



Ohio Department of Natural Resources
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Publication 5475
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MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATION IN OHIO



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The ODNR Division of Wildlife's mission is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all.

The Division of Wildlife is funded by annual hunting, trapping, and fishing license sales. It is the authority on Ohio's fish and wildlife resources, and uses no state or federal taxpayer dollars to fulfill its mission. Additional funds come in the form of federal aid reimbursement from an excise tax on hunting and fishing equipment.

Money generated allows the Division of Wildlife to promote conservation efforts of game and non-game animals. Examples of these efforts include endangered and threatened species restoration, fish hatcheries, hunter and angler education, and law enforcement.

The Ohio Division of Wildlife is dedicated to conserving and improving the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats, and promoting their use and appreciation by the public so that these resources continue to enhance the quality of life for all Ohioans. Rehabilitation of injured or orphaned native wildlife is a popular and important activity in Ohio, involving hundreds of public and private organizations and individuals.

The Division works in partnership with the Ohio Wildlife Rehabilitators Association to (1) foster a relationship among rehabilitators to improve

the quality of care given to native wildlife, (2) promote communication and education, and (3) ensure a rapid response team is available in the event of a catastrophe such as an oil spill.

(This document was compiled from the National Wildlife Rehabilitators & International Wildlife Rehabilitators Council's (NWRRA/IWRC) "Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation" © 1994 and the Ohio Wildlife Rehabilitators Association's "Guidelines for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Ohio" with permission for use by both organizations.)

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATION IN OHIO

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION FACILITY

(SOURCE NWRRA & IWRC)

STANDARD REQUIREMENTS OF ALL FACILITIES

First Aid and Safety. All wildlife rehabilitation facilities shall have fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, eye wash capability, first aid kits, and material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals stored on the premises. They shall also have protective clothing and safety/capture equipment appropriate to the species under their care.

Sanitation. Foods, utensils, dishes, food preparation areas, and food storage areas for wildlife shall always be kept separate from foods, utensils, dishes, food preparation areas and food storage areas used by humans and domestic animals. Cleaning of wildlife cages and housing shall be done in designated areas specially set aside for such cleaning. It shall not be done in sinks or tubs otherwise used by humans. A suitable sanitary method shall be provided to eliminate rapidly excess water from indoor facilities. If drains are used, they shall be properly constructed and kept in good repair to avoid foul odors and installed so as to prevent any backup of sewage.

Temperature Control. Injured or immobile animals shall be housed in indoor facilities. Rooms and buildings used for indoor housing of injured or immobile animals shall provide supplemental warmth or cooling as needed to protect animals from extremes of temperature, to provide for their health, and to prevent their discomfort. The ambient temperature shall not be allowed to fall below or rise above temperatures compatible with the health and comfort of the animal.

Natural or artificial shelter appropriate to local climate conditions for species concerned shall be provided for all animals kept outdoors to afford them protection and to prevent discomfort to such animals. Individual animals shall be acclimated before they are exposed to the extremes of individual climates.

Light and Ventilation. Indoor facilities shall be adequately ventilated by natural or mechanical means to provide for the health and to prevent discomfort of the animals at all times. Such facilities shall be provided with fresh air either by means of windows, doors, vents, fans, or air conditioning and shall be ventilated so as to minimize drafts, odors, and moisture condensation.

Indoor facilities shall have ample lighting, by natural or artificial means, or both, of good quality, distribution, and duration as appropriate for the species involved. Such lighting shall be uniformly distributed and of sufficient intensity to permit routine inspection and cleaning.

Lighting of outdoor enclosures shall be designed to protect the animals from excessive illumination. When sunlight is likely to cause overheating or discomfort of the animals, sufficient shade by natural or artificial means shall be provided to allow all animals kept outdoors to protect themselves from direct sunlight.

Water and Electric. Reliable and adequate electric power and potable water shall be available on the premises.

Daily Cleaning and Disinfection. Each wildlife rehabilitation facility shall provide a daily cleaning and disinfecting schedule.

CATEGORY I FACILITIES (source OWRA)

A Category I facility shall have weighing scales and adequate artificial warming units or incubators as necessary for wild animals in their care.

CATEGORY II FACILITIES

1. A Category II facility shall have incubators, weighing scales and all medical equipment and other items necessary to provide for emergency stabilization of animals prior to veterinary assessment.
2. A Category II facility shall have the gloves, goggles, squeeze cages, protective clothing and capture equipment necessary to handle the injured or Category I exception wildlife under its care.
3. A Category II facility shall have written procedures regarding providing emergency after-hours services for injured wildlife.
4. A veterinarian assisting Category II facilities shall have an on-site pharmacy with appropriate security for schedule II, III, and IV drugs, laboratory equipment, and intensive nursing care, radiology, and surgical facilities. Wildlife temporarily housed at a veterinary facility shall be kept separate from domestic animals to minimize the risk of disease transmission to all animals, and to minimize stress to the wild animals.
5. A Category II facility shall have a liability policy in force.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR HOUSING OF WILD ANIMALS *(source NWRA & IWRC)*

The enclosures suggested, with the exception of conditioning cages, are for short-term housing (i.e., usually less than six months) of rehabilitating animals. No animal may be retained for more than 180 days without specific authorization from the wildlife officer (source ODW). The philosophy which dictates cage size presupposes normal recovery times for the patient. None of the confinement or recovery cages are recommended for extended or permanent care. Each outdoor enclosure should possess an area which provides necessary protection from the elements.

Any bird old enough to perch requires the same size cage as the adult of the species. Enclosures should be made secure against local predators. They should duplicate natural conditions wherever practical.

Cage design should provide for ease of cleaning, ventilation, light, and temperature control. A separate source of water for drinking and bathing for each enclosure should be provided.

