

Texas Estuarine Resource Network

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Grantee: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

FINAL REPORT



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Table of Contents

Project Title.....	1
Executive Summary	1
Introduction.....	2
Project Significance and Background	2
Methods.....	3
Objective 2	3
Objective 3	4
Results and Observations	4
Objective 2	4
Objective 3	5
Discussion	7
Summary.....	7
Appendices	7

Project Title

Texas Estuarine Resource Network

Executive Summary

In partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Audubon Texas Coastal Program recruited and trained TERN citizen scientists and support expanded citizen science, community education, outreach and engagement during the busy coastal season (February – September). This work helped to grow a successful community science and volunteer network, the Texas Estuarine Research Network (TERN), and engaged community members throughout the Galveston Bay watershed with conservation messages. This project specifically focused on reducing impacts to birds from plastic pollution and limited response to injured or sick birds. Through this project Audubon Texas was able to develop a plastic reduction campaign Stop Ocean Plastic Pollution (STOPP), a wildlife permitting report, and quick user guides about how to respond to injured bird species. Outreach activities and deployment of monofilament recycling stations was delayed during the spring and summer of 2020 due to the unforeseen circumstances created by the Coronavirus. Although it may be difficult to deploy and monitor monofilament recycling stations within the project timeframe, Audubon Texas and its partners are committed to completing this work as soon as volunteer activities are resumed.

Introduction

The performing party (Texas Parks and Wildlife) in partnership with the Audubon Texas Coastal Conservation Program (Audubon Coastal Program) identified a need to engage and train citizen scientist to participate in conservation work alongside biologists and the Audubon Coastal Warden in the Galveston Bay watershed through the Texas Estuarine Resource Network (TERN) program.

The TPWD worked with the Audubon Texas to collect data through the TERN volunteer network and compile and disseminate information helping the TPWD and other organizations and agencies who assist in rescuing sick and injured wildlife. These efforts will cumulatively improve the health and ecological function of natural habitats within the watershed and provide a significant benefit to wildlife and water quality.

In partnership with the TPWD, Audubon Texas recruited and trained TERN citizen scientists to support and expanded citizen science, community education, and outreach and engagement during the busy coastal season (February – September). This time of year is characterized by higher concentrations of colonial waterbirds, young birds being hatched and fledged, and more people using the bay for recreational purposes.

Program strategies included the following:

- Research and coordinate historical baseline and present anthropogenic impacts to birds in the Galveston Bay Watershed;
- Provide further educational opportunities for new and existing TERN citizen scientists to assist with impacts to injured birds and wildlife;
- Provide the general public with more education about nesting birds, human disturbance, and the impacts of trash and discarded fishing line on local birds and other wildlife; and
- Develop stronger public outreach messaging about how the citizen science opportunities, through the TERN program, can assist with conservation.

Project Significance and Background

TERN is a citizen science-based program designed to connect people in nature while gathering valuable data to support scientists in protecting wildlife, wildlife habitats, and natural resources along the Texas Coast. The TERN program is the first citizen science program of its kind in the Texas coastal area. The program has built a network of volunteers to collect scientific data that can be used to inform management decisions concerning wildlife protection and land conservation. The TERN program consists of monitoring colonial waterbirds in two primary locations: rookery or nesting

habitats and foraging or feeding habitats. The program offers training in identifying colonial waterbird species, identifying waterbird behaviors and types of habitat, collection of rookery and behavior data, filling out datasheets, and submission of data. The TERN program also provides volunteer opportunities that involve a variety of partnership-based projects which include habitat restoration, habitat assessments, plastic debris and monofilament fishing line removal, land management on rookery islands, working with the public during outreach events, working in local senior living facilities, and working with local schools. Through these outreach activities Audubon Texas educates the general public about colonial waterbirds and the habitats they use.

Through this project the Audubon Texas was able to grow the TERN Program and target specific environmental stressors. There has been growing awareness and concern about the widespread problem of plastic pollution in the environment. Monofilament fishing line is an especially problematic type of plastic pollution because birds and other animals can become entangled and die when they encounter it in the wild. Some animals need immediate rescue and many of our TERN volunteers are the first people to encounter injured animals in the wild. Through this project the Audubon Coastal Program targeted monofilament recycling as a priority for stressor reduction. A detailed guide was also developed to instruct interested volunteers or parties on how to become certified to handle injured wildlife.

Methods

Outside of project reporting and administration (Objectives 1 & 4), there were two main objectives (Objective 2 & 3) to expand the TERN network, develop educational materials and reduce plastic pollution in the coastal environment. In order to achieve these objectives Audubon Texas took a multi-pronged approach.

Objective 2: To provide educational opportunities for new and existing TERN citizen scientists to assist with documenting and coordinating response to birds that have been injured by anthropogenic sources and to educate the public on plastic pollution.

Methods:

1. Research standard operating procedures to acquire permits for injured wildlife response.
2. Synthesize information in an easy to read step-by-step guide.
3. Summarize information for quick reference and share through outreach and engagement events.
4. Develop communications materials to communicate the problem of plastic pollution and share broadly with the public.
5. Build, deploy, and monitor use of monofilament recycling stations.

Objective 3: Increase awareness in the general public through the use of outreach and education. Increase the TERN program's visibility in the public eye through a variety of outlets to better inform communities of conservation work with colonial waterbirds, nesting and rookery island work, and ways to get involved through the TERN program.

Methods:

1. Develop and disseminate community outreach tools; develop presentations; publish press releases; conduct monitoring and colonial waterbird identification trainings.

Results and Observations

The TERN Program successfully developed and implemented the methods identified above. The activities performed throughout the grant period produced the following results.

Objective 2: To provide educational opportunities for new and existing TERN citizen scientists to assist with documenting and coordinating response to birds that have been injured by anthropogenic sources and to educate the public on plastic pollution.

TASK 2.1 SEABIRD SCOUT

Audubon staff developed the Seabird Scout program to recruit and train TERN volunteers to respond to injured wildlife. Through this effort we developed a step-by-step reference for how to recognize and help injured and sick birds. The guide provides three easy steps: Assess (the situation, baby or adult?), Bird Behavior (normal or injured), Contact (local wildlife rehabilitators) in *The ABCs of helping injured/sick birds* (Appendix 1). In addition to the longer ABC's guide, we also created a five-step summary that was printed on magnets and rack cards to distribute at outreach and engagement events (Appendix 2).

TASK 2.2 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Audubon TERN staff and community scientists prepared and shared outreach messages around the hazards of plastic pollution and how to respond to injured birds. A plastic pollution campaign called AudubonSTOPP (STop the Ocean Plastic Pollution) was created as a tool to engage the public on what they can do to eliminate single use plastics as well as a promotional tool to encourage individual and group clean-up efforts. The messages created through Audubon STOPP and the Seabird Scout program were shared broadly at festivals, community events and TERN events and training. Our outreach and engagement activities are detailed in an Outreach Report (Appendix 3).

TASK 2.3 FISHING LINE RECYCLING AND MONITORING

Due to the unforeseen circumstances created by the Coronavirus we are unable to convene volunteers to finish assembling and installing monofilament recycling stations. This has postponed completion of Task 2.3. Audubon Texas will reinstate this task when National Audubon lifts its Coronavirus policy and volunteer activities are allowed. Final assembly and installation of monofilament recycling stations at marinas along with post-installation of monofilament recycling station will begin when volunteer restrictions due to Coronavirus are lifted, possibly in late summer 2020.

Objective 3: Increase awareness in the general public through the use of outreach and education. Increase the TERN program's visibility in the public eye through a variety of outlets to better inform communities of conservation work with colonial waterbirds, nesting and rookery island work, and ways to get involved through the TERN program.

TASK 3.1 TERN PRESENTATIONS

TERN trainings were held at least quarterly throughout 2019 with presentations at schools and community events to raise awareness about the program and issues facing local birds. Outreach activities are detailed in the Outreach Report (Appendix 3) and the 2019 TERN schedule is included below (table 1). Over the course of 2019, Audubon Texas' TERN program counted 35,000 birds, recorded 5,052 hours of volunteer service, and coordinated 2,434 individuals volunteering or participating in TERN events. This is an increase from 2018 when the program recorded 4,778 hours of volunteer service and 1,541 individuals volunteering or participating.

