

Bird Treatment & Learning Center



James R. Scott, D.V.M., Founder
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Training Manual For Clinic Volunteers

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Introduction

Welcome to the Bird Treatment and Learning Center (Bird TLC) and thank you for your interest in contributing to the rehabilitation of wild birds by volunteering at the clinic. Bird TLC relies heavily on our clinic volunteers to ensure that we provide the best medical care possible to the wild birds that arrive at our facility. Therefore, Bird TLC has developed a very specific set of guidelines for volunteer training and performance.

These guidelines provide a clear understanding of what is expected and how it has best been accomplished in the past. Volunteers begin with simple duties that do not require special skills and can work their way up to significant responsibilities in the care and treatment of rehabilitating birds. As you become established as a clinic volunteer, if you feel you have a more efficient way to accomplish a task, please see the Rehabilitation Director to discuss your idea. We are open to new ideas that promote effective and efficient care. If there is any confusion regarding any part of the training process or clinic work, please advise the Rehabilitation Director of your concerns. We cannot address issues that we do not know about.

Any training is only as effective as the people providing it, so if you are a lead, please be sure you are familiar with these protocols and understand the concepts behind them. This will assure a safe, effective education for volunteers, as well as high quality medical care for the birds. All volunteers should occasionally read this manual after training completion to refresh themselves on policies and procedures.

General Clinic Volunteer Qualifications

- Must be at least 18 years of age, 16 year olds with a parent will be considered
- Must be a Bird Treatment & Learning Center Member
- Must be able to show proof of current tetanus vaccine
- Should be detail minded and willing to learn new things
- Must be able to read and write in English

Special Considerations

The benefits of volunteering in the Bird TLC clinic are numerous and include the satisfaction of helping injured wildlife regain the skills needed to return to the wild as well as increased knowledge and the opportunity to work closely with birds that most people only see through binoculars. However, volunteers also need to be prepared for the downside of this work. Rehabilitation is difficult work. By working with wild birds that have suffered traumatic injury you will be witness to blood, broken bones and intense injuries. In addition, you may suffer the emotional trauma of losing or euthanizing a bird you have worked closely with for some time. Birds that arrive at our clinic have on average a 55% mortality rate.

Reality

The other reality of wild bird rehabilitation is that for every hour you spend working closely with a bird, there will be 4-5 hours of cleaning involved. This is the price we pay for pursuing our passion.

Safety

Safety is a primary concern for Bird TLC—safety of the volunteers as well as the wild birds. Therefore it is extremely important that volunteers maintain safety requirements. This includes the proper handling of birds and equipment. All volunteers need to have a current tetanus vaccination and must keep a copy of proof of current vaccination on file at the clinic.

As a clinic volunteer you need to understand that we care for wild birds. These birds can inflict injury in any number of ways, including biting, scratching, footing and striking. Species treated at Bird TLC include raptors, corvids, waterfowl, songbirds and other species as they are presented. Wild birds can also carry certain diseases communicable to people (Zoonoses).

Volunteers are responsible for their own safety and must use their own judgment to assess the acceptability of volunteering at the clinic. This is especially true if they have special health concerns such as immune deficiency disorders or respiratory problems. All volunteers are required to sign a copy of the waiver found in Appendix A.

Commitment

Bird TLC asks that volunteers commit to working at least one four-hour clinic shift a week for at least four months. Due to the training needed, it is not time effective for the Rehabilitation Director or the Lead Volunteers to train individuals for a shorter time frame. The only exceptions are for volunteers that can work significant hours on a weekly basis—for example, 30-40 hours a week for three months. All exceptions must have prior approval from the Rehabilitation Director. Volunteers must treat their clinic shift as a regular responsibility and should contact Bird Treatment & Learning Center in the event they will not be available for their shift, as well as make the effort to find a replacement from the volunteer list.

Leadership

While volunteers are encouraged to be rather self-sufficient in their duties, certain additional key responsibilities are given to Lead Volunteers. Lead Volunteers are responsible for managing the volunteer shift for a specific day. They ensure that all necessary daily work is accomplished and that the clinic is left in good order for the next day's crew. They are also responsible for the majority of the training of new volunteers. Lead Volunteers certify that a trainee has attained the skills and understanding necessary to qualify for independent work.

Lead Volunteers are chosen for their dedication to Bird TLC as well as their experience, knowledge and skills in the care of wild birds. Lead Volunteers provide an information resource for crew members. The Rehabilitation Director regularly communicates with Lead Volunteers regarding new procedures and protocols for medication, handling, housing and other aspects of wild bird care. As a clinic volunteer, you report directly to your Lead Volunteer, who reports to the Rehabilitation Director. The Rehabilitation Director reports to the Executive Director. Volunteers are encouraged to use this chain of command. However, this should not discourage volunteers from interacting and sharing ideas with the Rehabilitation Director or the Executive Director.

Paperwork

Paperwork is neither the most exciting nor interesting aspect of clinic work. However, the functions of Bird TLC depend on the correct completion of all paperwork. All forms, data sheets and logs that make up the Bird TLC paper trail serve a vital function in patient care, permit responsibilities or financial tracking. Failure to keep accurate records could result in inferior care, loss of federal permits (BirdTLC would be shut down) or loss of funding and financial sponsors.

Every volunteer needs to be familiarized with the paperwork that is required for tracking the birds, tracking volunteer hours and where to reference information available in the clinic. Even if this is strictly a lead's job on your crew, the rest of the crew must understand how it is done. (We all get sick once in awhile.)

Each volunteer should be shown the intake sheets, intake log, daily record sheets, manuals' for different areas and the OSHA log. Each volunteer should also know the proper way to fill out each of these forms to assure consistency and to become familiar with what information is available in the different reference books placed throughout the clinic.

Reference Manuals

Reference Manuals are kept in different locations throughout the clinic. Each volunteer should be aware that the Diet & Nutrition Manual is kept in the kitchen for easy reference of feeding preferences for a variety of birds. The Treatment Manual is kept in the clinic area to provide a ready source of information regarding standard treatment for different injuries, as well as dosages and other treatment protocols, special recipes and other pertinent information regarding the medical aspect of Bird TLC.

