

## Upgrade Request for Provisional Wildlife Rehabilitator

<b>Provisional's name:</b> CLH Phone: Rehabilitation facility location: Types of animals rehabilitated: all birds except raptors Date Provisional License was first granted:	License number: Email:
<b>Sponsor's name:</b> Phone: Date:	License number: Email:

Attach copies of initial Learning Plan, annual Learning Plan status reports, and annual Wildlife Rehabilitation Annual reports from Provisional period.

Describe the learning and accomplishments as a Provisional that demonstrate the person's readiness for the upgrade to full Wildlife Rehabilitation license based on Chapter 14 requirements and personalized Learning Plan. Use extra paper as needed.

### **Accomplishments and Comments Compared to the Learning Plan**

#### **A. The purpose, ethics, and standards of wildlife rehabilitation, including the Minimum Standards of Wildlife Rehabilitation.**

CLH has a copy of the Minimum Standards of Wildlife Rehabilitation, NWRA Principles of Wildlife Rehab and Wildlife Rehabilitator's Code of Ethics. We have discussed how these apply to our rehab work. CLH is highly committed to doing the best for each animal. She strives to apply the highest standards and ethics in her work.

#### **B. Federal, state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances affecting wildlife rehabilitation.**

CLH has read state and federal regulations affecting rehab, and the additional information on the Special Licensing website. We reviewed regulations pertaining to disease control and reporting as required by the Colorado Dept of Health and Environment.

Since she wanted to use unlicensed people to help her with feeding baby birds, we spent extra time discussing the required training, written protocols, recordkeeping, and how to ensure that the unlicensed people are providing appropriate care. I have conducted training for two unlicensed volunteers to help her with animal care at this time. She has maintained the records on this and supervised them closely. While she has appreciated the help that her volunteers have provided, she has learned that supervising and monitoring their work is very challenging - especially someone with relatively limited experience. While it is up to her to decide how many unlicensed people she can supervise in the future, I strongly encouraged her to set limits on this so she can ensure that that things are done well.

#### **C. Identification of native wildlife species.**

As a longtime birder, CLH is extremely skilled at identifying bird species. She has an extensive collection of bird identification books and has completed the Cornell Home Study Course in Bird Biology. She has a Master's degree in biology. Even with her training, she admits that can be tough to identify tiny nestlings.

#### **D. Wildlife natural history and behavior**

CLH does her homework and researches the natural history, habitat, and diet of the many bird species (see C above). She has taken several graduate courses in animal behavior. Before getting her rehab license, she was a bird bander and participated in bird monitoring. She is continually trying to learn more about bird natural history and what is 'normal' -- and then how to apply this insight to benefit the birds during their time in rehab.

#### **E. Techniques to humanely prevent and resolve human-wildlife conflicts**

CLH has had some contact with the public to prevent wildlife problems (most calls come to me since she is not on the 'public list of rehabbers' since she is so new). She uses her knowledge of the natural history of birds and personal love for feathered creatures to educate the public and help them solve problems in a positive manner for them and the birds. She uses a very calm and respectful approach in trying to prevent problems. She has several articles and books on this subject. She does not hesitate asking for help if someone asks a question that she can't answer.

#### **F. Safe capture, handling and transport methods**

CLH has sought training on the safe capture and handling of birds from many sources. She had initial training as part of her bird banding activities. She also had training from several experienced bird rehabbers, including myself. Between her work with bird banding, previous volunteering for bird rehab center, and her Provisional experiences, we believe she has safely captured and handled thousands of birds. She can effectively restrain birds for exams and medical treatments. She is mindful of the stress and risks of injury when handling birds. Her skills handling birds are so extensive that I would be very confident in having her train others in capture and handling birds. She also does a good job in transporting birds in small cages.

