



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT A FEDERAL MIGRATORY BIRD REHABILITATION PERMIT

A Federal Migratory Bird Rehabilitation permit will authorize you to take, transport and temporarily possess sick, injured, and orphaned migratory birds for rehabilitation purposes. You should review Title 50 parts 10, 13 & 21.31 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These regulations can be found on our website at: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/ltr/ltr.html>. **You are responsible for reviewing and understanding these regulations before you request and accept a permit.** Below is a review of several sections pertinent to a Federal Migratory Bird Rehabilitation permit.

### ***1. What are the age and experience requirements necessary to qualify for a rehabilitation permit?***

You must be at least 18 years of age with a minimum of 100 hours of hands-on experience, gained over the course of at least 1 whole year, rehabilitating the types of migratory birds you intend to rehabilitate (e.g., waterbirds, songbirds, raptors). Up to 20 hours of the 100-hour time requirement may be fulfilled by participation in migratory bird rehabilitation seminars and courses.

### ***2. What are the caging requirements?***

Facilities must be adequate for each species you plan to rehabilitate. You will be required to submit photographs and diagrams of your enclosures with your application. 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 Rehabilitation. You may obtain a copy of this publication by calling NWRA at 320-259-4086 or IWRC at 510-383-9090. You can also visit their web sites at: [www.nwrawildlife.org](http://www.nwrawildlife.org) or [www.iwrc-online.org](http://www.iwrc-online.org).

### ***3. May I share rehabilitation facilities with someone else?***

No. We will issue only one permit per address. The permitted individual, or principal officer for permits issued to a business, is legally responsible for the facilities, all the birds at the facility, the activities, the subpermittees listed on the permit and any approved offsite locations, and any staff assisting with the permitted activities.

### ***4. Do I need to report suspected criminal activity involving a migratory bird that I receive for rehabilitation?***

Yes. You must notify your local Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Office if you receive a live or dead migratory bird whose injuries appear to be caused by poisoning, gunshot, electrocution or other criminal activity. Contact information for your local Service Law Enforcement Office can be obtained on the internet at [http://www.fws.gov/le/ContactsSites/le\\_chart.htm](http://www.fws.gov/le/ContactsSites/le_chart.htm) or by calling your Migratory Bird Permit Office.

### ***5. How long can I keep a bird in captivity for rehabilitation?***

You must release all releasable recuperated birds to the wild as soon as seasonal conditions allow. Birds may not be held for more than 180 days unless approved by the Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office.

### ***6. When must I euthanize a bird?***

You must euthanize any bird that has sustained injuries requiring amputation of a leg, a foot, or a wing at the elbow (humero-ulnar joint) or above, and/or is completely blind. You must not sustain the life of any migratory bird that cannot after medical management feed itself, perch upright, or ambulate without

inflicting additional injuries to itself. You must obtain permission before euthanizing any bald or golden eagle or threatened or endangered species unless Service personnel are not available and humane considerations warrant prompt euthanasia.

**7. *Can I accept migratory birds that are injured in the process of being removed from inside buildings?***

Yes. The public does not require a Federal permit to humanely remove a trapped migratory bird from the interior of a residence or a commercial or government building if the bird poses a health threat, is attacking people, threatens commercial interests such as damage to merchandise, or may injure itself. The property owner must transfer any bird that is injured or orphaned during the removal to a federally permitted rehabilitator. If an active nest with eggs or nestlings is present, the property owner must seek the assistance of a federally permitted rehabilitator in removing the eggs or nestlings and caring for them. A request for a contribution to help cover the cost of care incurred by you is encouraged. (See 50 CFR 21.12(d))

**8. *Can I display birds that are being rehabilitated to the public?***

The Migratory Bird Rehabilitation permit does not authorize the use of injured/recovering birds for educational purposes. Birds must not be displayed to the public unless you use video equipment or barriers that prevent birds from both hearing and seeing the public. If at any time a device that allows the public to view birds causes stress or harm, or impedes the rehabilitation of any bird, it must be discontinued immediately.