Training Information

Formal Training Sequence

There are three levels of training. Volunteers must complete the proceeding level in order to begin work at the next level. Responsibilities start with general sanitation, procedures that require no specialized skills, and steadily progress in difficulty and training required. A skills check-list is provided and should be completed prior to advancing to the next level of training. This list is not intended to be completed in one day. It is designed to allow the new volunteer to attain proficiency at this level prior to advancement. Before a lead signs off on an item they should be confident that the new volunteer could adequately complete that task with no supervision or outside input. The skill list covers only the *minimum* standards expected. It is not the end of the training in that area, we are all continuing to learn. A job description for each level is found in Appendix B. Achievement pins are available with the completion of each level of training.

Level 1: Sanitation & Disease Control

New volunteers must show proficiency at this level prior to advancement. Volunteers who come to us from other rehabilitation facilities will still need to be familiarized with the way we do things here, but should progress faster than brand new volunteers.

Volunteer Skills:

- Will become proficient with Bird TLC intake paperwork and other record-keeping procedures.
- Will be responsible for cleaning, sterilizing and preparing cages, crates and mats for incoming birds, or birds in clinic.
- Will learn the appropriate mats and perches for different types of birds and the cage set-up required for each.
- Will need to develop an understanding of different diseases and bacteria and the appropriate cleaning solution for each.
- Will assure that the clinic floors are swept and mopped to assist in disease control.
- Responsible for checking drain screens and cleaning as needed.
- Will be responsible to inspect mats for wear and replace as needed.
- Will create new perches from materials provided for an assortment of birds.
- Must have a working awareness of general cleaning requirements in an environment where animals are kept.
- Will assist as needed in the movement of birds (herding) under the direction of a senior volunteer.

Once volunteers have had a chance to observe our activities for a few days they can begin to work more closely with the small birds, red polls, robins, waxwings, in learning how to catch and restrain these types of birds. They should not be handling anything larger than a duck at this stage. *Please reference the Handling & Restraint section for more detail on what techniques should be taught and in what order.*

Level II: Diet & Nutrition

This is a more complex subject than Sanitation & Disease Control and will take longer to complete than level one. Please take the time to learn how to read the charts, accurately record amounts, etc.

Volunteer Skills:

- Will be responsible for appropriate food preparation for multiple species of birds.
- Will be required to read the bird's chart and evaluate the needs of each bird, including portion size and type of food offered.
- Must be able to safely cut fish and meat including quail and rabbits to be fed to raptors
- Should be willing to research specific dietary needs for certain birds or conditions.
- Will be responsible for using the appropriate size & weight of dish for each species.
- Should be able to make meaningful observations of the food preferences of birds in care by reading the feeding charts for several days previous.
- Will be required to weigh all food given and any leftovers not eaten to assure appropriate food intake.
- Responsible for putting the appropriate amount of food out for the next days crew, dependent on the number and type of birds in clinic.
- Will be responsible for washing and sanitizing food bowls and food preparation utensils.
- Will help maintain 'needs list' as food items run low.
- Will assist as needed in the movement of birds under the direction of a senior volunteer.
- Will be responsible to assist in the check-in of new arrivals and appropriately fill out the paperwork.

At this level, volunteers can begin to work with the larger birds like geese, ravens and small owls.

Level III: Handling and Restraint

A lot of this training can be worked into the other levels as long as it is done sensibly. Keep in mind that a new volunteer should not be handling large birds of prey, eagles, large owls and hawks until they have been thoroughly trained in all other aspects of handling and restraint and are proficient in them. They have no concept of the power of these bigger birds and the risk of someone getting hurt is just too high. All raptor handling should be observed and explained in a step by step manner prior to the volunteer having a bird in the hand. The time to explain how to catch an eagle is not when the volunteer is in the cage with a blanket and an upset bird.

The Handling & Restraint class is *required* prior to volunteers beginning work with large raptors. Any exceptions must be cleared with the Rehabilitation Director.

Volunteer Skills:

- Responsible for safely handling all types of birds.
- Is willing to learn appropriate capture/handling techniques dependent on the type of bird being handled.
- Understands and utilizes appropriate communication when handling birds to assure safety of the bird and other volunteers.
- Must have the strength and coordination to control large, powerful birds effectively.
- Is able to follow established capture/ restraint protocols.
- Should be proficient in checking in new birds and accurately filling out paperwork.

This position allows for selective training and proficiency based on the desires, skills and strength of individual volunteers. Not all volunteers are required to handle all types of birds.

If we all work together we can accomplish anything!



Recommended Processes to Accomplish Clinic Duties

The following is a compilation of techniques and processes put forth by a number of our long-term volunteers in an effort to provide the most efficient way to get through the days chores in the most expedient way possible. It is our hope that the following information will be helpful in providing a more standard way of approaching the common jobs that we do on a daily basis. If, over time, you feel you have discovered a better way to do a certain task, please advise us and we will look into it and, if appropriate, will make changes to this manual.

Thanks to all who gave their input and assistance in this project!

Sanitation & Disease Control

While not the most fun job in the clinic, it is one of the most important. Anytime an animal is kept in an enclosed area or pen, the need for keeping that area clean becomes a very large part of keeping the animal healthy. Without the proper cleaning and sanitizing disease can spread easily from one bird to the next resulting in the loss of the very thing we are working so hard to save.

Green Astroturf Mats:

1. Fill the soaking tub with water and add Simple Green.
2. Set up empty mews with clean paper, Astroturf mats and the appropriate perch. Be sure the perch is far enough forward to allow the bird to perch comfortably.
3. Remove soiled mats and perches once the bird has been moved to a clean mew.
4. Try and remove all feathers prior to soaking. It makes it easier later.
5. Place the soiled mats in the soaking tub and allow to sit for a minimum of 10 min. to loosen debris, (longer if you have the time). Placing the mats turf side down is best.
6. After the mats have had a chance to soak, place them one at a time in the scrub sink. It is helpful to fold them in half (turf side in) and strike them on the sawhorse to further loosen debris. Unfold the mat and use the brushes, fork or other utensils to scrub all feces, food, etc off the mat surface. Be sure to clean the back of the mat. It's easier if you take the bottom mat first.
7. Rinse well and check your work.
8. Shake off as much excess water as possible and spray mat with SynPhenol-3.
9. Hang the mat over the sawhorses to dry. Mats should be hung turf side down. Do not stack the wet mats, they don't dry well in this position.
10. SynPhenol-3 is non-toxic once it has dried on a surface. If you need to use a mat that is still wet, rinse it first.

