

Wildlife Rehabilitation in Wisconsin

An Introduction and Study Guide



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This document can also be found on the DNR website:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/wildlifehealth.html>

Code of Ethics

A Wildlife Rehabilitators Code of Ethics

1. A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to achieve high standards of animal care through knowledge and an understanding of the field. Continuing efforts must be made to keep informed of current rehabilitation information, methods, and regulations.
2. A wildlife rehabilitator should be responsible, conscientious, and dedicated, and should continuously work toward improving the quality of care given to wild animals undergoing rehabilitation.
3. A wildlife rehabilitator must abide by local, state, provincial and federal laws concerning wildlife, wildlife rehabilitation, and associated activities.
4. A wildlife rehabilitator should establish safe work habits and conditions, abiding by current health and safety practices at all times.
5. A wildlife rehabilitator should acknowledge limitations and enlist the assistance of a veterinarian or other trained professional when appropriate.
6. A wildlife rehabilitator should respect other rehabilitators and persons in related fields sharing skills and knowledge in the spirit of cooperation for the welfare of the animals.
7. A wildlife rehabilitator should place optimum animal care above personal gain.
8. A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to provide professional humane care in all phases of wildlife rehabilitation, respecting the wildness and maintaining the dignity of each animal in life and in death. Releasable animals should be maintained in a wild condition and released as soon as appropriate. Non-releasable animals which are inappropriate for education, foster-parenting, or captive breeding have a right to euthanasia.
9. A wildlife rehabilitator should encourage community support and involvement through volunteer training and public education. The common goal should be to promote a responsible concern for living beings and the welfare of the environment.
10. A wildlife rehabilitator should work on the basis of sound ecological principles, incorporating appropriate conservation ethics and an attitude of stewardship.
11. A wildlife rehabilitator should conduct all business and activities in a professional manner, with honesty, integrity, compassion, and commitment, realizing that an individual's conduct reflects on the entire field of wildlife rehabilitation.

Introduction to the Guide

Thank you for your interest in Wisconsin's wildlife rehabilitation program. This booklet can be useful as a reference for rehabilitators of all experience levels in Wisconsin. For beginning wildlife rehabilitators, the information provided in this booklet will help you better understand the role of wildlife rehabilitation in our state, allow you to decide whether this activity is something in which you would like to participate, and assist you in getting started as a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. It also provides basic information on what wildlife rehabilitation involves, how wildlife rehabilitation is regulated in Wisconsin and provides you with information and recommendations to conduct this activity to the best of your ability. In addition, the appendices in the back of this booklet may prove to be useful references in daily wildlife rehabilitation activities.

After you are familiar with the information in this booklet, continue your education by reading references listed in the Bibliography. These reference materials are separated into categories. If you have no experience in wildlife rehabilitation, start out by looking at the publications in the "Basic Rehabilitation" category. If you are an experienced rehabilitator, but want to further your knowledge in specific areas, you can choose references based on the different categories and your interests. Various professional organizations, conferences, and other rehabilitators provide additional opportunities for continuing education.

We strongly recommend that before giving serious consideration to applying for a Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation license you gain hands-on experience by volunteering at a wildlife rehabilitation facility or with an established individual licensed rehabilitator. This will help you decide whether you want to dedicate the time, effort and money it takes to be a good rehabilitator. If possible, become a member of state, national, and international wildlife rehabilitation organizations (see Contact Information, page 24).

Please be aware that this is a very brief summary of issues pertinent to wildlife rehabilitation in Wisconsin. Understanding the concepts addressed in the booklet will help you to acquire your license from the state, but the information contained in the guide is just the beginning of your learning. Read through this information carefully, and use it to guide you to the next step in furthering your knowledge.

Applying for a Wildlife Rehabilitation License

To obtain a Wildlife Rehabilitation License in Wisconsin, you must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Be at least 18 years of age and a resident of Wisconsin
2. Pass an exam with a score of 80% or higher. Exams will be given at selected DNR Service Centers by appointment.
3. Submit a completed application including a signed Consulting Veterinarian Agreement form.
 - A. Applicants for a Basic License must also submit a signed Sponsor Agreement form.
 - B. For an Advanced License, you must submit a Basic Level Evaluation form signed by your Sponsor and Consulting Veterinarian that states you have at least two years of wildlife rehabilitation experience as a Basic Licensee. If you are applying for an Advanced License before December 2005, you can substitute four or more years of wildlife rehabilitation experience for the Basic Level Evaluation requirement.
4. Pass a facility inspection after completion of the above requirements.

Department staff will review your application and determine if license issuance is acceptable based on your knowledge, experience, qualifications and species intended for rehabilitation. **Contact DNR Bureau of Wildlife Management at (608) 266-8204 for additional information on application materials and exam.**

The department may issue a rehabilitation license to an individual possessing a valid rehabilitation license or permit from another state or province, provided the minimum requirements are met.

Exam and Preparation

All wildlife rehabilitators must pass an examination to become licensed in Wisconsin. The intent of the exam is to test your understanding of basic rehabilitation concepts and information resources, not the specifics of injury or disease in any particular species. The exam is a multiple-choice and true/false test, consisting of 50 questions (see Appendix II for examples). To pass the exam, you must achieve a score of at least 80%. There are no additional exam requirements to renew your license or obtain an Advanced License.

This booklet will introduce you to general topics and information, including applicable Wisconsin and Federal laws, which we expect you to understand in order to pass the exam. There will not be any questions on the exam that are specific to one species. **However, this guide should not be used as your sole preparation for the exam.** Please familiarize yourself with the numerous reference materials cited in the Bibliography. As a starting point, we highly recommend the *Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation*, published by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) and the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA). *Minimum Standards* covers most basic concepts of wildlife rehabilitation that you will need to know to pass the exam and is available for free on the internet.

The exam will be given by appointment at numerous DNR Service Centers throughout the state beginning in July 2004 (see Appendix I).

Wildlife Rehabilitation Overview

Wildlife rehabilitation is the act of providing temporary care to injured, sick, or orphaned wildlife with the goal of releasing them back into the wild. When an animal is admitted for rehabilitation, it faces one of four fates: death as a result of its medical condition, successful rehabilitation and release, permanent placement as an educational display due to factors preventing release, or euthanasia.

Successful release of wildlife means the animal must be able to function as a wild animal in its natural habitat. This includes the ability to recognize and find appropriate foods, socialize and reproduce with members of its own species, and exhibit normal behaviors such as fear of humans and predator avoidance.

As defined in s. 169.01(37), Wis. Stats. a wild animal is any animal of a wild nature that is normally found in the wild and that is not a domestic animal. Most wild birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians are protected by state laws, and ownership of those animals remains with the state, s. 169.02(3). Wis. Stats. Therefore, wild animals are not to be held in captivity without a proper government issued permit or license. Anyone wishing to engage in wildlife rehabilitation activities in Wisconsin is required to obtain a license through the Department of Natural Resources. Keep in mind that there are certain restrictions. Rehabilitators operating under a basic license are not permitted to rehabilitate harmful wild animals as defined by s.169.11, Wis. Stats. Currently harmful wild animals include cougars, members of the family ursidae (bears), wild swine, and feral swine, however the Department has the authority to add animals to this list after consulting with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Department of Health and Family Services. In addition, anyone wishing to rehabilitate migratory birds that are protected by federal laws must also obtain a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Wisconsin DNR issues licenses for wildlife rehabilitation activities to qualified individuals. The intent of a rehabilitation license is to ensure all persons engaged in wildlife rehabilitation are qualified and provide humane care and housing for wildlife being rehabilitated. This activity can be a rewarding experience but it is extremely demanding and consumes a large amount of time, energy and money. Potential candidates should seriously consider the numerous responsibilities involved with wildlife rehabilitation before actively pursuing a license.

Before giving serious consideration to applying for a license, we strongly recommend that you experience wildlife rehabilitation first-hand by volunteering to work at a rehabilitation facility or with an established individual rehabilitator. This experience will help you decide if you are willing to dedicate the significant effort it takes to be a good rehabilitator. Understanding all that is involved with rehabilitation comes from hands-on experience and networking with licensed individuals.

What is involved with Wildlife Rehabilitation?

Persons agreeing to accept this responsibility must be willing to:

Donate personal time. Quality wildlife rehabilitation will take up much of your time. For those wildlife rehabilitators who care for orphaned babies, the busiest time is spring and summer when you may be feeding baby birds every 20 minutes or bottle feeding a baby mammal every couple of hours – around the clock. Preparing diets, cleaning cages, constructing new cages, and answering endless telephone calls will take up even more time!

First you must decide how much of your time you are willing to spend doing wildlife rehabilitation. Set realistic boundaries. Starting off trying to do everything will only overwhelm you; burn out happens quickly. Attending to the demanding needs of the animals in your care should be your primary focus.

