

Songbird Rehabilitation



Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act



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- All birds are protected except:
 - English Sparrow
 - Rock Dove (pigeon)
 - European Starling
- Rehabbers are required to have a Federal permit

Federal Permit

Requirements:

- State permit
- 100 hours of avian rehab experience
- Letter from veterinarian willing to work with you
- Letter from federally-permitted rehabber familiar with your training
- Flight cage

Federal Permit



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT A FEDERAL MIGRATORY BIRD REHABILITATION PERMIT

A Federal Migratory Bird Rehabilitation permit will authorize you to take, transport and temporarily possess sick, injured, and orphaned migratory birds for rehabilitation purposes. You should review Title 50 parts 10, 13 & 21.31 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These regulations can be found on our website at: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/ltr/ltr.html>. **You are responsible for reviewing and understanding these regulations before you request and accept a permit.** Below is a review of several sections pertinent to a Federal Migratory Bird Rehabilitation permit.

1. What are the age and experience requirements necessary to qualify for a rehabilitation permit?

You must be at least 18 years of age with a minimum of 100 hours of hands-on experience, gained over the course of at least 1 whole year, rehabilitating the types of migratory birds you intend to rehabilitate (e.g., waterbirds, songbirds, raptors). Up to 20 hours of the 100-hour time requirement may be fulfilled by participation in migratory bird rehabilitation seminars and courses.

2. What are the caging requirements?

Facilities must be adequate for each species you plan to rehabilitate. You will be required to submit photographs and diagrams of your enclosures with your application. Criteria used for evaluating and/or inspecting your facilities will be based on the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's (IWRC) Minimum Standards for Rehabilitation. You may obtain a copy of this publication by calling NWRA at 320-259-4086 or IWRC at 510-383-9090. You can also visit their web sites at: www.nwrwildlife.org or <http://theiwrc.org>.

3. May I share rehabilitation facilities with someone else?

No. We will issue only one permit per address. The permitted individual, or principal officer for permits issued to a business, is legally responsible for the facilities, all the birds at the facility, the activities, the subpermittees listed on the permit and any approved offsite locations, and any staff assisting with the permitted activities.

4. Do I need to report suspected criminal activity involving a migratory bird that I receive for rehabilitation?

Yes. You must notify your local Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Office if you receive a live or dead migratory bird whose injuries appear to be caused by poisoning, gunshot, electrocution or other criminal activity. Contact information for your local Service Law Enforcement Office can be obtained on the internet at http://www.fws.gov/le/ContactsSites/le_chart.htm or by calling your Migratory Bird Permit Office.

5. How long can I keep a bird in captivity for rehabilitation?

You must release all releasable recuperated birds to the wild as soon as seasonal conditions allow. Birds may not be held for more than 180 days unless approved by the Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office.

6. When must I euthanize a bird?

You must euthanize any bird that has sustained injuries requiring amputation of a leg, a foot, or a wing at the elbow (humero-ulnar joint) or above, and/or is completely blind. You must not sustain the life of any migratory bird that cannot after medical management feed itself, perch upright, or ambulate without

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7. Can I accept migratory birds that are injured in the process of being removed from inside buildings?

8. Can I display birds that are being rehabilitated to the public?

Stress

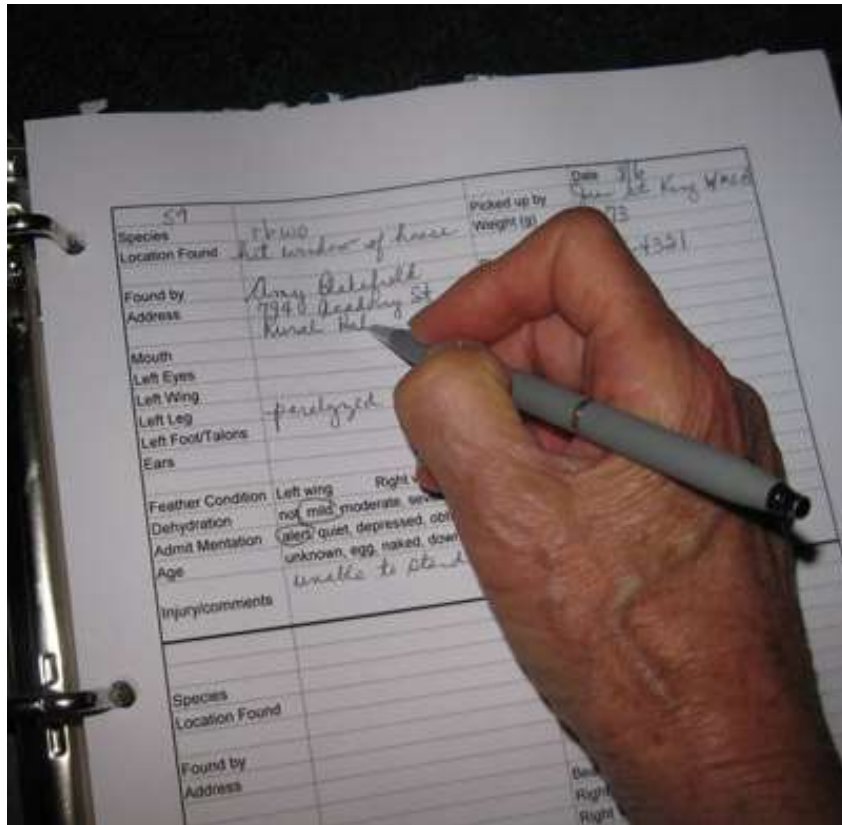
- Songbirds are prey species
- Constantly looking out for predators
- If possible, they will hide their injuries
- Don't make direct eye contact
- Unfamiliar noises, smells, and sights cause them even more stress (pets, radio, TV, voices)
- Do not house near predators



