

Elizabeth Wildlife Center



Elizabeth's
WILDLIFE
center

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Introduction

Welcome Message

Thank you for giving your time as a volunteer to help change the life of an animal in need. The Elizabeth Wildlife Center is a volunteer, non-profit organization. As a result, we recognize the value of your time, and the importance for you to be happy and fulfilled in the volunteer work that you perform.

Explanation of the Volunteer Guide

This Guide has been prepared for you as a reference. It contains information regarding volunteer responsibilities, procedures that need to be followed, and ideas on how to make your volunteer time with us safe, fun and beneficial to all.

We hope that this handbook will give you a look into The Elizabeth Wildlife Center and what we have to offer you, the volunteer.

It is in our person-to-person meeting and/or phone interview that we can better get to know each other and express our views which will aid in creating a harmonious relationship as well as the best possible volunteer fit for you.

The goal of this Guide is to allow you to feel comfortable with our organization. We depend on you – *your success is our success*. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your volunteer coordinator will gladly answer them. Once you start, we truly believe that you will enjoy your volunteer work as well as meeting your fellow volunteers with whom you share similar interests. We also believe you will find The Elizabeth Wildlife Center to be a fulfilling place to volunteer. We ask that you read this Guide carefully, and refer to it whenever questions arise.

As always, if you enjoy your experience with us, please refer others to our volunteer program. Through growth, we can make even greater successes in animal welfare and education.

About Us

Elizabeth's Wildlife Center was established in 1986, and became a non-profit organization in 1999. Elizabeth Melnick, founder and primary caregiver of the Center, is a qualified registered nurse and wildlife rehabilitator. What first began as a rescue center from her home, expanded into Elizabeth's backyard with construction of aviaries and small housing facilities.

The Center is now a fully functioning, independent facility, capable of handling hundreds of injured/orphaned wild birds and animals. The Center has 4 buildings that serve as care-giving facilities. We have pre-release buildings, and a waterfowl pond for rehabilitation purposes.

Each year we admit over 1000 birds/animals and approximately 50% are fully rehabilitated and released. Each animal that enters our facilities is assessed, given necessary treatment, rehabilitated, and if fully recovered, released to their natural environment. Our goal is to continue our Rehabilitation and Release Program. Our Community Education Program is also an intricate part of the Center.

The Center receives over 4,000 phone calls per year with questions regarding situations involving small wildlife that are injured/ orphaned. This service is provided during normal business hours, daily from 9 am to 6 pm.

The Center offers a mutually beneficial solution for both animals and humans by providing a permanent and safe place for wildlife to be rehabilitated while at the same time educating the public. This is the only Wildlife Center in the Abbotsford area that provides this service. The Center receives animals from the local police and fire departments, the SPCA, veterinarians and residents of Abbotsford and the Lower Fraser Valley -- serving approximately 200,000 community members. The purpose of the Center is to preserve wildlife. These invaluable animals, whose natural life cycle has been disturbed by human interaction, would otherwise be euthanized.

We evaluate our success by the number of animals released, education evaluation forms, financial support within the community, the number of phone calls received, and volunteer involvement. Our goal is to increase awareness and knowledge about wild animals.



Volunteer Application Process

Definition of 'Volunteer'

A "volunteer" is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the agency. A "volunteer" must be officially accepted and enrolled by the agency prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as "employees" of the agency.