AVIAN CAGING *(source NWRA & IWRC)*

Materials for avian caging vary within the field. Aviaries should have a double-door entry system. Solid walls for aviaries can be constructed of wood, fiberglass, or an equivalent. Chicken wire is not permitted if the birds can come into direct contact with them. If vertical wood lath, fiberglass screening, or netting prevent direct contact, then wire can add extra security. Flooring for aviaries is often pea gravel over sand which should be changed biannually or as needed. Natural flooring is acceptable in very large enclosures; but, it must be turned and disinfected from time to time. Flooring for small cages includes towels or raised netting over newspaper, newspaper alone, or wood shavings (cut up tree trimmings, but not sawdust), depending on the species being housed. Perches can be wood doweling or plastic piping (or the equivalent) covered by 1/4-inch-pile Astroturf, hemp, or indoor/outdoor carpeting. Platforms can be covered with 2-inch-pile Astroturf or indoor/outdoor carpeting. Natural limbs, bow, block and ring perches are appropriate for certain species of birds.

MAMMAL CAGING *(source NWRA & IWRC)*

The following are suggested building materials for outdoor caging. Walls are generally made of chain-link fencing, welded wire, or wood. Chicken wire is not permitted (source ODW). When wooden cages are used, they should be water-sealed. Welded wire sizes are as follows: 1/20 inch by 2-inch (2" x 2") for small rodents and opossums (100gm or less); 2-inch by 1-inch (2" x 1") for squirrels; and 1-inch by 1 and 2-inch (1" x 1-1/2") for raccoons and larger mammals. Roofing materials are the same with a covered area that provides protection from the elements. Fiberglass is sometimes used on top of the wire to provide protection. The flooring depends on the species being housed. Larger walk-in mammal cages should have concrete flooring and be sloped for proper drainage. If natural flooring is utilized, wire fencing must be placed under the cage and be covered with a drainage gravel (i.e., pea gravel). Tree trimmings can be used if they are changed regularly. All doors should be equipped with a double-door system for the protection of the handler and the animal. A den should be provided for the animal; examples would be a wooden box, fiberglass or plastic animal carrier.

CONDITIONING CAGING:

SPECIES	CAGE SIZE (W X L X H)	ADDITIONAL AMENITIES REQUIRED
AVIAN, NON-RAPTORS: loons, grebes, cormorants, geese, swans, diving ducks (Mute swans may not be rehabilitated and must be euthanized)	large enough to contain 6' pool and loafing area	swimming area, 6' pool, tank or pond, deeper than 2'
AVIAN, NON-RAPTORS: dabbling ducks	large enough to contain kiddie pool and loafing area	4' kiddie pool
AVIAN, NON-RAPTORS: songbirds, doves, small woodpeckers, kingfishers, swifts, swallows, rails, coots, pheasants, quail, small bitterns or herons	4' x 8' x 6'	4' kiddie pool (only for bitterns & herons) and perching structure
AVIAN, NON-RAPTORS: large woodpeckers, nighthawks, goatsuckers, gulls, terns, plovers, cuckoos, cranes, large bitterns or herons	8' x 16' x 8'	4' kiddie pool (only for cranes, bitterns & herons) and perching structure
AVIAN, RAPTORS: small to medium hawks & owls, Cooper's hawks, sharp-shinned hawks, broad winged hawks, merlins, kestrels, screech-owls, saw-whet owls, long-eared owls, short-eared owls, barn owls	8' x 16' x 8'	perching structure
AVIAN, RAPTORS: large owls, barred owls, great horned owls	10' x 30' x 8'	perching structure
AVIAN, RAPTORS: large hawks and vultures, red-tailed hawks, red-shouldered hawks, rough-legged hawks, northern harrier, goshawk, black vultures, turkey vultures	10' x 30' x 10'	perching structure
AVIAN, RAPTORS: large falcons, and other extra-large raptors, peregrine falcons, gyrfalcon, eagles, osprey, snowy owls	16' x 90' x 16'	perching structure
MAMMALS, OUTSIDE PRE-RELEASE: tree or ground squirrels	4' x 6' x 4' ground squirrels 4' x 8' x 8' tree squirrels	single animal cage sizes. 1 square foot needs to be added for each additional animal.
MAMMALS, OUTSIDE PRE-RELEASE: opossums, skunks	4' x 8' x 6'	single animal cage sizes. 1 square foot needs to be added for each additional animal.
MAMMALS, OUTSIDE PRE-RELEASE: fox, raccoon, badger	8' x 8' x 6'	single animal cage size. 2 square feet needs to be added for each additional animal.
MAMMALS, OUTSIDE PRE-RELEASE: beaver, river otter	6' x 12' x 6'	single animal cage sizes. 2 square feet needs to be added for each additional animal. Also include swimming area, 6' pool, tank or pond, deeper than 2'

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION PERMITS

(SOURCE ODW & OWRA)

PERMIT HOLDERS, SUB-PERMITTEES, AND VOLUNTEERS

Wildlife rehabilitation and the development of wildlife rehabilitation facilities usually requires cooperative relationships among wildlife rehabilitators working in a geographic area, including sharing of expertise, division and specialization of work, and sharing of limited resources such as housing, equipment, money, veterinary services and administrative services. Wildlife rehabilitators in a geographic area who coordinate their efforts are less likely to compete for limited resources, more likely to fund-raise effectively, more likely to provide a broader range of services for that geographic area, and are likely to have more options available to provide better care for wildlife.

Accordingly, wildlife rehabilitators should not apply for permits to provide services which are already effectively provided by other wildlife rehabilitation facilities within a geographic area but should instead work with those wildlife rehabilitation facilities or they should apply for permits to provide wildlife rehabilitation services which are not otherwise already provided for in that geographic area.

Naming wildlife rehabilitators as volunteers or as sub-permittees by a permit holder is recognized as an effective means of building cooperative relationships among wildlife rehabilitators to better serve a geographic area, and as an effective means to supervise the activities of wildlife rehabilitators working in a geographic area. **Permit holders are responsible for the supervision of their volunteers and ensuring sub-permittees have all proper equipment and caging to rehabilitate animals at a location other than the permit holders facility. Sub-permittees must maintain a copy of the permit holder's current rehabilitation permit and current Minimum Standards. Only persons listed on the permit are recognized as legitimate "sub-permittees."** If the permit holder wishes to add or delete sub-permittees, it is the permit holder's responsibility to request the change in writing from the Division for processing. Requests may be emailed to the Permit Coordinator at: wildlife.permits@dnr.state.oh.us.

