

Job Descriptions for Soarin' Hawk Assignments



The following jobs requires Volunteers to be **On Permit** (Soarin' Hawk state DNR approval to handle birds)

Avian Care

Duties: This position involves the care of the raptors that are housed in outdoor flight pens. The work for this position is outside, in all kinds of weather from below freezing weather, to scorching hot to raining and snowing. It involves feeding the raptors whole or cut up prey items such as mice, rats, venison, etc. It also includes picking up leftover food items, cleaning water and food dishes, cleaning the walls and floors of the pens, and and other things as needed to keep Avian Care running efficiently and pens maintained in a clean and safe manner. It is an important position as you are also expected to observe the raptors for any signs of illness or problems that should be brought to the attention of our veterinary technician or veterinarian.

Qualifications: The person in the lead position must have leadership skills, experience at Soarin' Hawk in Avian Care and understand every aspect of Avian Care. A volunteer must be approved by Bridgette McCue for the lead position, must be on the State permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Assistants in avian care do not need any prior experience, but do need to be on our State Permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Creance:

Duties: Creance conditioning is the use of a long line, called a creance, to test a raptor's ability to fly and to exercise the bird to get it back into top physical shape before release. It involves putting leather straps (jesses) on the raptors legs, attaching the 200' creance line to the jesses and gently tossing the bird into the air. Once the bird has used up most of the slack in the line, gradual tension is placed on the line (called braking) so that the bird will gradually decrease its speed and land gently. This process is repeated several times.

Qualifications: The lead position for creance must be experienced in catching the birds in the flight pens, know how to properly put the jesses on and use the equipment, and know how to evaluate a bird's flight. A volunteer must be approved by Barb Hathaway to be in the lead position, must be on the State permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

The assistants do not need any experience. They are responsible to help lay the line and will be taught how to brake the bird for a gradual stop. The assistants may learn the other aspects of creance as the lead determines that they are ready. They must be on the permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Commitment: The commitment is for one session, typically 1-4 hours depending on how many birds need creance flown. We would like a steady weekly commitment, but volunteers may also sign up as they have time to help.

Education Bird Handlers

Duties: Responsible for presentations and handle live raptors on a glove during education programs presented to various groups in the community.

Qualifications: You must show prior, consistent commitment to volunteering with Soarin' Hawk before you can begin training to hold education birds. You must go train with one of the bird trainers and they must approve you before you can take birds to the education program. You must be on Soarin' Hawk's state DNR permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Commitment: Continual training with the education bird you are working with, a minimum of once every two weeks. You must handle birds at a minimum of 12 education programs each year.

There is a manual for handling the education birds that goes into more detail about qualifications, commitment, etc.

Please speak with Pam Whitacre, Ann Zepke or Sandy Moore if you are interested in becoming a bird handler.

ICU (Intensive Care Unit)

Duties:

Lead- Primary responsibilities include administering fluids, medication, tube feeding patients, and monitoring the bird for any abnormalities. Other responsibilities include, but are not limited to preparing diets, cleaning cages, washing dishes, sweeping the floor, and taking out the trash. The Lead will document on the treatment sheet what is done with the patient during their shift. Lead will notify the ICU Coordinator of any abnormalities or concerns with the patient if it arises.

Assistant- Primary responsibilities include, but are not limited to restraining the patient for any medical procedures and preparing diets. Other duties may include cleaning cages, washing dishes, sweeping the floor, taking out the trash and other things as needed to keep ICU running efficiently.. Assistant will notify the lead if they notice any abnormalities with the patient.

Helper- Primary responsibilities are cleaning cages, washing dishes, sweeping the floor, taking out trash and other things as needed to keep ICU running efficiently.

Qualifications: all positions must be on Soarin' Hawk's state DNR permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Lead: must be approved by Katherine Ternet, RVT or Pat Funnell, DVM. Must be able to assess patients, accurately draw up medicines and efficiently give necessary medicines and treatment. Must know the normal behavior of each species so the abnormal can be recognized. Attention to detail is also a requirement.

Assistant: must be approved by Katherine Ternet, RVT or Pat Funnell, DVM. Must have experience handling raptors (we don't want your first experience to be with fragile, sick birds).

Commitment: minimum of one 2-4 hour shift per week. Must be reliable. Must be willing to fill in shifts for volunteers that are on vacation, sick, etc.

