

Introduction To The Center for Wildlife For Our Volunteers

- Center for Wildlife History and Philosophy
- Animals We Take/Do Not Take At The CFW
- A Wildlife Rehabilitator's Code of Ethics
- Center For Wildlife Daily Routine
- What We Look For In Our Volunteers
- CFW Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Application Form
- Hold Harmless Form

Center for Wildlife History and Philosophy

Since opening its doors in 1986, the Center for Wildlife has been the only public facility in southern Maine dedicated to the rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned wild animals. Our goal in the treatment of these animals is “Rescue, Rehabilitate and Release” – to return them to their natural habitats, giving them a second chance at life.

Over 1,600 animals are brought to the Center each year from communities throughout Maine, New Hampshire and Northern Massachusetts. They are brought or referred to the Center by veterinarians, game wardens, animal control officers, police and fire departments, animal welfare organizations such as humane shelters and the Audubon Society, and, of course, concerned individuals who want to help.

Many of the animals that come to the Center are suffering from infection, illness, or injury. The causes and types of injury vary widely – perhaps a great blue heron became entangled in fishing lures, a red-tailed hawk was shot or poisoned, a gray squirrel was hit by a car, or a cottontail was injured by a cat. During the spring and summer months the Center also receives an enormous influx of orphaned baby birds and mammals that must receive round-the-clock care to ensure their survival. Whatever the illness or injury, the Center for Wildlife provides the full range of diagnostic treatment and recovery activities needed to maximize each animal’s chance of returning to the wild.

Our goal here at the Center for Wildlife is to rehabilitate and release sick, injured or orphaned wild animals back in the wild. Although this may sound simple, there are many facets to it. Good diet, low stress, medical care, quiet and respect are just a few of the many things that we have to monitor for this operation to be successful.

As with people in a hospital, the animals in our care need a quiet environment in which to recuperate from their injuries or to grow from a baby into a healthy wild animal. We minimize our handling and interaction with the animals so that they will grow up and remain wild. Interactions with us cause the animals stress. They see us as a predator no matter if they are a Great Horned Owl or a tiny chipmunk. Prolonged peering at them, handling them, speaking loudly around them, or even the knowledge that we are around is not beneficial for the animals. Many times people will bring animals in and say, “They really seemed to enjoy me holding and comforting them, they sat so still!” The fact of the matter is, they were frozen in fear and were waiting for you to eat them! We need to remember that sometimes the best way to help the animals in our care is to keep our distance.

As for the babies, if we raise them as our own babies, they will grow up not knowing what they are. We raise babies with members of their species whenever possible to help aid them in learning their natural behavior. When you raise a baby squirrel up from a pinky and at 8 weeks old it wants nothing to do with you, congratulations, you have done a **wonderful** job. You have successfully raised a wild orphan.

The whole reason we do what we do is to be able to return these animals to the wild and give them the best chance to live out the life they were meant to live. We do right by the animals by keeping them wild. It is how we show them our love and respect.

Animals We Take At CFW

Did you know...

In 2008, CFW treated a total of 1604 animals!

- 680 songbirds
- 499 mammals
- 277 water birds
- 90 raptors
- 34 reptiles/amphibians
- 24 other birds

Songbirds
Pigeons
Game birds
Raptors
Water birds
Shrews, voles, moles, mice
Bat
Cottontail
Woodchuck
Muskrat
Gray, Red and Flying Squirrel
Chipmunk
Opossum
Porcupine
Snakes
Turtles

Animals We Do Not Take At CFW*

Fox
Raccoon
Beaver
Skunk
Coyote
Lynx
Bobcat
Bear
Deer
Moose
Fisher
Marine Mammals

***Although we do not usually take these animals, we are in contact with other wildlife rehabilitators who do care for the animals on the above list. Should you get a call about one of these animals, contact a staff member.**

CFW RELEASE POLICY

We do not guarantee the release of any animal back to its original place of capture. Due to age, reason for admittance, migration, time of year, and other deciding factors, the staff at the Center for Wildlife will always aim to make the best decision for the animal in question. The animal's welfare is our first priority. This policy applies to all animals in our care. If the rescuer wants to be present for release, that is their option, but all release decisions by the staff are final. If there are any questions, please ask a staff member.

A Wildlife Rehabilitator's Code of Ethics

- 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.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should be responsible, conscientious, dedicated, and should continuously work toward improving the quality of care given to wild animals undergoing rehabilitation.
- A wildlife rehabilitator must abide by local, state, provincial and federal laws concerning wildlife, wildlife rehabilitation and associated activities.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should establish safe work habits and conditions, abiding by current health and safety practices at all times.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should acknowledge limitations and enlist the assistance of a veterinarian or other trained professional when appropriate.
- 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 animals.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should place optimum animal care above personal gain.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to provide professional and 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 that are inappropriate for education, foster-parenting, or captive breeding have a right to euthanasia.
- 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.
- A wildlife rehabilitator should work on the basis of sound ecological principles, incorporating appropriate conservation ethics and an attitude of stewardship.
- 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.