A wildlife rehabilitator who possesses wildlife for a permit holder at a site other than the permit holder's wildlife rehabilitation facility for over 48 hours must be named as a sub-permittee. Wildlife must be received at the permit holders facility prior to being moved to a sub-permittee's facility. A sub-permittee shall not accept wildlife from the public for direct admission into their own facility.

A volunteer or wildlife rehabilitator who works at the permit holder's wildlife rehabilitation facility or who only rescues and transports wildlife for delivery to that wildlife rehabilitation facility does not need to be listed as a sub-permittee.

A permit holder who wishes to list wildlife rehabilitators working within his or her geographic area as sub-permittees should do the following:

1. Develop a written policy outlining the qualifications, training, selection and monitoring of sub-permittees.
2. Designate the animals that a sub-permittee is authorized to possess.
3. Be familiar with the facilities of the sub-permittee and assure that the sub-permittee's facilities are in compliance with the Division of Wildlife rules and conditions of the permit holder's permit.
4. Designate the duties that a sub-permittee is authorized to do.
5. Submit Form 8998 (Sub-Permittees) for each sub-permittee to be added or maintained on the permit. This form must be submitted with each renewal. Notify the Division in writing of any changes to the sub-permittees information during the permit cycle.
6. Provide a copy of the current year's rehabilitation permit and Minimum Standards to each sub-permittee. The permit is two-sided with the sub-permittee's names listed on the back.

CONTINUING EDUCATION *(source ODW)*

While there is no continuing education requirement required to renew a rehabilitation permit, you are strongly encouraged to enhance your rehabilitation skills by participating in formal training, workshops, conferences, and by reading professional journals/newsletters/articles.

TELEPHONE NUMBER *(source ODW)*

The Division believes each permit holder has an obligation, as a wildlife steward, to both provide care for orphaned or injured wildlife and to inform and educate the person who is seeking the rehabilitators assistance. Wildlife rehabilitators must provide a telephone number on their permit application which can be made available to other wildlife rehabilitators, Division personnel, local law enforcement, and animal care facilities seeking assistance with an orphaned or injured wild animal. The number does not have to be the direct line of the permit holder. However, it must be a telephone number of a person experienced in responding to rehabilitation questions and who will provide appropriate personal assistance to the caller.

ADDITIONAL PERMITS *(source ODW)*

There are several activities which require supplemental authorization for rehabilitation. These include avian species, endangered avian and/or mammal species.

Persons wishing to rehabilitate avian species must obtain the necessary U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service permit(s) and provide a copy to the Division for their state permit file.

For state and/or federally endangered avian and/or mammal species, a supplemental letter permit is required in addition to the rehabilitation permit and must be requested in writing from the Chief of the Division. Each request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Following a review of the permit holder's qualifications, on-site caging, proximity to other authorized rehabilitators, and dialogue with the District Wildlife Management Supervisor, the request will be considered. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their request. Authorized permit holders will be issued a supplemental letter permit from the Chief. Any violation or variation from the stated restrictions and conditions of these letter permits may result in termination of the permit.

While bobcats, bald eagles, osprey, peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans and barn owls are no longer endangered species, the Division wants to be involved in decisions concerning the rehabilitation of these species. For this reason, only persons with permits to handle state endangered and/or federally listed species or those with specific written permission from the Division should accept these species for rehabilitation.

COMMERCIAL PROPAGATION LICENSE *(source ODW)*

Persons conducting wildlife rehabilitation shall not sell, barter, or trade native wildlife species. Wildlife that are being rehabilitated for release back in to the wild shall not be housed at the same location where a licensed commercial propagator is operating.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY *(source OWRA)*

Wildlife rehabilitation shall be done only on a not-for-profit basis, but any wildlife rehabilitation facility may accept donations from persons presenting wildlife to it. **Accepting wildlife for rehabilitation should not be conditional upon the receipt of a donation.** A wildlife rehabilitation facility may also consider soliciting funds from its community through education programs, memberships, corporate solicitations, fund-raising events and grants, and such fund-raising is in fact recommended as a means to increase public awareness of and a sense of commitment to both such wildlife rehabilitation facility and wildlife.

Wildlife Rehabilitation facilities which have applied for and received tax-exempt charitable status from the IRS are subject to numerous regulations and reporting requirements concerning their governance and use of funds. Accordingly, the IRS allows corporations, foundations and individuals to make tax-deductible contributions to tax-exempt charity. A wildlife rehabilitation facility which is not such a tax-exempt charity shall not lead the public to believe that the facility is a tax-exempt charity, and shall inform persons and/or organizations which make donations to it that such donations are not tax-deductible charitable contribution.

All wildlife rehabilitation facilities shall comply with all laws governing charitable solicitations required by the Ohio Attorney General, the Internal Revenue Service, and local charitable solicitations laws, and should comply with charitable solicitation standards prescribed by the Better Business Bureau to the extent they may apply to such facility. IRS Form 990 annual reports should be kept on site in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations for tax-exempt organizations required to file them.

Whether or not a wildlife rehabilitation facility is a tax-exempt charity, if it solicits people as members or volunteers it shall make available for its members and volunteers written organizational structure that defines how policy is developed, what establishes membership, the governing body, and the hierarchy for decision-making. This may be represented by policy manuals, a code of regulations, constitution, by-laws, etc.