TASK 3.2 INJURED BIRD PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS REPORT

After completing extensive research Audubon Texas staff compiled an *Injured Bird Permitting Requirements Report* (Appendix 4). The information was compiled from interviews with professional wildlife rehabilitators in the Galveston area and from state and federal permit documents. The report is intended to assist individuals interested in becoming a permitted wildlife responder and rehabilitator. It is a thorough summary that provides step-by-step guides to completing both the state and federal permits.

TASK 3.3. PRESS RELEASES

Audubon Texas staff prepared three press releases (Appendix 5): one about signing the Audubon STOPP pledge, and two about what to do if encountering a bird that appears injured.

Table 1. TERN Annual Training, Work Day, and Event Calendar for 2019.

TERN Activity	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
		RM	RM	RM	RM	RM	RM	RM			
ACBS	ACBS	ACBS	ACBS	ACBS	ACBS				ACBS	ACBS	ACBS
					TCWS						
FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM
IM	IM								IM	IM	IM
	SCU		SCU		SCU		SCU		SCU		SCU
Whooping Crane TT	TT		TT			TT				TT & Whooping Crane TT	
										TERN Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event	
TIC		TIC						TIC			
		BN	BN	BN					BN	BN	BN
				GTBC							
CBC											

Key

RM = Rookery Monitoring	TT = TERN Training	SCU = Shoreline clean-up	GTBC = Great Texas Birding Classic
ACBS = Audubon Coastal Bird Surveys	FM = Forage Monitoring	TIC = TERN in the Classroom	CBC = Christmas Bird Count
TCWS = Texas Colonial Waterbird Surveys	IM = Island Management	BN = BirdNerd Lecture Series	

Discussion

Audubon Texas is grateful for the opportunity to reach a wider group of community members through the funds provided by this grant. The TERN program is a unique program that provides both scientific monitoring and data as well as volunteer service projects and outreach. The program has grown over the course of this grant and because of the opportunities provide through this partnership. Moving forward Audubon Texas would like to see the TERN program grow to become even more science focused by leveraging the volunteer science resources to support state, federal and nonprofit partners' science questions. The current greatest challenges are the safety concerns created by the Coronavirus. Many volunteers can continue their TERN surveys individually, but other activities such as monthly group surveys and deployment and monitoring of monofilament recycling stations require volunteers to either convene or interact with other members of the public. Hopefully normal operations will return by the end of the summer.

Summary

In partnership with TPWD, Audubon Texas was able to complete all but one of the project deliverables within the timeline. Through these efforts the TERN network grew to provide over 5,000 hours of volunteer service for coastal bird conservation efforts in 2019. Audubon Texas was to reach coastal communities in the Galveston Bay area and develop a campaign aimed at reducing plastic pollution. Audubon Texas staff was also able to provide a reference document that will serve as a resource for individuals interested in becoming state and federal wildlife rehabilitators and responders. Project activities are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Table of completed deliverables.

Task	Deliverable	Completed
1. Project Administration	Quarterly progress reports	Q1-Q7
	Reimbursement forms	Q1-Q6
	Regular communication	Ongoing
Task 2. Seabird Scout Project and Plastic Pollution Education	Seabird Scout standard operating procedures	Q4-Q6.
	Plastic pollution education outreach activities	Q1-Q6
	Fishing line recycling stations data collection	TBD – near completion
	Report of activities	Q1-Q8
Task 3. Education and awareness	TERN presentation	Q1-Q6
	Report on wildlife permitting process	Q6
	Approved press release	Q4
Task 4. Final report	Draft final project report	Q8
	Final report	TBD



Seabird Scout

The ABCs of helping injured/sick birds



Assess- The Situation

Look around:

- **Safety:** the number one thing you should do if you find a sick/injured bird is to be safe; so take a look around. Often times you may find a sick/injured bird near roads, rocky or uneven terrain, and/or a thick wooded area. Wherever you are, be sure to assess the situation by taking stock of what is around you and be safe.
- **Close Quarters:** try very hard not to get too close to the possible sick/injured bird. Often times getting too close can cause the bird to lash out or hurt itself by becoming too stressed if it cannot fly away.
- **Location:** try to look around and GPS your location so that you can give the correct information to the proper authorities when you call them.
- **Pictures:** Take a lot of pictures, especially of the injured portion of the bird.



Bird Behavior:

Baby:

- **Nestling:** If the bird is not injured, try and find the nest in a nearby tree. If a nest cannot be located, you can make one yourself out of soft materials. Place it in a tall bush/tree to keep it away from predators. Parents will be back shortly.
- **Fledgling:** If the bird is a fledgling, hopping around, giving you the cutest little chirp; never fear! It is just learning how to fly. Look around for the parents, they are often nearby. If the bird is in danger of predators, try and place it in a bush. If not, leave the bird be.



Contact:

Report Injured Birds in Galveston County:

Using your pictures, location, and brief description; go to the Facebook page: Report Injured Birds in Galveston County and upload your information. They will be able to reach out to local wildlife centers or the humane society to come and help the sick/injured bird.



Assess Cont.-Baby or Adult?

Baby bird: check to see if it has feathers

- **Feathers:** this baby will often look like a fluff ball or has actual feathers. This is a fledgling and is learning how to fly and the parents will be nearby. Look to see if it is injured.
- **No feathers:** this baby will often look like a naked dinosaur with wings! This baby is a nestling and will need to be in a nest. Look to see if it is injured, in danger of human traffic/predators, and if the parents are nearby.

Adult bird:

- Whether the bird is a juvenile or an adult, at this age the bird will be quite a bit larger and will be able to fly, capture food, and have mostly feathers, rather than a fluffy down like fledglings.



Bird Behavior:

Adult:

While we may want to try and give the bird what it needs, be sure to never try and capture the bird unless otherwise directed by a permitted rehabilitator. Instead, try to take note if it is:

- **Injured:** look at its wings, beak, and feet for odd angles and bones out of place. Try and take pictures of the area you think is injured.
- **Sick:** acting out character for a bird - examples: abnormalities in feathers/beak, is frozen in place, poor general appearance (hygiene), walking funny...
- **Entangled:** check to find fishing line and/or waste attached to the bird. Try and take pictures of where it is entangled



Contact:

Wildlife Rehabilitator:

If you need assistance right away, contact a local rehabilitator by looking at the Texas Parks & Wildlife website: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/rehab/list/> or use the QR code above. A wildlife rehabilitator is a good resource to use on what to do if a capture is necessary, who to contact in your area, and where to go with an injured bird.

Audubon Texas

Seabird Scout

QUICK GUIDE TO INJURED AND SICK BIRDS

1

Assess the Situation: Is it safe?

2

Identify: Is the bird injured, sick, and/or entangled

3

Document: take pictures of the bird, any notable observations, and your location

4

Call: Your local wildlife rehabilitator for important next steps

5

In a Hurry?: Post pictures, location, and description to Report Injured Birds in Galveston County Facebook page.

Appendix 3: Outreach report

2018

November

- Seabrook community presentation to educate coastal citizens about their local birds and plastic pollution (Tasks 2.2 & 3.1).

2019

March – May

- The World Migratory Bird Day at Armand Bayou Nature Center, hosted booth (Task 2.2)
- Bay Day at Kemah Boardwalk, hosted booth (Task 2.2)
- Presentation at Draw Academy (partnered with Galveston Bay Estuary Program) to share our message of protecting birds and Back the Bay. This opportunity to speak to nearly 600 elementary students was an interactive experience for students to learn about the dangers that coastal colonial waterbirds face while raising their chicks as well as covered topics such as what we humans can do to protect these birds. We joined the two phrases “Fish, Swim, and Play – 50 yards away” from our Audubon public service announcements and “Back the Bay” so that the entire school could participate in the interactive lesson activity (Task 2.2)

June – August

- Partnering with Galveston Bay Estuary Program, we were able to present at two local libraries in Pasadena to share our message of protecting birds and Back the Bay. Each presentation had ~20 kids and adults in attendance. We were able to present on plastic and recyclable awareness and what they can do to be better to keep the bay clean; along with how we can protect birds. The phrase “Fish, Swim, and Play – 50 yards away” was used again in these presentations (Task 2.2)

September – November

- Bird Nerd Series - September 14th with Jim Stevenson from the Galveston Ornithology Society where he discussed his research on circum-Gulf migration and the conservation hazards these birds face crossing these countries and human borders. We had 37 individuals attend. (Task 3.1).
- Bird Nerd - October 19th featured Taylor Rhoades from the Houston Zoo as she discussed how the zoo is using behavioral training to mediate the usage of plastics in the community (Tasks 2.2 & 3.1).
- Presentation at Discovery Middle School in Houston for 130 students on coastal birds and the hazards that plastics cause wildlife. These students gave a verbal pledge to pick up plastic pollution in their local parks and watersheds as well as to reduce single use plastics as often as possible as part of our Audubon STOPP pledge (Task 2.2)
- Booth at the Texas A&M Galveston Career Fair to discuss TERN and volunteering as a way to gain experience (Tasks 2.2 & 3.1)

2020

January

- Galveston State of the Bay Symposium. Hosted a booth with educational materials and presented on TERN progress and training (Task 2.2).