Perches:

1. Much the same as the mats with one exception. If the perches are soaked, it will encourage the wood to warp and also cause the wood to expand and retract loosening the screws.
2. Perches can be sprayed and set off to the side to 'soften up' the debris, then hosed down in the scrub sink and cleaned.
3. Don't forget to clean the bottom and sides of perches.
4. Again, after the final rinse, spray with SynPhenol-3 and let dry.

Eagle Mews

1. Prepare a bucket of hot water with a splash of Simple Green. Get some wash cloths, a scrub brush or your favorite cleaning tool.
2. Remove ALL newspaper prior to starting the cleaning process. If paper gets hosed through, it plugs the drain quickly and gums up the entire process.
3. You can gently mist the mews down with the hose and let them soak a bit prior to starting the scrubbing if they are really grubby. *Avoid blasting them with the hose as it damages the wood and floods the other mews.*
4. Clean all obviously soiled areas of the mew, including the door.
5. Rinse gently with the hose. This is a good time to check the drain behind the mews to be sure it's not plugged and causing water to back up into the mews.
6. Squeegee or towel dry the excess water out of the mew
7. Spray with SynPhenol-3 and allow to dry.
8. Be sure and wipe down the rails, stairs, etc. if they become soiled.

Other Cages:

1. Clean out all food and water bowls and take to the kitchen for cleaning.
2. If clean cages are available, the bird can be moved to a clean cage once it is set up with perches, food and water.
3. Remove soiled newspapers from the bottom of the cage as well as dirty perches.
4. Clean any seeds, mealworms, etc from the bottom of the cage then wipe out with a wet cloth. Again, a bucket of water with Simple Green is handy if there are lots of small bird cages to be done. Rinse with a rag dipped in clean water.
5. Check the screen for any soiled areas and clean appropriately.
6. Perches for the small birds should be cleaned daily as well. This can be done easily by scrubbing them down in the scrub sink.
7. If there is time, it is handy to set the cages up again so they are ready for the next guest.

Other Items:

1. Any airline type kennels that come in will need to be taken apart and cleaned in preparation to be returned to the owner. They should be taken apart, washed and put top inside bottom with hardware and door sandwiched between the two.
2. Water bowls will be placed next to the scrub sink. They will need to be washed and placed on the meal-worm table to dry.
3. Collect garbage from all trash cans at the end of your shift and place in the dumpster. Don't forget to replace the bag.
4. Floors throughout the clinic should be swept and mopped daily. Floors should be mopped with a roughly 10% bleach solution.
5. Bathrooms should be cleaned & mopped weekly using cleansers found in the women's bathroom.
6. Outdoor mews should be raked and walls cleaned as soon as one bird is moved out to assure a clean space for the next bird. This is sometimes dependent on the weather.



Diet & Nutrition

This task requires more pre-planning as well as quite a bit more paperwork. Remember the Diet & Nutrition Notebook in the food prep room, it's a ready reference for who eats what type of food. The record keeping is just as important as the type of diet offered. From a medical perspective, we need to know who is eating, who isn't and who is a fussy eater. The only way we determine this is to know how much and what was eaten from the each day.

The following recommendations should make this job easier for you.

Raptors/Corvids/Waterfowl:

1. Get a paper and pencil and do a walk through of what birds are in clinic. Make note of each bird's number and what they have been eating, including amount. Note any special delivery techniques such as 'offered whole fish' or 'cut into small chunks'. Other notes will be found either on a cover sheet for that bird or on a previous days space. Things such as 'loved the moose meat' or 'ate quail immediately' speak volumes about what this bird likes and does not like.
2. Pull the empty (we hope) food dishes out and record how much was eaten in the appropriate place on the chart. Be sure to weigh the leftovers as well as the number of pieces. Some people cut up scraps of paper and put the birds number in the used pan then weigh and record it when they have the time. This is a good way to keep from getting confused about which bowl came from what bird as well as allows you to get an accurate weight rather than guessing.
3. With waterfowl and corvids guessing the amount left over is about the best you get. We will monitor the weight of the bird in these cases.
4. Return to the kitchen and start preparing the diets from your notes. Again, place a slip of paper in each birds bowl listing the birds' number, the weight of the food and the number of the pieces or type of content. All fish needs to be re-hydrated with LRS and all diets receive a sprinkle of Avicon/Bone Meal to assist in maintaining health.
5. Food should be presented to the birds once they have been moved to clean cages and any treatments have been performed. Be sure each bird has a fresh bowl of water, with a rock if appropriate.
6. As you feed each bird, refer to your slip of paper and record the amount, type and number of pieces on the chart.

Songbirds or anything in the Small Bird Room:

Diets for these guys require that you know what they are in order to figure out what to feed them. Reference the previous days chart, or consult with someone knowledgeable in identifying small birds. Check the Diet & Nutrition Notebook once you have an ID in order to fix the right meal.

It's easier to fix these meals after you are done with all the salmon, moose, rats, etc. in case you need to chop greens or eggs.

1. Gather all dirty small bird dishes and take into the kitchen for washing. Return with the appropriate number of clean dishes.
2. Usually you can prepare the small bird diets in the small bird room where most of our seed mixes are located. You may need to get berries, chopped greens or hard-boiled eggs from the kitchen.
3. If you are feeding mealworms place them in a GLASS bowl separate from the other diets. They can crawl out of just about everything else. Mealworms can be placed with the birdy cornbread as long as it is in a GLASS bowl.
4. Take a pitcher of water into the bird room to fill all the water dishes as you go.

Other:

1. Wash all dirty dishes and place in drainer. Wash and clean any items used in treatments for the day. Example: Syringes and feeding tubes.
2. Wipe down and clean all kitchen surfaces with soap and water. Don't forget the handles on the refrigerator and freezer.
3. Be sure you have taken care of any needles or other items used to re-hydrate the food. *An uncapped needle is a safety hazard, so be aware.*
4. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Put out the appropriate amount and type of food from the freezer for the next days crew.