RECORDING REQUIREMENTS *(source NWRA & IWRC)*

Records are a vital part of any rehabilitation program, and are particularly important when trying to learn from previous work in an effort to improve the care given to wildlife. Record-gathering information has been placed into two categories: required information and recommended information. Records should be kept on all wild animals. Formats will vary from organization to organization. Records can be consolidated for healthy litters or clutches of animals raised for release. Daily forms for animals by pen, enclosure, or cage are required to verify that food, medications, and care is being provided. Statistics should conform to specifications listed below.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

- Species
- Date admitted
- Name/address/phone number of finder
- Presenting injury/problem
- Final disposition
- Federal band number, where applicable

RECOMMENDED INFORMATION

- Physical examination data
- Initial weight
- Release weight
- Data regarding surgery, clinical pathology, necropsy, histopathology *(where applicable)*
- Treatment information

YEAR END REPORT *(source ODW)*

Wildlife rehabilitators are required to submit an annual report to the Division. For migratory species, a copy of your federal annual report will be acceptable. For all other species, please utilize the form "DNR 9019 Annual Year End Report" included with permit applications. This form is also available for download on the Division's website.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION RULES & REGULATIONS

SUMMARY

- All applicants for a Category I Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit must be eighteen years of age at the time of application
- All applicants for a Category I Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit must provide documentation that they have completed a Division of Wildlife approved rehabilitation course conducted by the Ohio Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (OWRA) or another approved entity.
- Applicants that have at least three years of rehabilitation experience as a Category I rehabilitator or equivalent may apply for a Category II Rehabilitation permit. The Chief or his designee shall approve new Category II applicants as needed to fulfill the rehabilitation needs of a county or geographical region.
- All applicants for a Category I or Category II Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit must provide signed verification of veterinary assistance (DNR 8960 provided).
- All Category I and Category II Wildlife Rehabilitators shall comply with the conditions set forth in the permit and provide proper facilities for the animals in their care. All cage and holding facilities shall meet the minimum standards as outlined in this Publication 5475, Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Ohio.
- All Category I and Category II Wildlife Rehabilitators shall keep a record of all animals by species which are held for rehabilitation. Records shall include the location the animal was found, the date the wild animal was received, the issue causing a need for rehabilitation, and the date and location where the wild animal was released, or its final disposition if not released. All records must be maintained for a period of two years and shall be open for inspection by any Division of Wildlife personnel. All rehabilitation facilities will be inspected by the Division of Wildlife a minimum of once every two years.
- Persons holding a Category I Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit may rehabilitate orphaned wild animals, except deer, bobcats, raccoons, weasels, skunks, mink, opossums, badgers, beaver, raptors, canids, bats, mute swans and state or federal endangered species.
- Persons holding a Category II Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit may rehabilitate additional species of native wild animals as specified on their permit except deer, coyote, bobcats, mute swans, or state or federal endangered species unless otherwise approved by the Chief of the Division of Wildlife.
- Wild animals that are not candidates for release to the wild, but may be a good representative of the species, may be transferred to licensed education facilities upon approval from the Division of Wildlife. Additional approvals may be required by the USFWS for migratory birds and Federally listed species.
- Category I and Category II Wildlife Rehabilitation Permits are not valid for the possession of Dangerous Wild Animals as defined in Chapter 935.01 of the Revised Code except for injured or orphaned timber rattlesnakes, Eastern massasaugas and bobcats held for rehabilitation purposes only.
- Wild animals that are being improperly cared for may be removed by any Wildlife Officer. Written notice to the holder of a Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit may be given that his or her permit is being revoked until the conditions of the facility or the care and handling deficiencies are corrected.

RELEASE STANDARDS (source ODW/OWRA)

Wildlife must be released within 180 days unless otherwise authorized by the Wildlife Officer. Landowner permission must be obtained prior to releasing wildlife. It is preferable that all animals be returned to the site where found for release. Refer to the "Rabies-Vector Species" section for details on release of rabies-vector species. Refer to the "Special Considerations for Turtles" section for information on releasing turtles and other amphibians and reptiles.

NON-RELEASABLE (source ODW)

Rehabilitators shall not sustain the life of any wild animal that cannot after medical management feed itself, or one that has an impairment that prevents it from standing, perching upright, or moving about without inflicting additional injury to itself. Further, any bird that has sustained injuries requiring amputation of a wing at the elbow (humero-ulnar joint) or above, a leg or foot, and/or are blind in both eyes, must be euthanized. Non-releasable wildlife, with no visible signs of injury, deformity, or amputation may be transferred to a licensed education facility with approval from the Division. A written request for the transfer, accompanied by a description of why the animal is non-releasable (provided by a veterinarian) and is a good candidate for education, must be made to the Permit Coordinator by email at: wildlife.permits@dnr.state.oh.us. All reptiles must be PIT tagged upon transfer to education.

EUTHANASIA

Under Ohio Revised Code 4729.532 (method and requirements for euthanasia of animals by use of drugs) and Ohio Revised Code 4729.531 (license for euthanasia of animals by use of drugs), only licensed veterinarians, certified euthanasia technicians and registered veterinary technicians can perform euthanasia by means of lethal injection. Additionally, Ohio Revised Code 4729.532 states no agent or employee of an animal shelter shall perform euthanasia by means of lethal injection on an animal by use of any substance other than combination drugs that contain pentobarbital and at least one non-controlled substance active ingredient, in a manufactured dosage form, whose only indication is for euthanizing animals, or other substance that the state veterinary medical licensing board and the state board of pharmacy both approve by rule adopted in accordance with Chapter 119 of the Ohio Revised Code. To become a certified euthanasia technician, individuals must take required coursework and pass an examination.

ENDANGERED SPECIES (source ODW)

If you receive an orphaned or endangered species or are called concerning an orphaned or injured endangered species, IMMEDIATELY (within 24 hours) contact the Wildlife Officer assigned to your county and the District Wildlife Management Supervisor. Inform them of any details you know about the animal (such as, extent of injury, when, and where it was found). Remember to leave your contact information, the date, and time of your call.

Wildlife District	Wildlife Supervisor	Telephone Number
District 1	Mike Ervin	(614) 902-4201
District 2	Bob Ford	(419) 424-5000
District 3	Scott Peters	(330) 644-2293
District 4	Jim Hill	(740) 589-9930
District 5	Brett Beatty	(937) 372-9261

We appreciate your assistance in the conservation of endangered species. There are several rehabilitators around the state who have permits to handle endangered species and the Wildlife Officer or District Wildlife Management Supervisor can help coordinate the transport of endangered species.