March

- Online TERN Training with the Galveston Bay Area Master Naturalists (Task 3.1)

July

- Online BirdNerd webinar series featuring Kristen Vale, American Bird Conservancy (Task 2.2). Fifty-six volunteers attended and the webinar was [recorded](#).

TERN Grant Quarterly Report Photos



Students holding up ping pong balls that represent the eggs of colonial waterbirds on the Texas Coast.



Students in the audience who are participating with the interactive program.

Audubon STOPP

Stop the Ocean Plastic Pollution

1. Take the Pledge / join the group AudubonSTOPP
2. Pick up Plastics from the environment
3. Post your cleanup photo to [#AudubonSTOPP](#)



Audubon

TEXAS



Booth at World Migratory Bird Day





Booth shared with GBEP at Bay Day and Nesting Bird Activity live!





Least Tern: Kathy Cline

July 14th Virtual BirdNerd flyer.

AUDUBON TEXAS ESTUARINE RESOURCE
NETWORK PRESENTS

Beach-nesting Bird and Shorebird Conservation on the Texas Coast

FEATURING **KRISTEN VALE**
AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY
JULY 14, 2020, 2:00 PM

JOIN ZOOM MEETING [HERE](#)
PASSWORD: 968654

THIS PRESENTATION IS APPROVED
ADVANCE TRAINING FOR THE GALVESTON
BAY AREA CHAPTER TMN

Instructional Guidance for the Wildlife Rehabilitation

Permitting Process in Texas
April 2020

Contents

Disclaimer	3
Introduction	3
Wildlife Rehabilitation	3
Benefits of Wildlife Rehabilitation	3
General Requirements	4
State Permit	5
Federal Permit	6
Summary	7
Bibliography	7
General Requirements Summary	8
State Requirements Summary	9
Federal Requirements Summary	10
Appendices	
Appendix One: Subpermittee Application	11
Appendix Two: State Permit	12
Appendix Three: Federal Permit	17
Appendix Four: Facilities	27

Disclaimer:

This document is to provide information on how you can obtain a permit or become a subpermittee to rehabilitate migratory birds. **This document is not for wild animal care.** If you wish, you can add that onto your migratory bird rehab permit after completing its requirements. For more information on wild animal care, please contact Texas Park and Wildlife, or visit their website at: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits/land/wildlife/>.

It is important to note, if you do find a sick/injured bird, you are protected by the Good Samaritan Provision according to 50 C.F.R. 21.31(a) to transport any sick, injured, and/or orphaned bird without a permit, and take possession of the bird in order to immediately transport it to a permitted rehabilitator. However, this provision does not protect any person with multiple experiences capturing injured/sick birds and transporting them. If this is occurring multiple times, you must obtain a permit to handle, transport, and rehabilitate any injured/sick migratory bird; or be placed on a subpermittees permit.

Finally, if you choose to complete the process for a permit, it is important to note that this is a voluntary activity. The permittee is responsible for any and all costs for the rehabilitation of the animal.

This document, and information henceforth, explains the qualifications that you will need to complete for the state of Texas permit. If you would like to be permitted in another state, you must contact the agencies within to find out more information.

Wildlife Rehabilitation:

The process of wildlife rehabilitation begins with an individual spotting and reporting an injured or sick animal to a wildlife professional and/or animal control. Once the animal is safely captured by a professional, the animal is transported to a rehabilitation facility. At the facility the animal is examined to determine the extent of the injury or illness and the probable success of rehabilitation. That evaluation is based on the species, condition, and recovery options available. Once

evaluated, the professionals are able to provide the appropriate care to rehabilitate the animal. If the animal cannot be rehabilitated, it will be euthanized humanely, after following protocols (especially if it is protected by the migratory bird act/endangered species act). In some cases animals that are non-releasable can be kept by the rehabilitator (under a separate permit) for educational purposes or as a surrogate parent for orphaned or injured young wildlife.

Benefits of Wildlife Rehabilitation:

There are many benefits to having wildlife rehabilitators, particularly in areas of concentrated human populations and development. There are wildlife biologists who may have expert knowledge of a particular species of animals (particularly threatened and endangered species), but do not have the time or resources to care for individual animals. Wildlife rehabilitators also provide data and staff-power for areas of wildlife research and retrospective studies. They can assist in monitoring disease and domestic animal protection and public health. Permits, requirements, and procedures also provide self-regulation and self-enforcement within the wildlife rehabilitator community. Wildlife rehabilitation centers also provide valuable public education and a clear understanding regarding securement of wildlife and its necessary motives.

Without wildlife rehabilitators, biologists and conservationists would be overwhelmed with saving our wildlife species. Using this connection, rehabilitation experts can focus on each species while the conservation experts can focus on saving larger populations and habitat.



Black Skimmer
Photo: Michael Libbe/National Audubon Society

General Requirements:

There are many steps that you will need to take in order to be state and federally permitted to rehabilitate birds. While these steps may seem daunting, many of the requirements can be used to fulfill both the state and federal permit. It is important that adequate training is obtained to ensure no undo harm is inflicted on the animal or the rehabilitator.

One of the general requirements for obtaining a permit demands that a person have 100 hours of hands-on experience within the past two years with a rehabilitation permit holder. You will not be granted a federal permit without this experience. While this experience can be obtained through employment at a rehabilitation facility, it may be easier to get a position as an unpaid volunteer. Additionally you can work with any wildlife rehabilitator regardless of whether they have the resources of paid staff or are an official organization. Some wildlife rehabilitators have a work facility on site or near their homestead. Some examples of programs in the Houston area that you can volunteer for are Friends of Texas Wildlife in the Montgomery County Texas (<http://www.ftwl.org/>).

Hands on experience can offer valuable education opportunities. While there are classes and workshops on specific topics, volunteering over the course of a year or two will provide exposure to a variety of different animals as well as treatment options for injuries, illnesses, or weaning young animals to be released. Each wildlife rehabilitator will have different experience to offer and it may be beneficial to assist more than one facility as you gain knowledge from different people. Overall, the standards and procedures will be the same due to the regulation of the permits, however the approach may differ based on the experience of each rehabilitator and who taught them in the field. Additionally, most wildlife rehabilitation professionals work closely with government agencies such as USFWS and TPWD regarding endangered and threatened species. Those biologists and environmental specialists will offer specific knowledge on many of the species that are in need of protection under federal laws.

The next requirement is for the supplementary references needed for your application. This process will be lengthy in time, with at least one year at a minimum working relationship with the individuals. This can be done by gaining personal and professional experience with individuals who work within the conservation and

wildlife rehabilitation fields. These may be biologists with government agencies (USFWS/TPWD) or non-profit organizations that are doing conservation work such as animal monitoring, tracking, tagging/banding, or other related work. Volunteering with these organizations and individuals is a way to gain valuable experience as well as meeting local veterinarians who may be performing procedures on many of the animals that need additional care for rehabilitation. They will teach you important skills required for wildlife rehabilitation. You will need at least a year of working relationship with these individuals in order to name them for your supplementary references.

Taking courses on wildlife rehabilitation and becoming a member of either the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) or National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) is another requirement to apply for a permit. These organizations provide resources, trainings, and conferences that you can attend. These conferences can even count towards some of your required 100 hours of training. For a list of upcoming conferences, see <https://nwrasyposium.org/> for more information.