FOOD PREPARATION NOTES

(From Diet/Nutrition Manual)

DIET NOTES:

BALD EAGLES: Salmon plus 20cc saline or lactated ringers (LRS)
Avicon & Bonemeal (especially for birds with fractures)
Herring/Hooligan add 1cc B-1 (thiamine)

GOLDEN EAGLES: Moose or caribou plus 20cc saline or LRS
For a mouse add 1 drop Vit. A once a week
Whole Birds: pluck downy & small feathers

END OF SHIFT PROCEDURES:

- Check condition of food storage container—clean & dry.
- Use quality food only... “When in doubt, throw it out!”
- Take out of freezer sufficient quantity for next day. Leave in the bucket to thaw.
- Repackage huge amounts into smaller portions, refreeze extra
- **Nolvasan** food prep table, refrigerator door and handle.
- Sweep, then wet mop floor with 10% bleach solution
- Empty garbage
- Log in OSHA book.
- Turn off light.

Avian Diet & Nutrition

First of all, volumes have been written about this subject, many with differing beliefs and ideas about how different birds should be fed. All are well intentioned and most offer good insight into maintaining a healthy bird. Due to the sheer quantity of material out there, we are not able to incorporate it all into our facility at Bird TLC. The following pages are designed to present the current feeding protocols here at our facility.

If you feel a certain item should or should not be offered to a specific type of bird, bring it to our attention with any supporting documentation that you find. This information will be evaluated by a veterinarian, and a decision made at that level.

If you have a system for a certain type of bird, please share that with us. We all learn from each other.

One of the most common complaints that I was presented with when I started my position here at the Bird Treatment & Learning Center was the lack of uniformity with feeding and diets. I am making an attempt to correct this problem, but it can only be done with your assistance and willingness to work with me and the other teams, who feel just as passionately about this subject as you do. It is not possible to incorporate everyone's feeding ideas on every species, so there has to be some give and take. Nobody is completely right and nobody is completely wrong, we need to find a solution we can all live with.

Please do not make an “executive decision” to drastically change a diet.

Remember that most birds eat a wide variety of things in the wild and slight variations are healthy for the bird.

Just a few things to think about...

- **Am I giving a reasonable assortment of options (when possible) to each bird?**
- **Am I giving the bird too much or too little food?**
- **Am I keeping good records when I clean up the ‘leftovers’ from the day before?**
 - **Not only how much, but what is left, this is where we find patterns to make permanent changes to diets.**

As Bird TLC continues to grow and become a more respected facility our mindset needs to grow as well. This means providing a teamwork approach not only within our individual crews, but as an organization.

Handling & Restraint

This is probably the reason most people come to Bird TLC to volunteer. It can be one of the most fun and more dangerous aspects of the job, too.

In general, volunteers will start by learning how to handle the small birds first and gradually work up to handling the large birds of prey. This is not to say that a new volunteer should be excluded from the large bird activity, just that they should take a role other than handler. They can, with proper coaching, hold a foot while the handler changes grip, assist an experienced volunteer with herding or push the plunger on tube feeding.

Volunteers should be carefully coached on all levels of handling and should be supervised closely until they are comfortable and have shown proficiency.

Prior to handling large raptors, new volunteers are required to attend the Handling & Restraint Training.

The Basics

There are four considerations in the selection of a restraint technique when handling a wild bird.

- 1) Will it be safe for the handler?
- 2) Will it be safe for the bird?
- 3) Can the procedure (exam, tube feeding, etc.) be accomplished successfully using this technique?
- 4) Can constant attention and observation be given the bird during and after the restraint?

Note that the first consideration is for the safety of the handler. Take care of yourself so that you can take care of the patient.

It is normal to feel anxious when handling wildlife for the first few times and a touch of fear is a good thing. It keeps us careful and watchful. But do not feel pressured to undertake a capture or hold if you have serious misgivings. And always learn new techniques under the supervision of a more experienced volunteer.

Plan your approach in advance, and have the necessary equipment at hand. Capture itself is stressful to the patient and need not be prolonged by lack of preparation. There is no need to speak to a bird when approaching it. Humans are perceived as predators - quite correctly - and the sound of a human voice does nothing to alleviate a bird's anxiety.

Once you have captured a bird one of the main precautions is to **hold the bird in such a way that it can breathe**. A bird's breathing mechanism is different from a mammal, as they do not draw air into the chest cavity by the action of a diaphragm. Only the muscles around the rib cage are used. Thus if the bird is being gripped firmly around its thoracic

area, it will start to slowly suffocate. This is an important consideration with all birds, but especially with songbirds and other little ones that can be grasped in one human hand.

Small Birds:

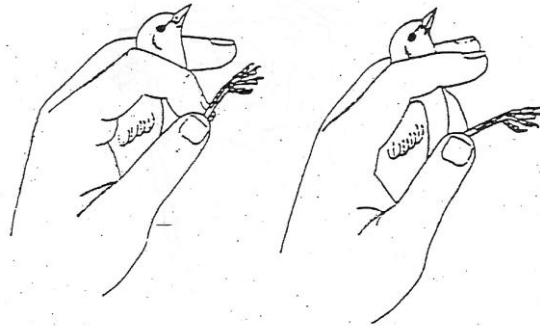
Small birds are considered those birds that are usually kept in the small bird room, usually passerines. These birds are small and delicate and require a soft but firm technique. They are also easily stressed, so if you don't feel you can catch a certain bird efficiently, let someone else catch that bird, you can practice on an easier patient.

WATCH how more experienced volunteers capture and hold birds. Pay attention to where they put their hands and how they approach specific species. ASK questions. If you know why something is done a certain way it is easier to remember it when it's your turn.

Different grips are used depending on what you wish to accomplish. The Bander's Grip is the most common one used to examine small passerines.

The Bander's Grip

The index finger and middle finger close around the bird's neck while the legs are controlled by the ring finger, little finger and thumb. The wing on the thumb side can be extended for examination and the grip can be switched to the other hand when it is time to examine the other wing. To look at the back or belly, take both legs in the free hand, gripping the thighs; pull the legs down in order to open up the belly area, or turn the bird in the neck gripping hand to see the back. With experience-and a few escapes- you will be able to judge how firmly to grip the birds. Extra care must be taken if the bird has damaged wings or serious wounds.