STATE ENDANGERED SPECIES

STATE ENDANGERED TERRESTRIAL SPECIES PROTECTED UNDER OHIO REVISED CODE 1531.25

(up-to-date list maintained at wildohio.gov)

BIRDS: American bittern, Northern harrier, King rail, Sandhill crane, Piping plover (*E), Common tern, Black tern, Loggerhead shrike, Kirtland's warbler (*E), Lark sparrow, Snowy egret, Cattle egret, and Upland sandpiper

MAMMALS: +Black bear, Indiana bat (*E), and Allegheny woodrat

REPTILES: Copperbelly water snake (*T), Plains gartersnake, Timber rattlesnake, Eastern massasauga (*SC), and Smooth greensnake

AMPHIBIANS: Eastern hellbender (*SC), Cave salamander, Blue-spotted salamander, Green salamander, and Eastern spadefoot

* Indicates an Additional Federal Status Designation

+ Black bear (*Ursus americanus*) shall not be rehabilitated and must be euthanized

NUISANCE ANIMALS *(source ODW)*

Wildlife, such as raccoons and bats, which have been live-trapped by a Commercial Nuisance Wild Animal Control Operator (CNWACO) or by the property owner due to a nuisance situation **shall not be accepted for rehabilitation**. There may be times when dealing with the public, a rehabilitator must determine if the animal is “abandoned” or “orphaned.” Simplifying the scenario (e.g., no rehabilitation of raccoons from chimneys/attics/porches/garages) is the most straightforward approach and will take the subjectivity out of the decision. When dealing with the public, ask for details of the situation to assist in objectively assessing if an animal has been abandoned because of a purposeful action by the homeowner or are actually “orphaned” because of a natural event. If the situation suggests the young were abandoned, then the person can try to reunite (e.g., release the young on site) or have them euthanized. Animals abandoned because of a purposeful action by the homeowner may not be rehabilitated. Any young from adults trapped or captured as nuisance animals shall not be accepted for rehabilitation. Under Ohio Administrative Code 1501:31-15-03, ALL raccoons, skunks, coyotes, fox and opossums trapped or captured under authority of the nuisance wild animal regulation must be euthanized by the CNWACO or property owner, NOT given to or accepted by a rehabilitator. If a nuisance trapper attempts to give you any animal for rehabilitation, please contact the Wildlife Officer assigned to your county or District Wildlife Management Supervisor as soon as possible.

INVASIVE NON-NATIVE FREE-RANGING TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATE *(source ODW)*

In August 2008 the Division of Wildlife implemented Policy #41 entitled, “Invasive Non-native Free-ranging Terrestrial Vertebrate.” This policy outlines the agency’s position concerning the potential negative impacts of non-native species and the need for their control.

It is the policy of the Division of Wildlife to humanely dispatch invasive non-native free-ranging terrestrial vertebrates found on Division owned or managed lands. The Division will strongly encourage other land-managing agencies to also eliminate these species from their lands. The “American Veterinary Medical Association’s 2013 Edition Guidelines For Euthanasia” will continue to be the standard followed by the Division of Wildlife to humanely euthanize terrestrial vertebrates. In addition, the Division discourages the rehabilitation of any invasive non-native terrestrial species and specifically prohibits the rehabilitation of **mute swans, red-eared or yellow bellied sliders, and European wall lizards. These species must be euthanized.**

Due to physical and environmental barriers, wildlife are often restricted in their ability to migrate and populate new areas. However, many species are being transported by people for commercial or personal use while others are introduced inadvertently as hitchhikers on vehicles or ships. The majority of these species do not become established in the wild. However, they occupy areas where their natural predators do not exist and may have a substantial advantage over native species. If they become established these nonnative invasive free-ranging terrestrial species can and do out compete and displace native wildlife. Two examples include 1) the mute swan which competes with the trumpeter swan in wetland areas and is a vector for several strains of avian influenza and 2) the European wall lizard which has established a reproducing population along the Ohio River near downtown Cincinnati and is spreading westward displacing native skinks.

The release and/or escape of unwanted reptiles and amphibians is difficult to control or prevent. However, if non-native species are found in the wild and can be eliminated before they become established, we can minimize their effect. The red-eared slider is a non-native turtle common in the pet trade and more frequently found in isolated wetlands in the Oak Openings. If individual turtles are removed and humanly euthanized they will not establish and displace more sensitive species such as the native spotted turtle. In 2000, the Division adopted rules and regulations prohibiting release of captive reptiles and amphibians to prevent disease transmission to wild populations. This is primarily a deterrent to people who might have otherwise released unwanted animals into the wild. The rule facilitates our ability to prosecute if a person is caught releasing an animal or if the animal is later found and their owner identified by the implanted passive integrated transponder (PIT) number.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TURTLES

Characteristics of some Ohio turtle species should be taken into account by the wildlife rehabilitator to ensure that our actions are contributing to healthy and viable populations throughout the state. The first of these is the extreme site fidelity of individuals, often using the same areas for nesting, overwintering, and seeking out mates. How exactly these patterns are formed is poorly understood, but recent research is finding ever more complex turtle life histories. This site fidelity can often lead to the failure of translocated turtles to establish home ranges in unfamiliar habitats, eventually succumbing to mortality associated with dispersal and exhaustion.

A second characteristic of turtles that should be considered is their longevity. Longevity of some Ohio turtle species include 75 years for Snapping Turtles, 80 years for Blanding's Turtles, and 100+ years for Box Turtles. These long lives have two implications for conservation and management. First, turtle population dynamics often require adults to be around for a long time (to have low mortality) in order for populations to be viable. Unlike most game species, there is no evidence that turtles compensate for a reduction in population density with increased reproductive output or higher survivorship. Second, a long life means that individuals can have a longer time to interact with and alter populations.

The third consideration for turtles is that of disease. The transmittal of novel pathogens through well-meaning rescue and rehabilitation programs is not merely theoretical. Translocation of turtles has been implicated in the spread of Upper Respiratory Tract Disease and possibly ranavirus. Diseases that have received increasing attention include ranavirus, Chelonian Mycoplasma, and Terrepene herpesvirus, but these are simply the diseases that we are aware of today. Not all infected turtles will necessarily show symptoms and new diseases are constantly being identified.