Through regular volunteering with a wildlife rehabilitator, taking courses on wildlife rehabilitation, and becoming a member of either the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) or The National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) you can get into contact with members who can potentially have you listed as a subpermittee. The subpermittee is an individual who is granted permissions to take on wildlife rehabilitation duties without having their own permit. A wildlife rehabilitator who has their own permit may select responsible individuals to list under the protection of their permit to handle and care for the animals. The permit holder is responsible for all actions taken by the subpermittee, so this privilege of working under someone's permit is earned through regular contact and communications as well as the availability and reliability of the volunteer. For those who are interested in working with wildlife for rehabilitation purposes, this is one of the best ways to get experience with wildlife and the responsibilities required by law to obtain and hold a state and federal rehabilitation permit. See **Appendix One** for the subpermittee application.

Once you go through all of the necessary programs, trainings, and conferences, you may apply for your state and federal permits. Have a federal permit completed and ready to submit once you have completed your state permit if you wish to rehabilitate protected bird species. Many of these general requirements will be repeated in

the next sections. This information is summarized below in: **General Requirements: A Summary.**

State Permit:

A state permit from TPWD is required in the state of Texas if you wish to rehabilitate wildlife. You must meet these requirements before applying and have all necessary documentation with your application. If you wish to rehabilitate migratory birds as well, a federal permit is required as well. More information on migratory birds can be found here:

<https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/laws-legislations/migratory-bird-treaty-act.php>.

You can refer to **Appendix Two** for an example of a state permit application. It is free to apply for a state permit.

As mentioned before, you will need to gain a personal and professional relationships with individuals who work within the conservation and wildlife rehabilitation fields. You will need to have two letters of recommendation for your application.

Becoming a member of the IWRC and NWRA will also be a requirement for a state permit. Memberships are inexpensive (IWRC: \$30/year and NWRA: \$50/year) and can provide you with training materials. With your participation in one of these organizations, you can take any one of their conferences or trainings they offer, as this can also aid in your 100 hours of required training. If you do not wish to participate in a conference, you may instead opt to take the department wildlife rehabilitation exam. The minimum score for this test is an 80 percent. However, it is important to note that the application for this exam is \$115. If you wish to complete the exam, study materials and further information are provided on the IWRC website or by following this link:

<http://www.cwrexam.org/certification/documents/CWR%20Applicant%20Handbook.pdf>

Lastly, by completing the general requirements, and the specified ones listed above, you will also need to provide proof of adequate facilities for the intended species along with written verification from any and all licensed veterinarian(s) that you are using to provide medical care and/or as a consultant. Pictures must be provided along with a properly labeled diagram. Note that your facilities may be inspected by the department. In order to adequately complete this section of the application, make sure that you understand the natural history and behavior of any animal you plan to rehabilitate as this can help determine their enclosure. Cage size criteria are based on animal size and medical status. Avoid areas of human activity to prevent imprinting. You must

be able to provide temporary housing for any species, even if you are not currently permitted to treat (animal must be taken to an appropriate rehabilitator within 24 hours). Lastly, your holding facilities should have adequate water, food, shelter, and be constructed with appropriate materials. It is important to note that you may NOT share rehabilitation facilities with someone else. See **Appendix Four**.

Once all of these requirements have been met, you may turn in your state permit application (see **Appendix Two**). Once it has been approved, you may then apply for your federal permit. Many of the requirements that you have been working on thus far will also count towards your federal permit. This information is summarized below in: **State Requirements: A Summary**.

Federal Permit:

If you wish to rehabilitate migratory birds, you will need to also have a federal permit, as migratory birds are protected bird species. In the state of Texas, in order to obtain a federal permit, a state permit must be obtained first. It is alright to work on both your state and federal permits at the same time. The steps to obtaining a federal permit may already be met as you work on obtaining your state permit.

You can refer to **Appendix Three** for an example of a federal permit application. There will be a \$50 application fee.

In accordance with the general and state permit requirements, you will need to gain a working relationship with individuals who work within the conservation and wildlife rehabilitation fields. These individuals will provide one letter of recommendation, statements of willingness to provide you with assistance, and be a point of contact. Unlike the state permit, you will only need one letter of recommendation but it must be from a fellow federal permittee. The federal permittee can be the same one that wrote your state letter of

recommendation. This permittee will need to work closely with you and know your work and facilities. Next you will need two statements, one from a federal permittee and one from a licensed veterinarian. These statements will be about their willingness to provide you with assistance. As for the statement of willingness from a licensed veterinarian, this can be from the same veterinarian that helped you with your state permit. Lastly, your point of contact will need to be your state wildlife law enforcement. Please contact US Fish and Wildlife Service – Office of Law Enforcement to get your needed contact. Please see this website for more information: <https://www.fws.gov/le/contact-us.html>.

As stated in the general requirements, you will need to complete 100 hours of hands-on experience over the course of a year. Since you have spent time working on your state permit, many of these hours may already be met. Remember that this experience can be obtained through employment or volunteering at a rehabilitation facility. Additionally, you can work with any wildlife rehabilitator regardless of whether they have the resources of paid staff or are an official organization.

Lastly, as with the state permit requirement, you will also need to provide proof of adequate facilities for the intended species along with written verification from any and all licensed veterinarian(s) that you are using to provide medical care and/or as a consultant. See **Appendix Three** for more information. This information is summarized below in: **Federal Requirements: A Summary**.

**** Please note that the Regional Director may place restrictions on which type of birds you are allowed to rehabilitate. This will be based on you experience and facilities. Any information that is required on the application that is not attached or provided will result in a denial of permit.**



Summary:

While the steps to becoming a wildlife rehabilitator are lengthy, there are many benefits to having wildlife rehabilitators especially in heavily populated areas where animals get hurt more readily. The process to become a permitted wildlife rehabilitator allows each individual to begin helping animals immediately and the hands on experience provides a thorough education to prepare this person for what they will experience while rehabilitating wildlife and birds. Through this process you will be getting to know the professionals within your community and finding ways to work together to benefit our wildlife. By completing these steps to become a state and federally permitted rehabilitator for migratory

birds, you will not only be helping these animals; but also helping your community.

Bibliography:

*All information was gathered and borrowed from the Texas Administrative Code: Title 31, P.2, Chapter 69, Subchapter C.

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=31&pt=2&ch=69&sch=C&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=31&pt=2&ch=69&sch=C&rl=Y)

*All information was gathered and borrowed from the FWS application form 3-200-10b and the FWS website:

<https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/permits/regional-permit-contacts.php>

General Guidelines: A Summary

1. Must be 18 years or older and have a state license
2. You will need to apply for both a State and a Federal permit (Federal permit required if you wish to rehabilitate protected bird species) **Must have completed the Federal permit application to turn into the State (so all guidelines to get a Federal permit must be met). State permit is required first, then you can turn in your Federal permit**
 - a. State application for rehabilitation can be found here:
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits/land/wildlife/rehab/>
 - i. See tab for Wildlife Rehabilitation Application
 - b. Application for a Federal Migratory Bird Rehabilitation Permit can be found on this website:
<https://www.fws.gov/forms/display.cfm?number1=200>. A fee maybe required.
 - i. See permit form 3-200-10b
3. Must have 100 hours of hands on experience (gained over the course of a year). **Cannot get Federal permit without this.
 - a. During this time you must gain experience for each type of migratory bird you want to rehabilitate
 - i. You can do this by working as a subpermittee for a rehabilitation permit holder
 - ii. Further information and training can be found here: <http://www.ftwl.org/node/106>
 - b. 20 hours out of 100 can be fulfilled by take a migratory bird rehabilitation seminar/class
4. Two letters of recommendation from someone who has known you over two years.
 - a. Letters of recommendation must be from a conservation scientist or game warden, licensed vet, or another rehabilitator permit holder
5. Must have completed a training course. This course is offered by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Coalition
6. Must have gone through a department sponsored wildlife rehabilitation or national rehabilitation conference within the three years of trying to obtain a permit
7. Must have a state or national membership through a rehabilitation organization OR score at least an 80% on the department administered wildlife rehabilitation exam
8. Photographic evidence of the facilities you plan to use
 - a. Go to the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council or the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association websites for more information

State Requirements: A Summary

In order to obtain a state license from TPWD for the rehabilitation of birds, you must meet the following requirements. If you would like to also be able to rehabilitate protected bird species, then you must also apply for a federal license.

Here are the requirements to apply for a state license. If you plan on rehabilitating protected bird species (please see list ____), then in addition to these requirements you will also need to meet the requirements for the federal permit listed and have them ready to turn in with your application.