The Leg Hold Grip:

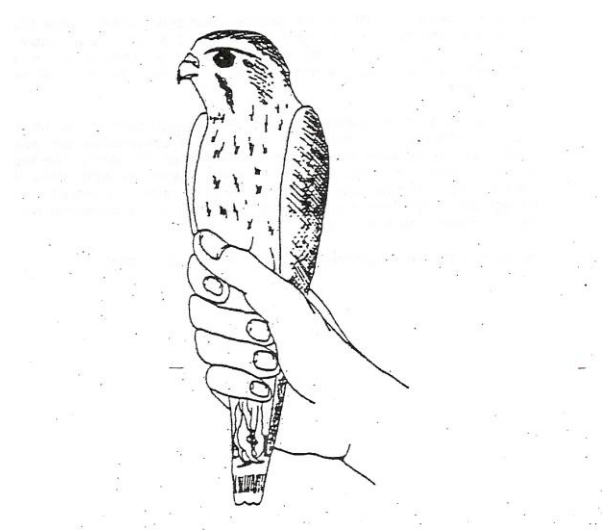
This grip is convenient when you want the bird to move its wings as freely as possible so that you can assess possible damage. (It would not be helpful to use this grip if the damage is obvious.)

The bird's thighs are held between the index and middle finger, while the thumb presses the lower legs against the other side of the index finger.



The Ice Cream Cone Grip:

This grip is convenient for slightly larger birds that do not fit into one hand with the bander's grip. It allows you to control the talons of small raptors also, assuming that the bird in question has long enough wing and tail feathers to be gathered into the gripping hand. Good candidates for this hold are large woodpeckers, Stellar's jays and kingfishers.



Larger Birds & Raptors:

From small birds volunteers should progress to larger but fairly safe birds such as ducks, geese and small raptors such as owls. This allows volunteers to have a better understanding of bird behavior and strength without such a high risk of injury to either the volunteer or the bird.

Once the volunteer has become proficient with the smaller birds and is comfortable handling the smaller raptors they can begin to be taught how to catch and hold eagles and other large birds.

Considerations for Capture:

Talons

Raptors are birds of prey that have seizing talons. Not only are those talons sharp, but the birds' feet have extraordinary squeezing power. A golden eagle can break the bones in a man's arm with his grip, although this has happened only rarely. Some raptors (owls, for example) will also use their sharp, flesh-tearing beaks, but the feet are the most important part to control. **You should always be aware of the location of the feet in relation to ANY of your body parts.** Do not reach across a restrained raptor, take the time to walk around to the other side.

Beaks

Corvids, such as ravens, magpies and jays, all use their beaks as their major weapon. A magpie or jay bite is a nuisance, but a raven bite is memorable. Other hard biters are puffins, loons, gulls and albatrosses. We rarely get cranes or herons, but they can stab with incredible swiftness and force. When handling dangerous beaked birds, take care to control the beak at all times and **wear goggles**. Remember that there is a lot of stretch in a bird's neck, so even if you are holding it at waist level, it can reach up to your face.

The Blanket Drop:

The preferred method of capturing a medium to large bird is the towel/blanket drop method. The diagram shown depicts a large raptor that is in a run. The same technique can be used for smaller birds in cages or kennels.

A. For an eagle, hold a felted ("army") blanket near one edge, leaving a bit of a flap. A large, dark towel is better for smaller raptors. Enter pen quietly, perhaps moving the water dish and food platter away with your foot. **Have an assistant standing by**, also with a blanket, to shield the doorway and keep the bird from seeing it as an escape route. The assistant can remove the dishes entirely.

Shimmy the blanket a little as you near the bird to distract it. Don't give it much time to think, though.

B. When the bird has its wings mostly folded and is turned sideways to you or has its back to you, drape the blanket over the bird, memorizing the position of its head.

C. Stoop quickly and slide your hands around the bird's wrists on each side and down to the thighs, then the tibiotarsals, and seize one in each hand, its right leg in your right hand, its left in your left. Note that if the blanket slides off the bird's head, IT WILL ESCAPE. Back off and start over.

D. Holding each leg firmly, hoist the bird up against your chest. This allows you to pin its wings into place with your upper arms. If you find now that you have a biter, or that the blanket flap over the head is a bit skimpy, have your assistant hold the bird by the back of the head and upper neck while you walk to your destination.