NWRA/IWRC Wildlife Rehabilitation Minimum Standards, 1993

Center for Wildlife Daily Routine

The Center for Wildlife is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The animals don't take vacations from needing to be fed and cared for! In the **spring and summer months, we are here from sunrise to sunset, usually from 8 AM to 8 PM**, and in **the fall and winter months from around 9 AM until 6 PM**. Due to the fact that we receive so many babies during the spring and summer months, some of these routines may take longer, but it is important that they get done each day.

The daily routine, which always has a few wrenches thrown into it, consists of cleaning, food preparation, cleaning, feeding, cleaning, admitting animals, cleaning, triaging and did we mention **cleaning?** It is important to remember that the animals that are in our care are like people in a hospital. We need to make sure their surroundings are clean so that they can regain and maintain their health.

MORNINGS

The opening person turns on lights, checks phone messages and returns any urgent calls, pulls mice from the refrigerator and sets them on the counter to warm for the morning feeding and from the freezer to thaw for the evening feeding and starts the food preparation. Check the white boards to note the top priority animals and any other important messages that may have been posted since your last shift. Besides the babies indoors, the animals outside need to be attended to first, especially the songbirds (generally, the smaller the animal, the higher the priority). The indoor animals receive fresh food and water and any medical attention or medicine needed. Treatment sheets need to be filled out daily to help monitor the animals' progress. The mouse cages downstairs need to be checked, food and water topped off, and cleaned if necessary. During the summer months, one or two people will be in charge of feeding the baby birds or baby squirrels, and at some times, both, while others complete the outdoor rounds and other rooms.

AFTERNOONS / EVENINGS

A mid-afternoon check is done of the outdoor cages and fresh food and water is supplied as needed. Headcounts should be done during the afternoon/evening check as well. Mice, bird diet, and any frozen fruit that will be needed for the next day should be pulled and put in the refrigerator. At dusk the nocturnal animals' food preparation begins and once it gets dark they can be fed. The closing person is in charge of making sure the lights and dryer are off, the cages are shut, the Center is clean, food is pulled for the following morning, the security alarm is set, and the doors are locked.

ALL DAY

Throughout the day, cleaning, laundry and dishes need to be done so they don't pile up! There are many jobs to be done, from feeding the babies and the mice to refreshing the branches inside or in the outside cages, to admitting animals as they come in and stabilizing them. There is always something that needs to be done! If you ever feel like you have nothing to do, ask a staff member – we have a long 'to do list'! It is also important that you let a staff person know if you feel overwhelmed or lost. We all feel this way at times, and the staff members may think that you automatically know what they mean when they ask you to do something. If you ever have a doubt or are unsure, speak up. There is never a silly question, and we are all here to help each other as well as the animals.

What We Look For In Our Volunteers/Interns

RESPONSIBILITY / RELIABILITY -- The animals, staff and other volunteers rely on you to be here at a certain time on certain days. If you are unable to make your shift, we need to know with enough time to make other arrangements. If you don't show up, the work does not get done and the animals will not get the quality of care that they deserve. Be respectful.

SENSITIVITY / RESPECT -- Be sensitive to the animals needs. Keeping their cages covered, their heads covered when handling them, and being quiet around them helps to lower their stress level. There are always times when people forget, they talk loudly around or to the animals or forget to cover a cage. No one is perfect. We are all human, and we all make mistakes. We are not asking you to be perfect, just mindful of your actions.

NOT SQUEAMISH -- Some people are squeamish. If you are one of those people, let us know so we don't give you a job that makes you uncomfortable! There are many jobs that need to be done and can be held aside – from folding the laundry, answering the phone, organizing paperwork, to weeding the garden. It may take time to get used to some of the things that are involved with the care of the animals. Let us know if you are squeamish, and if you start to lose that squeamishness, let us know that too! When an animal comes in you may be dealing with blood and bad injuries. Some animals may die overnight and must be removed from the cage the next morning. Dead fish and mice as well as bugs are used in the feeding of animals. And in this field of work you are guaranteed to be dealing with a lot of poop, literally! Some things make us uncomfortable, and that is understandable. Just let a staff member know. Other things need to be dealt with, no matter how unpleasant; that is the nature of the work.

OPEN COMMUNICATION -- This field of work can be a stressful and depressing one. There are times when you may just want to cry, and others when a co-worker may. Remember that we are all in this together, and that if something is bothering you or you are uncomfortable with anything, that you are always able to talk to a staff member about it. If you are burned out or need a break, talk to the Volunteer Coordinator about it. We have all been there, and we all understand!

GOOD LISTENERS -- Following directions is important not only for the safety and well being of the animals, but also the safety and well being of you and those around you. There are procedures that need to be followed, and rules that need to be recognized and respected. If you disagree or don't understand something (NO MATTER WHAT), talk to a staff member. The rules and regulations are there for a reason and need to be followed.