Based on these characteristics and considerations, the following recommendations are made for wildlife rehabilitators dealing with turtles:

1. Do not accept turtles that have been "rescued" but are otherwise healthy and uninjured. Old injuries that have healed, including a missing limb or eye or previously cracked shell, are commonly observed in wild turtle populations and are not a sufficient reason for accepting a turtle for rehabilitation. Explain to the public that removal of turtles from areas that they deem "unsuitable" will eventually result in the loss of populations. Turtles can and do survive in some suburban and even urban areas, but not if they are constantly rescued and relocated.
2. Turtles should be released at their point of capture, not simply within the township where they were found. When you receive a turtle, ask for – and document – the location with as much specificity as possible. Within reason, this is the location where the turtle should be released. Releasing amphibians or reptiles somewhere other than their point of capture requires written authorization from the chief of the Division of Wildlife.
3. Keep turtles isolated from other animals and use strict biosecurity procedures to ensure you and your facility are not inadvertently spreading diseases.
4. Release turtles as soon as possible. The longer a turtle spends in captivity, the greater the chance it has to be exposed to pathogens. Living in captivity may also interrupt natural cycles such as overwintering, breeding, and nesting. Releasing amphibians or reptiles that have been in captivity for longer than 30 days requires written authorization from the chief of the Division of Wildlife.

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE'S POSITION ON KNOWN & EMERGING DISEASES IN WILDLIFE

The Division of Wildlife utilizes a five-pronged approach to address known and emerging wildlife disease issues. This approach focuses on 1) preventing diseases before Ohio's wildlife are affected; 2) detecting diseases in wildlife that emerge; 3) diagnosing and identifying diseases; 4) monitoring outbreaks of diseases in wildlife; and 5) managing these diseases in wildlife. The Division also puts significant effort into informing and educating Ohioans about the Division's role and authority in addressing disease issues and in disseminating factual information about diseases that impact or potentially affect Ohio's wildlife populations.

Under Ohio Revised Code 1531.04(A) the Division is directed to plan and implement programs and policies based on the best available information, including biological information derived from professionally accepted practices for the benefit of the wildlife resource. Maintaining healthy wildlife populations is the most basic function of the Division. Species which are abundant like the white-tailed deer, mallards, or Canada geese could be locally reduced in numbers or vigor from a known or an emerging disease. The threat of a known or an emerging disease in wildlife could be devastating to endangered species with limited populations.

WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME

In March 2011, the first case of White-nose syndrome (WNS) was confirmed in an abandoned mine on the Wayne National Forest in Lawrence County, Ohio. The disease was first confirmed in the United States during the winter of 2006-07 when the New York Department of Environmental Conservation found dead and dying bats in caves in New York State. Since 2006, it has been estimated that WNS has killed over 6 million bats. The disease has spread quickly and is now confirmed in 25 other states and 5 Canadian Provinces.

WNS is caused by a cold-loving fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (PD). Although PD in different life stages can be found year-round on infected bats (sometimes only visible through a microscope), the disease is most obvious during cold winters while the bats are hibernating. Characteristic signs of WNS include the white fungus on the muzzles and other parts of affected bats, as well as bats flying during the day during cold winter weather.

Since 2011, Ohio has experienced the rapid spread of White-nose Syndrome (WNS), the range of the disease is now considered statewide, and several species of bat populations are in significant decline. For instance, over the past year, northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) was listed federally (and in the state) as threatened because of this species population declines caused by WNS. The scope of bat mortality of many species associated with the WNS epizootic is unprecedented in recent history. The fast rate of WNS spread across the country, the high rate of mortality, and the previously unknown causal fungal pathogen, have made this a challenging wildlife disease event.

WNS is caused by a cold-loving fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (PD). This fungus can be found on bats year round; at times (when PD is in spore form) it is only visible through a microscope. The fungus affects bats during colder temperatures, and may be seen on the muzzle of hibernating bats. However, the fungus is unlikely visible on bats that have emerged from hibernation or during the summer when the fungus is in spore form. Some signs that indicate bats may be affected include bats flying during the day during cold winter weather and bats with lower than normal body weight, dehydration, and wing membrane damage.

In response to the statewide distribution of WNS and bat population declines, Ohio is no longer requiring all bats to be euthanized during winter months. All bats which can be rehabilitated must be transferred immediately to a properly permitted wildlife rehabilitator. Please note a limited number of rehabilitators will be permitted to rehabilitate bats. Rehabilitators who wish to work with bats must have established biosecurity protocols in place and rigorously follow WNS decontamination procedures, as well as proper caging and experience with bats.

Ohio bat species are often difficult to differentiate, especially those in the *Myotis* genus which include Indiana bats (federally and state endangered), northern long-eared bat (federally and state threatened), and little brown bat (state species of concern). Bats that cannot be rehabilitated must be humanely euthanized. Prior to euthanizing any bat be certain to identify the specimen to species. For help with identification, contact the Division's Bat Biologist, Jennifer Norris at 614-265-6349 or jennifer.norris@dnr.state.oh.us. Jennifer must be notified within 24 hours if either the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), or threatened northern-long eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) is received. Both Jennifer and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Columbus Field Office Endangered Species Coordinator, Angela Boyer (614-416-8993 ext. 21) must be notified prior to euthanizing any Indiana bat or northern-long eared bat.

Any time a bat is handled or taken into a rehabilitation facility, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decontamination protocols must be followed. Visit <http://www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome> for updated materials and for supplemental documents that explain the decontamination procedures. Visit <http://bit.ly/whitenosesyndrome> for updates and information on WNS in Ohio.

RABIES-VECTOR SPECIES

All mammals can get and transmit rabies; however high-risk species or rabies-vector species (RVS) include raccoons, skunks, foxes, and bats.