In Home Care

Duties: At home care for birds for various reasons such as illness or training non-releasable birds on the glove to get them ready to be placed as education birds. Falconers also keep birds in their mews when we have need of extra flight pen space. Caring for the bird at home which, if the bird is kept in a cage, includes twice daily cleaning of cage. Also feeding daily, storing frozen prey at home, training the bird if it is non-releasable, medical treatment as needed.

Qualifications: Must be approved by Katherine Ternet, RVT or Pat Funnell, DVM. Qualifications vary according to what is needed for the bird and situation. Volunteer must be on both State and Federal Permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Commitment: It is on an as-needed basis.

Triage

Duties: This job is all about the initial intake, assessment and initial treatment of injured and orphaned birds of prey. This is an On-Call position.

Qualifications: You must be able to accurately assess problems and start appropriate initial medical treatment of any injured or orphaned bird of prey that is presented. You must be trained and approved for this position by Pat Funnell, DVM, must be on our State permits and must be at least 18 years of age.

Commitment: The commitment involves being On-Call all day (7am-9pm) to evaluate new raptors coming in to Soarin' Hawk. The commitment may be for the same day each week or may be to fill in as needed.

The Following Assignments **do not require** the Volunteers to be On Permit (may be some exceptions noted in description)

Education Program Assistants

Duties: Help with various aspects of education programs that do not involve handling of live birds. May include carrying birds in their carriers, handing out education materials, educating people using the preserved wings and feet, keeping general public away from the birds while they are being handled, etc.

Qualifications: Ability to work well with and interact in a professional manner with the general public. Do not have to be On Permit.

Commitment: No set commitment is required but we would prefer you help in as many public education programs as possible.

Rescue

Duties: rescue and immediately transport injured and orphaned birds of prey from where they are found to ICU to be examined and treated.

Qualifications: Physically able to catch the raptors which may involve walking long distances and picking up raptors that are trying to talon and bite you. Being able to handle horrible smells and euthanasia. Willing to put potentially smelly, angry birds in your car for transport. Must have reliable transportation.

You do not have to be on Soarin' Hawk's permits to rescue a bird. You must be at least 18 years of age or older.

We are going to implement a mass texting to more efficiently contact available rescuers. Most flip phones do not accept mass texts, so a smart phone is preferred but not absolutely necessary.

Commitment: Being willing to be dispatched with no advanced warning to pick up a bird. (We do understand that no one can be on call 24/7 as work, etc. must come first.)

Special Events

Duties: Helping with various aspects of a special event, which may be our yearly Expo, and fundraising event, etc.

Qualifications: vary according to the event and the job within the event. You do not need to be on the permits to help in this position.

Commitment: varies tremendously, but reliability is essential.

Phone Duty

Duties: Answering the Soarin' Hawk phone 7am-9pm. If a call comes in for an injured or orphaned raptor, locating and sending a rescuer to pick up the bird and determining where the bird should be taken. Fielding questions about many other things including education programs, other wildlife, etc. and referring the caller to the appropriate persons.

Qualifications: Must be able to interact with the public in a kind and professional manner. Must be able to deal with irate people (when you have to tell them you won't take the abandoned baby bunny, etc.) in a calm, professional manner. Must be able to tell the caller you don't know the answer but, if the question is about a raptor, will get back to them with an answer. Must be available to answer the phone for the whole time period (7am-9pm).

Commitment: Daily, weekly or monthly commitments are available. But for each day you commit, you would need to be available 7am-9pm to answer the phone.

Maintenance

Duties: Varies tremendously according to the maintenance that needs done. There is periodic, scheduled maintenance as well as urgent or emergency repairs. Maintenance jobs may include electrical, plumbing or construction.

Qualifications: Experience and skills needed for various aspects of facility maintenance. Must provide tools for the project. Attention to detail is a must. **Must be on State permits to enter areas with live raptors.**

Commitment: this is an as-needed basis

Food Pick-up

Duties: Driving to pick up food for the raptors and delivering it to the appropriate place. When involving picking up road-kill deer, it also includes field dressing it and either cutting off the meat and refreezing or taking it to the designated butcher.

Qualifications: You will need to provide your own vehicle that is appropriate for picking up the food. (Food is typically dead rats, mice and day-old chicks or road-kill deer.)

Commitment: On an as-needed basis. Chick and rats/mice are typically picked up 4 times a year in Michigan. Road-kill deer need to be picked up and processed immediately.