Most experienced rehabilitators in the field recommend that beginners spend their time, for at least the first year, on one or two common or easier species to rehabilitate. Choosing a species, such as gray squirrels, gives you the chance to focus your learning on the natural history, rehabilitation recommendations, proper caging, and appropriate diets for that specific species. Once you feel comfortable working with that one species you may want to reconsider your time and financial commitments before expanding to other species.

Around the clock animal care can interfere with your social and family life. How will you go on vacation when you have baby birds to feed? Having well established relationships with other rehabilitators can help with some of these time commitments.

As you become known in your community as a wildlife rehabilitator you should expect an increase in time dealing with public communications regarding a wide variety of wildlife related issues. You can expect phone calls at all hours of the day not only from the general public, but also humane societies, veterinary clinics, animal control personnel, nature centers, pet stores, and department personnel. As a result, wildlife rehabilitation is a field experiencing a high burnout rate. A responsible rehabilitator needs the ability to say “no”. Knowing your limitations will help you manage your time most efficiently.

Assume the financial obligations that come with providing quality animal care. Wildlife rehabilitation is a volunteer activity. A very common misconception is that the department pays for wildlife care. However, the Wisconsin DNR is not responsible for any costs incurred by a licensed rehabilitator. That responsibility lies solely with the license holder. Wildlife rehabilitation can become an expensive activity and you will need to have money available to provide adequate care for the animals in your care. It will cost hundreds, if not thousands of dollars per year to conduct this activity depending on the number and variety of animals you take in. You will have to buy or construct appropriate caging for each species, handling equipment, medications and appropriate diets. In addition, you should also expect to pay for at least some of the veterinary advice and services for treatment of injured and sick animals. Many wildlife rehabilitators network with members of their local communities for some goods and services and seek donations of used equipment.

There are indirect costs as well; increased use of personal vehicles, telephone, and household utilities will also add to costs. Active rehabilitators will continue to spend money on reference materials, subscriptions to magazines, and journals that cover natural history, ecology, and animal care techniques. Membership in both state and national wildlife rehabilitation organizations is strongly recommended. These organizations provide valuable learning and educational opportunities through networking and hands-on training sessions. Continuing education is imperative in the dynamic field of wildlife rehabilitation. All levels of rehabilitators are encouraged to attend lectures, classes, and conferences to remain up-to-date on the newest rehabilitation information and practices and ensure the best care for the animals in their facilities.

Wildlife rehabilitators cannot charge for their services, it is strictly a voluntary service. Establishing a not-for-profit organization can sometimes help with costs associated with wildlife rehabilitation activities. Information on this can be obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and the Internal Revenue Service.

Build a good working relationship with an Advanced Licensee. Basic Licensees are required to work with the assistance of one or more Advanced License holders who act as sponsors/mentors. This mentorship insures that the Basic Licensee will have an experienced rehabilitator to teach techniques, help solve problems, answer questions, and provide overall direction on development of rehabilitation skills. In addition, a sponsor is an excellent networking resource. In the developing field of wildlife rehabilitation, networking provides unlimited access to the successes and failures of those who have been practicing longer than you. This network will also help when it is in an animal’s best interest to be transferred to another

facility, to place single orphans with others of its species, for example. In addition, the Department has a directory of the state's licensed wildlife rehabilitators available for the purpose of networking.

In choosing a sponsor, the Basic Licensee should keep in mind what they hope to gain from establishing such a relationship. The sponsor should be familiar with the species you are interested in and you should feel compatible in your working relationship with this person. Sharing the same values, expectations, interest and personality will serve both you and your sponsor better than if you are struggling with a difficult working relationship. You will want to forge a relationship that is beneficial and provides instruction, training and the ability to conduct quality rehabilitation at either your facility or your sponsor's facility. Be sure to work out specific details when entering into such an agreement. Some of these items are addressed in the application and attachments. If your goal as a Basic Licensee is to advance to the next level, make sure that your sponsor acknowledges this in their instruction and guidance so that you may be recommended to the DNR for advancement.

Build a good working relationship with a licensed Veterinarian. Wildlife rehabilitators are neither trained nor licensed to diagnose and treat animal diseases. Licensees are not allowed to practice veterinary medicine, unless they currently hold a Veterinary Medical License. Medical or surgical treatments, drug prescription and administration, injections, vaccinations, and anesthesia must only take place at the direction and under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. As a condition of their license, wildlife rehabilitators must establish and maintain a good working relationship with a cooperating veterinarian. Veterinary care is a critical part of wildlife rehabilitation and the welfare of animals undergoing rehabilitation will only benefit from a good working relationship between the rehabilitator and veterinary consultant.

Veterinarian's Role

All license holders should understand how licensed veterinarians fit into wildlife rehabilitation activities and what regulatory latitude they are granted under these rules.

1. Licensed veterinarians may, at their discretion, serve as voluntary consultants for Basic and Advanced level license holders.
2. Veterinarians are not required to have a wildlife rehabilitation license to consult with or provide advice on care and treatment of animals undergoing rehabilitation.
3. Veterinarians may treat wild animals in their clinic without possessing a wildlife rehabilitation license, provided that no stay at the clinic is longer than 24 hours.
4. Veterinarians that retain wild animals for longer than 24 hours are required to have a wildlife rehabilitation license, or be working with a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, or notify the department.

You must take the initiative! A license holder is responsible for negotiating an agreement with a licensed veterinarian to serve as your medical consultant. It is extremely important that you and your veterinary consultant are compatible. Incompatible relationships and values will inevitably lead to misunderstandings that can cost your rehabilitation efforts and ultimately affect the welfare of the animals in your care.

Negotiate a good working relationship with your consulting veterinarian to avoid conflicts. There are several details that must be agreed on in advance. Among other details, the following should be considered:

1. Goods and services that the veterinarian is willing to provide.
2. Charges by the veterinarian for the services and supplies provided.
3. Species that the veterinarian will and will not work with.

4. The veterinarian should have sufficient knowledge in wildlife medicine and be acquainted with general care and conditions associated with wildlife patients.
5. Types of consultation will the veterinarian provide over the phone.
6. How often the veterinarian is willing to be available?
7. If necessary, is the veterinarian willing to come to your facility?
8. Arrangements for bringing wild animals to the clinic (appointment only, in case of emergency, etc.)
9. How wild animals should be brought into the clinic (secure carrier, through a back door, etc.)?
10. Where wild animals will be kept while at the clinic in order to minimize stress (noise, foot traffic, proximity to predators, etc.).
11. What type of diagnostic procedures will the veterinarian perform (radiographs, hematology, etc.)?
12. What types of treatments will the veterinarian perform (prescribe and administer medications, fracture management, surgery, etc.)?
13. Establish protocols for follow up care, treatments, record keeping and communications.
14. Establish protocols and agreements on euthanizing animals. Agree, in advance, on a process of how you and your veterinarian will make euthanasia decisions. Make sure to address the details of how the process will be carried out including safe disposal of the carcasses.
15. Any agreements must abide by the laws and regulations governing the practice of veterinary medicine.

Release of the animal. As previously stated, the purpose of wildlife rehabilitation is to release healthy animals back to the wild. It is one of the most rewarding aspects of the rehabilitation process. Releasing the animal, however, is not always easy. Even the most experienced rehabilitators foster an emotional connection with the animals in their care, a connection that can make it difficult for them to release the animals. Once released, the rehabilitator no longer has control over what happens to the animal. So in order to ensure the highest success rate possible and make release a little easier, rehabilitators must consider a variety of release criteria.

Some of the most important pre-release considerations include recovery from the primary injury/illness, physical conditioning, acclimation to weather, release site selection, seasonal timing of release, and the behavioral and psychological fitness of the animal. Animals' needs vary depending on the time of the year, age and sex of the animal, as well as the breeding condition. These considerations are as important as proper medical management of the animal's injury/illness to its long-term survival.

In some situations, it is best to release the animal where it was found. This is not always the case, however. Choosing appropriate release sites is a critical step in successful wildlife rehabilitation. Release of any animal to the wild requires an understanding of many biological and non-biological factors. Species have habitat requirements, which are the minimum needs necessary to ensure their survival and reproduction potential. There are many characteristics in habitat selection that must be considered, and it is critical to understand which characteristics are important to the animal being released. References on the animal's natural history can help you better understand the animal's relationship with its environment and what is necessary for its survival.

Once a release site is chosen, a plan for the actual release should be developed. All of the necessary materials (gloves, carriers, nets, etc.) should be organized so the release runs as smoothly as possible, minimizing the stress on the animal. In addition, the plan should account for various environmental factors.

In order to reduce the stress a newly released animal must cope with as it adjusts to life in the wild, the release should be done during periods of current and forecasted mild, precipitation-free weather.