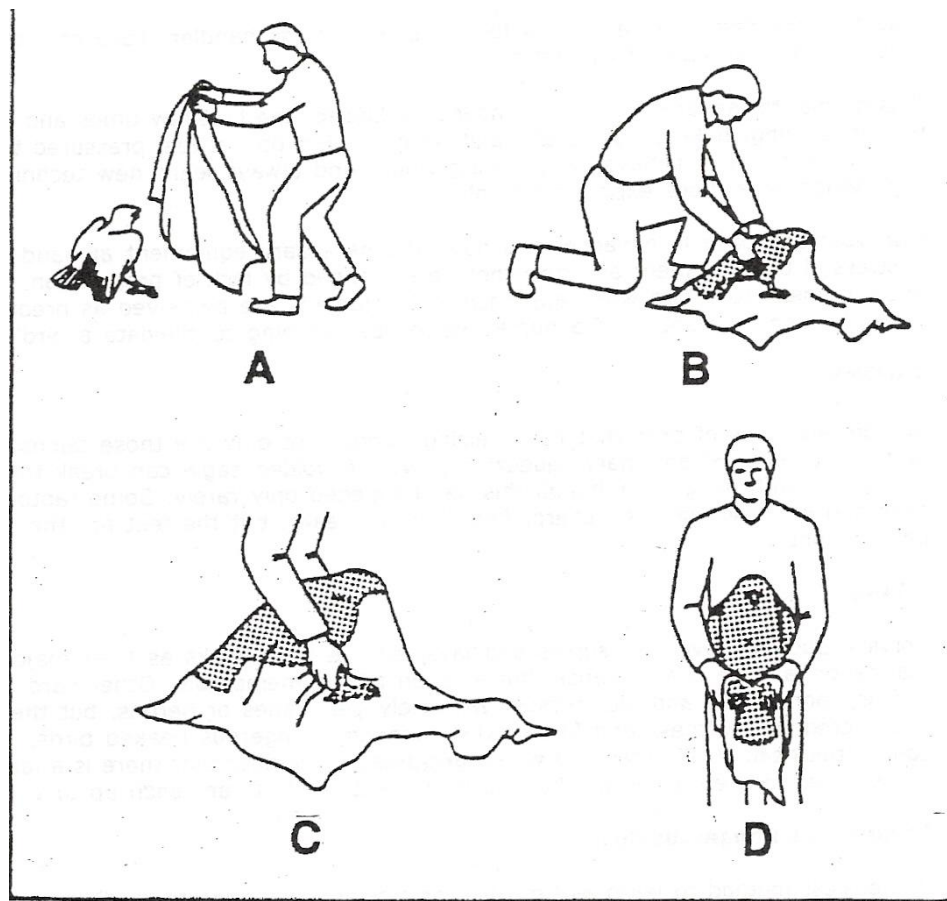


Figure 1 A. Blanket technique used to cover and catch a raptor.
 B. Covered raptor is initially grasped with both hands over back shoulders.
 C. Both hands secure legs just above feet.
 D. Restraint and carrying method with raptor held between arms against handler's body.

****Extracting a taloned bird from a kennel**:**

Usually eagles sent in from outside of Anchorage arrive in large airline kennels. If the eagle is free-standing inside the kennel, take the kennel to a prepared eagle pen, push it partway into the pen and open the kennel door so that the eagle's escape route is into the pen. Lift the rear end of the kennel and thump on it to encourage the eagle to come out.

If the eagle refuses to come out, you may have to unscrew the top of the kennel and remove that. Once the bird steps out, remove the kennel, close the door of the pen and let the bird settle down. Approach it later for capture and examination.

NOTE:

Only skilled handlers should attempt to extract an eagle by reaching into an airline kennel. The following people are the only people authorized to teach this technique. Dr. Scott, Cindy Palmatier or Barbara Callahan.



General Help Volunteer and Other Information

This is our catch-all category for all those things that need to be done around the clinic that don't really involve the birds. Things like mew repair, yard clearing, a run to the dump or a quick trip to the store require a dedication all their own. Without this group of volunteers we would all be a lot busier than we are now. So, if you are able to assist in this category just let us know and we'll be happy to have you help us out.

1. No matter what task you take on it needs to be approved by Bird TLC. Please run the idea past your lead, and then contact the Rehab Director for final approval.
2. Spending money with the intent to be reimbursed for it **MUST** be cleared through either the Rehab Director or the Office Manager.
3. If your task requires you to use power tools, be sure you know how to use the equipment and follow safety guidelines.
4. If you have spare time and wish to stop in and help out we would love to have you. Be sure that you check in with the lead on duty and find out what they would like you to do rather than just jumping in on what you think needs doing.
5. Please be aware that by being a volunteer you represent Bird TLC. We try to avoid any political or ethically charged topics and stay in the middle of the road. If you have a strong opinion on a hot topic, please do not express this as a Bird TLC opinion or when you are representing Bird TLC. Diverse ideas are welcome, but as an organization we must provide a united front.

**Thank you for being a dedicated volunteer for the
Bird Treatment & Learning Center**



Volunteer Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____ DOB: _____

E-mail: _____

Employer: _____ Phone: _____

We encourage volunteers to support Bird Treatment & Learning Center financially if possible.

Do you have any medical or veterinarian training or specialties?

Explain: _____

Have you worked with any types of birds, domestic, exotic or wild? _____

List any specialized bird courses you have taken: _____

Please indicate your areas of interest:

Presenting Educational Programs to the Public. Please check which groups you would prefer teaching:

___ General Audience (adults & children) ___ Senior High School ___ Junior High
___ Adults only ___ Children only ___ Elementary ___ Pre-school ___ Clubs or Groups

Do you have experience teaching or speaking to any of the following groups?

___ Preschool to Grade 3 ___ Grades 4 thru 6 ___ Grades 7 thru 9 ___ High School ___ University
___ Scout Groups ___ Business Groups ___ Other explain _____

Special Interests: ___ Any & All birds ___ Environmental Impacts & Issues

___ Owls ___ Eagles ___ Hawks ___ Ravens & Jays ___ Sea birds ___ Waterfowl ___ Song birds

Are you interested in other Bird TLC volunteer opportunities? Please indicate.

___ Office support ___ Phone tree – calling members and volunteers to provide special information
___ Fund raising ___ Grant writing (experience required) ___ Assisting at presentations & events
___ Raising wild baby birds (training required; involves taking birds home)
___ Home care for rehabilitation birds (requires clinic experience plus US Fish & Game requirements)

Optional. Please share with us other information, such as: names of places you have volunteered, your educational background, memberships in other organizations, etc. _____

Thank you.

Volunteer Waiver

1. I have received the Bird Treatment & Learning Center Volunteer Manual and have taken the time to become familiar with it.
2. I have provided Bird Treatment & Learning Center with proof of current Tetanus vaccine.
3. I understand that some avian diseases are transmittable to humans (zoonosis) and that if I am immune compromised in any way that I am at a much higher risk of contracting these diseases.
4. I agree that I am neither an employee nor agent of Bird TLC and am not associated with Bird TLC in any capacity other than as a volunteer. Therefore, I will hold the Bird Treatment & Learning Center harmless and free of any and all claims which may arise as a result of my volunteer activity.
5. I acknowledge that I am fully aware of the Bird Treatment & Learning Center's avian species ability to inflict bodily harm. Therefore, I, the undersigned volunteer, accept the responsibility for any such physical and /or psychological injury that I may suffer while working with avian species. Furthermore, I will not hold the Bird Treatment & Learning Center, it's officers, directors, staff, or volunteers responsible for any costs related to any and all injuries incurred while working with or as a result of exposure to the Bird Treatment & Learning Center's avian species.
6. I am fully aware that I will be working in areas where wet floors, hoses, and other potential obstacles and possibilities for injury are unavoidable. I will hold Bird Treatment & Learning Center harmless in all cases should I become injured while on the premises.
7. I understand that I will receive no wages or compensation of any kind for my volunteer activities with the Bird Treatment & Learning Center.
8. I fully understand and accept the conditions outlined in this contract as a requisite for my participation as a volunteer with the Bird Treatment & Learning Center.