Transportation

- Cardboard box or shoebox with air holes
- Keep warm, dark, and quiet
- Use white paper towels to line box
- May offer water in shallow dish (not for babies)
- Don't play radio or talk in the car

Intake

A photograph showing a hand holding a pen and writing on a bird intake form. The form is a grid with various fields for recording information about a captured bird. The fields are filled with handwritten text in black ink. The form is part of a binder, as indicated by the metal rings on the left side.

Species	59	Date	3/6
Location Found	at window of house	Picked up by	John de Key West
Found by	Amy Batefield	Weight (g)	73
Address	7940 Beeding St Marl. Hill	Phone #	+351
Mouth			
Left Eyes			
Left Wing			
Left Leg	paralyzed		
Left Foot/Talons			
Ears			
Feather Condition	Left wing	Right wing	
Dehydration	not mild moderate severe		
Admit Mentation	alert quiet depressed obtuse		
Age	unknown egg naked down		
Injury/Comments	unable to stand		
Species			
Location Found			
Found by			
Address			

Get detailed history!

- Where was it found?
- Food, water, or medicine administered?
- How long since capture?
- Get finder's name, address, and phone #

Handling

- Easier to catch if room is dark
- Use a lightweight blanket or sheet to throw over bird
- Don't move bird from one hand to the other
- Don't restrict breathing (chest must be able to move up and down)
- Handle only in a small, contained area



Handling

- Bander's grip



Identification

Natural history is very important.

- Insectivore or seed eater?
- Ground feeder or drop forager?
- Habitat
- Nest type
- Nocturnal?
- Migratory?

Songbird Stages

- Hatchling – pink, naked and blind
- Nestling – downy or pin feathers, short stubby tail