The behavioral and psychological fitness of the animal is also a consideration before release, and is particularly important for orphans raised by rehabilitators. Migration is an important behavior for any migratory species to ensure survival. If the animal does not recognize when it is time to move to the proper seasonal habitat, there is little chance of survival. Food recognition as well as hunting and foraging skills are also imperative for the animal's survival. Another necessary behavioral characteristic is predator recognition and avoidance. A final behavioral consideration is dependent on your rehabilitation techniques. If an animal is imprinted or tamed, it is unsuitable for release. The taming of wild animals, and habituation and imprinting on humans work against successfully rehabilitating an animal to release.

A final release criterion should include pre-release health screening. This screening should not only consider the animal's recovery from injury, but also its exposure to infectious diseases during the rehabilitation process. This step is imperative in order to minimize the unnatural spread of parasites and diseases among wild populations.

The ultimate goal is the release of physically and psychologically fit animals into the appropriate habitats at the appropriate time, not merely the release of an animal. Rehabilitation and release should only be undertaken when the animal has a reasonable chance for survival in the wild. For more information regarding release considerations refer to NWRA's *Principles of Wildlife Rehabilitation*.

Deal with death and euthanasia. While your goal is to rehabilitate and release the animals that come into your care, you can expect that possibly one half of admitted animals die or must be euthanized. According to the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, euthanasia is "the act or practice of killing or permitting the death of hopelessly sick or injured individuals (as persons or domestic animals) in a relatively painless way for reasons of mercy". As with all rehabilitation efforts, euthanasia must be performed in the most humane way possible. A national standard for euthanasia methods is the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2007 Guidelines on Euthanasia. Copies of the report can be obtained by contacting the DNR. Euthanasia is one of the hardest tasks a rehabilitator must be able to perform and is another reason the DNR urges anyone who wants their own license to volunteer with an experienced wildlife rehabilitator to receive training.

Euthanasia always involves emotions. People who want their own rehabilitation licenses should first carefully consider their personal feelings about euthanizing animals and their willingness to do so as the need arises. As a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, you need the ability to put your personal emotions and beliefs aside and look rationally at the quality of life for the animal. The animals in your care must be treated responsibly.

The need for euthanasia presents itself in many circumstances. If an animal is unable to recover due to the extent of its injuries or illness, or if it is imprinted on humans, or tamed due to improper care during the rehabilitation process, the animal has little chance of survival if released. An animal with a terminal illness or injury deserves the best treatment we can give. In most circumstances, releasing these animals back into the wild is irresponsible.

A wildlife rehabilitator must commit to making relatively difficult decisions throughout the process of rehabilitation for each animal in their care. Establishing and following set guidelines for evaluation and long term outcomes for each patient must be addressed from the beginning. All wild animals mask symptoms of fear, pain, and illness. While the need to euthanize is not always obvious, most often it is better to make the decision to euthanize an animal as early on as possible in the rehabilitation process. Time, energy, costs, and

emotions all have to be considered by the wildlife rehabilitator. Experience you gain from volunteering and practicing wildlife rehabilitation will help you better identify what animals may survive.

An animal that has come into a facility may ultimately have to be euthanized even though it was not a critical case upon admission. Many factors influence an animal's ability to recover sufficiently for release back to the wild. They may seem to be doing well initially, only to take a turn for the worst. It is also common to receive animals that with proper care and treatment could survive, but that cannot be returned to the wild. If an animal is determined to be non-releasable, there are two options: 1) euthanasia and 2) life in captivity. Consulting with the Department, your sponsor(s), and veterinarian will help determine the most responsible outcome for an animal.

To many, retaining the animal in captivity for the remainder of its life may be more appealing than ending the animal's life, but there is a lot to consider when making this decision. Is there just cause to keep the animal for educational, foster parenting, or breeding purposes? Can the animal be provided with adequate caging? Will the animal receive proper stimulation to help maintain physical and mental well-being? Will the animal receive a proper diet? Will the animal be exposed to a minimum level of stress while in captivity? A responsible wildlife rehabilitator will keep in mind that wild animals are designed physically and mentally for lives in the wild.

While placement in permanent facilities is an option for some non-releasable animals, each animal must be considered on a case by case basis. The nature of the injury or illness and/or the animal's psychological state will help determine whether an individual animal may adjust to a life in captivity. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires that birds that are unable to feed themselves, perch, or ambulate; blind, or require an amputation of a leg, foot, or wing at the elbow or above be euthanized (50 CFR 21.31). Keep in mind that non-releasable wildlife **cannot** be retained under a Wildlife Rehabilitation License. Often, quality placements are rare and difficult to find. Even though euthanasia is not the only answer, it is often the best answer to avoid prolonging the animal's pain. Wildlife rehabilitators need to focus on what is best for the animal, not what is best for them.

Deal with the public. Rehabilitators provide facilities for the public to bring orphaned, injured and sick wild animals, and they coordinate the medical and nursing care for these animals. By acceptance of a Wildlife Rehabilitation License, your name, address and phone number are made public upon request. One of the most time consuming activities for a wildlife rehabilitator is answering the endless telephone calls and other inquiries from the public. It is inevitable that wildlife rehabilitators receive these inquiries. Much of your time on the telephone will be spent trying to convince people not to interfere with wildlife. More often than not, just leaving an animal alone affords the best chance for the most desirable outcome.

It is also essential that you are knowledgeable about rehabilitation activities on a variety of wild animals. Make sure to prepare yourself and your staff to have a good understanding of wildlife identification, life histories, behavior, and habitat requirements, as well as the regulations and laws pertaining to wildlife rehabilitation. Do not give callers information on caring for wild animals. It is unlawful for them to possess a protected animal. In addition, knowing how to network calls to the appropriate municipal, state or federal agencies and others directly associated with wildlife activities will ultimately benefit you and your success as a wildlife rehabilitator.

Facilities

Adequate facilities are absolutely essential to quality wildlife rehabilitation. The number and types of cages, pens, and treatment areas you have directly affects the species and number of animals you can admit.

Wildlife rehabilitators must make a conscious effort to provide adequate housing for the wildlife they care for and treat. Laws in Wisconsin require wildlife rehabilitators to comply with minimum standards that are outlined in state statute and administrative code. Wisconsin Statutes, s.169.39 – Humane care and housing, and Wisconsin Administrative Code, NR19.77 – Facility standards address the minimum requirements for rehabilitation facilities. A summary of the requirements is as follows (see Rules and Regulations section for complete statutes and codes):

- Rehabilitators must have general operating standards that include written protocols for disease prevention and transmission, euthanasia, pharmaceutical use, pest control, carcass and biological waste disposal and adequate veterinary care.
- Wildlife must be housed and handled in such a way that they do not pose a risk to people, are not used as pets, and are not unnecessarily exposed to humans and other captive animals
- Wildlife must receive humane treatment, enrichment, adequate housing, food, separate bathing and drinking water, and care.
- Wildlife must be exposed to various environmental conditions (ambient temperature, ventilation, lighting, shade, and shelter) to ensure proper acclimation before release.
- Sanitary conditions must be maintained in rehabilitation facilities.

Perhaps one of the most discussed issues with wildlife rehabilitation is appropriate cage size. Unfortunately, you will not be able to succeed as a rehabilitator with only one or two cages. Animals are admitted to rehabilitators suffering from varying degrees of injury and illness. In some circumstances, an animal will only need care for a day or two; in others, it may require a month or more of recovery. The NWRA/IWRC *Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation* addresses the three stages of caging required for varying degrees of injury or illness. Temporary confinement caging is utilized to restrict the animal's activity and mobility to a minimum allowing for rest and preventing further injury. Cages developed for the recovery phase of rehabilitation allow for limited activity and mobility. Recovery phase caging permits a less restrictive environment for increased movement prior to transfer into cages designed for the animal's conditioning phase of rehabilitation. These cages allow for unlimited activity and mobility and provide physical and psychological conditioning or reconditioning.

Another concern when designing cages is what materials to use during construction. Cages can be made of many materials, but the best materials to use depend on the species being housed. Wood, metal, wire, and PVC piping have all been successfully utilized in cage construction; however, there are certain recommendations to consider. Generally, wire is not appropriate for birds, especially if they can come in direct contact with it. Housing birds in cages made of wire often leads to feather damage that will delay or prevent a successful release. In addition, non-toxic materials are advised, especially if a species has a habit of chewing such as squirrels, beavers, woodchucks, etc. It is also important to consider the bedding used in caging. Safe bedding won't unravel and entangle the animal or become moldy. Old cloth diapers and fleece blankets make exceptional bedding while sheets and towels made of terry cloth can be dangerous. Hay and straw are not recommended bedding, especially indoors, because they become moldy easily when damp and this can cause further problems of illness and infection with the animals in your care. Refer to the NWRA's *Principles of Wildlife Rehabilitation* for illustrations, plans, material lists and other caging information.