Volunteer Signature

Printed Name

Date

Phone

Parent/Guardian if under 18

Date

Bird TLC Representative

Date

Please Provide One Reference with Phone Number

Emergency Contact (Name & Phone Number)

Appendix B: Skills Check lists

Skills Check List-Sanitation & Disease Control

Have your lead or Rehab Director check off and date as you complete each skill level

Sanitation, Disease Control

| Skill or Responsibility | Date | Signature |
|--|------|-----------|
| Has been briefed on the different types of organisms that we deal with and the cleaners of choice for each | | |
| Has been shown the location of brooms, mops, buckets and cleaners for floor maintenance. | | |
| Has been shown the locations of hoses, drains, shut-off valves and light switches. | | |
| Has been trained and is proficient in cleaning and sanitizing mats & perches | | |
| Understands the matting and perching requirements of small and large birds | | |
| Has been trained to observe perches and mats for signs of wear and the need to replace perching surface. | | |
| Has been trained on the location & technique to keep drains clear. | | |
| Has been trained and is proficient in assisting with herding eagles into new runs. | | |

***Leads, only sign off on an item if the volunteer has a complete and thorough working knowledge of this item.*

Example: Can the volunteer actually show you where all the light switches are and where the main water shut-off is located?

Skills Check List-Diet & Nutrition

Have your lead of Rehab Director check off and date as you complete each skill level

Diet & Nutrition

| Skill or Responsibility | Date | Signature |
|--|------|-----------|
| Has been shown the location of the Diet & Nutrition Notebook located in the food prep room and has had time to review and become familiar with it. | | |
| Has been shown and is proficient in reading dietary chart notes and knows how to accurately record amount and type of food given as well as amount and type of food left over. | | |
| Understands the basics of the dietary needs for our more common types of birds as well as the appropriate amount to give. | | |
| Is able to choose the appropriate dishes and food delivery for different types of birds or birds with different preferences. | | |
| Understands and is proficient in the cleaning protocol for food and water bowls as well as the food prep counters, refrigerator doors, floors, etc. | | |
| Is able to estimate the amount and type of food needed for the next day and place it in the appropriate place to defrost. | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Skills Check-list Handling & Restraint

| Skill | Date | Lead Signature |
|--|------|----------------|
| Has read and understands the training manual section on Handling and Restraint. | | |
| Has been shown how to, and is proficient in the following forms of small bird restraint; banders grip, leg hold grip and ice cream cone grip. Knows the appropriate time to use each grip | | |
| Understands the 'danger zone' for the different types of birds. Example: Talons for raptors, beaks for corvids..... | | |
| Has been taught the blanket drop technique and has been given the opportunity to practice on ducks and geese. | | |
| Has successfully captured and restrained smaller raptors such as small owls or hawks. | | |
| Has assisted with eagle handling in the form of herding, holding a leg or head when the bird is restrained. | | |
| Has captured a more docile eagle out of the runs successfully. Is able to maintain control and safety with the bird. | | |
| Is trained in the capture of an eagle in one of the outside mews and is competent to be considered an eagle handler. | | |
| Understands when a bird is beyond their skill level and it's time to call in a more experienced handler. | | |

***Leads, only sign off on an item if the volunteer has a complete and thorough working knowledge of this item.*

Appendix C: Abbreviations

Standard Abbreviations What does it mean!!

SID–Once Daily (every 24 hrs)

BID–Twice Daily (every 12 hrs)

TID – Three Times Daily (every 8 hrs)

QID – Four Times Daily (every 6 hours)

Example:

Dextrose TID x 5d

Translation:

Give Dextrose three times daily for 5 days.

Standard Abbreviations Part II Give it where!

PO – per os – by mouth

SQ – Subcutaneous – under the
skin

IM – intramuscular – in the
muscle

IV – intravenous – in the vein

IP – intraperitoneal – in the
abdominal cavity

NPO – Nothing by mouth

Appendix D: Volunteer Job Descriptions

Bird Treatment & Learning Center **Volunteer Job Positions** **Rehabilitation Division** **General Information**

Organization Name:

Bird Treatment & Learning Center

Major Objectives:

The Bird Treatment & Learning Center cares for injured or orphaned wild birds of many different varieties. We provide medical care and rehabilitation as well as educational programs for the public.

Qualifications & Requirements:

- Must be at least 18 years of age, 16 year olds with a parent will be considered
- Must be willing to become a Bird Treatment & Learning Center Member
- Must be able to show proof of current tetanus vaccine
- Should be detail minded and willing to learn new things

Lines of Communication:

- This position will report to the Lead Volunteer for that day's crew.
- Beyond the Lead Volunteer, this position would then report to the Rehabilitation Director.
- Lead Volunteers will report to the Rehabilitation Director.
- Beyond the Rehabilitation Director, Leads will report any concerns or questions to the Executive Director.

Orientation & Training:

- Orientation & training will be provided for each position.
- Additional training for more advanced volunteer positions is available and volunteers are encouraged to advance to their level of comfort.

Times Needed & Location:

- Volunteers will work at the Bird Treatment & Learning Center Clinic, located at 6132 Nielson Way in Anchorage.
- Volunteers are needed for morning (9-1) and afternoon (1-5) Monday thru Friday and mornings on Sat. and Sun.
- Days and times are flexible to assist in meeting the volunteer's schedule.

Commitment Required:

- Clinic Volunteers are asked to commit to 4 hours per week, either morning or afternoon. Days and shifts that need additional personnel vary.
- Clinic Volunteers should be willing to commit to at least 4 months of volunteering. Due to the training needed it is too time consuming to train for a shorter time frame.
- Volunteers should contact Bird Treatment & Learning Center in the event they will not be available for their shift as well as make the effort to find a replacement from the volunteer list.