Only licensed Category II wildlife rehabilitators with RVS training may raise orphaned or provide care to injured RVS. All Category II rehabilitators must provide the date of their most recent pre-exposure vaccination and/or antibody titer and acknowledge the risk of handling these species on the permit application. All rehabilitators handling RVS shall complete a training course (or equivalent certification) for handling RVS offered by the OWRA or other approved organization. All Category II rehabilitators shall discuss the risks associated with handling RVS with all volunteers and sub-permittees who assist with wildlife rehabilitation at their facility.

Skunks and foxes must be euthanized or held for 30 days with no signs of rabies before being released to the same county and township in which they were originally obtained. If this is not possible, they must be euthanized.

Raccoon originating from Ashtabula, Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Harrison, Jefferson, Lake, Mahoning, Monroe, Portage, Summit and Trumbull counties cannot be rehabilitated and must be euthanized. In the remaining 74 counties, raccoons must be euthanized or held for a minimum of 65 days with no sign of disease before being released. If held for 65 days with no signs of illness, they must be released in the same county and township in which they were originally obtained.

Rehabilitated bats showing no sign of rabies should be released immediately during the spring, summer, and fall (April 1 to November 30, when temperatures are above freezing). Bats that are rehabilitated in the winter should be released as soon as possible in the spring (April 1, pending weather conditions). Bats should also be released to the same county and township they originated. It is recommended that all animals are to be released in the same approximate location they were collected.

Unless otherwise instructed by your local health department, all RVS which die or are euthanized shall be submitted within 24 hours to the local health department for rabies testing. If bitten by a RVS or potentially exposed to rabies, you must immediately (within 24 hours) call the local health department to report the incident and submit the animal for testing, as well as seek medical attention.

CONTROL OF DISEASES TRANSMISSIBLE FROM ANIMAL TO ANIMAL

1. The efficiency of cleaning should be incorporated into the design of cages and pens. Seamless, non-porous materials should be employed for cage construction and food containers.
2. Animal enclosures should be kept sanitary by having an adequate and routine cleaning regimen in which responsibilities are clearly defined and assigned to personnel. Before a newly-acquired animal is introduced into a cage or enclosure that has previously been used by another animal, the cage must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and the bedding material changed.
3. Animals having contagious diseases must be kept isolated from all non-infected susceptible animals. Newly acquired animals should be housed separately upon arrival. They should not be added to a group pen until it has been established that they are in good health (i.e., ten to thirty days). **RVS that are being accepted from different locations/townships should be marked in such a manner to differentiate individuals when housed in the same enclosure. Marking method is at the discretion of the rehabilitator but must remain visible/detectable through the rehabilitation period to facilitate the efficient return of the animals to the appropriate township for release. Unmarked animals from different locations must not be housed together.** A routine examination for parasites should be performed on new arrivals, with reexamination at intervals during protracted rehabilitation.
4. Animal diets must be prepared and foodstuffs should be stored under sanitary conditions that are free from vermin and microbial contamination.

STANDARDS GOVERNING THE PREVENTION OF DISEASE TRANSMISSION WITHIN THE REHABILITATION FACILITY (source ODW, NWRA/IWRC, & OWRA)

1. Clothing should be clean and changed as often as necessary. It is suggested that the facility provide lab coats or other tops to volunteers and launder them.
2. Shoes and boots should be kept clean.
3. Disposable gloves and surgical masks must be available for use during such procedures as necropsies or cleaning contaminated animal quarters.
4. Lavatory facilities should be accessible. This is especially true of handwashing sinks.
5. Eating, drinking and smoking should be restricted to designated areas free of animal waste materials.
6. The supervisory staff must, as a part of their training, be given basic information on zoonoses. Personal hygiene rules should be established and the supervisory staff should set an example.
7. All personnel should be advised to seek the consent of their physicians before working in the facility. They should acquire any necessary vaccinations (especially tetanus). If working with mammals, they should inquire about the possibility of pre-exposure rabies vaccinations. Female personnel who become pregnant should be advised to renew medical consent.
8. Necropsy procedures must adhere strictly to sanitary practices including the use of surgical masks and disposable gloves, appropriate outer garments, and the use of disinfectants.
9. There must be separate refrigeration facilities for food and for post-mortem specimens.
10. The veterinarian assisting a wildlife rehabilitation facility should direct the wildlife rehabilitation facility as to the proper disposal of carcasses.
11. A wildlife rehabilitation facility should use discretion when allowing children, persons with weakened immune systems, or women who are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant to handle any animals or work within the animal care areas of the wildlife rehabilitation facility. In no event should a Category II Facility allow such persons to have access to diseased wildlife.
12. Residences where children, persons with weakened immune systems, or women who are pregnant or considering becoming pregnant live should not be used as wildlife rehabilitation facilities.
13. Any permit holder who possesses rabies vector species for rehabilitation should have possession of and comply with Procedures and Guidelines for Wildlife Rehabilitators Who Are Authorized to Handle Rabies-Vector Species written by Laura J. Simon.
14. All wildlife rehabilitators should have current tetanus inoculations.
15. If you, or a sub-permittee, or volunteer is bitten by a rabies-vector species or otherwise potentially exposed to rabies; immediately (within 24 hours) call your local health department to report the incident and submit the animal for testing, as well as seek medical attention.

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All organic refuse must be collected into airtight bags or containers and stored in a safe location until removal from the premises. The supervisory staff is responsible to local public health officials on matters regarding waste and post-mortem material disposal.
2. Indoor facilities are required to have efficient ventilation and air movement.
3. Domestic animals should not be allowed on the premises. However, if they are, they should be fully vaccinated and must have no direct contact with wildlife.
4. A program for rodent & insect control is recommended for wildlife care facilities. However, care should be taken to avoid contaminating food or housing areas with pesticides.

