

Northwest Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

Volunteer Introduction

Steps to becoming a Volunteer at NWRC:

- 1.) Please print your own application and mail it to NWRC at:

Northwest Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

PO Box 4273, Bellingham, WA 98227

- 2.) After your application has been received you will receive an email from Michelle Hilton our Volunteer Coordinator to set up an Orientation.
- 3.) After your orientation and you have decided you would like to become an active Volunteer at NWRC; we ask that you volunteer at the Rehab at least once every two weeks for three months minimum (with exceptions), to be considered an active volunteer.

Please note: That unfortunately by law, children have to be between ages 14 and 17 to volunteer with a parent. When they have reached 18 years of age they can come by themselves. When it comes to working with wild animals things get a little tricky but when your children come of age, I hope you will look into volunteering with us again.

Below is a list of potential skills that you will have the opportunity to learn as a Volunteer at NWRC. Also included are some basic rules and procedures at NWRC. If you are just interested in building, maintenance, and/or fundraising please email the rehab at nwwildlife@netzero.net with your specific interests.

Potential Skills to Acquire in Animal Care

Basic Volunteers

- Basic animal husbandry of wildlife
- Food preparation for various wild species
- Hand feeding baby birds and various baby mammals
- Basic cleaning and sanitization of the facility and cages
- Work and communicate effectively as a team player

Experienced Volunteers

- Calculating medications
- Giving a physical examination
- Doing fecal floatations
- Writing up patient treatment plans
- Administering medications PO, IM, and SQ and possibly IV
- Gavaging various animals (tube feeding)
- How to do a figure-8 wrap on a broken wing
- Basic wound care
- Prepare different milk-replacing formulas

- Communicate effectively to the public about wildlife (by phone or at the center)
- Prepare and administer vaccinations to skunks and raccoons
- Learn about euthanasia procedures
- How to safely restrain various species
- Work and communicate effectively as a team player

Rules and Procedures

- * Always wear protective gloves when handling animals and soiled animal bedding.
- * Always wear thick latex gloves, a disposable gown, and potentially a mask when handling/cleaning raccoons. Raccoons can carry Raccoon Roundworm, which is very dangerous to you. The transmission is fecal to oral, so always protect yourself. We do de-worm every raccoon we admit but don't take chances.
- * Always wear eye protection around skunks and raptors, as well as thick, heavy gloves.
- * Report all injuries or bites to the Lead Rehabilitator or to the Lead Volunteer that day.
- * Do not handle bats, unless authorized by the Lead Rehabilitator or the Lead Volunteer. Bats can carry rabies, so do not touch them or anything they have touched. When we deal with bats, we wear heavy, leather gloves and a virus-resistant mask.

- * No talking to the animals! No cuddling with the animals! If an animal imprints on you or is behaviorally unfit, that animal will not be released and will be euthanized. Don't be the cause! We want them wild and afraid of us.
- * Absolutely no talking around the fawns. Fawns imprint easily on humans. They must have minimal to no contact with humans.
- * Do not disturb the animals or handle them if it is not necessary. Keep picture taking to a minimal and only when the animal is being fed or changed or examined. Do not disturb the animal just to take its picture.
- * We are closed to the public. Only staff, volunteers, and interns are allowed to see the animals or be in the facility (other than the front room). If you have guests, they are not allowed to see the animals. If they wish to volunteer, they must fill out an application and a release form.
- * The Lead Rehabilitator and/or the Lead Volunteer(s) are in charge. If you are not clear on who the lead person is during your shift, please ask.
- * The facility is small and intern living quarters are close, so please keep your work/living area clean and always pick up after yourself.

We hope to hear from you soon!

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