

Field Triage for Game Officers

Peggy Hentz – Red Creek Wildlife Center

Basic Equipment

- Gloves (all leather, 1 light pair, 1 heavy pair, 1 long pair)
- Goggles (firm fitting and complete eye coverage)
- Blanket (wool is best, tightly woven, no loose looped fabric)
- Nets, catch pole etc
- Containers
 - Cardboard boxes – excellent for birds
 - Live traps – excellent for appropriately sized mammals (no birds)
 - Plastic totes – All around good choice

Working with your rehabilitator

Use smart phone technology

- Great Public Relations
- Less time wasted
- Second opinion / confirmation
- Learning experience

3 Choices / 3 Questions

3 Questions

- Does it need help?
- Can it survive?
- Can it be set free?

3 Choices

- Leave it there - Limited to Baby animals only
 - Healthy and uninjured
 - Uninterrupted family
 - Temporarily displaced
(With adult animals, if you can catch it... It needs help)
- Dispatch it
 - For animals that cannot survive
 - Common animals that could never be released
- Transport for rehab

Tools to making a good decision:

- Know what's normal (nesting habits and natural history)
- Know the signs of a problem
- Be able to perform a cursory/field exam
- Phone consultation with a rehabilitator

Performing a Field Exam:

- General observation
- Head to toe exam
 - Including Body cavities
 - Ears, eyes, mouth, vent/anus
- Smell

Triage

Poor candidates - All Animals

- Maggots in the anus
- Spinal fracture (obvious dislocation with paralysis)
- Open fractures that smell or look infected
- Loss of limb
- Dehydration in babies
 - turgor test - 5+ seconds - poor prognosis



Deer

- Age and size
 - 3 months and under – rehab if allowed
 - over 3 months – do not transport
- Wet tail and flies at the rear
- Birth defects

Opossums

- Size Matters
 - Pink and hairless will usually die
 - Gray and furred – good candidate

Birds

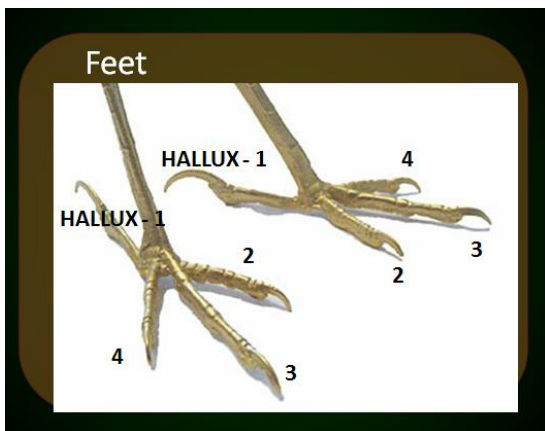
Wing injuries

- Compound (open fractures) poor candidates
- Fracture at a wing joint - poor candidate

Leg injuries (long legs – heron)

- Skin temperature should be the same for both feet
- If the foot of injured leg is ice cold - poor candidate

Foot injuries in raptors



Loss of any digit 2, 3 or 4 on one foot = good release candidate

Loss of 3 + 4 or either hallux on one foot = marginal release candidate

Loss of 1 and 3 on one foot or both hallux = non- releasable