Benefits & Frustrations:

- The benefits of volunteering are numerous and include the satisfaction of helping injured wildlife regain the skills needed to return to the wild as well as increased knowledge and the opportunity to work closely with birds that most people only see through binoculars.
- The frustrations include the emotional trauma of losing or euthanizing a bird you have worked closely with for some time, as well as the amount of cleaning and paperwork required for each hour you actually spend with a bird.

Contact:

- Further information can be obtained by calling the Bird Treatment & Learning Center at 562-4852 and speaking with Cindy Palmatier, Rehabilitation Director.

**Volunteer Job Description
Sanitation, Disease Control & Cage Set-Up**

Title:

Disease Control, Sanitation and Set-up Technician

Duties & Responsibilities:

This is an entry-level volunteer position with ample opportunity to advance.

- Will become proficient with Bird TLC intake paperwork, the location of OSHA logs and other record-keeping procedures.
- Will be responsible for cleaning, sterilizing and preparing cages, crates and mats for incoming birds, or birds in clinic.
- Will learn the appropriate mats and perches for different types of birds and the cage set-up required for each.
- Will need to develop an understanding of different diseases and bacteria and the appropriate cleaning solution for each.
- Will assure that the clinic floors are swept and mopped to assist in disease control.
- Responsible for checking drain screens and cleaning as needed.
- Will be responsible to inspect mats for wear and replace as needed.
- Will create new perches from materials provided for an assortment of small birds.
- Must have a working awareness of general cleaning requirements in an environment where animals are kept.
- Will assist as needed in the movement of birds under the direction of a senior volunteer.

Volunteer Job Description

Nutrition & Food Preparation

Title:

Nutrition & Food Preparation

Duties & Responsibilities:

This is a 2nd level volunteer position, BTLC training or prior experience required.

- Will be responsible for appropriate food preparation for multiple species of birds.
 - Will be required to read the bird's chart and evaluate the needs of each bird, including portion size and type of food offered.
 - Will be required to safely cut fish and meat to be fed to the raptors
 - Research specific dietary needs for certain birds or conditions.
 - Use the appropriate size & weight of dish for each species.
 - Make meaningful observations of the food preferences of birds in care by reading the feeding charts for several days previous.
 - Will be required to weigh all food given and any leftovers not eaten to assure appropriate food intake.
 - Responsible for putting the appropriate amount of food out for the next days crew, dependent on the number and type of birds in clinic.
 - Will be responsible for washing and sanitizing food bowls and food preparation utensils.
 - Will help maintain 'needs list' as food items run low.
 - Will assist as needed in the movement of birds under the direction of a senior volunteer.
 - Will be responsible to assist in the check-in of new arrivals and appropriately fill out the paperwork.
-
-

Volunteer Job Description

Capture/Restraint (Bird Handling)

Title:

Capture/Restraint (Bird Handling)

Duties & Responsibilities:

This is a 3rd level volunteer position, BTLC training or prior experience required.

Handling/Restraint is defined as removing all types of birds from crates or carriers, capturing birds out of cages or runs for treatment or cleaning, restraining birds during medical procedures or treatments and maintaining control and safety at all times. Types of birds to be handled range from tiny Red Polls to ravens and eagles.

Training will be provided under the supervision of a senior volunteer.

- Responsible for safely handling all types of birds.
- Will use appropriate capture/handling techniques dependent on the type of bird being handled.
- Understands and utilizes appropriate communication when handling birds to assure safety of the bird and other volunteers.
- Must have the strength and coordination to control large, powerful birds effectively.
- Is able to follow established capture/ restraint protocols.
- Check in new birds and accurately fill out paperwork.

This position allows for selective training and proficiency based on the desires, skills and strength of individual volunteers. Not all volunteers are required to handle all types of birds.

**Bird Treatment & Learning Center
Volunteer Job Description
Rehabilitation Division**

Lead Volunteer

Organization Name:

Bird Treatment & Learning Center

Major Objectives:

The Bird Treatment & Learning Center cares for sick, injured or orphaned wild birds of many different varieties. We provide medical care and rehabilitation as well as educational programs for the public.

Title:

Lead Volunteer

Qualifications & Requirements:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must be willing to become a Bird Treatment & Learning Center Member
- Must be able to show proof of current tetanus vaccine
- Should be detail minded and willing to learn new things
- Must have a prior history of BTLC service and completed all training provided for 1st three levels.

Lines of Communication:

- Lead Volunteers will report to the Rehabilitation Director.
- Beyond the Rehabilitation Director, Leads may contact the Executive Director with issues or concerns.

Orientation & Training:

- Orientation & training will be provided for this position.

Times Needed & Location:

- Volunteers will work at the Bird Treatment & Learning Center Clinic, located at 6132 Nielson Way in Anchorage.
- Volunteers are needed for morning (9-1) and afternoon (1-5) Monday thru Friday and mornings on Sat. and Sun.
- Days and times are flexible to assist in meeting the volunteer's schedule.

Commitment Required:

- Lead Volunteers are asked to commit to 4 hours per week, either morning or afternoon. Days and shifts that need additional personnel vary.
- Lead Volunteers should be willing to commit to at least 12 months of volunteering. Due to the training needed it is too time consuming to train for a shorter time frame.
- Volunteers should contact Bird Treatment & Learning Center in the event they will not be available for their shift as well as find a replacement Lead from another shift.

Benefits & Frustrations:

- The benefits of volunteering are numerous and include the satisfaction of helping injured wildlife regain the skills needed to return to the wild as well as increased knowledge and the opportunity to work closely with birds that most people only see through binoculars.
- The frustrations include the emotional trauma of losing or euthanizing a bird you have worked closely with for some time, as well as the amount of cleaning and paperwork required for each hour you actually spend with a bird.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Lead volunteers are responsible for providing direct supervision and daily direction for the rest of the volunteer staff on their crew.
- Leads must be able to accurately perform all duties expected of other clinic volunteer positions.
- Lead volunteers are responsible to see that all paperwork is completed accurately and completely.
- Leads are responsible for the day-to-day training of new volunteers and are expected to work closely with the Rehab. Director to facilitate uniformity in the training of new volunteers.
- Leads are expected to be familiar with new policies, medications and treatment protocols.

Contact:

- Further information can be obtained by calling the Bird Treatment & Learning Center at 562-4852 and speaking with Cindy Palmatier, Rehabilitation Director.