BEING OBSERVANT -- You are the eyes, ears and voice for the animals. Look for signs of diarrhea, fur/feather loss, limping, cloudy eyes, fighting, emaciation, loss of appetite, off behavior, or anything that strikes you as abnormal. Don't be afraid to mention something, no matter how small. The baby squirrel just didn't seem himself today, the hawk didn't eat 2 of his 3 mice, or the seagull was just sitting there, anything. Write it on the treatment sheet, this is how we notice trends, and tell a staff person. Follow your gut, and if it feels wrong, mention it!

FLEXIBILITY -- Our jobs here at the center vary and at times we all just have to pitch in and help wherever we can. Being flexible helps ease the load for everyone. You will help us by being willing to do whatever needs to be done, and in turn, you will learn more skills, allowing you a wider variety of tasks to choose from.

CFW VOLUNTEER POLICY

- The Center for Wildlife requires a **4 hour a week / 3 month** minimum commitment from all volunteers.
- All volunteers must attend orientation (one or two 4-hour workshops with senior volunteer trainers) before signing up on the animal care schedule.
- All volunteers must be at least **17 years of age**.
- All volunteers will undergo a trial and evaluation period before being considered a full-fledged animal caretaker. The Center for Wildlife reserves the right to terminate the volunteer contract at any time.
- Volunteers must **abide by the rules and regulations** as stated in the Center for Wildlife handbook and Wildlife Rehabilitators Code of Ethics.
- Volunteers are required to **follow instructions and directions** given to them by staff and supervisors.
- All volunteers must have signed the **Hold Harmless form** and have up to date paperwork with **emergency contact numbers**.
- All volunteers must have had a **tetanus shot** in the last 10 years (5years if you are injured).
- All volunteers must **sign up in advance for a scheduled time** and if circumstances prevent them from attending, must notify a staff member as soon as possible.
- If a volunteer is injured at the Center for Wildlife they agree to notify a staff member **immediately**.
- **No visitors** are to accompany a volunteer unless first having filled out paperwork, hold harmless form, and have been interviewed and approved by a staff member.

By signing below, I state that I understand these policies and agree to follow them while volunteering at the Center for Wildlife.

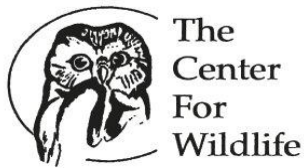
Volunteer Signature

Date

Note any exceptions to policies below:

Staff Signature for Approval of Exceptions

Date



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date filled out _____

Area of Interest (please check): Public Assistance Hotline Animal Care Facility

Name _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Employer: _____ Job Title: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Name: _____ Relation: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Relation: _____ Phone Number: _____

How did you find out about the Center for Wildlife? _____

What do you hope to gain from your volunteer experience? _____

What other volunteer or work commitments have you made and do you anticipate they will conflict with your volunteer commitment at CFW? _____

What aspect of volunteering are you most interested in doing? _____

Do you have any medical conditions that we should be aware of? (Allergies, asthma, pregnancy etc.) _____

Have you had a tetanus shot in the last 10 years? Y N

Can you volunteer on a regular basis? Y N

Are you willing to make a 4-hr/wk commitment for 3 months? Y N

If not, how long can you commit to? _____

Days you are available to volunteer: S M T W R F S

Hours you are available: 7-11 a.m. 8-12 12-4 4-8 p.m. 5-9pm

PLEASE SIGN RELEASE FORM ON NEXT PAGE

STAFF USE ONLY

Date(s) Called: _____ Interview Date: _____ Start Date: _____ Staff Interviewer: _____



The
Center
For
Wildlife

P.O. Box 620 * Cape Neddick, ME 03902 * Phone: 207-361-1400

HOLD HARMLESS FORM

Name _____

Phone Number _____ Birth Date (day/month/year) _____

Address _____

In consideration of your accepting my volunteer participation in the Center for Wildlife, I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, waive and release all claims for damages which I may have or which I may hereafter accrue to me against the Center for Wildlife, its sponsors, agents, representatives, or assigns for any damages which may be sustained and suffered by me in connection with my association with or participation in the volunteer program at the Center for Wildlife.

I further acknowledge am at least 18 years of age, that I have been sufficiently informed by the Center for Wildlife of the laws, rules, and regulations under which the Center operates and that I will abide by those laws, rules, and regulations.

I have been informed of and understand the risks associated with rabies and other diseases in wild animals. If any animal under my care inflicts an injury upon a human, I will report the incident to the Center immediately and will abide by all pertinent policies and regulations. I have received a tetanus shot within the past 10 years and I understand that, in the event of an injury, I should receive a booster if it has been more that 5 years since my last tetanus shot – and I will do so at my own expense.

I attest and verify that I have been sufficiently informed of the risks involved in the program and that I will be sufficiently trained to participate in this program.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____