#### **G. Identification and general assessment of common health or behavioral problems**

CLH has had extensive training on the intake exams and procedures from two avian veterinarians and three experienced bird rehabilitators, including myself. Since most of her previous experience did not involve medical assessment, she really wanted training on this -- and got it. She watched others and practiced, asking for feedback so she could improve. She has performed initial exams on many different types of birds -- and seen a variety of conditions, including shock, broken wings and legs, dehydration, general bruising, punctures from cat bites, gunshot wounds, beak injuries, feet tangled in fishing line, head trauma, and seizures from toxins. And she's seen a few orphans that were healthy on admission. She understands what first aid she can provide (heat, fluids, wound cleaning, stabilizing fractures, etc.) and when to take the bird to the vet for more diagnostics and treatment -- and does so.

#### **H. Intake procedures (e.g., assessment, weight, hydration, first aid).**

CLH is very thorough on collecting and documenting information from the person delivering the bird. Very aware that stress can kill a bird as fast as a serious injury, she calmly conducts a minimal assessment, provides any essential treatment for life-threatening conditions, and then places the bird in a small, warm, and semi-dark cage in a quiet area. After a short while she does the rest of the assessment and initiates further treatment, such as fluids, wound cleaning, and so forth. Her detailed documentation of exams helps with continuing care.

#### **I. Nutrition, diet, and feeding methods**

CLH is well aware that nutrition and diet are critical elements in the care of captive wildlife. While she has a good foundation of understanding due to her education, rehab training, and biology degree, she is constantly studying nutrition and diets. She is very thoughtful and

deliberate in her evaluation of diets and their effectiveness. She calculates calorie requirements for birds in care, with special attention for those that do not seem to be eating enough, maintaining weight, or digesting normally. She understands the appropriate amount of food that each bird should be fed and the reasons. She also uses her knowledge of the natural history of birds to help with her diets and feeding methods – and is very good at encouraging birds to eat, including adult birds that might be reluctant to eat in captivity.

#### **J. Facilities, appropriate caging, and habitat needs**

CLH has done a great job of preparing her ‘rehab rooms’. As expected of someone so “into birds and their natural history”, she has thoroughly researched caging and habitat needs. Her primary rehab room is well equipped with cages for a variety of species, sizes, and conditions. These cages are carefully constructed to support the bird’s healing, prevent further injury or feather damage, and provide as normal an environment as possible. She closely monitors each bird’s progress and assesses its readiness for more exercise, enrichment, or hiding places. She is watchful of noise levels, chemical smells and exposures, temperature control and opportunities for injuries. She demonstrates good judgment in selecting appropriate sized cages for development stage or recovery. She creates amazing habitats for the different species in their recovery cages as well as outdoor caging that helps them prepare for release. She has gotten great assistance from others in building her indoor and outdoor cages – and gets them involved in helping create habitats.

#### **K. Wildlife diseases and parasites**

CLH has attended several training sessions on wildlife diseases and zoonoses. She is very responsible in treating for external parasites so as to prevent transmission of diseases. She follows quarantine protocols when the birds are admitted and if any show signs of illness or parasites. She is vigilant with sanitation protocols.

#### **L. Survival skills for wildlife**

As with other rehab activities, CLH’s understanding of natural history and bird behavior served her in good stead. She is very aware of the skills the birds need to survive. The caging she provides is matched to the age, health, size and needs of the bird. The nestlings are in small baskets – but natural materials are close, such as twigs. The pre-release cages are set up so the birds can get good exercise, have places to hide, and lots of areas to search for food. She makes sure the birds are imprinted on their own species and not habituated to people or predators. CLH makes sure the birds can find food and are self-feeding, have good flight skills and stamina, try to and can evade easy capture, and generally compete with others.

#### **M. Release criteria, considerations, and preparation;**

She carefully and thoroughly assesses the readiness of a bird for release, evaluating its development stage and ability to survive on its own, overall strength, and ability to compete and survive in the wild. She does not rush them to release nor does she keep them in rehabilitation for an excessive time. Again, her knowledge of natural history is invaluable in preparing them for release and assessing their readiness.

