

Wild Animal Rehabilitation Permit Information Division of Fish & Wildlife

Requirements for obtaining a wild animal rehabilitation permit

- 1) New applicants need to pass a test.
- 2) New applicants must also have at least one year of experience working with one of the following: a licensed veterinarian, a zoological park, university animal clinic, or permitted wild animal rehabilitator. See the requirements in 312 IAC 9-10-9.
- 3) New applicants must have at least one of the reference materials from the list below. The reference material must include information pertaining to the species that you want to take in for rehabilitation.

All Species

1. *Principles of Wildlife Rehabilitation* from the National Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association (NWRRA) *
– www.nrawildlife.org
2. *NWRRA Minimum Standards for Rehabilitation* – www.nrawildlife.org
3. *NWRRA Quick Reference- hydration charts, aging tables for birds & mammals, skeletal systems, fluid therapy, abbreviations and calculations* – www.nrawildlife.org
4. *Wildlife First Aid: Basic Care for Birds and Mammals* – Irene Ruth

Mammals

5. *Wild Mammal Babies: The First 48 Hours and Beyond* – Chris's Squirrels & more*
6. *Mammals of Indiana* – Mumford and Whitaker
7. *Manual for Raising Raccoon Cubs: Just a Helping Hand* – Elaine Sorensen
8. *North American Tree Squirrels-Natural History and Biology* – Michael A. Steele & John R. Kiprowski

Birds

9. *Hand-Rearing Birds* – Gage & Duerr *
10. *Manual of Ornithology* – Procter & Lynch
11. *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* – David Sibley
12. *Raptors in Captivity: Guidelines for Care and Management*- Laurie Arent

* Preferred reference materials.

- 4) Within three years after getting your rehabilitation permit, a permit holder must complete 8 hours of continuing education that is approved by the Division of Fish & Wildlife or re-take the test in order to renew the permit. The documentation can include a copy of a certificate or other proof of attending the training.

Assistants

- 1) List assistants on your application form and give them a copy of your permit.
- 2) Assistants must be at least 16 years of age to help at a permit holder's facility.
- 3) If an assistant is under the age of 18, the permit holder must provide direct and on-site supervision.
- 4) Assistants age 18 or older may provide assistance to the permit holder as follows:
 - a. With written authorization, an assistant listed on the permit may possess a wild animal at their own residence for no more than 30 consecutive days unless authorized by the DNR.
 - b. The permit holder maintains responsibility for the care of the wild animal.

- c. The permit holder must provide supervision with written instructions and be available for phone contact with the assistant at all times.
- d. The facilities of the assistant must meet the same facility standards as the permit holder.
- e. The wild animal possessed by an assistant must be returned to the permit holder at the time of weaning or release, whichever comes first.
- f. The permit holder must report animal and its disposition on his/her annual report.

Housing requirements for wild animals taken in for rehabilitation

- 1) Animals cannot be housed in a cage that would allow physical contact with domestic or companion animals or animals kept under any other license or permit unless authorized in writing by the DNR (such as for foster parents).
- 2) The enclosures/cages must be kept clean and in sanitary conditions as follows:
 - a. Cages must be cleaned daily.
 - b. Permit holder or named assistants must observe and provide care for wild animals at least once daily unless otherwise specified.
 - c. Animals cannot come into contact with any individuals other than the permit holder, assistant listed on permit, licensed veterinarian, animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or authorized DNR employee.
 - d. Quarantine animals if they are suspected of having an infectious disease.
 - e. Keep animals separate from human living quarters and activities unless intensive care is required; un-weaned animals may be housed in human living quarters but away from human activities (not in the kitchen, living room by the TV, etc.).
 - f. House the animals in enclosures that are structurally sound, of sufficient strength, kept in good repair to prevent escape or injury, and allow sufficient space for individual posture and social movements (unless medical treatment necessitates restricted mobility).
 - g. Secure cages when unattended.
 - h. Have protective devices and entrances and exits of cages to prevent escapes if kept outdoors and if needed to prevent injuries to human or animal's health (also can be helpful if an unauthorized person decides to trespass and open cage doors and release animals).
 - i. Have ambient temperatures appropriate for that species of animal.
 - j. Have adequate ventilation by means of windows, doors, vents, fans or air conditioning.
 - k. Maintain adequate lighting.
 - l. Provide adequate shade, shelters, nest boxes, perches and dens to protect from inclement weather and direct sun.
 - m. No exposed sharp objects, toxic paints, etc. can be in the cages with the animals.
 - n. Cages must have visual barriers or be separated by distance to restrict a wild animal's view of humans and other wild animals.
 - o. Feed animals appropriately and adequately to meet the nutritional needs of the animals.
 - p. Use food that is palatable, free of contamination, and of sufficient quantity.
 - q. Food receptacles must be appropriately sized, easily accessible, kept sanitary and safe.
 - r. Give the animals fresh, clean water unless medical treatment necessitates otherwise.
 - s. Remove and dispose of food wastes, feces, urine, and bedding daily to maintain sanitary conditions and protect human and animal health.
 - t. Remove trash, garbage, debris and any carcasses from the cages as soon as they are observed.