When designing cages, it is important to consider that no cage is appropriate for all species. The requirements for materials, protection, and furniture are often very different from birds to mammals. There are even different requirements within animal groupings (i.e. mammals, birds, reptiles, etc.) A squirrel that

is days from release must have the opportunity to climb trees or limbs while a muskrat needs the availability of water to swim in. In order to provide the most appropriate caging for the animals in your care, you must first know as much about the natural history and behavior of the animal as possible. Obtain as much information as possible on each species in your care through literature and other rehabilitators. Through an understanding of each species' lifestyle, you can provide the most suitable cage habitat. Suitable caging will provide for and encourage the animal's natural behaviors, such as foraging, predator avoidance, and social responses to conspecifics.

Cage design should go beyond the basic requirements of size, security and animal safety. The animal's psychological well-being must also be considered. Appropriate caging will provide insulation from the sights and sounds that may frighten and stress the animals (people, pets, predatory species, etc.). Isolation from humans is also recommended to minimize habituation and physical transfer of disease.

Outdoor facilities must be completely predator-proof and provide shelter from the elements and protection from the wind and sun. All caging must provide fresh, ice-free water at all times, and provide for ease of cleaning, ventilation, light and temperature control. It is also important to remember that rehabilitation facilities are for short-term housing of sick or injured wildlife and are not recommended for extended or permanent care.

Deer.

NR 16.45(8)(d), Wis. Admin. Code exempts wildlife rehabilitators from many of the pen requirements pertaining to deer in captivity. Therefore, while individuals rehabilitating deer must meet the requirements of 169.39, Wis. Stats. and NR 19.77, they do not have to follow the guidelines for fencing height and material (NR 16.45(1)(a)), double fencing (NR 16.45(2)), minimum size (NR 16.45(3)), coming into compliance (NR 16.45(5)), and notice of expansion or replacement (NR 16.45(6)). However, as a basic license holder, you are not permitted to rehabilitate mammals belonging to the family cervidae (deer, elk, and moose), s. NR 19.73(2)(b), Wis. Admin. Code.

Rules and Regulations

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 169 – Captive Wildlife. The following provisions are parts of ch. 169, Wis. Stats. specifically related to wildlife rehabilitation. Individuals interested in rehabilitation should familiarize themselves with the statute paying special attention to the following highlighted sections.

169.02 Title to wild animals. (3) EXCEPTIONS. Legal title to a live captive wild animal or the carcass of a captive wild animal that is possessed as authorized under a rehabilitation license or a scientific research license remains with the state. A person holding a rehabilitation license or a scientific research license may transfer or dispose of a live captive wild animal or the carcass of a captive wild animal only as specifically authorized by the department.

169.085 Rehabilitation of wild animals. (1) REQUIREMENT. No person may rehabilitate any wild animal except as authorized under a rehabilitation license.

(2) INAPPLICABILITY TO CERTAIN WILD ANIMALS. This section does not authorize the rehabilitation of harmful wild animals.

History: 2001 a. 56

169.11 Harmful wild animals. (1) DESIGNATION.

(a) The department shall designate by rule cougars, members of the family ursidae, wild swine, and feral swine as harmful wild animals. After consulting with the department of agriculture, trade and consumer protection and the department of health services, the department of natural resources may designate by rule other species of wild animals as harmful wild animals if any of the following applies:

1. The wild animal is not a native wild animal and is capable of inflicting harm to the environment.
2. The wild animal is capable of creating a risk to public health or to the health of domestic animals.
3. The wild animal is capable of inflicting severe physical harm to humans or to domestic animals.

(b) No person may possess, take, propagate, sell, purchase, transfer, exhibit, or rehabilitate a live harmful wild animal unless specifically authorized to do so by the department.

(c) No person may introduce, stock, or release, or import into this state to introduce, stock, or release, any harmful wild animal unless specifically authorized to do so by the department under s. 169.06 (1) (c).

(3) EXEMPTIONS.

(a) Public zoos and aquariums are exempt from the prohibition under sub. (1) (b).

(b) 1. Veterinarians are exempt from the prohibition under sub. (1) (b) for the purpose of providing medical treatment to harmful wild animals.

2. For purposes of subd. 1., "medical treatment" does not include rehabilitation.

History: 2001 a. 56; 2005 a. 253; 2007 a. 20 s. 9121 (6) (a); 2007 a. 119.

169.24 Rehabilitation license. (1) ISSUANCE. The department shall issue a rehabilitation license to rehabilitate wild animals to any individual who is at least 18 years of age, who meets the qualifications under rules promulgated under sub. (2), and who files a proper application.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS; RULES. The department shall promulgate rules to establish the qualifications required to obtain a rehabilitation license, the types of activities authorized by a rehabilitation license and the standards, limitations, and requirements for rehabilitation licenses. The department may promulgate rules to establish standards for exempting an individual from any of these rules or from any provisions under this chapter.

History: 2001 a. 56

169.36 Record keeping and reporting requirements. (3) REHABILITATION LICENSES. Each person holding a rehabilitation license shall keep a correct and complete record of all of the following information for each wild animal:

(a) The date that the wild animal in need of rehabilitation is received and the species of the wild animal.

(b) The condition of the wild animal that requires rehabilitation.

(c) The disposition of the wild animal, including the date and location of its release into the wild or its transfer to the department.

- (d) The cause of death, if known, for a wild animal that dies.
- (e) Health records as required by the department

169.37 Inspection. (1) DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORITY. For purposes of enforcing this chapter and the rules promulgated under this chapter with respect to a person who is required to have a license or maintain records under this chapter, a conservation warden or representative of the department, upon presenting his or her credentials to that person, may do any of the following:

- (a) Enter and inspect any land, vehicle, building, or other structure where live wild animals are possessed or where carcasses of wild animals are possessed.
- (b) Inspect any equipment, materials, or other activities related to the wild animals.
- (c) Gain access to and inspect any records required to be kept under s. 169.36
- (d) Investigate and inspect any wild animal or any other animal to be introduced, stocked, or released into the wild. Inspection under this paragraph may include the removal of reasonable diagnostic samples from wild animals for biological examination.

(2) TIMES FOR INSPECTIONS. An inspection authorized under sub.(1) or (4) may be conducted during any of the following times:

- (a) Normal business hours.
- (b) During the time that the person who possesses wild animals or carcasses of wild animals is conducting business.
- (c) At any time, if the inspection is necessary for public health, safety, or welfare.

(3) PROHIBITING INSPECTIONS. No person who has been requested to submit to an inspection under this section or s. 169.38, or an operator of a vehicle for such a person, or employee or person acting on behalf of such a person, may prohibit entry as authorized under this section or s. 169.38 unless a court restrains or enjoins the entry or inspection.

History: 2001 a. 56.

169.39 Humane care and housing. (1) COMPLIANCE WITH RULES. No license may be issued under this chapter unless the department determines that the applicant will comply with all of the rules promulgated under subs. (2) and (3).

(2) RULES; GENERAL. The department shall promulgate and enforce rules for the housing, care, treatment, enrichment, feeding, and sanitation of wild animals subject to regulation under this chapter to ensure all of the following:

- (a) That the wild animals receive humane treatment and enrichment.
- (b) That the wild animals are held under sanitary conditions.
- (c) That the wild animals receive adequate housing, care, and food.
- (d) That the public is protected from injury by the wild animals.

(3) RULES; HOUSING. The rules for housing under sub. (2) shall include requirements for the size and location of permanent enclosures and of temporary enclosures at locations other than those where the wild animals are permanently housed. The rules regulating the location of enclosures shall include the distance required between 2 enclosures. The rules for housing shall include specifications for enclosures for each species of harmful wild animal that the department designates under s. 169.11(1).

(4) ORDERS. The department may issue an order requiring any person holding a license under this chapter to comply with the rules promulgated under sub. (2).

History: 2001 a. 56

169.43 Local ordinances. A municipality or county may enact and enforce an ordinance that prohibits the possession or selling of live wild animals.

History: 2001 a. 56.

NR 19 SUBCHAPTER II – Wildlife Rehabilitation. The following section should be read and thoroughly understood by any individual interested in obtaining a wildlife rehabilitation license.

NR 19.70 Purpose. This subchapter is adopted to establish consistent standards for the rehabilitation of wildlife in Wisconsin. The intent is to ensure all persons engaged in wildlife rehabilitation are qualified and provide humane care and housing for wildlife being rehabilitated.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.71 Definitions. In this subchapter:

- (1) “Advanced license” means a wildlife rehabilitation license issued by the department to a person qualifying under s. NR 19.73 (1) and (3).
- (2) “Basic license” means a wildlife rehabilitation license issued by the department to a person qualifying under s. NR 19.73(1) and (2).
- (3) “Department” means the department of natural resources.
- (4) “Euthanasia” means the humane killing of wildlife in accordance with the current American veterinary medical association standards contained in the 2000 Report of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia.

