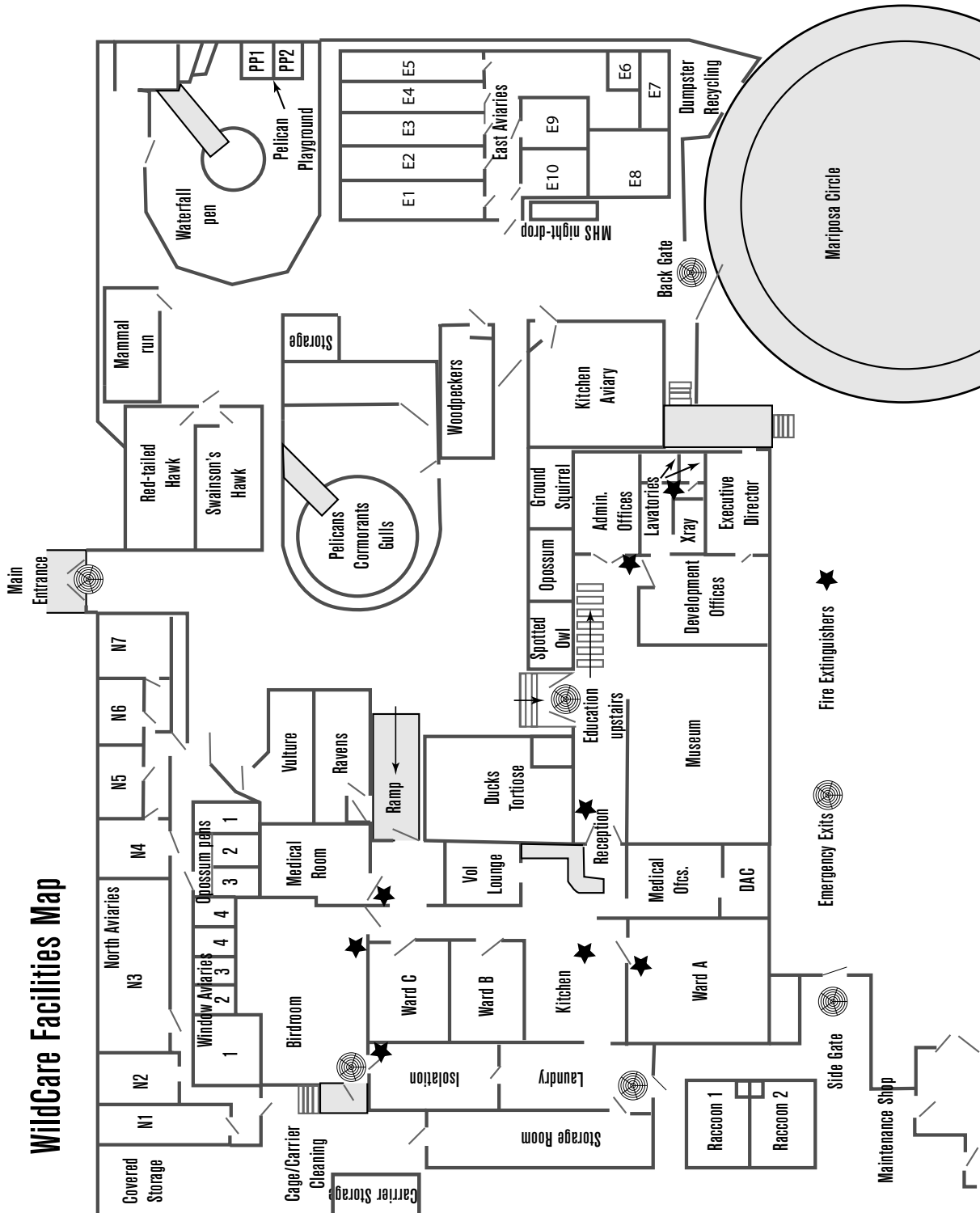
## Conversions

1000 milligrams (mg)	= 1 gram (g)
100grams (g)	= 1 kilogram (kg)
1000 milliliters (ml)	= 1 liter
1 milliliter (ml)	= 1 cubic centimeter (cc)
1 pound (lb)	= 16 ounces (oz)
1 cup (c)	= 8 ounces (oz)
454 grams (g)	= 1 pound (lb)
2.2 pounds (lb)	= 1 kilogram (kg)
1 drop	= .05ml or 1/20 ml
5 milliliters (ml)	= 1 teaspoon (tsp)
1 teaspoon (tsp)	= 1/6 fluid ounce (fl oz)
15 milliliters (ml)	= 1 tablespoon (tbsp)
1 tablespoon (tbsp)	= 1/2 fluid ounce (fl oz)
2 tablespoons	= 1 fluid ounce (fl oz)
65 milligrams (mg)	= 1 grain (gr)