1. Must be 18 years old and have a current state driver's license.
2. Have two letters of recommendation from the following individuals that have known you for at least two years:
 - a. Licensed veterinarians
 - b. Conservation scientist or game wardens currently employed
 - c. A permitted wildlife rehabilitator
3. Current membership with either International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council (IWRC) or National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA)
 - a. Membership fees for IWRC: \$30/year
 - b. Membership fees for NWRA: \$50/year
4. Must have proof that you have completed ONE of the following:
 - a. Completion of training offered by IWRC or NWRA within three years preceding this application
 - b. Attended a wildlife rehabilitation conference or a national wildlife conference within three years preceding this application
 - c. Membership in a state or national rehabilitation organization (IWRC or NWRA are examples).
 - d. Took the department wildlife rehabilitation exam and scored at least an 80 percent.
 - i. This test can be offered through IWRC, you do not need to be a member or take any classes
 - ii. In order to receive a certificate to be a Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator (CWR), you must pass the written exam. The pass score cut off is a 38/50. HOWEVER, in order to obtain a state license using this document as evidence, you must score at least a 40/50.
 - iii. The Application fee for this exam is \$115.
 - iv. Study materials and further information are provided on the IWRC website or by following this link: <http://www.cwrexam.org/certification/documents/CWR%20Applicant%20Handbook.pdf>
5. Must have proof of adequate facilities for the intended species. Pictures must be provided along with properly labeled diagrams. Note that your facilities may be inspected by the department.
 - a. Here are some basic requirements for your facilities. For a more detailed list please refer to the Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation document attached.
 - i. Make sure you understand the natural history and behavior to any animal you plan to rehabilitate as this can help determine their enclosure
 - ii. Cage sized criteria based on animal size and medical status
 - iii. Avoid areas new human activity to prevent imprinting
 - iv. Must be able to provide temporary housing for any species, even if you are not currently licensed to treat. (Animal must be taken to an appropriate rehabilitator within 24 hours).
 - v. Holding facilities should have adequate water, food, shelter, and be constructed with appropriate materials
 - vi. You may NOT share rehabilitation facilities with someone else.
6. Need to have written verification from any and all licensed veterinarian(s) that you are using to provide medical care and/or as a consultant.

*All information was gathered and borrowed from the Texas Administrative Code: Title 31, P.2, Chapter 69, Subchapter C.
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=31&pt=2&ch=69&sch=C&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=31&pt=2&ch=69&sch=C&rl=Y)

Federal Requirements: A Summary

In the state of Texas, you will need a federal permit in order to rehabilitate protected bird species. In order to obtain a federal permit, a state license must be obtained first. Please note that in order to obtain a state license for the rehabilitation of protected birds, not only do you need to fulfill the requirements for the state, but also the federal requirements as well. (So these steps may already be met if you have your state license.)

In order to obtain a federal license from US Fish and Wildlife for the rehabilitation of birds, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be 18 years or older and have a current state driver's license
2. Application fee \$50
3. Have a copy of your state rehabilitation license
4. Have at least 100 hours of hands on experience working with the types of birds you plan on rehabilitating. This must be done over the course of at least 1 year.
 - a. Please note that up to 20 hours can be fulfilled by participating in a migratory bird rehabilitation seminar and course. See 4a on the state license requirements.
 - b. Be sure to take adequate notes of which bird species you worked with, how long, under what conditions, number of hours spent handling/feeding, any medical treatments provided, and how the bird was released; as this will need to be described in your application.
5. Must have proof of adequate facilities for the intended species. Please refer to 5a(i-iv) on the state license requirements for further information. Pictures must be provided along with properly labeled diagrams. Note that your facilities may be inspected by the department.
6. Letter of recommendation from a federally permitted rehabilitator that is familiar with your work.
 - a. Must also attach a letter from a federally permitted rehabilitation (can be the same one) stating their willingness to provide you with assistance.
7. A letter from a licensed veterinarian stating their willingness to assist you. Please see 6 on the state license requirements for further information.
8. Please use the state of Texas as your state wildlife law enforcement contact needed for your application.
9. Any information that is required on the application that is not attached or provided will result in a denial of permit.

** Please note that the Regional Director may place restrictions on which type of birds you are allowed to rehabilitate. This will be based on you experience and facilities.

*All information was gathered and borrowed from the FWS application form 3-200-10b and the FWS website:

<https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/permits/regional-permit-contacts.php>

Appendix One: Subpermittee Permit



TPWD Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit – Subpermittee Request Subpermittee that I will be held accountable for:

Complete the following information for a new subpermittee to be added:

Name: _____ Permit #: _____

Home Address: _____

City, State and Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____ Driver's License Number and State: _____

*Social Security Number/Birthdate: _____ / _____

Subpermittee: By my signature, I acknowledge that I am authorized to conduct rehabilitation activities only while under the supervisory responsibility (including legal responsibility) of a rehabilitation permit holder. I understand that I may possess protected wildlife as named on the permit for rehabilitation purposes provided I have in my possession a copy of the valid wildlife rehabilitation permit naming me as a subpermittee.

Signature of Subpermittee: _____

Permittee: By my signature, I acknowledge that I will be held accountable for the subpermittee's actions and understand that any negative action may result in the discontinuation of my permit.

Printed Name of Permittee: _____

Signature of Permittee: _____

Complete the following information for removal of a subpermittee from your permit:

Name: _____ Driver's License Number and State: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Permittee: By my signature, I hereby authorize the above changes to the list of subpermittees on my wildlife rehabilitation permit.

Printed Name of Permittee: _____

Signature of Permittee: _____

Once listed on your permit, subpermittees may transport wildlife to your permitted location. Care of wildlife at a subpermittee's location is for temporary holding purposes only. Subpermittees may only transport or temporarily handle species authorized by your permit. You are responsible for providing a copy of your permit to a subpermittee.

Law Enforcement may be requested to conduct inspections to ensure permit compliance.

This document is not a guarantee that an individual will be subpermitted.

Please submit this form to:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Big Game Program – Wildlife Permits Office
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

*State law requires that applicants/permittees provide their Social Security number on all permit applications. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department may only release this information to agencies operating under the provisions of Parts A and D of Title IV of the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sections 601-617 and 651-699).

PWD 1284 – W7000 (09/10)

Appendix Two: State Permit



[Dept Use] Permit #:

Application for Wildlife Rehabilitation Permit

Please complete this form and return it, along with all requested attachments, to: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Diversity Branch, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744. *This application will not be considered unless fully completed and signed.* **If you wish to rehabilitate protected bird species, you must also apply for a federal permit.** Please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Permits Office at 505/248-7882 for an application, or you may download an application at: <http://permits.fws.gov/forms/rehab.pdf>

1. Applicant's Surname: _____		Home Phone: _____	
First: _____		Office: _____	
Middle: _____		Cell: _____	
Last: _____		Fax: _____	
Title: _____		Date of Birth: _____	
Profession: _____		Driver's License No.: _____	
Mailing Address: _____		¹ Social Security No.: _____	
		E-mail Address: _____	
		2 nd E-mail Address: _____	
City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____	
2. Facility Name: _____			
Facility (physical) Address: _____			
City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____	County: _____

3. State animal handling care experience:

4. List the species you propose to rehabilitate. Please be specific. (i.e., opossum, squirrel, raccoon, deer fawn, amphibian, reptile (excl. alligators), etc., If you want to work with birds, you must specify songbird, waterfowl, or raptor.)

5. Attach photographs and a detailed description of your facilities (incubators, cages, pens, kennels, etc.) with written dimensions next to each photo and specify what species each enclosure (pen or cage) will be intended for.

6. Applicant is affiliated with:

<input type="checkbox"/> International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council	Membership #:	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association	Membership #	_____

¹Texas Parks and Wildlife Department maintains the information collected through this form. With few exceptions, you are entitled to be informed about the information we collect. Under Sections 552.021 and 552.023 of the Texas Government Code, you are also entitled to receive and review the information. Under Section 559.004, you are also entitled to have this information corrected.

7. Please check which article has been attached:

- ☐ IWRC or NWRA completed training course certificate within the preceding 3 years
- ☐ Current membership card for IWRC or NWRA
- ☐ Proof of attendance at a national rehabilitation conference within the preceding 3 years
- ☐ I wish to take the Department administered wildlife rehabilitation exam

8. Attach a copy of your federal rehabilitation permit application (applicant information sheet only) if you intend to rehabilitate protected bird species. **All migratory birds except European starlings, English House sparrows, and pigeons are federally protected.**

- ☐ I do not wish to rehabilitate any protected bird species.