- u. Sanitize cages, rooms, hard surfaced pens, kennels, runs, equipment, and food and water receptacles between each adult animal use and between litters to prevent disease transmission.

Diseased or severely injured animals

- 1) All diseased mammals, non-migratory birds, reptiles, and amphibians must be euthanized. This includes raccoons with distemper and parvovirus.
- 2) If an animal is severely injured and a licensed veterinarian does not believe that it will be releasable within 180 days from the date obtained by the rehabilitator, then it needs to be euthanized.
- 3) Turtles with shell fractures must be euthanized unless determined by a licensed veterinarian to be treatable and releasable within 2 years of obtaining the turtle.

Releasing animals

- 1) You must have permission from the landowner to release the animals, even if they are released on public land (including city parks).
- 2) You must release the animals within 180 days unless approved by the DNR due to the time of year and extensive injuries.
- 3) You must have permission from the landowner to pick up or release an animal on the landowner's property.
- 4) Specific release requirements are as follows:

Reptiles and Amphibians: Release at the site where found, unless the origin is unknown. If the origin is unknown, it may be released in an appropriate habitat in the permit holder's county of residence.

Birds: Release in county from where it was originally obtained unless it is outside the breeding season for that species, it has been in a rehab facility for 90 calendar days or more, it is a juvenile, or it is a species not in the order Anseriformes (ducks and geese), Charadriiformes (plovers, killdeer, stilts, sandpipers, yellowlegs, curlews, dowitchers, phalaropes, snipes, woodcock, gulls, terns, etc.), Columbiformes (pigeons and doves), Falconiformes (falcons, kestrels, merlins), Galliformes (quail, partridge, turkey, pheasant), Gruiformes (rail, sora, moorhen, coot, gallinule, crane), or Strigiformes (owls).

Mammals other than deer, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, striped skunks, and Virginia opossums: Release in the county from which it was originally obtained or found unless the origin is unknown or it is a juvenile; if unknown, release mammal in appropriate habitat in the permit holder's county of residence; juveniles housed together with other animals of the same species may be released as a group in appropriate habitat in a county where at least one member of the group originated.

Foxes, raccoons, striped skunks, and Virginia opossums: release site must be at least 2 contiguous acres; no more than 8 animals of each of these species may be released per 2 acres of any site (1 site =2 acres; a 20 acre piece of property = 10 release sites) per calendar year; juveniles housed together with other animals of the same species may be released as a group in appropriate habitat in a county where at least one member of the group originated.

Coyotes: release site must be at least 2 contiguous acres; juveniles housed together with other coyotes may be released as a group in appropriate habitat in a county where at least one member of the group originated.

Deer: release site must be at least 5 contiguous acres and be outside city limits; no more than 10 deer may be released per site per calendar year.

If the rehabilitator is in a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Positive Area, then the deer must be released in a CWD Positive Area. If the deer came from a CWD Positive Area, then the deer must be released within a CWD Positive Area. Information on CWD Positive Areas can be found at: on.IN.gov/cwd.