CONTACT INFORMATION**STATE WILDLIFE OFFICERS BY COUNTY** (UPDATED ON 2/3/16)Go to *wildohio.gov* for current state wildlife officer assignments in your county.**ODNR DIVISION OF WILDLIFE DISTRICTS & OFFICES****WILDLIFE HEADQUARTERS**

2045 Morse Road • Columbus, OH 43229-6693
 ☎ (614) 265-6300 (Voice)
 1-800-750-0750 (Ohio Relay-TTY)
 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543)

WILDLIFE DISTRICT ONE

1500 Dublin Road • Columbus, OH 43215
 ☎ (614) 644-3925

WILDLIFE DISTRICT TWO

952 Lima Avenue • Findlay, OH 45840
 ☎ (419) 424-5000

WILDLIFE DISTRICT THREE

912 Portage Lakes Drive • Akron, OH 44319
 ☎ (330) 644-2293

WILDLIFE DISTRICT FOUR

360 E. State Street • Athens, OH 45701
 ☎ (740) 589-9930

WILDLIFE DISTRICT FIVE

1076 Old Springfield Pike • Xenia, OH 45385
 ☎ (937) 372-9261

FAIRPORT FISHERIES UNIT

1190 High Street • Fairport Harbor, OH 44077
 ☎ (440) 352-4199

SANDUSKY FISHERIES & ENFORCEMENT UNITS

305 E. Shoreline Drive • Sandusky, OH 44870
 ☎ (419) 625-8062

INLAND FISHERIES RESEARCH UNIT

10517 Canal Road SE • Hebron, OH 43025
 ☎ (740) 928-7034

ADAMS Scott Cartwright (937) 372-5639 ext5205	LICKING Patrick Muldovan (614) 902-4214
ALLEN Craig Barr (419) 429-8379	LOGAN Adam Smith (614) 902-4215
ASHLAND Brennan Earick (330) 245-3044	LORAIN Randy White (330) 245-3032
ASHTABULA Jason Warren (330) 245-3036	LUCAS Mike Ohrich (419) 429-8388
ATHENS Allen Patton (740) 589-9980	MADISON Matt Teders (614) 902-4216
AUGLAIZE Mark Schemmel (937) 372-5639 ext5218	MAHONING Tom Frank (330) 245-3038
BELMONT Brian Baker (740) 589-9981	MARION Chad Grote (614) 902-4217
BROWN Eric Lamb (937) 372-5639 ext5220	MEDINA Eric Moore (330) 245-3043
BUTLER Aaron Ireland (937) 372-5639 ext5207	MEIGS Chris Gilkey (740) 589-9988
CARROLL Kyle Queer (330) 245-3048	MERCER Austin Levering (937) 372-5639 ext5210
CHAMPAIGN Jeffrey Tipton (614) 902-4209	MIAMI Jasmine Grossnickle (937) 372-5639 ext5215
CLARK Byron Rice (937) 372-5639 ext5212	MONROE Wes Feldner (740) 589-9989
CLERMONT Gus Kiebel (937) 372-5639 ext5209	MONTGOMERY Trent Weaver (937) 372-5639 ext5211
CLINTON Matt Roberts (937) 372-5639 ext5206	MORGAN Todd Stewart (740) 589-9990
COLUMBIANA Jesse Janosik (330) 245-3039	MORROW Tyler Eldred (614) 902-4218
COSHOCTON Jerrod Allison (740) 589-9982	MUSKINGUM Jeffrey Berry (740) 589-9991
CRAWFORD Jason Parr (419) 429-8380	NOBLE Brad St. Clair (740) 589-9992
CUYAHOGA Ryan Donnelly (330) 245-3033	OTTAWA Reid Van Cleve (419) 429-8389
DARKE Jeff Wenning (937) 372-5639 ext5208	PAULDING <i>vacant</i> (419) 429-8390
DEFIANCE Matthew Smith (419) 429-8381	PERRY Eric Lane (740) 589-9993
DELAWARE Maurice Irish (614) 902-4221	PICKAWAY Josh Elster (614) 902-4219
ERIE Kelsey Brockman (419) 429-8382	PIKE Matt Van Cleve (740) 589-9994
FAIRFIELD Tony Zerkle (614) 902-4210	PORTAGE Barry Hennig (330) 245-3040
FAYETTE John Coffman (614) 902-4211	PREBLE Brad Turner (937) 372-5639 ext5219
FRANKLIN Brad Kiger (614) 902-4212	PUTNAM Jason Porinchok (419) 429-8391
FULTON Josh Zientek (419) 429-8383	RICHLAND Gregory Wasilewski (419) 429-8392
GALLIA Roy Rucker (740) 589-9983	ROSS Bob Nelson (740) 589-9995
GEAUGA Scott Denamen (330) 245-3035	SANDUSKY Matthew Leibengood (419) 429-8393
GREENE Matthew Hunt (937) 372-5639 ext5204	SCIOTO Hollie Fluharty (740) 589-9996
GUERNSEY Roby Williams (740) 589-9984	SENECA Austin Dickinson (419) 429-8394
HAMILTON Ryan Schock (937) 372-5639 ext5217	SHELBY Tim Rourke (937) 372-5639 ext5213
HANCOCK Eric VonAlmen (419) 429-8384	STARK Mark Basinger (330) 245-3041
HARDIN Ryan Kennedy (419) 429-8385	SUMMIT Daniel Shroyer (330) 245-3042
HARRISON Nick Turner (330) 245-3049	TRUMBULL Marty Cisine (330) 245-3037
HENRY Troy Reimund (419) 429-8386	TUSCARAWAS Wade Dunlap (330) 245-3047
HIGHLAND Jim Carnes (937) 372-5639 ext5214	UNION Josh Shields (614) 902-4220
HOCKING Chris Dodge (740) 589-9985	VAN WERT Brad Buening (419) 429-8395
HOLMES Jeremy Carter (330) 245-3045	VINTON Jared Abele (740) 589-9997
HURON Nathan Kaufmann (419) 429-8387	WARREN Jason Keller (937) 372-5639 ext5216
JACKSON Ted Witham (740) 589-9986	WASHINGTON Eric Bear (740) 589-9998
JEFFERSON Craig Porter (330) 245-3050	WAYNE Aaron Brown (330) 245-3046
KNOX Michael Budd (614) 902-4213	WILLIAMS <i>vacant</i> (419) 429-8396
LAKE Marino Pellegrini (330) 245-3034	WOOD Cody Klima (419) 429-8397
LAWRENCE Darin Abbott (740) 589-9987	WYANDOT Nathan West (419) 429-8398