9. List any current permits or licenses held by you (or a member of your immediate family or household) for possession of state-protected wildlife. (Examples include but not limited to: Scientific Deer Breeder, Triple T, Educational Display, Zoological, Scientific Research, Fur-bearer Propagation, Game Bird Breeder, Non-game Dealer, etc.)

10. Have you ever received a wildlife citation or wildlife conviction: ☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, please explain (date, location, violation, etc.):

11. All facilities maintained for wildlife rehabilitation purposes should meet the minimum standards prescribed for such facilities by the NWRA & the IWRC. Furthermore, the department may specify individual caging requirements on a case-by-case basis. Are you prepared to have your facilities inspected by the department? ☐ YES ☐ NO

12. List the name, contact info, and address of any veterinarian(s) licensed to practice in Texas with whom you intend to consult during wildlife rehabilitation activities and attach written verification from veterinarian on office letterhead.

13. Attach 2 letters of reference, as required by § 69.47 pertaining to Qualifications. Make sure person specifies affiliation to applicant. Person must be: conservation scientist or game warden currently

employed by the department, licensed veterinarian, or a currently permitted wildlife rehabilitator (must include state SPH #). Please include contact information. Department employee and licensed veterinarian letters must be on official letterhead.

Letter 1 from: ☐ Licensed Vet ☐ Game Warden or Conservation Scientist ☐ Licensed Rehabilitator

Letter 2 from: ☐ Licensed Vet ☐ Game Warden or Conservation Scientist ☐ Licensed Rehabilitator

14. For Mammal Rehabilitation:

Please list sites (addresses), acreage amounts, landowner names along with contact info of where you plan on releasing wildlife capable of surviving on their own. If proposing to release deer fawns please also have the landowner state whether or not the property is high-fenced. Attach signed landowner's authorization letters.

Landowner(s) Name:

Contact Information:

Address of Property:

Acreage:

County:

15. Is release property high fenced? ☐ YES ☐ NO

By my signature, I certify that I desire and agree to possess the wildlife listed in this document for the sole purpose of rehabilitating and releasing said wildlife in accordance with Texas Parks and Wildlife Code and regulations adopted by the Commission, and declare that the above statements made by me are true and correct.

I have read the enclosed information pertaining to the Statewide Rabies Quarantine and if granted a rehabilitation permit, I will not take in any foxes or coyotes and I will abide by the 10 mile restriction for releasing raccoons.

Signature of Applicant

Printed Name

Date

Additionally, I have read and understand the Wildlife Rehabilitation Proclamation (regulations). I understand a wildlife rehabilitation permit may be granted at the discretion of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and that said permit may not be renewed if I fail to comply with the regulations of the department or with any provisions of the permit. If granted, a permit will not constitute authority to capture or to hold native wildlife for any purpose other than rehabilitation. This application does not constitute authority to possess any protected wildlife.

Appendix Three: Federal Permit

Form 3-200-10b (Rev. 07/2019)
U.S. Department of the Interior
FEDERAL FISH AND WILDLIFE PERMIT APPLICATION FORM
Migratory Bird Rehabilitation
(Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 50 CFR 21.31)
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Division of Migratory Bird Management
OMB Control No. 1018-0022
Expires 04/30/2021**TYPE OF REQUEST**☐ **New Application**☐ **Renewal**☐ **Amendment**

If requesting a renewal or amendment, provide Permit # _____

BEFORE FILLING OUT THIS FORM, please access the [Return Addresses](#) (to obtain the email/postal mail addresses where this form can be returned), review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and read the form [Instructions](#). Please retain the "NOTICES" page for your records.

Complete Sections A or B, and C, D, and E of this application. U.S. address may be required in Section C, see instructions for details. See instruction **page(s)** for information on how to make your application complete and help avoid unnecessary delays.

A. Complete if applying as an individual			
1.a. Last name		1.b. First name	1.c. Middle name or initial
			1.d. Suffix
2. Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	3.a. Telephone number	3.b. Alternate telephone number	3.d. E-mail address

B. Complete if applying on behalf of a business, corporation, public agency, Tribe, or institution			
1.a. Name of business, agency, Tribe, or institution		1.b. Doing business as (dba)	
2. Tax identification no.	3. Description of business, agency, or institution		
4.a. Principal officer Last name	4.b. Principal officer First name	4.c. Principal officer Middle name/ initial	4.d. Suffix
5. Principal officer title		6. Primary contact name	
7.a. Business telephone number	7.b. Alternate telephone number	7.c. Business fax number	7.d. Business e-mail address

C. All applicants complete address information					
1.a. Physical address (Street address; Apartment #, Suite #, or Room #; no P.O. Boxes)					
1.b. City	1.c. State	1.d. Zip code/Postal code:	1.e. County/Province	1.f. Country	
2.a. Mailing Address (include if different than physical address; include name of contact person if applicable)					
2.b. City	2.c. State	2.d. Zip code/Postal code:	2.e. County/Province	2.f. Country	

D. All applicants MUST complete	
1. A nonrefundable processing fee is required to process this permit, please attach check or money order payable to the U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE. Federal, Tribal, State, and local government agencies, and those acting on behalf of such agencies, are exempt from the processing fee – Please see link for processing fee cost and fee exempt status as outlined in 50 CFR 13.11(d) . Click here for Processing Fees	
2. Do you currently have or have you ever had any Federal Fish and Wildlife permits? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, list the number of the most current permit you have held or that you are applying to renew/re-issue: _____	
3. Certification: I hereby certify that I have read and am familiar with the regulations contained in Title 50, Part 13 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the other applicable parts in subchapter B of Chapter I of Title 50, and I certify that the information submitted in this application for a permit is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statement herein may subject me to the criminal penalties of 18 U.S.C. 1001.	
Signature of applicant/Principal Officer (No stamped signatures. Electronic signatures accepted.) _____	
Date of signature (mm/dd/yyyy) _____	

Please continue to next page



FEDERAL FISH AND WILDLIFE PERMIT APPLICATION FORM
Rehabilitation
(Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 50 CFR 21.31)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Migratory Bird Management



NOTE: A Federal Rehabilitation permit is required to acquire, temporarily possess, or transport sick and injured migratory birds, restore them to health, and release them back to the wild. Birds undergoing rehabilitation may not be displayed to the public. Permits are available to individuals and organizations with appropriate facilities as described in the NWRA/IWRC Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation (2000 version) and demonstrated experience in rehabilitating migratory birds. You must be at least 18 years old to apply for a migratory bird permit. Please read "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" and the pertinent regulations before you sign and submit your application.

Please provide the information requested below. If additional information needs to be provided that does not fit in the designated spaces, add additional sheets to your application submission. You may use as many additional sheets as needed. Please number pages accordingly using the page number box provided at the bottom of the sheet, and the corresponding question number.

You should be as thorough and specific as possible in your responses. Incomplete applications will be returned.

As the permittee, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your subpermittees, staff, and volunteers adhere to the terms of your permit.

SECTION E.

Questions

1) What groups of species do you intend to rehabilitate?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Songbirds/Passerines | <input type="checkbox"/> Shorebirds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterfowl | <input type="checkbox"/> Seabirds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marsh Birds | <input type="checkbox"/> Raptors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wading Birds | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagles |

2) Attachments - In additions to this form, you should also attach the following to complete your application:

- a)** A letter of recommendation from a federally permitted rehabilitator familiar with your training and experience. Also attach a letter from a federally permitted rehabilitator stating his or her willingness to provide you with assistance. If these are the same individual, a single letter may be submitted.
- b)** A letter from a licensed veterinarian stating their willingness to work with you by providing any necessary veterinary assistance.
- c)** If you are renewing your permit, include your current annual report with your application. The annual report form may be found at the following website: <https://www.fws.gov/forms/3-202-4.pdf>
- d)** Attach photographs and diagrams of your permanent facilities/enclosures for housing migratory birds (both indoor and outdoor). Diagrams must include dimensions (length, width, and height) and a description of interior and exterior construction materials, such as flooring and netting materials. Indicate the species or type of species that will be housed in each. Also provide a description of the interior and exterior construction and housing materials, such as flooring, netting, perching, and watering materials. Criteria used for evaluating and/or inspecting your facilities will be based on the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's (IWRC) Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation 2000 Third Edition which can be found at https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nrawildlife.org/resource/resmgr/Min_Standards/MinimumStandards3rdEdition.pdf

Section E. Rehabilitation

3) Any permit issued as a result of this application is not valid unless you also have any required State or tribal permits or approvals associated with the activity. Have you obtained all required State or tribal permits or approvals to conduct this activity?

