



Volunteer Information Packet

Volunteering with Cascades Raptor Center

Thank you for taking the time to read this volunteer information packet. Once you have read it, if interested in volunteering, please fill out our online application. Currently, Cascades Raptor Center has nine full-time staff, three part-time staff and nearly 125 volunteers. The hours donated annually by our amazing team of volunteers equates to almost 12 full-time employees! Our longest serving volunteer has been with us since 2004, and we have many other volunteers who have been with us nearly as long.

We recognize that volunteering at Cascades Raptor Center may not be the right fit for everyone. By reading this volunteer information packet, we hope that you will see that our unwritten motto is, "Birds first." We put the needs of the birds above all else. Even volunteers who do not work directly with the birds must be tuned in to this motto for the success of the organization.

About Volunteering

Requirements for all volunteers:

- Must be 18 years old or older.
- Non-English speakers must have a 90 or above on TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
- Must sign a waiver stating that you have not had any felony convictions in the past 5 years and are not required to register as a sex offender.

Desirable characteristics of a successful volunteer:

- Great communication skills and dependability
- Teamwork, dedication
- Openness to constructive criticism
- Positive perspective
- Willingness and ability to learn

Communication and team work are a necessity! The birds, staff and your fellow volunteers **depend** on your reliability, honesty, adaptability and openness. Thus, notifying staff in advance of absences, actively seeking coverage for your absences, and scheduling a make-up shift are expected and greatly appreciated. Work is accomplished during set shifts, usually with other shift-mates.

Learning to be an effective volunteer at the Raptor Center takes time. Staff members work closely with you while you learn the basics and the reasons behind center protocols. Even the simplest task can have layers of complexity of which you may be unaware and frankly, it's often critical that tasks are done as requested – the health (physical and mental) of birds depends on it! Questions are always appreciated. It truly takes a village at the Raptor Center – and the absence of one person can make all the difference in the lives of birds in our care. Be honest about what you are able to give and do and be sensitive to the unique situation of working with living animals. Those things will earn respect and admiration from staff and fellow volunteers, and the birds will demonstrate appreciation in their comfort level with you.

Animal Care Team

- Time Requirement: Minimum of one four-hour shift a week, and an initial commitment of 100 hours (roughly six months at 4 hrs/week).
- Volunteers on the Animal Care Team will be involved in preparing whole food, animal diets (both for residents and patients), caring for our feeder animals (mice), cleaning aviaries, hospital crates and keeping our working spaces clean, assisting with our wildlife hospital, and helping with other special projects around the center.
- Dress code: While you are here, you are representing the Raptor Center. Please wear appropriate clothing (i.g., close-toed shoes, no short-shorts, shirts must have sleeves, no tights or yoga pants, and your Volunteer name badge).
- Special Considerations:
 - o Most of the work done by our Animal Care Team is done outside, all year round, in all weather conditions.
 - o Work can be physically demanding. We are situated on the side of Spencer Butte, so being able to walk up hills, haul heavy hoses, and lift crates is necessary.
 - o We are working with predatory birds whose diets consist of small, whole animals. Please be aware that as an Animal Care Volunteer part of your duties will be preparing diets, which means cutting up or skinning mice, quail, rabbit, rats, and fish.
 - o Because we focus solely on raptors, our hospital sees far fewer patients than other wildlife hospitals (roughly 250-300 per year). That means, some days there will not be any rehabilitation tasks to do.

Greeter Team

- Time Requirement: Two greeter shifts a month (greeter shifts are four hours during our summer season and three hours in our winter season). No minimum hour requirement.

- Volunteers on the Greeter Team are responsible for checking guests in when they arrive, running our gift shop, orienting visitors and answering questions, and general shop upkeep.
- Special Considerations:
 - As the front line in interactions with the public, greeters get lots of questions about the center and the birds in our care. The more you know, the more helpful you will be to guests. Staff are always around to help answer questions you may not know the answer to.
 - As a greeter, you are typically the first, and often last, face of the that the public sees. It's important to be comfortable handling cash/credit transactions. However, attitude is everything in this position! Polite, friendly, personable are the starting points – a willingness to share our work with zeal will make you a darling on Yelp, Trip Advisor and other forms of social media where guests comment on their experience. Your enthusiasm translates directly into support (in the form of admissions, retail sales, memberships and adoptions) for the birds. Thus excellent greeters are critical to our mission.

Construction Team

- Time Requirement: No minimum commitment, though construction volunteer usually meet on Tuesday & Thursday mornings.
- Volunteers on the Construction Team are responsible for building aviaries, fixing perching, other building projects, and general maintenance around the center.
- Special Considerations:
 - Most of the work done by this team is outside, year around.
 - We prefer people who come in with a basic knowledge of construction, proper tool usage, and experience building.