Nestling Types

Altricial



Creative Commons - Pinke

Naked, blind, helpless wholly,
dependent on parents

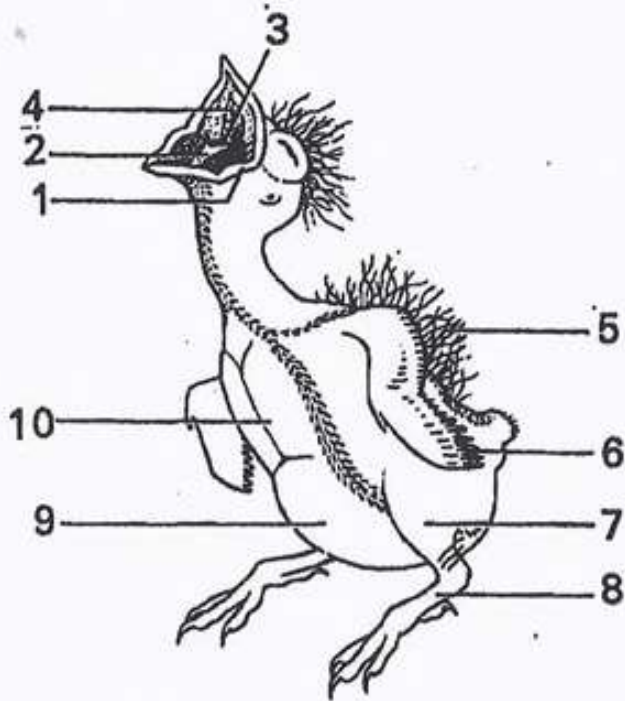
Precocial



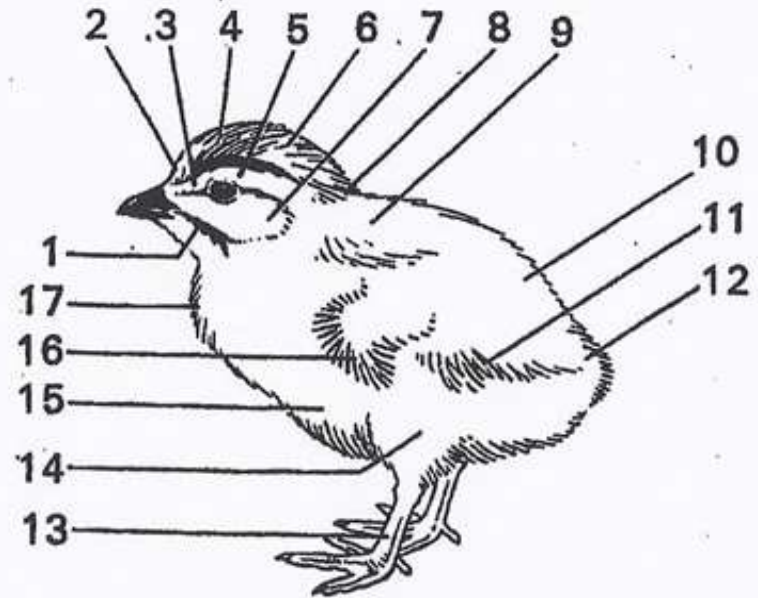
Creative Commons – George Thomas

Down covered, active soon after
hatching, able to leave nest

Nestling Types



- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Gape flanges | 7. Thigh |
| 2. Tongue | 8. Tarsus |
| 3. Tongue-spurs | 9. Belly |
| 4. Palate | 10. Breast |
| 5. Down filaments | |
| 6. Wing quills | |



- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. Moustache streak | 10. Back |
| 2. Forehead | 11. Flank |
| 3. Lores | 12. Rump |
| 4. Forecrown | 13. Tarsus |
| 5. Eyestripe | 14. Thigh |
| 6. Hindcrown | 15. Belly |
| 7. Ear coverts | 16. Wing |
| 8. Nape | 17. Upper breast |
| 9. Mantle | |

Songbird Stages

- Fledgling – mostly feathered, longer tail, beginning to self-feed



Songbird Stages

- Fledgling – mostly feathered, longer tail, beginning to self-feed

“teenager”



Housing - Nestlings



- Incubator
- Margarine tub (finches, wrens, sparrows)
- Cool Whip bowl (robins, mockingbirds, blue jays)
- Line plastic bowls with white, unscented tissue
- Place plastic bowl inside Kritter Keeper or aquarium

Housing - Adults

- Never use wire cages
- Cardboard box with insect screen
- Kritter Keeper or aquarium
- Screened rabbit cage
- Outdoor flight cage



Environmental Enrichment

- Minimize visual contact by placing natural color contact paper or pictures of flowers and trees on outside of cage
- Offer different sized perches at various heights
- Offer natural foods
- Use natural substrate such as dirt or grass
- Natural setting with places to hide

Grocery List

- High protein, high quality kitten kibble (40% protein)
- Mealworms
- Wax worms
- Seed mixes
- Fruit (strawberries, blueberries, grapes)
- Greens (kale, romaine lettuce, Dri Greens[®])



waxworms



mealworms



superworms

Feeding - Babies

- Hatchlings need to be fed every 15-30 minutes from 7:00am – 9:00pm
- Nestlings every 30-45 minutes
- Fledglings every 45-60 minutes
- Weigh, weigh, weigh!
- Soak high quality (protein) kitten chow until softened
- Alternate feedings of kitten chow and insects
- Don't give hatchlings water
- Offer live mealworms and fruit/seed in cage for fledglings
- Take a worm count to determine if bird is beginning to self-feed

HATCHLING



Feeding Doves

- Baby doves do not gape
- Doves < 40 grams must be syringe fed crop milk or baby cereal mix
- Doves > 40 grams can be fed with a homemade seed feeder (designed by Lessie Davis)



Feeding - Adults



- Provide natural diet if possible
- Offer as much of a variety as possible including fruits, berries, and greens
- Provide water for drinking

Gavage

- Method of feeding if bird is unwilling or unable to self-feed
- Use warm slurry or fluids
- Insert past glottis and into crop
- Gut capacity is approximately 10% of body weight
- Do not overfill or bird can choke or aspirate

Most Common Injuries

- Window strike
- Hit by car
- Cat or dog attack
- Orphaned
- Kidnapped



Treat or Euthanize

- Traumatic injury to the patagium
- Open or compound fractures
- Fractures involving or near a joint
- Leg or wing amputation
- House Finch Eye Disease
- Emaciation
- Any fracture in a migratory bird
- Non-native species

House Finch Eye Disease



Release Criteria

- Weather
- Normal body weight
- Ability to fly strongly
- Waterproof and fully feathered
- Same species nearby
- Territory available
- Not hunting season
- Acclimated to outside temperature
- Recognize natural foods
- Recognize predators
- Recovered completely from injury/illness
- If migratory, check migration schedule

Essential Supplies

- Heat lamp (red), lava pack, heating pad
- Cardboard boxes, Kritter Keepers, berry baskets
- Kitten kibble
- .5cc, 1cc and 3cc syringes
- Distilled water, Pedialyte[®], Normosol[®]
- Bird seed mixes (black oil sunflower, millet, safflower)
- Insects (mealworms, waxworms and crickets)
- Tissue paper, paper towels
- Nutristart[®] or high protein baby cereal
- Forceps

Reference Materials

- Sibley Guide to Bird Behavior
- Sibley Guide to Birds
- Stokes Guides Vol. I – III
- Songbird Diet Index
- Body Weights of 686 Species of North American Birds

Suppliers

Mealworms, Wax worms, Crickets:

- Nature's Way www.thenaturesway.com
- Grubco www.grubco.com

Supplies:

- Valley Vet Supply www.valleyvet.com
- Doctors Foster and Smith
www.drsfostersmith.com

- The end