☐ Yes, Have Attached

☐ None Required

4) Describe in detail your experience and training, including the source and the duration, in treating and rehabilitating migratory birds. (You must have at least 100 hours of hands-on experience rehabilitating the types of migratory birds you intend to rehabilitate (e.g., wading birds, raptors), or other comparable training and experience.)

a) List the species you have worked with and the approximate number of hours or years of experience in handling, capturing, and restraining

b) List the species you have worked with and the approximate number of hours or years of experience in transporting

c) List the species you have worked with and the approximate number of hours or years of experience in providing daily care and feeding; and

d) List the species you have worked with and the approximate number of hours or years of experience. Please also describe the types of medical treatments and management of injuries you have provided.

5) Provide the name, address, and telephone number of the federally authorized facility where your experience was obtained. If you are using training in lieu of up to 20 experience hours, include the course/seminar, provider/instructor, number of hours, and date completed.

6) Describe your rehabilitation facilities for restricted, limited, and unlimited care, including photographs, LxWxH dimensions, and a description of interior and exterior construction materials, such as flooring, netting, perching and watering materials.

7) Describe how and where birds will be conditioned for release. If you will use creance flying, describe in detail the techniques you will use and your experience with these techniques. List two references, including contact information, familiar with your creance experience. At least one reference must be an individual outside of your organization.

8) Location(s): *Provide the physical address where rehabilitation will occur. If you are requesting authorization to rehabilitate at multiple locations, provide the following information: subpermittee name; physical address; age; phone number; description of their migratory bird rehabilitation experience; type of species they will care for; type of care they will provide; diagrams (width, length, and height dimensions) and photographs of their facilities. Off-site subpermittees caring for young songbirds/passerines may also be required to include enclosure information.*

9) Describe the diet you will administer for each group of species you propose to rehabilitate, and indicate your food source.

10) Anyone who will be assisting you with the permitted activities or acting as your agent must either have their own Federal migratory bird permit for the activity or be identified by you, in writing, as a subpermittee under your permit. They may also require a State permit. Subpermittees must be at least 18 years old. As the primary permittee, you will be responsible for ensuring that your subpermittees are properly trained and adhere to the terms of your permit. Provide the name of any subpermittees who will be conducting activities under your permit. Any individual(s) regularly transporting birds directly to your facility or from your facility directly to another facility must either be listed under your permit as a subpermittee or possess their own rehabilitation permit.

11) Provide the name and telephone number of your State Wildlife Law Enforcement contact.

12) You must retain records legibly written or reproducible in English relating to the activities conducted under your permit for at least 5 years after the date of expiration of your permit. The records must include the date each bird is received, type of injury or illness, disposition, and date of disposition. Is the physical address you provided in Section C on page 1 of this application the address where your records will be kept?

☐ Yes

☐ No If "no", provide
the physical address

13) If you are operating as a private individual, as opposed to a business or nonprofit organization, indicate if the Service may include your name, address, and telephone number in a public list of permitted migratory bird rehabilitators?

- ☐ Yes (I am operating as a private individual and you may post my contact information)
- ☐ No (I am operating as a private individual and you may not post my contact information)
- ☐ Not Applicable (I am operating as a nonprofit organization, business, agency, or other institution.)

14) Disqualification factor. Have you, the permittee, or your client (if a broker on behalf of your client):

- **Been assessed a civil penalty or convicted of any criminal provision of any statute or regulation relating to the activity for which the application is filed (50 CFR 13.21(b) (1));**
- **Been convicted, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, for a felony violation of the Lacey Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. (50 CFR 13.21 (c)(1));**
- **Had a permit revoked within the last five years for willfully violating any Federal or State statute or regulation, or any Indian tribal law or regulation, or any law or regulation of any foreign country, which involves a violation of the conditions of the permit or of the laws or regulations governing the permitted activity (50 CFR 13.28 (a)(1)) or failing to correct deficiencies that were the cause of a permit suspension within 60 days (50 CFR 13.28 (a)(2)).**

Answer "yes" if ANY of the events listed immediately above have occurred. Answer "no" if none of the events listed immediately above have occurred.

☐ Yes
☐ No

If you answered "Yes", provide: a) the individual's name; b) date of conviction, civil penalty assessment or revocation; c) charge(s), or reason(s) for revocation; d) location of the incident; e) court (if applicable, ticket, federal/state/tribal court etc.); and f) legal action taken for each violation (i.e. fine, incarceration, probation...). Please be aware that a "Yes" response does not automatically disqualify you from getting a permit.

15) Are you eligible for Fee Exempt Status? Fee exempt status applies to government agencies (Federal, State, Tribal, and municipal governments). Applicants acting on behalf of such agencies must submit a letter on agency letterhead and signed by the head of the unit of government for which the applicant is acting on behalf, confirming that the applicant will be carrying out the permitted activity for the agency, or the agencies tax exempt form.

☐ Yes - Government Agency
☐ Yes - Acting on behalf of Government Agency
Documentation Included
☐ No - not eligible for Fee Exempt Status

16) I acknowledge that I have read the form [Instructions](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and have accessed the page with the [Return Addresses](#) to obtain the address where I should return this form. I have also filled out all fields and questions in this application. Check this box to acknowledge: ☐

NOTICES

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: The information requested is authorized by the following: the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668), 50 CFR 22; the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544), 50 CFR 17; the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712), 50 CFR 21; the Wild Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4901-4916), 50 CFR 15; the Lacey Act: Injurious Wildlife (18 U.S.C. 42), 50 CFR 16; Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (TIAS 8249), 50 CFR 23; General Provisions, 50 CFR 10; General Permit Procedures, 50 CFR 13; and Wildlife Provisions (Import/export/transport), 50 CFR 14.

Purpose: The collection of contact information is to verify the individual has an eligible permit to conduct activities that affect protected species. The information the individual provides helps the FWS monitor and report on protected species and assess the impact of permitted activities on the conservation and management of species and their habitats.

Routine Uses: The collected information may be used to verify an applicant's eligibility for a permit to conduct activities with protected wildlife; to provide the public and the permittees with permit related information; to monitor activities under a permit; to analyze data and produce reports to monitor the use of protected wildlife; to assess the impact of permitted activities on the conservation and management of protected species and their habitats; and to evaluate the effectiveness of the permit programs. More information about routine uses can be found in the System of Records Notice, Permits System, FWS-21.

Disclosure: The information requested in this form is voluntary. However, submission of requested information is required to process applications for permits authorized under the listed authorities. Failure to provide the requested information may be sufficient cause for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to deny the request.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service collects information necessary to monitor take and disposition of migratory birds, under the applicable laws governing the requested activity, for which a permit is requested, and to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974. Information requested in this form is purely voluntary. However, submission of requested information is required in order to process applications for permits authorized under the above laws. Failure to provide all requested information may be sufficient cause for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deny the request. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned Control No. 1018-0022.

ESTIMATED BURDEN STATEMENT

We estimate public reporting for this collection of information to average 7 hours for the application and 5 hours for recordkeeping, including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of the form to the Service Information Clearance Officer, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: BPHC, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or via email at Info_Coll@fws.gov. Please do not send your completed form to this address.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

For organizations, businesses, or individuals operating as a business (i.e., permittees not covered by the Privacy Act), we request that you identify any information that should be considered privileged and confidential business information to allow the Service to meet its responsibilities under FOIA. Confidential business information must be clearly marked "Business Confidential" at the top of the letter or page and each succeeding page and must be accompanied by a non-confidential summary of the confidential information. The non-confidential summary and remaining documents may be made available to the public under FOIA [43 CFR 2.26 – 2.33].

Appendix Four: Facility Standard

FACILITIES STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION AND HOLDING OF RAPTORS

(These facilities standards apply in addition to those specified in the General Facilities Standards.)

Triage Equipment: The permittee shall have the following initial exam and intensive/pre-surgical treatment facilities:

1. Designated treatment area, at least 6' x 6'.
2. Medical kit, including tubing, large syringes, gauze pads, betadine flush and topical antibiotics.
3. 2 to 5 non-wire holding cages measuring 18" x 18", to 36" x 36".
4. Heating pad or heat lamp.
5. Set of washable food and water bowls for inside use only.
6. Record keeping/daily log system.