Transport Team

- Time Requirement: No time requirement. You may be asked to help with transport/rescues at any time.
- Volunteers on our Transport Team help us shuttle injured birds to/from our center to other wildlife centers in the area. They also may be called to pick up injured raptors that are already contained. If someone has experience safely capturing and restraining injured raptors, they may be asked to help with injured birds who are not contained.
- Special Considerations:
 - There is no telling when we will need help. E-mails go out when help is needed and whoever responds first, goes out.
 - You must have reliable transportation with heating and AC, and have car insurance.
 - If you are going to pick up an uncontained raptor (requires specific training), you will have to have your own box or crate, gloves and ideally a net.

Other Important Information

Death and Euthanasia

We are not a no-kill or sanctuary organization. Raptors are apex predators which means that they must be in top physical condition in order to survive. Some patients come into our clinic with injuries so severe that they die despite our best efforts, or their prognosis of survival in the wild is so poor, we make the difficult decision to euthanize them. Please know that this is something that staff does not take lightly. Many considerations are taken into account before the decision to euthanize a bird is made. Euthanizing of patients is done humanely by an experienced staff member.

We also euthanize feeder animals so that the birds in our care can receive fresh food. Rabbits and mice are euthanized throughout the week. If this process is something that you are not comfortable with, you will not be asked to do it. Those willing will be taught how to euthanize safely and humanely.

Feather Policy

Possession of native and/or migratory birds or their parts or products (feathers, eggs, nests, physical artifacts like feet or talons) without a permit is a violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16U.S.C. 703-712), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (amended in 1962) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. These Acts prohibit 'take, transport, sale, barter, trade, import and export, and possession' of native and/or migratory birds, making it illegal for anyone to possess native and/or migratory birds and native and/or migratory bird parts - including molted feathers - without a permit. Cascades Raptor Center has permits for possession of birds for rehabilitation, birds for education, for the eagles on exhibit, and for the eggs, feathers, skeletons, and other artifacts we use in education. We can exchange such artifacts with other permitted facilities but cannot provide them to any individual, even to Native Americans with possession permits for religious purposes. All of our eagle feathers and cadavers must be transferred to the US Fish & Wildlife Eagle Repository for distribution to Native Americans. **Theft of feathers (or other parts or products) jeopardizes the state and federal licenses and permits that allow Cascades Raptor Center to operate. Individuals found taking feathers will be reported to the proper state and federal authorities and immediately dismissed from the center.**

Injuries and Zoonoses

Injuries: Working with any animal, especially those who are scared or in pain, has inherent risks of injury. You will be trained by staff or an experienced volunteer in raptor body language. Knowing this will help keep both you and the birds safe. While working in our clinic, you will be taught appropriate handling and restraint techniques with the correct equipment. Most injuries sustained at the Raptor Center are unrelated to birds, like shutting your finger in a door or tripping over a hose. For these reasons being aware of your surroundings and paying attention will keep you safe. We also highly recommend that you have a current tetanus vaccination.

Zoonotic diseases are diseases which are shared by humans and other animals. The following table lists common zoonoses with their causes and preventive measures. **All prospective volunteers are expected to read and understand this section in order to sign the waiver which is part of their application.** For

more information on typical carriers, symptoms in both humans and other animals, and some treatments, check the IWRC *Basic Skills 1AB* manual, other references cited, or online.

Please note that this list includes zoonotic diseases carried by mammals as well as birds. For your peace of mind, do know that most bird ectoparasites will not stay on you, or bite, even though they may amble around on you for a while - and that they are not typically the parasite carriers mentioned below, which are more likely to be found on mammals.

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR KNOWLEDGE! Health safety starts with some very basic concepts:

- *Keep clean! Wash thoroughly* after handling animals or cleaning aviaries. ***DO NOT prepare your food or eat in animal care areas*** or where animal plates have been placed or washed.
- *Dispose of animal remains and wastes* in a sanitary, secure way. Wash feces-contaminated feeding utensils or dishes away from the food preparation area, in the dirty sink.
- *Minimize contact with the animals*, limiting it to what is needed to accomplish the task at hand.
- *Know the animal.* Normal appearance and behavior of animals can be learned. Be especially careful of unusual behavior until its cause is clear or special precautions can be taken.
- *Rid the animal of potential vectors* (endo- and ecto- parasites) immediately. This is important not only for your health but also that of other animals in care.
- ***DO NOT work where mosquitoes, fleas, or other parasites are present without protection***, e.g., a repellent. (Please do not spray repellent on your hands, where it might contaminate feathers.)
- *If you become ill*, be able to tell your doctor on what dates and with what species of animals you worked. Also, know the identity of other people working with you so they can be contacted, either to check for similar symptoms or to inform them of a potential problem (e.g., ringworm).
- ***Immuno-suppressed people should NOT be working around wild animals!***

