

Contact Information

Find a Rehabilitator near you.
PA Association of Wildlife Rehabilitators
<http://pawr.com/>

PA Game Commission
<http://www.pgc.state.pa.us/>

Pennsylvania Game Commission
Bureau of Law Enforcement
2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797
(717) 783-8164

NORTHEAST REGION

(Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne,
Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Sullivan,
Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming Counties)
(570) 675-1143

SOUTHEAST REGION

(Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster,
Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia,
Schuylkill and York Counties)
(610) 926-3136

NORTHCENTRAL REGION

(Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Lycoming,
McKean, Potter, Tioga and Union Counties)
(570) 398-4744

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

(Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton,
Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry and Snyder Counties)
(814) 643-1831

NORTHWEST REGION

(Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence,
Mercer, Venango and Warren Counties)
(814) 432-3187

SOUTHWEST REGION

(Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene,
Indiana, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland
Counties)
(724) 238-9523



WILDLIFE REHABILITATION in PENNSYLVANIA

What is Wildlife Rehabilitation?

What does a Rehabilitator do?

The Laws

Becoming a Rehabilitator

Additional Requirements

How you can help

Contact Information

Prepared by
Pennsylvania Association
of Wildlife Rehabilitators

What is Wildlife Rehabilitation?

Wildlife rehabilitation a system of caring for injured, sick and orphaned wild animals with the goal of releasing these animals back into their natural habitat.

Wildlife Rehabilitation is also a public service, providing the public with a humane, legal way of dealing with wildlife in need that they encounter.

What does a Rehabilitator do?

Most of the time is spent feeding animals and cleaning their cages.

Orphaned Wildlife: Many orphaned baby birds need constant feeding and cleaning throughout the day. Baby mammals need to be fed every few hours around the clock.



Special attention is given to monitoring their growth, feeding and nutritional requirements, temperature and humidity. All of this must be done with minimal handling so the animal doesn't become attached to people, remembering that the ultimate goal is releasing that animal back to the wild.

Injured and Sick Wildlife: Rehabilitators work closely with the veterinarian in diagnosing injury and illness and developing a program of intensive care, medication, feeding, exercise,



physical therapy, and pre-release conditioning tailored for the animal.

Public Education: One of the most important tasks as a Rehabilitator is educating the people who call you for information or help. Many people find animals and immediately assume the animal is in trouble. The Rehabilitator listens

carefully and asks questions to determine if that animal is truly in need. If it is not, it is the Rehabilitator who instructs the person how to put the animal back and why this is important. If the animal does need help, the Rehabilitator instructs the finder on how to properly contain and transport the animal to them.

Public Outreach: Many Rehabilitators give programs to schools and other organizations to educate the public.

“There can be no purpose more inspiring than to begin the age of restoration, reweaving the wondrous diversity of life that still surrounds us.”

Edward O. Wilson

The Laws

In Pennsylvania, it is illegal to possess wild animals without a permit, even if your intention is to try to help it. The Pennsylvania Game Commission regulates these laws and issues permits for Rehabilitation. There are 3 separate permits: mammals, passerines (songbirds) and raptors. Additional requirements must be met to care for animals that commonly carry rabies: raccoons, fox, skunks, woodchucks, bats and coyotes.

If you plan on working with birds, a separate permit is issued through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Using wildlife in public education programs requires additional permits.



Becoming a Rehabilitator

We highly recommend you begin the process by volunteering with a local Wildlife Rehabilitator. Most people volunteer for 2 years before applying for their own permits.

You must first determine your ability to supply a place to work (in your home or another building), the time necessary for caring for the animals and the funding for food, supplies, caging and veterinary care.

To apply for a permit, call the PA Game Commission regional office in your area or the PGC law enforcement office in Harrisburg and ask for an application.

You need to have a veterinarian who is willing to work with you. Talk to your veterinarian about your goals and see how involved or supportive they are willing to be.

You also must be sponsored by another Wildlife Rehabilitator (if there is one near you). This is extremely important, because the rehabilitator will be of the greatest value in educating you on rehabilitation techniques and practices.

After passing a written exam, you meet with the Wildlife Rehabilitation Council for a short interview.

Most people apply for non-profit status, then tax-deductible status and sales tax exemption in order to fund these efforts. There is no state funding for rehabilitation.

Additional Requirements

Every two years you must attend a wildlife rehabilitation workshop or conference in order to keep your permit active. Yearly workshops are made available by the Wildlife Rehabilitation Council and the PA Game Commission. Classes are also available through other states and national and international organizations.

If you feel you would enjoy wildlife rehabilitation but do not have the time or resources, please consider volunteering at a Center near you.