## COMMON ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVERSIONS

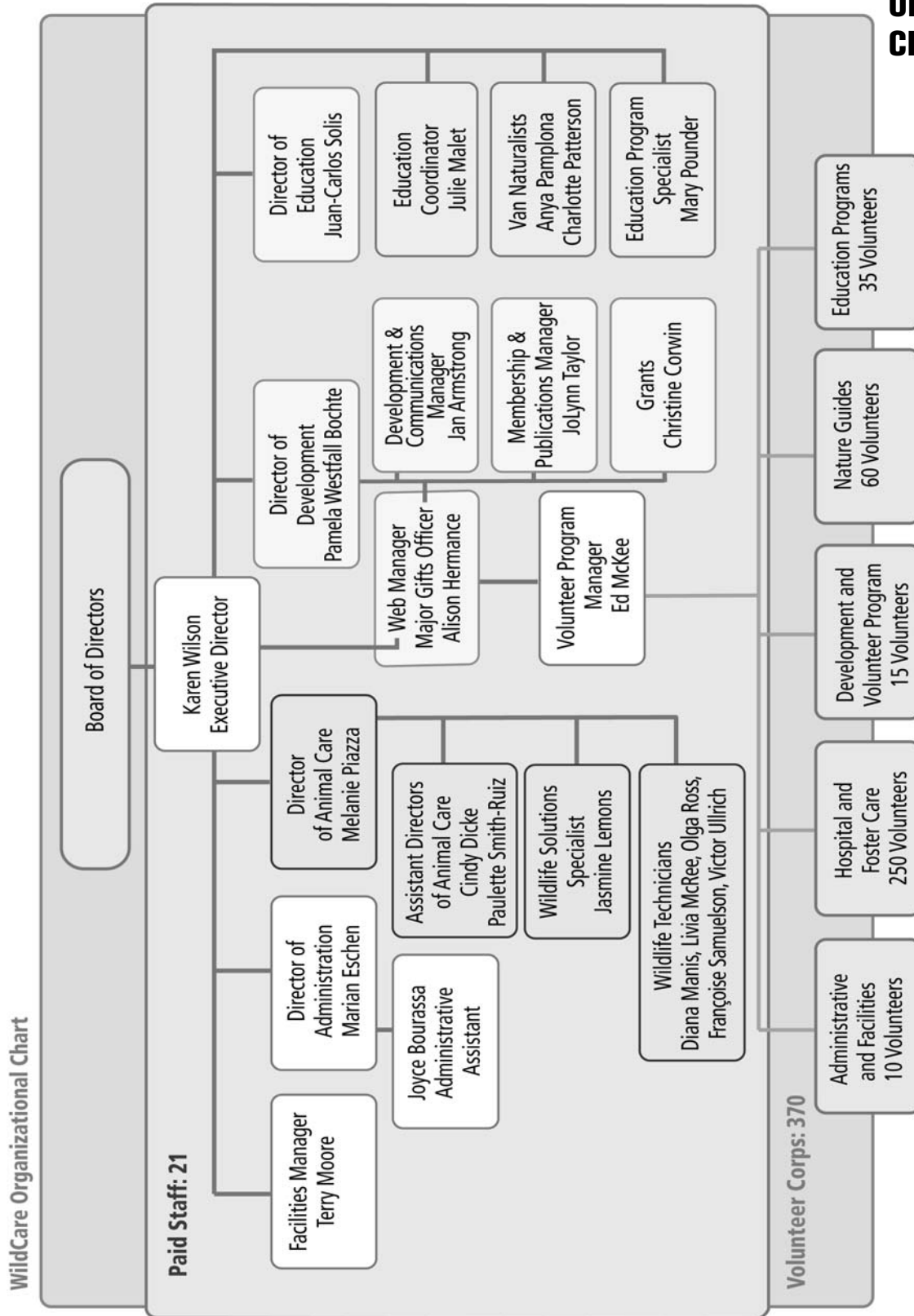
# APPENDIX

## WILDCARE FACILITIES MAP



# APPENDIX

## WILDCARE ORGANIZATION CHART



# APPENDIX

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## **WILDLIFE REHABILITATION ORGANIZATIONS**

### **INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

[www.iwrc-online.org](http://www.iwrc-online.org)

Telephone: 408-271-2685

PO Box 8187  
San Jose, CA 95155

A non-profit, professional membership organization, the IWRC supports the wildlife rehabilitator with classes, conferences, publications and a professional journal. Conferences are generally held in October. One-year membership for an individual is \$49.00 and includes quarterly journal, annual membership directory and published proceedings from the annual conference.

### **NATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR'S ASSOCIATION**

[www.nwrawildlife.org](http://www.nwrawildlife.org)

Telephone: 320-230-9920

2625 Clearwater Rd, Suite 110  
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301

NWRA is a nonprofit national membership organization committed to promoting and improving the integrity and professionalism of wildlife rehabilitation. Classes and publications are offered; conferences are usually in March. \$40.00 annual membership (individual) benefits include the quarterly journal and annual membership directory.

### **CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS**

[www.ccwr.org](http://www.ccwr.org)

Telephone: 415-541-5090

PO Box 434  
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

CCWR is a non-profit professional membership organization that works to promote communication among wildlife rehabilitators and with California regulatory agencies with the focus of improving the quality of care for wildlife. Individual annual membership dues of \$20.00 includes quarterly newsletter and Regional membership directory. Annual symposium is held in the fall.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## VOLUNTEER POLICIES

**PLEASE READ THIS MANUAL AND REFER TO IT AS NECESSARY.**

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE VOLUNTEER  
COORDINATOR WITHIN 2 WEEKS OF YOUR FIRST SHIFT.**

My signature on this form acknowledges that I have received, read, and understand WildCare's Wildlife Rehabilitation Manual for Volunteers and will comply with all procedures set herein. I agree that any adjustments in protocol will be pre-approved by a member of the animal care staff.

I understand that the policies contained in this Manual are for my safety and protection as a volunteer and as well as for the animals in my care. I agree to follow these procedures and to notify either my Supervisor or a Staff Member of any conditions that could bring harm to any person or animal.

I understand that WildCare accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the agency. I understand that the agency may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate my relationship with the agency.

I understand that I may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever my relationship with the agency. I agree to communicate this decision as soon as possible to my Supervisor or a member of the animal care staff.

I understand that WildCare has volunteer policies which are fully explained in WildCare's Volunteer Management Policies. I agree that in the event of problems, disagreements or grievances, I will refer to this policy manual and follow the appropriate procedures for effective resolution.

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Volunteer Name (please print)

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Volunteer Signature

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Date