Zoonoses related to Wildlife Rehabilitation

DISEASE	ROUTE	PRECAUTIONS	CARRIERS
Bacterioses			
<i>Chlamydiosis</i> (<i>psitta-cosis</i> , <i>ornithosis</i>)	Inhaling dried, aerosolized feces	Keep environment clean; dispose of feces ASAP; good personal hygiene	Pigeons, raptors, finches
<i>Campylobacteriosis</i>	Fecal/oral, direct contact with contaminated water	Good personal hygiene	Coyote, mink, hoofed mammals, birds
<i>Salmonellosis</i>	Fecal/oral	Good personal hygiene	Most animals, including birds, reptiles , mammals (Common in opossums)
<i>Leptospirosis</i>	Direct contact with infected animal, urine, or urine contamination of soil, water, food	Good person hygiene	Most mammals, esp, rodents, skunks, marine mammals
<i>Tularemia</i> (“Rabbit Fever”)	Ectoparasite bite; direct contact with broken skin/eye; improperly cooked meat	Good personal hygiene; wear gloves when doing necropsies; use insecticides when ectoparasites are seen; don’t rub eyes with dirty hands	Rabbits, 100 other mammals, some birds
<i>Lyme Disease</i> and <i>Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever</i>	Tick bite or handling of tick; bite of infected animal	Use proper insecticide when ectoparasites are seen; good personal hygiene	Deer and other mammals
<i>Plague</i>	Flea bite; direct contact with infected tissue	Use proper insecticide when ectoparasites are seen; good personal hygiene	Rodents, other mammals with fleas
Mycoses (fungus)			
<i>Ringworm</i>	Direct contact; handling of infected material (bedding, clothing)	Good personal hygiene; laundering contaminated material	Mammals
<i>Aspergillosis</i> (not usually spread from animal to human but common to both)	Inhalation of spores (common in environment)	Ubiquitous organism (usually a problem only for debilitated or immune-suppressed humans); good housing cleaning – no damp bedding or moldy food; wear mask when doing necropsies; good ventilation	No direct animal vectors but most commonly found in waterfowl and raptors
<i>Candidiasis</i> (yeast infection)	Contact with secretions of infected animal	Good personal hygiene (usually a problem only for people on antibiotics); good housing cleaning	Any

DISEASE	ROUTE	PRECAUTIONS	CARRIERS
Viruses			
<i>Rabies</i>	Infected body fluid entering wound	Avoid being bitten; use gloves if have scratches or cuts on hands and rabies is possible or suspected; wash <u>any</u> bite or contact area with soap and water immediately	Any warm-blooded animal
<i>Hanta Virus</i>	Inhalation of aerosolized urine and feces of affected rodents	If cleaning areas with signs of wild rodents, first spray surfaces with a bleach solution; wear mask	Deer mice, voles, other wild rodents
<i>West Nile Virus</i>	Bite of infected mosquito; very slight possibility of transmission from infected birds	Get rid of standing water; stay inside at high mosquito activity times like dawn/dusk; use repellants; wear long sleeves; use gloves when cleaning aviaries of infected birds	Mosquitos
Parasitoses			
<i>Baylisascaris procyonis</i> or <i>columnaris</i> (raccoon or skunk roundworm)	Fecal/oral	Good personal hygiene; wear gloves when cleaning raccoon or skunk cages; worm all incoming raccoons/skunks; do not launder feces-contaminated bedding with any other material; DO NOT USE RACCOON OR SKUNK HOUSING FOR ANY OTHER SPECIES	Raccoons, skunks
<i>Mange</i>	Direct contact	Good personal hygiene	Mammals
Protozoan Zoonosis			
<i>Giardia</i>	Fecal/oral	Good personal hygiene	Waterfowl, wading birds, sparrows, other birds; beaver, other mammals

Sources:

Jan White, *Basic Wildlife Rehabilitation 1AB*, 1988; International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council; pp 98-103.

Hanna Siemering, "Zoonoses," in *Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine*, Murray Fowler, DVM, ed.; Second Edition, 1986; WB Saunders Co; pp 64-68.

Richard H. Evans, DVM, and Daniel P. Carey, DVM, "Zoonotic Diseases," in *Clinical Avian Medicine and Surgery*, Greg J Harrison, DVM, and Linda R. Harrison, eds., 1986; WB Saunders Co; pp 537-540.

Jeffrey E. Barlough, DVM, PhD, ed., *Manual of Small Animal Infectious Diseases*, Churchill Livingstone, Inc., 1988.