Non-releasable animals

- 1) Non-releasable animals (except for deer) can be kept as foster parents or as education animals, but not as pets.
- 2) No non-releasable white-tailed deer may be kept under any permit; they must be euthanized.
- 3) Foster parents may be approved only if 5 mammals or birds of the same species have been taken in for rehabilitation within the last 2 previous years.
- 4) Non-releasable wild animals may be transferred to another individual with a rehabilitation permit or falconry license (raptors only); that person must have had a permit for at least 3 consecutive years and must use the animal for fostering or educational programs.
- 5) The determination of non-releasable wild animals must be based upon a licensed veterinarian's examination and statement. Non-releasable is defined as a wild animal that cannot obtain food on its own in the wild; does not exhibit locomotive skills necessary to survive; does not possess adequate vision to find or catch food and maneuver in a normal manner; or cannot otherwise fend for itself without medical care due to disease or extensive injuries. The statement must be a signed document or on letterhead.
- 6) For mammals other than deer:
 - a. Obtain a special purpose educational permit (or add it to current permit) to use it in educational programs; multiple species can be kept under one permit.
 - b. No more than 3 mammals per species and 6 mammals total may be possessed if 12 or fewer total mammal programs are presented to the public each calendar year.
 - c. No more than 5 mammals per species and not more than 20 mammals total may be possessed if 13 or more total mammal programs are presented to the public each calendar year.
 - d. Exceptions allowed upon prior written approval from DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife Permitting Staff based on the number of educational programs presented to the public the previous year.
- 7) For birds:
 - a. Obtain a special purpose educational permit (or add it to current permit).
 - b. No more than 3 birds per species and 6 birds total may be possessed if 12 or fewer total bird programs are presented to the public each calendar year.
 - c. No more than 5 birds per species and not more than 20 birds total may be possessed if 13 or more total bird programs are presented to the public each calendar year.
 - d. Exceptions allowed upon prior written approval from DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife Permitting Staff based on the number of educational programs presented to the public the previous year.
- 8) For reptiles:
 - a. No more than 3 reptiles per species and 6 reptiles total may be possessed if 12 or fewer total reptile programs are presented to the public each calendar year.
 - b. No more than 4 reptiles per species and not more than 20 reptiles total may be possessed if 13 or more total reptile programs are presented to the public each calendar year.

- c. Exceptions allowed upon prior written approval from DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife Permitting Staff based on the number of educational programs presented to the public the previous year.

Care of animals

- 1) You cannot spay, neuter or otherwise alter the reproductive function of a wild animal that is going to be released.
- 2) You are required to tag or mark an animal if it is given a pharmaceutical product or other chemical to tranquilize or anesthetize the mammal unless the product is labeled as safe for human consumption and released outside the clearance period.
- 3) You cannot use an animal currently undergoing rehabilitation for public display or education under the rehabilitation permit; electronic viewing and photographs are allowed.
- 4) You cannot mark or tag the animals in any way, such as with a collar or ear tag, unless required due to use of chemical or if approved in writing from the DNR.

Disposition of animals

- 1) Animals that die in your care must be:
 - a. buried,
 - b. incinerated,
 - c. given to a veterinarian or landfill for proper disposal,
 - d. put in the trash if double-bagged,
 - e. donated to a properly licensed university or other educational or scientific institution (such as a nature center at a state or county park),
 - f. donated to a person with a USFWS permit for Native American religious purposes; or
 - g. kept for educational purposes if you have a special purpose salvage permit.
- 2) If the animal was euthanized with chemicals, it must be disposed of only according to the chemical's label (such as outside the clearance period).
- 3) Animals cannot be sold or bartered (including live and dead animals and their parts and meat).
- 4) Live animals may be transferred to another individual with a rehabilitation permit.
- 5) Animals that are euthanized must be euthanized by an approved method (the methods recommended by the National Wildlife Rehabilitator's Association).

Reporting Requirements

- 1) Notify the DNR (Conservation officer or Linnea Petercheff) within 24 hours of acquiring an endangered species or a bald or golden eagle, alive or dead, including the location and date of acquisition. A DNR Conservation Officer can be reached through Central Dispatch at 812-837-9536 (available 24/7).
- 2) Notify the DNR (Conservation officer or Linnea Petercheff) within 24 hours if you have reason to believe that a wild animal has been subjected to criminal activity.
- 3) The signed annual report is due by January 31 that includes the species and condition of each animal; date animal was received; name and county of the donor or other source; and the method, location and date of disposition of the animals. If you use a computerized record, you must sign it as being a true and accurate account of all wild animals taken in for rehabilitation that year. If you transfer an animal to another person, please list that person's name.
- 4) Keep records for a minimum of 3 years.
- 5) Maintain current records/log books that include the following: the species and condition of each animal; date animal was received, name, address and telephone number of the donor or other source; treatment

of the animal while in captivity, including pharmaceutical products given to a mammal or reptile; and the method, location and date of disposition of the animal.

Carry the permit with you when transporting an animal possessed under this permit to another location (such as to a veterinarian or another rehabilitator or to a release site), and you must have the permit available and on-site when possessing and caring for wild animals under the authority of the rehabilitation permit. You must have permission from the property owner to go onto his/her property to rescue any wild animal.

NOTE: The term “animal” includes mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds.

Contact Information

Linnea Petercheff, Permit Supervisor

(317) 233-6527

Email: LPetercheff@dnr.IN.gov

Avery Cyr, Wildlife Permitting Biologist

(317) 232-4102

Email: acyr@dnr.IN.gov

Paperwork Submission & Amendment Requests: wildlifepermits@dnr.IN.gov

Indiana DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife

402 W. Washington St., Rm W273

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2781

Fax: (317) 232-8150