Note: Copies of the 2000 Report of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia, JAVMA, Vol. 218, No. 5, dated March 1, 2001, are available for inspection at the offices of the Secretary of State, 30 W. Mifflin Street, Madison, WI, the Legislative Reference Bureau, One E. Main Street, Madison, WI, or the department.

- (5) “Facilities” means any equipment, housing or shelter used for wildlife rehabilitation.
- (6) “Federal permit” means a special purpose permit issued under 50 CFR Part 13 and 50 CFR 21.27 by the United States fish and wildlife service for the rehabilitation of migratory birds and federally endangered or threatened species.
- (7) “Protective device” means a device that is designed to prevent the escape of an animal at the entrance of a primary enclosure.
- (8) “Sponsor” means an advanced licensee who has volunteered to mentor a basic licensee.
- (9) “Sponsorship agreement” means a document that establishes an advanced licensee as a sponsor for a basic licensee.
- (10) “Volunteer” means any person, including interns, working in a limited capacity subject to the limits under s. NR 19.73 (3)(d) and under the supervision of an advanced licensee on wildlife rehabilitation activities.
- (11) “Wildlife” means “wild animal” as defined in s. 169.01(37), Stats.
- (12) “Wildlife rehabilitation” means “rehabilitate” as defined in s. 169.01 (30m), Stats.
- (13) “Wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee” means a group of volunteers appointed by the secretary or secretary’s designee to advise and provide recommendations about wildlife rehabilitation to the department.
- (14) “Wildlife rehabilitator” means a person authorized to capture, receive, temporarily possess, transport or transfer orphaned, sick or injured wildlife for the purpose of wildlife rehabilitation under a valid license issued pursuant to this subchapter.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04; CR 09-024: am. (10) Register May 2010 No. 653, eff. 6-1-10.

NR 19.72 General wildlife rehabilitation provisions. (1) The title to all wildlife and their offspring held under a wildlife rehabilitation license remains under the jurisdiction of the department as described in s. 169.02, Stats., and may not be sold, traded or bartered without the consent of the department.

(2) The department may restrict wildlife rehabilitation of specific wildlife species, either statewide or in certain geographic areas to control the spread of disease, to protect public health or to prevent harmful environmental impacts.

(3) The department may restrict wildlife species authorized for rehabilitation based on the facilities and qualifications of the applicant or licensee.

(4) A wildlife rehabilitation license does not authorize the capture, receipt, possession, transportation or transfer of wildlife for any purpose other than wildlife rehabilitation.

(5) This license does not exempt the licensee from local ordinances that apply to activities authorized by this license.

(6) This license does not authorize the practice of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 453.02 (6), Stats.

(7) The licensee shall display his or her license to department agents or other law enforcement agents upon request.

(8) Any costs incurred by the licensee for wildlife rehabilitation activities shall be the responsibility of the licensee.

(9) Unless specifically authorized by the department for educational purposes, no person may place wildlife being rehabilitated on public exhibit, in ways that may lead to inappropriate imprinting, socialization, habituation or stress.

(10) Wildlife being rehabilitated may not be transported outside Wisconsin for release or any other purpose unless the licensee has verbal, or written, permission from the department and possesses a wildlife rehabilitation license pursuant to this subchapter.

(11) No person may import or accept wildlife for rehabilitation from outside Wisconsin unless he or she has verbal, or written, permission from the department and possesses a wildlife rehabilitation license pursuant to this subchapter.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.73 Licenses. (1) GENERAL RESTRICTIONS. (a) Requirements. No person may rehabilitate wildlife unless he or she possesses a valid license pursuant to s. 169.24, Stats.

(b) *Transferability.* A rehabilitation license is not transferable.

(c) *Reporting.* The licensee shall notify the department within 7 days of any change of name, address, telephone number, associated federal permit status, substantial changes to facility, a decision to discontinue as a sponsor or wildlife rehabilitation activities before license expiration.

(2) BASIC LICENSE. (a) Requirements. An applicant for a basic license shall meet all of the following requirements:

1. Possess a signed sponsorship agreement stating an advanced licensee is willing to mentor the applicant's wildlife rehabilitation activities.

2. Possess a signed consulting veterinarian agreement stating a veterinarian, licensed to practice in Wisconsin or state of residence, is willing to consult and assist with care and treatment of wildlife being rehabilitated.

3. Pass an examination meeting the requirements of s. NR 19.75.

4. Allow an inspection of facilities to assure that the applicant's facilities meet the requirements of s. NR 19.77.

(b) *Restrictions.* Basic licensees may not possess any of the following:

1. Federal migratory birds or federal or state endangered or threatened species unless authorized by appropriate federal and state permit.

2. Mammals belonging to the family cervidae (deer, elk, and moose) or other harmful wild animals designated under s. 169.11, Stats.

3. Species of bird belonging to the order ciconiformes (vultures, bitterns and herons), falconiformes (hawks, eagles, harriers, osprey, kites and falcons) with the exception of American kestrel, the order Strigiformes (all owls), with the exception of saw-whet and screech owls or the families gruidae (cranes) or gaviidae (loons).

(c) *Euthanasia.* Euthanasia may only be performed under direct supervision of the sponsoring advanced licensee or consulting veterinarian.

(d) *Volunteers.* Basic licensees may not list volunteers on their license.

(3) ADVANCED LICENSE. (a) Requirements. Applicants shall meet all of the following requirements:

1. Possess a basic evaluation form signed by the applicant's advanced licensee sponsor stating that the applicant has been a licensed basic rehabilitator for a minimum of 2 years and has satisfactorily engaged in the practice of wildlife rehabilitation.

2. Possess a signed consulting veterinarian form stating a veterinarian, licensed to practice in Wisconsin or licensee's state of residence, is willing to consult and assist with care and treatment of wildlife being rehabilitated.

3. Allow an inspection of facilities to assure that the applicant's facilities meet the requirements of s. NR 19.77.

(b) *Restrictions.* Advanced licensees may not possess any of the following:

1. Species of wildlife not authorized by their license.

2. Federal migratory birds or federal or state endangered or threatened species unless authorized by the appropriate federal and state permit.

(c) *Euthanasia.* Euthanasia may be performed by the advanced licensee or consulting veterinarian.

(d) *Volunteers.* Volunteers may be authorized to assist with the rehabilitation of wildlife under the authority of an advanced licensee's license provided that all of the following conditions apply:

1. An updated list of volunteers assisting the advanced licensee is retained by the advanced licensee, and shall be provided to a department agent upon request.
2. Volunteers operating at a location other than the advanced licensee's facility shall retain a copy of the advanced licensee's license which shall be provided to a department agent upon request.
3. Advanced licensees accept responsibility for the actions and activities of volunteers and shall be responsible for any violations by volunteers in violation of this chapter or ch. 169, Stats.
4. Advanced licensees that utilize volunteers that are not assisting with wildlife rehabilitation activities under the direct supervision of the advanced licensee shall be responsible for the volunteers' facilities meeting the standards defined in s. NR 19.77.

Note: Wildlife rehabilitation sponsorship and veterinary agreements will be available upon request at DNR Service Centers, by writing the Bureau of Wildlife Management, PO Box 7921, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53707-7921 or by calling (608) 266-8204.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04; CR 08-021: am. (3) (a) (intro.), r. (3) (e) Register November 2008 No. 635, eff. 12-1-08; CR 09-024: renun. (3) (a) 4. to be (3) (a) 3. Register May 2010 No. 653, eff. 6-1-10.

NR 19.74 Application. (1) A person desiring to rehabilitate wildlife in Wisconsin shall submit all of the following information required by the department on an application form supplied by the department:

- (a) A signed consulting veterinarian agreement from a veterinarian who is willing to consult and assist applicant with care and treatment of wildlife being rehabilitated.
- (b) A signed sponsorship agreement from an advanced licensee who has agreed to sponsor the basic applicant.
- (c) For an advanced license applicant, a signed evaluation form from the advanced sponsor and consulting veterinarian which indicates compliance with s. NR 19.73 (3).
- (d) Certification that the applicant has read and understands this subchapter and that the applicant agrees to comply with all provisions of this subchapter.

(2) The department may issue the appropriate rehabilitation license to an individual possessing a valid rehabilitators license or permit from another state or province, provided that the minimum requirements of the basic or advanced rehabilitators licenses described in this subchapter are met.