Enclosure sizes: All raptors held by authority of a wildlife rehabilitation permit for post-trauma/post-surgical treatment, observation, conditioning, educational or fostering purposes shall be housed in holding facilities sufficiently large to allow for the birds' comfortable movement without making contact with walls or ceiling of enclosure. All enclosures shall be constructed to conform approximately to the following dimensions:

1. 4' x 8' x 7'
2. 8' x 8' x 8'
3. 10' x 10' x 8'
4. 8' x 32' x 10' *
5. 8' x 60' x 12' * *large enclosures for flight conditioning

Construction: The walls of enclosure should extend at least 6 inches into the ground to prevent predators from digging their way into the cage. Walls and ceiling should fit securely together and not have any gaps. The above facilities shall be constructed with any one or combination of the following:

1. Rubber coated non-galvanized wire. **Chain-link fencing, chicken wire, or any non-coated wire alone is not acceptable.**
2. Non-abrasive synthetic netting.
3. Lumber slats spaced no more than 3/4" inches apart.
4. Solid sheets of wood (spaced in a manner that allows for air flow)

** It is recommended that chemically-treated wood should not be used due to chemical leaching.

Additionally, if the enclosure(s) are not constructed of lumber slats or solid wood panels, then there must be material (such as plywood, fiberglass screening, or slats) on the interior of the walls to:

- a.) Prevent the raptor from clinging to the outside material (major injury hazard);
- b.) Prevent feathers from being pushed through the holes of the outside material (will lead to shredded feathers and will prevent proper flight); and
- c.) To provide a partial visual barrier (raptors stress easily to outside disturbances)

Flooring: The floor must provide quick drainage of water, be easy to clean, and not be abrasive to a raptor's feet. Wood chips, hay, or straw hold moisture and promote mold and fungus growth. Concrete is abrasive to a raptor's feet. Sand, pea gravel, (living) grass, or artificial turf are ideal.

Perching: Raptors require furnishings that are sturdy and easy to clean. Natural limbs can be used if periodically replaced and have had all protruding branches removed to prevent bumblefoot. PVC pipe, wood dowels covered with artificial turf are ideal. Pet store variety perches are not acceptable. Perches should not be placed in corners of enclosures in order to prevent tail feathers from touching the walls.

THIS IS YOUR GUIDELINE CHECK SHEET. THE CRITERIA LISTED HERE ARE ITEMIZED ON THE GAME WARDEN'S INSPECTION REPORT. YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO FULFILL ALL REQUIREMENTS.

Appendix 5: Press Releases

Press Release: Injured and Sick Birds

Headline:

“Seabird Scouts: Community eyes on sick or injured birds”

How you can help report injured birds in the Galveston Bay Area.

Galveston, TX (06/30/19)

In the Galveston Bay Area, reporting injured birds can be as simple as knowing who to call. Each county and some cities have an animal control department with highly trained individuals ready for rescue. The difficulty is knowing where these birds are which is where the community can help through scouting and reporting any sick or injured bird found in your area. Audubon Texas seeks members of the community to assist with the Seabird Scout project in order to train and equip community members with the tools they need to properly identify and report sick and injured birds to the proper authority. Individuals willing to take a 2 hour training will learn about local birds, bird behaviors that suggest a bird is in distress, and which local authorities to call in case of a spotting. The “scouting” can be done anywhere as you are out at local parks, nature centers, and even neighborhoods. Newly trained Seabird Scouts will not be asked to capture, rescue, or rehabilitate wildlife for this project. Audubon Texas relies on professional and permitted wildlife rehabilitation experts for this, however scouting, identifying, and reporting are incredibly helpful for wildlife and these individuals are in great need. Any individuals or communities that are interested should contact Kari Howard with Audubon Texas Coastal Program at khoward@audubon.org.

Audubon Texas also works with individuals sub-permitted with the Wildlife Center of Texas. This group has a local Facebook group- **Report Injured Birds Found in Galveston County**. The purpose of this group is to provide members with a venue to report injured birds found in the Galveston Bay Area including Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston and Mainland communities around Galveston Bay. The goal is to help facilitate rescue and transport of injured birds to the Wildlife Center of Texas in Houston.

While knowing what to do in the case of finding an injured bird, there are also steps that you can do to help prevent incidence from happening. Remember to always recycle your fishing line in the appropriate locations when fishing, be mindful of nesting birds on family beach days, and always be a mindful 50 yards away from birds.

About Audubon

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters and partners have an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon's vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Audubon is a nonprofit conservation organization. Learn more how to help at www.audubon.org and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/audubonsociety) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/audubonsociety) at @audubonsociety.

Audubon Coastal Program

Kari Howard

khoward@audubon.org

281-339-7234

Press Release: Pollution

“AudubonSTOPP”

How you can help Stop The Ocean Plastic Pollution.

Galveston, TX (06/30/19)

“What makes plastic so useful for humans is exactly what makes it a nasty environmental contaminate—it spreads easily and takes forever to degrade, finding its way to our lands and oceans where it wreaks havoc on wildlife.” *Benji Jones: Audubon Magazine 2018.*

While plastics have become a staple in many lives every year 8 million metric tons of plastic finds its way to the ocean, most never completely break down and thus becomes a hazard to marine life. When birds, and other marine organisms, ingest these particles they are not digested and often lead to the bird to starve. Audubon Texas seeks to inspire small local clean ups that can be done with friends and family in your community. Audubon offers a 1 hour workshop to educate community members about the hazards of plastic pollution and what each of us can do to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Restore our habitats. One major action to help our wildlife and habitats is to retrieve and remove plastic and expanded polystyrene from our environments. This can be done in local parks, bayous, wetlands, shorelines, and beaches.

By signing the pledge to join the AudubonSTOPP group, you and your community can help clean up plastic in your area. By reaching out to our neighbors, we can have an impact on the amount of plastic pollution that reaches the water and threatens our birds, fish, turtles, and all marine life.

Find more information here on our Facebook Page AudubonSTOPP and take the pledge. We ask pledges to sign up, do a local clean up near your neighborhood waterway or park, and post your results our Facebook page to inspire others to join this cause.

Communities that are interested in the free workshop will also receive free bags for your clean up event! Those interested please contact Kari Howard at khoward@audubon.org for more information.

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Audubon Coastal Program

Kari Howard

khoward@audubon.org

281-339-7234

Press Release: Recycle

Headline:

“Bird nests do not belong on the ground”

How you can keep our waterways tangle-free.

Galveston, TX (06/30/19)

“Fishing line snares result in injury and death for a vast number of wildlife each year – a problem birders and outdoor groups are trying to combat.” Jesse Greenspan Audubon Magazine 2018

One of the most common ways coastal birds are being injured is from fishing line that is thrown on the ground. The typical fisherman experiences this scenario- casting the line, it tangles into a bird nest, the tangle is cut out, and the line is restrung. Innocently enough the bird nest falls to the ground or is thrown in an open trash can where the light weight material is blown out. As birds search for food along the shores the line gets caught on their feet, wings, and/or beaks. This type of plastic takes more than 600 of years to biodegrade and accounts for many bird deaths – along with other organisms along the coast. Even humans experience bad fortune when fishing line is not properly disposed of, it can entangle boat engines and cause issues with divers.

Fortunately there is a solution which is to place your unwanted line into a Monofilament Recycling Tube at your favorite popular fishing spot. Audubon Texas Coastal Conservation Program is trying to bring more awareness of the existing Texas Sea Grant Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Project in the Galveston Houston Area. These tubes are emptied and monitored by local volunteers and are distributed along places like Pier 61 in Galveston, Surfside Beach near Freeport, and the Texas City Dike. Audubon Texas and Galveston Bay Area Texas Master Naturalists are also placing more tubes throughout bay and coastal fishing spots in conjunction with Texas Sea Grant. In working with these partners we are repairing old tubes, creating new recycling tubes, placing signage, and promoting recycling of tubes in many popular fishing and birding spots. Line collected from these stations is sent off to be melted down and reused for other purposes.

Recycling your unwanted fishing line is an excellent way to help birds and other wildlife as well as reduce entanglement for our community that enjoy these waterways!

For more information about the Texas Sea Grant Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program please visit:

<https://mrrp.tamu.edu/> .

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