**9. *Can I keep a migratory bird to use for educational purposes?***

This permit does not authorize you to possess birds for educational purposes. You must release all recuperated birds to suitable habitat following the recovery of the bird as soon as seasonable conditions allow. However, any bird that, after rehabilitation, cannot be released to the wild may be transferred to a Migratory Bird Special Purpose Possession permit if the bird is suitable for use in educational programs, or may be transferred to another type of permit as deemed appropriate, upon authorization of your permit issuing office.

**10. *Can I keep imprinted birds for educational purposes?***

No. Under no circumstances will anyone be permitted to keep a bird that has been imprinted while under their care. Orphaned migratory birds should be raised in a manner in which they are imprinted upon their own species. Every precaution must be taken to avoid imprinting birds to humans. Except as required to feed, water, and exercise animals, indoor and outdoor facilities, cages, pens, enclosures or other areas must be sufficiently separate and protected from pets and from human living or work space to prevent human contact with animals. You will be required to transfer any birds that are imprinted to humans while in your care or a subpermittee's care as directed by your Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office.

**11. *Can I transfer birds to other permit holders?***

Yes. Dead and nonreleasable live birds that are suitable for use in educational programs or research projects can be placed with a qualified educational or scientific institution as defined in 50 CFR 10.12. Releasable raptors may be transferred to permitted falconers (50 CFR 21.31(e)(4)(i)). Live birds may not be transferred to another permittee without permission from your Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office. Both the transferring and the receiving permittees (except falconers) must complete a form 3-202-12 (Migratory Bird and Eagle Acquisition and Transfer form) and submit it to their issuing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Permit Office. The form can be found on our website at: <http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-202-12.pdf>. Falconry permittees must submit a completed 3-186A form. Dead bald eagles and golden eagles, including feathers, must be sent to the National Eagle and Wildlife Property Repository at: RMA, Building 128, 6550 Gateway Rd., Commerce City, CO 80022-1798.

**12. Will anyone inspect my records or birds in my care?**

By accepting a Federal Rehabilitation permit, you authorize an agent of the Service to enter your premises at any reasonable hour to inspect the wildlife in your care, your books and records. (See 50 CFR 13.47)

**13. What procedures are required to transfer my permit to a new location?**

Any address change or other circumstances that affect your permit must be reported to your Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office in writing within 10 days so your permit can be amended. (See 50 CFR 13.23) In addition, you must provide pictures and diagrams (including a description of materials used) of your cages if your physical address has changed.

**14. Do I need a State permit to rehabilitate migratory birds?**

Your permit is not valid unless you are also in compliance with State requirements, which may be more restrictive. This means that if your State requires you to have a permit to possess migratory birds for rehabilitation purposes, you must hold a valid State permit in order for your Federal permit to be valid. It is your responsibility to make sure you comply with State permit requirements.

**15. Will I be required to keep records of my activities?**

Yes. You must maintain accurate records of operations on a calendar-year basis. Your records should reflect each bird that you possessed and its disposition, including whether the birds were released, euthanized, died, are still undergoing rehabilitation in your care, or were transferred (including the name of the person(s) or institution to whom birds were transferred).

**16. Will I be required to submit an annual report of activities?**

Yes. You will receive an annual report form from your Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office. The report form can also be found on our website at <http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-202-4.pdf>. This report must be completed and submitted to your issuing office by January 31 of each year.

**17. How do I renew my permit?**

A renewal letter or form and annual report form will be sent to you at least 60 days prior to the expiration of your permit. If you wish to renew your permit, you must return the completed renewal to your Regional Migratory Bird Permit Office at least 30 days prior to the expiration of your permit and include a copy of your current State license, if one is required. If we receive your renewal request at least 30 days prior to the expiration of your permit, your permit will remain valid beyond the expiration date for the activity authorized on your permit until a decision on your renewal is made. If we receive your renewal request fewer than 30 days prior to expiration of your permit and we are unable to process your request before the expiration date, your permit will expire and you will no longer be covered for your activity. If you allow your permit to expire before requesting renewal, you may be required to submit a new application. (See 50 CFR 13.22 and 13.11(c))

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