Note: Wildlife rehabilitation application, evaluation form, sponsorship agreement, and veterinary agreements will be available upon request at DNR Service Centers, by writing the Bureau of Wildlife Management, PO Box 7921, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53707-7921 or by calling (608) 266-8204.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.75 Examination. (1) A person desiring a basic license to rehabilitate wildlife in Wisconsin shall take a written examination, provided and administered by the department, and score 80% or greater.

- (2)** The examination shall be prepared by the wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee and administered by a representative of the department.
- (3)** An applicant failing to correctly answer at least 80% of the questions on the examination described in this section may not be issued a license but may repeat the exam 30 days after the examination was completed.
- (4)** The department shall provide an examination study guide and other information regarding wildlife rehabilitation to each applicant upon request.

Note: The wildlife rehabilitation study guide will be available upon request at DNR Service Centers, by writing the Bureau of Wildlife Management, PO Box 7921, 101 S. Webster St., Madison, WI 53707-7921 or by calling (608) 266-8204.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.76 Facility inspection. (1) By accepting a license under this section a licensee consents to the facility inspection requirements established in s. 169.37, Stats., by the department and its agents.

- (2)** An applicant for a license under this section shall allow inspection of the applicant's facilities.
- (3)** Following an inspection, the department may do any of the following:
 - (a) Remove any wildlife if it is in the best interest of the animals until the facility complies with the standards established in s. NR 19.77.
 - (b) Deny the licensee or applicant the privilege to rehabilitate certain species until licensee or applicant can prove that the rehabilitation facilities are in compliance with this subchapter.
 - (c) Suspend a rehabilitation license for 30 days to allow a licensee's facilities to be brought into compliance.

(d) Allow a licensee under this subchapter a specified period of time to comply with s. NR 19.77 without revocation or suspension of license privileges designated in this subchapter.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.77 Facility standards. (1) GENERAL OPERATING STANDARDS. Prior to engaging in wildlife rehabilitation activities, protocols for disease prevention and transmission, euthanasia, pharmaceutical use, pest control, carcass and biological waste disposal and adequate veterinary care shall be established by the licensee and reviewed and signed by licensee's consulting veterinarian. Wildlife being rehabilitated shall be subject to all of the following conditions:

- (a) If suspected of having an infectious disease, be quarantined in areas designated for that purpose.
- (b) Be kept separated from human living quarters and activities.
- (c) Have no contact with captive wildlife licensed under ch. 169, Stats., with the exception of other wildlife held under a rehabilitation license.
- (d) Have no contact with the general public unless specifically authorized by the department for educational purposes.
- (e) Be kept in enclosures at all times, and have contact with the licensee or designated volunteers only to the extent necessary to provide adequate care and treatment.
- (f) Not be tamed, used as pets, held with domestic animals or habituated to humans.
- (g) Be of compatible species when housed together, and not pose a threat to health or well-being of other wildlife in the same enclosure.
- (h) Be raised with other wild animals of the same species held under the authority of a rehabilitation license whenever appropriate and possible, to ensure proper species orientation.

(2) ENCLOSURE SIZE AND CONSTRUCTION. (a) Enclosures shall be structurally sound, of sufficient strength for species involved, and maintained in good repair to prevent escape or injury to wildlife being rehabilitated.

- (b) Enclosures shall be constructed to allow sufficient space for individual posture and social movements, unless medical treatment necessitates restricted mobility.
- (c) All outdoor wildlife enclosures shall have protective devices at entrances and exits to prevent escapes.
- (d) Enclosures shall be secured when unattended.
- (e) No exposed sharp objects, ponds with steeply sloped banks, toxic paints or sealants, poisonous vegetation or other hazardous items may be used in the construction of enclosures.
- (f) Enclosures shall have visual barriers to restrict wildlife's view of humans, domestic animals, and other species being rehabilitated to reduce inappropriate imprinting, socialization, habituation or stress.

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS. (a) Ambient temperatures shall be sufficient for species involved.

- (b) Adequate ventilation by means of windows, doors, vents, fans or air conditioning shall be provided to protect wildlife health and to minimize drafts, odors and condensation.
- (c) Adequate lighting shall be provided by artificial or natural means and cycled for appropriate photoperiod for species involved.
- (d) Adequate shade, weatherproof shelters, nest boxes, perches and dens shall be provided to protect wildlife from inclement weather and direct sun.
- (e) Wildlife being rehabilitated shall be gradually acclimated before being exposed to extreme outdoor conditions.

(4) FOOD. (a) Adequate feeding schedules shall be maintained for species involved unless medical treatment necessitates restricted food intake.

- (b) All food shall be palatable, free of contamination, and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value.
- (c) Wildlife's diets shall be supplemented with vitamins and minerals when necessary for species involved.
- (d) Food receptacles shall be appropriately sized, easily accessible, kept sanitary and safe.

(5) WATER. (a) Fresh uncontaminated water for drinking shall be provided at all times unless medical treatment necessitates restricted water intake.

- (b) Water, separate from drinking water, shall be provided for species requiring bathing, swimming or misting unless medical treatment necessitates restricted water exposure.
- (c) Water receptacles shall be appropriately sized, easily accessible, kept sanitary and safe.

(6) SANITATION. (a) Removal and disposal of wildlife food wastes, feces and urine, bedding, carcasses, trash, garbage, and debris from the enclosure and premises shall be performed frequently to maintain sanitary conditions and protect wildlife and human health.

(b) Cages, rooms, hard surfaced pens, kennels, runs, equipment, and food and water receptacles shall be sanitized between each wildlife use to prevent disease transmission.

(c) Excess water shall be drained from enclosures and may not drain into neighboring enclosures.

(d) Wildlife in enclosures shall be protected from contact with cleaning activities and chemicals.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04; CR 08-021: am. (2) (f) Register November 2008 No. 635, eff. 12-1-08.

NR 19.78 Care and treatment of wildlife. (1) Any orphaned, sick or injured wildlife, except endangered or threatened species, that the licensee determines is not capable of being rehabilitated or having a reasonable chance of survival in the wild shall be treated under one of the following options:

(a) Euthanized.

(b) Turned over to the department.

(c) Disposed of as directed by the department.

(d) Retained for the purpose of long-term care at the direction of the department.

(2) A licensee shall notify the department within 48 hours of receipt of federal or state endangered or threatened species.

(3) State endangered or threatened species may be euthanized and disposed of only under direction of the department.

(4) Federally endangered or threatened migratory birds may only be euthanized and disposed of under the direction of the migratory bird permit office, United States fish and wildlife service, and the department.

(5) Federally endangered or threatened mammals shall only be euthanized and disposed of under direction of the endangered species permit office of the United States fish and wildlife service and the department.

(6) No licensee may keep any orphaned, sick or injured migratory bird for the purpose of rehabilitation, including birds not ready for release prior to the onset of cold weather, longer than 180 days unless an extension is granted by the migratory bird permit office of the United States fish and wildlife service, and the department for each individual case.

(7) No licensee may keep any orphaned, sick or injured wildlife for the purpose of rehabilitation, including wildlife not ready for release prior to the onset of cold weather, longer than 180 days unless an extension is granted by the department for each individual case.

(8) When the licensee determines that the injured or sick wildlife have sufficiently recovered, or orphaned wildlife has matured to an age where there is reasonable chance for survival in the wild, wildlife shall be released at an appropriate location with landowner permission unless otherwise authorized by the department.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04; CR 08-021: am. (2) Register November 2008 No. 635, eff. 12-1-08; CR 09-024: am. (4) Register May 2010 No. 653, eff. 6-1-10.

NR 19.79 Infectious disease reporting. A licensee or consulting veterinarian shall report animal diseases as required by s. ATCP 10.02 if diagnosed in wildlife being rehabilitated and to the department's wildlife health program.

Note: The wildlife health program may be contacted by sending an e-mail to wildlifehealth@dnr.state.wi.us or by calling (608) 266-8204.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.80 Record keeping and reporting. (1) A wildlife rehabilitation license may not be renewed until the licensee has submitted an annual report in accordance with s. 169.36 (10), Stats., and any additional required records that the department has specifically requested.

(2) An advanced licensee and a basic licensee shall provide a copy of the records required to be maintained for that license to the department quarterly as follows:

(a) Quarterly submission of records shall be provided to the department by April 30th, July 31st, October 31st and January 31st each year, and shall consist of a copy of all required records maintained during the 3 previous months.

(b) Records to be included in the quarterly report shall consist of complete records of all transactions or activity involving any wild animals of the following families:

1. Canidae (coyotes, foxes, wolves).
2. Ursidae (bears).
3. Mustelidae (badger, mink, otter, skunk).
4. Felidae (bobcat, lynx, cougars).

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04; corrections made to (2) under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 1., Stats., Register December 2003 No. 576.