CLH uses a very thoughtful approach in establishing criteria for release sites based on her knowledge of natural history and experience as a birder. She evaluates potential release sites for habitat, evidence of conspecifics, and territory size. If she suspects the species has already migrated, she works with rehabbers and Audubon members to find out where the birds are located – and then gets the bird to that site. She releases at the appropriate time of day and season.

## **N. Euthanasia, necropsy and carcass disposal**

CLH has had training about euthanasia from our veterinarians, a rehab workshop, and the IWRC online course. She has read several papers on this in rehab journals and talked with rehabbers. She is clear what is required for a bird to be able to survive in the wild – and when it is not going to be viable candidate for release. She also considers the length of time and likelihood of recovery. She consults with the vets about the prognosis if she has concerns.

She has made the decision to euthanize numerous birds, and performed the euthanasia if necessary. She has worked with our veterinarians to ensure that the euthanasia methods are as painless and stress-free as possible. Her euthanized birds are cremated at the humane society.

## **O. Public contact regarding wildlife (e.g., reasons, issues, risks, safety, liabilities)**

CLH has done a great job talking with public about birds. Her knowledge and enthusiasm really help her communications with the public. Her calm demeanor and problem-solving approach seem to help her convince the public to reneest nestlings, not kidnap fledglings, and surrender birds for rehab.

## **P. Wildlife rehabilitation recordkeeping**

CLH has kept detailed and accurate daily records of the birds in her care. She has reviewed them with me on regular basis in order to help her figure out how to improve with current and future cases. The annual rehab record that she submitted to the Division and USFWS were complete and accurate.

## **Additional subject areas:**

### **Q. Working effectively with veterinarians**

CLH has worked closely with several avian vets who have considerable experience with pet birds. She is eager to learn from them as well as share knowledge of wild bird species. While she does basic first aid for birds in need, she does not hesitate to take birds to the vets for more diagnostics and treatments. She has contacted several vets in the area to let them know that she is a bird rehabilitator and that they can call her if people contact their clinics about wild birds.

### **R. Minimizing stress**

CLH is very sensitive to wildlife stressors. She strives to minimize stressors in the rehab environment. She tries to reduce noise, handling, extraneous activities and exposure to humans. When she has had volunteers help with rehab activities, she has explained about stressors and reminded them to “talk quietly” and “stay calm” when near the birds.

### **S. Safety**

DPR is very safety conscious since she has seen several volunteers injured in rehab facilities. She is careful with situations that can cause injury, whether handling animals, administering moving cages, transporting animals, or meeting with the public.

### **T. Other**

#### **Managing personal stress and boundaries**

CLH is quite aware of the stress that rehab can place on the rehabbers – and then on the birds. She volunteered for a rehab center that admitted so many birds that they could not get all the feedings done or keep cages clean. As a result, she has said she will limit the number of birds she admits so that she can provide good care. I suspect that she may ultimately develop a specialty bird rehab center, either for passerines or waterfowl. But for now, she wants to keep rehabbing a variety of birds but a limited number.

### **Summary of Wildlife Rehabilitated During Provisional License Period**

She rehabilitated 128 birds in the 19 months that she has been a Provisional. I have often checked on the birds she has cared for during rehab and at their release time. She has worked with individual birds from when they were admitted until their disposition. She has done a great job monitoring each individual and providing quality care. While about 30% died or were euthanized, she has released approximately 60% of the birds when they were healthy and in good shape, and showed all the abilities they needed to survive on their own. She transferred about 5% of the birds to other rehabbers who had more appropriate caging.

She has worked with a variety of species, young and adult birds, with many different types of health problems. She has provided excellent nutrition and caging.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

CLH has demonstrated a personal commitment to learning and working to help the birds. She has a degree in biology, attended many bird workshops, and completed the Cornell Bird Biology class. She also attended the state rehab conference. She watched the CDOW's rehab videotapes. She has many books on birds and a growing collection of rehab publications.

She has studied **all** the questions in the CDOW Rehab Study Guide and is able to answer them from her general knowledge or quickly checking references.

I strongly recommend that she be upgraded to a full Wildlife Rehabilitation license.