NR 19.81 Qualifications of sponsors. Advanced licensees may volunteer to sponsor, or provide consultation and advice to basic licensees. A person desiring to be an advanced sponsor shall do all of the following:

(1) Submit a request to the wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee established in s. NR 19.82 requesting designation as a sponsor.

(2) Have experience rehabilitating those wildlife species which the basic licensee is authorized to possess.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.82 Wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee. (1) The secretary shall appoint persons experienced with wildlife biology, rehabilitation, law enforcement, and veterinary medicine to a wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee.

(2) The wildlife rehabilitation advisory committee shall assist the department with development of wildlife rehabilitation examinations, facility inspections, and recommendations which may be used in department decision making as it pertains to wildlife rehabilitation activities.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.83 Additional conditions. (1) Any license issued after January 1, 2004, is subject to requirements of this subchapter.

(2) On January 1, 2004, all existing Wisconsin wildlife rehabilitation permittees will be granted a provisional license for 2 years. After 2 years from the effective date of the provisional license, these provisional licensees may apply for a license pursuant to this subchapter.

(3) An individual applying for a license pursuant to s. NR 19.73 (2) and (3) shall take the examination and meet the requirements established in s. NR 19.75.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.84 Modifications. The department may amend or add conditions to licenses issued under this subchapter at any time if there is a risk to public health and human welfare or there is a risk to the health and welfare of the environment.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

NR 19.85 Disclaimer. The number of licenses issued under this subchapter may be restricted by the department based on the need for wildlife rehabilitation. Possession and care of any wildlife under this subchapter does not create a property right to the wildlife for the licensee.

History: CR 03-029: cr. Register December 2003 No. 576, eff. 1-1-04.

Additional State Rules and Regulations

Threatened and Endangered Species. The state requires special authorization for the rehabilitation of state endangered or threatened species (see Appendix III for list of species), which authorizes the take, exportation, transportation or possession of state endangered or threatened species under 29.604, Wis. Stats. and NR 27, Wis. Admin. Code. Individuals interested in wildlife rehabilitation should familiarize themselves with both documents. Contact the Department's rehabilitation program manager or the Bureau of Endangered Resources for further information.

Federal Rules and Regulations

Migratory Bird Treaty Act - This law makes it illegal to possess any migratory bird, its nest, eggs, or feathers. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a migratory bird is any bird, whatever its origin and whether or not raised in captivity, which belongs to a species listed in 50 CFR 10.13, or which is a mutation or a hybrid of any such species, including any part, nest, or eggs of any such bird, or any product, whether or not manufactured, which consists, or is composed in whole or part, of any such bird or any part, nest, or eggs thereof. A list of federal migratory birds is available on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website, www.fws.gov.

In order to rehabilitate any migratory bird, you must apply for and obtain a permit under 50 CFR 21. A permit issued under this law gives a wildlife rehabilitator permission to possess migratory birds for the sole purpose of wildlife rehabilitation. This type of permit is species specific and does not authorize the rehabilitation of Bald or Golden Eagles. Similar to Wisconsin's rehabilitation license requirements, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires an annual report including yearly rehabilitation activity.

A federal rehabilitation permit does not authorize the rehabilitator to possess any bird for longer than 180 days. A separate Migratory Bird "special purpose" permit must be issued to a person wishing to possess a migratory bird (live or dead), its nest, egg, or feather for use in educational programs. See next page for contact information

Endangered Species Act - This law provides special protection for birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates and plants that are threatened with extinction. With the newly rewritten federal regulations pertaining to wildlife rehabilitation, an individual possessing a federal rehabilitation permit under 50 CFR 21 is not required to obtain a separate permit for federally listed threatened and/or endangered species. However, if a rehabilitator does not possess a federal rehabilitation permit, as may be the case with a mammal-only rehabilitator, a permit to rehabilitate federally listed species must be acquired under 50 CFR 17. A separate permit must be issued if a person wishes to possess an animal (live or dead), its nest, eggs, feathers or hide for use in educational programs. This type of issuance is species specific. See next page for contact information.

Bald Eagle Protection Act - This law provides specific protection for bald and golden eagles. In addition to a migratory bird rehabilitation permit, a "special purpose" permit issued under this law gives a wildlife rehabilitator permission to possess an eagle for the sole purpose of wildlife rehabilitation (50 CFR 22). A separate permit must be issued if a person wishes to possess an eagle (live or dead), its nest, egg or feather for use in educational programs (50 CFR 22).

The Lacey Act - This law prohibits the import or export across state or national boundaries of animals that were taken in violation of any state laws. This law generally would not apply to wildlife rehabilitation. However, if a wildlife rehabilitator accepts an animal for treatment from another state in which it was illegally obtained, they may be prosecuted.

Contact Information

Wildlife Rehabilitation Organizations

Wisconsin Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary
1660 East Shore Dr.
Green Bay, WI 54302
Email: wwra@wilwildlife.org

National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
2625 Clearwater Rd.
Suite 110
St. Cloud, MN 56301
Phone: (320) 230-9920
Internet: www.nrawildlife.org

International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council
PO Box 3197
Eugene, OR 97403
Phone: 866-871-1869
Internet: www.iwrc-online.org

Government Agencies

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Migratory Bird Permit Office
5600 America Blvd. West
Suite 990
Bloomington, MN
55437-1458
Email: permitsR3MB@fws.gov
Internet: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/>

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
WM/6, attn: Wildlife Rehabilitation Program Manager
101 S. Webster St., Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921
Phone: (608) 266-8204
Fax: (608) 267-7857
Internet: <http://dnr.wi.gov>

Appendices

Appendix I: DNR Service Centers and Offices by District*

* Exam will not be offered at all listed service centers. Contact the DNR Central Office at (608) 266-8204 or visit our Web site (<http://dnr.wi.gov/Contact/OfficeLocations.html>) for test locations in your area.

Northern District

Counties served: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Washburn, Florence, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Oneida, Vilas.

Antigo

223 E. Steinfest Rd.
Antigo, WI 54409
715-627-4317 (phone)
715-623-6773 (fax)

Cumberland

1341 2nd Ave. Box 397
Cumberland, WI 54829
715-822-3590 (phone)
715-822-3592 (fax)

Ladysmith

N4103 HWY 27
Ladysmith, WI 54848
715-532-3911 (phone)
715-532-4901 (fax)

Rhineland

107 Sutliff Ave.
Rhineland, WI 54501
715-365-8900 (phone)
715-365-8932 (fax)

Superior

1701 N. 4th St.
Superior, WI 54880
715-392-7988 (phone)
715-392-7993 (fax)

Ashland

2501 Golf Course Rd.
Ashland, WI 54806
715-685-2900 (phone)
715-685-2909 (fax)

Hayward

10220 St. HWY 27
Hayward, WI 54843
715-634-2688 (phone)
715-634-9232 (fax)

Park Falls

875 S. 4th Ave.
Park Falls, WI 54552
715-762-3204 (phone)
715-762-4348 (fax)

Spooner

810 W. Maple St.
Spooner, WI 54801
715-635-2101 (phone)
715-635-4105 (fax)

Woodruff

8770 HWY J
Woodruff, WI 54568
715-356-5211 (phone)
715-358-2352 (fax)

Northeast District

Counties served: Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago.

Green Bay

2984 Shawano Ave.
Green Bay, WI 54313
920-662-5100 (phone)
920-662-5413 (fax)

Peshtigo

101 N. Ogden Rd.
Suite A
Peshtigo, WI 54157
715-582-5000 (phone)
715-582-5005 (fax)

Sturgeon Bay

110 S. Neenah Ave.
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920-746-2860 (phone)
920-746-2863 (fax)

Oshkosh

625 E. County Rd. Y, Suite 700
Oshkosh, WI 54903
920-424-3050 (phone)
920-424-4404 (fax)

Plymouth

1155 Pilgrim Rd.
Plymouth, WI 53073
920-892-8756 (phone)
920-892-6638 (fax)

West Central District

Counties served: Adams, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Crawford, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Marathon, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Vernon, Wood.

Baldwin

890 Spruce St.
Baldwin, WI 54002
715-684-2914 (phone)
715-684-5940 (fax)

Eau Claire

1300 W. Clairemont
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715-839-3700 (phone)
715-839-6076 (fax)

Wausau

5301 Rib Mountain Rd.
Wausau, WI 54401
715-359-4522 (phone)
715-355-5253 (fax)

Black River Falls

910 HWY 54 E
Black River Falls, WI 54615
715-284-1400 (phone)
715-284-1737 (fax)

La Crosse

3550 Mormon Coulee Rd.
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-785-9000 (phone)
608-785-9990 (fax)

Wisconsin Rapids

473 Griffith St.
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-421-7800 (phone)
715-421-7830 (fax)

Southern District

Counties served: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Kenosha, Lafayette, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha.

Dodgeville

1500 N. Johns St.
Dodgeville, WI 53533
608-935-3368 (phone)
608-935-9652 (fax)

Janesville

2514 Morse St.
Janesville, WI 53545
608-743-4800 (phone)
608-743-4801 (fax)

Milwaukee

2300 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53212
414-263-8500 (phone)
414-263-8606 (fax)

Waukesha

141 NW Barstow, Room 180
Waukesha, WI 53188
262-574-2100 (phone)
262-574-2117 (fax)

Fitchburg

3911 Fish Hatchery Rd.
Fitchburg, WI 53711
608-275-3266 (phone)
608-275-3338 (fax)

Madison (DNR Central Office)

101 S. Webster St.
Madison, WI 53703
608-266-2621 (phone)
608-261-4380 (fax)

Sturtevant

9531 Rayne Rd., Suite 4
Sturtevant, WI 53177
262-884-2300 (phone)
262-884-2306 (fax)

Appendix II: Sample Exam Questions

Multiple Choice

<p>If your facility is fully occupied, and further case load would compromise your standard of care, your responsible options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A take the animal anyway B tell the person finding the animal to take it home C refer the person finding the animal to another rehabilitator or euthanize the animal D tell the person finding the animal to leave it in the wild 	C
<p>A responsible rehabilitator devotes a lot of attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A talking to animals to get them used to human presence. B handling animals to provide them with a sense of security. C isolating animals from unnecessary human contact D none of the above. 	C
<p>Imprinting is a condition whereby a young animal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A establishes permanent psychological guidelines that control its sexual and social relationships B goes through a critical period during which it learns its species identity C becomes non-releasable if imprinted on a human D all of the above. 	D
<p>The natural first-line defensive reaction of a threatened mammal unable to escape its tormentor is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A to bite. B to play dead. C to strike out with its claws or front paws. D to go into convulsions, fooling its tormentor into giving up. 	A
<p>Confining a recently injured animal in a darkened cardboard box:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A may reduce stress B is cruel C may help tame it for treatment D may damage the animal's vision 	A
<p>Three steps in effective cage/pen cleaning are: a) removing soil by hosing, sweeping or other means, b) applying a disinfectant, sanitizer or sterilizer, c) cleaning surfaces with a good detergent and rinsing thoroughly. What is the appropriate order of these three steps?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A a, b, c B a, c, b C c, a, b D b, a, c 	B

<p>Which of the following is a virus capable of causing disease in all mammals, including humans, and is usually transmitted through contact with an infected animal's saliva?</p> <p>A aspergillosis B ornithosis C rabies D distemper</p>	C
<p>Your veterinarian gives you antibiotic tablets (200 mg/tablet) for a fox with a skin infection. You are instructed to administer 10 mg/lb twice daily by mouth (PO) for ten days. The animal weighs approximately 5 lb. The proper dose of medication is:</p> <p>A 1/4 tablet B 1/2tablet C 3/4 tablet D 1 tablet</p>	A
<p>In rescuing an animal in the field, the wildlife rehabilitator's paramount concern is:</p> <p>A securing the animal at all cost B safety to the people involved C using high-technology capture equipment D working alone</p>	B
<p>A deer fawn found lying alone in a meadow most likely requires:</p> <p>A rescue and transport to the nearest Wisconsin DNR office B a rapid inspection for potential predators followed by urging the fawn into any nearby woods C no action D immediate transport to the nearest licensed wildlife rehabilitator</p>	C
<p>Which of the following are important questions that should be asked when taking in an animal for care?</p> <p>A Where was the animal found? B How long have the people had the animal? C Did they feed it or treat it? D all of the above</p>	D
<p>When you are presented with an endangered species, you should:</p> <p>A treat it like any other wildlife B not touch it C place the animal in a zoo D begin treatment and notify the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources within 24 hours</p>	D
<p>When deciding whether to continue treatment or to euthanize an animal, factors to consider include:</p> <p>A the availability of an effective and humane course of treatment B once treatment is complete, can the animal re-enter the wild with a reasonable chance of survival? C justification for keeping an animal in captivity if it is not releasable D all of the above</p>	D

A Wisconsin rehabilitation permit allows you to: A transport live wildlife for the purposes of veterinary care AND rehabilitation ONLY B transport live wildlife for the purposes of public education C transport live wildlife from one state to another D all of the above.	A
A Wisconsin Basic wildlife rehabilitation license allows the rehabilitator to: A medicate and treat an injured peregrine falcon for long term rehabilitation B raise a fawn brought in by animal control officer C keep baby raccoons for 2 years to give them a better start D none of the above	D
Who should you contact regarding legal matters involving migratory birds? A U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and/or Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources B Federal Aviation Administration C Ducks Unlimited D U.S. Department of Agriculture	A
What behavioral considerations are important for an animal to exhibit before it can be released? A competitive foraging behavior B species recognition and socialization with its own kind C predator avoidance D all of the above	D

True/False

Mammals should be provided with multiple hiding places in their cages.	T
It is natural for some mammals to leave their young unattended for long periods of time, only returning to feed them.	T
It is important to simulate the proper photoperiod (day length) for animals housed indoors on a long-term basis.	T
Wild animals are suitable pets when they are hand raised.	F
Wild mammals and birds should be maintained away from the sights and sounds of a household.	T
Attention to an animal's behavior is not a necessary aspect of wildlife care.	F
Rehabilitators should seek professional veterinary assistance in identifying infectious disease.	T
A zoonotic disease is one that humans can contract from other animals.	T
Sterile dressings applied to open wounds should be carefully monitored and changed to avoid infection and promote healing.	T
Animals being warmed by an external heat source (e.g. heat lamp, heating pad, hot water bottle) should be closely monitored to avoid burns and overheating.	T
Infant animals should be held on their backs when being fed.	F
Adhering to a regular feeding schedule is equally as important as feeding the proper diet.	T

For their size, growing juvenile animals have greater caloric requirements than adults.	T
You may restrict a bird's ability to breathe and cause suffocation by holding it too tightly around the chest or by keeping it on its back too long.	T
Catch-poles and nets can be useful for handling biting mammals.	T
Releasing healthy, prepared animals back into suitable habitats is the main goal of wildlife rehabilitation.	T
An animal must be acclimated to outdoor conditions before it can be released.	T
Knowledge of an animal's natural history and resource needs are important in determining release sites.	T
A wildlife rehabilitation licensee is exempt from federal regulations if all activities take place within Wisconsin.	F
A wildlife rehabilitator is required to submit an annual report of all animals handled to the Wisconsin DNR and, if handling migratory birds or a federally endangered or threatened species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	T
It is necessary for rehabilitators to have a veterinarian who is willing to work with them.	T
Starlings, pigeons, and house sparrows are unprotected exotic species that may be kept or treated without a state or federal wildlife rehabilitation license.	T
Humane euthanasia is not a necessary part of wildlife rehabilitation.	F

Appendix III: Endangered and Threatened Species

The list below is current as of April 2013. Please view the most up-to-date list of state and federal endangered and threatened species at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/laws.html>

Wisconsin Endangered and Threatened Species (as of April 2013):

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles/Amphibians
<u>Endangered</u> American marten <u>Threatened</u> Big Brown Bat Little Brown Bat Northern Long-eared Bat Eastern Pipistrelle	<u>Endangered</u> Piping Plover Yellow-throated Warbler Snowy Egret Peregrine Falcon Worm-eating Warbler Loggerhead Shrike Red-necked Grebe Caspian Tern Forster's Tern Common Tern Bewick's Wren Barn Owl <u>Threatened</u> Henslow's Sparrow Red-shouldered Hawk Great Egret Yellow Rail Spruce Grouse Cerulean Warbler Acadian Flycatcher Yellow-crowned Night Heron Kentucky Warbler Greater Prairie Chicken Bell's Vireo Hooded Warbler	<u>Endangered</u> Blanchard's Cricket Frog Slender Glass Lizard Queen Snake Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake Ornate Box Turtle Western Ribbon Snake Northern Ribbon Snake <u>Threatened</u> Wood Turtle Blanding's Turtle Butler's Garter Snake

Federal Endangered and Threatened Species in Wisconsin (as of April 2013):

Mammals	Birds	Reptiles/Amphibians
Indiana Bat Canada Lynx	Piping Plover Kirtland's Warbler	Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (candidate)

Annotated Bibliography

IDENTIFICATION GUIDES

Several publishers offer excellent sets of field guides for identification of native wild animals. You may find that you need to get several. Check with other rehabilitators and local nature centers to find out what is available and what seems most useful.

- Peterson field guide series: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Audubon Society field guide series: Alfred A. Knopf Pub.
- Golden field guide series: Golden Press
- Field Guide to the Birds of North America: National Geographic Society

BASIC REHABILITATION

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