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Requirement of Application

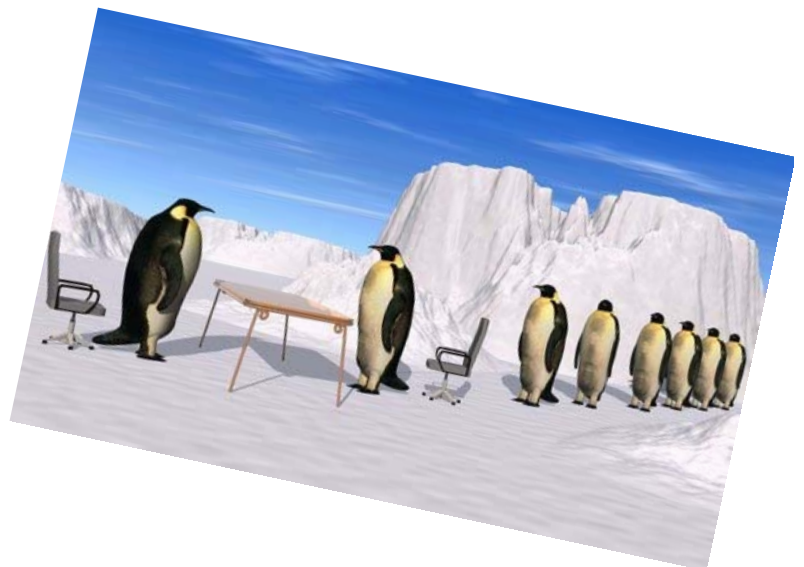
All volunteers must fill out a Volunteer Application Form, Volunteer Release Form, Photo Release Form, and a Criminal Record Check may be requested- prior to participation at any event with the Elizabeth Wildlife Center. All volunteer participation is subject to the exclusive discretion of Elizabeth Wildlife Center.

Who Can Volunteer

Adults and youth can volunteer at our facility. Please note that we do not accept any volunteers under the age of 18 years.

Interview

All volunteer applicants are subject to personal interviews by the volunteer coordinator and/or Manager/ Founder of the Elizabeth Wildlife Center- Elizabeth Melnick.



Volunteer Participation and Expectations

Volunteer Commitment

Your volunteer commitment to the Elizabeth Wildlife Center involves being punctual, diligent, responsible and conscientious. This involves arriving at the designated time and date for your position, performing your volunteer duties to the best of your abilities, and abiding by the policies and procedures of the Elizabeth Wildlife Center.

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Elizabeth Wilderness Center's most popular position involves assisting with the care of injured and orphaned wildlife and the overall operation of the wildlife center. You will assist with hospital cleaning as well as feeding and daily care of the animals. You will have the opportunity to participate in volunteer-run fundraising events and construction bees. Time commitment is a minimum of 100 hours per year. This includes a minimum 100 hours completed by doing one 3-4 hour shift per week plus another 20 hours assisting with non-animal work such as fundraising or Public Relations events and construction work parties. Shift times are flexible. Training is provided!

Volunteers are expected to be committed to Elizabeth Wildlife Center's philosophies and practices while attending the Center, events and to conduct themselves appropriately. If you have questions regarding our programs or activities, please ask before participating. Volunteers are not required to attend every activity or event, but if you agree to participate in an activity or event, you are expected to adhere to that commitment.

If you should decide to not volunteer with us any longer, we would appreciate it if you would please send the Volunteer Coordinator an e-mail to let us know that you will no longer be volunteering with us. We ask that you notify the Volunteer Coordinator so that other arrangements may be made in a timely manner, prior to our next event/ shift.



Attendance

All volunteers are invited and encouraged to attend activities and/or events at the Elizabeth Wildlife. Volunteers who sign up to participate in events but are no-shows for Two or more shifts or events without just cause and notification will be removed from the volunteer list, pending review by the supervising staff of the Center.

Training and Supervision

Volunteer training will vary according to the volunteer's position. All volunteers must attend an orientation with the volunteer coordinator or supervising member of the Center. After the orientation, the Volunteer Coordinator will make an evaluation to determine how best to utilize a volunteer's time and skills.

Treatment of Animals

Animals are to be treated kindly, gently, and professionally, at all times. Volunteers are to handle animals only if they have been trained. Volunteers are not expected or given permission to perform ANY medical treatment on animals unless they have received approval and performed the treatment in practice with Founder/Manager Elizabeth Melnick first.

Confidentiality

All volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes information that may involve board members, other volunteers, clients, sponsors and/or the overall business of the Elizabeth Wildlife Center.

Conduct

As a volunteer, you are a representative of the Elizabeth Wildlife Center. When involved in our events or when wearing your volunteer attire, you are expected to present a good image of the organization at all times. This includes language. Please be respectful of our attendants as well as your fellow volunteers. If you disagree with someone, another volunteer,

sponsor or event attendee, please refer the matter to Supervising Staff/ Elizabeth Melnick. It is unacceptable to act unprofessionally at any time while at a Elizabeth Wildlife Center sponsored event or function.

Fundraising and Donations for the Elizabeth Wildlife Center

If you can't come or you know others who would like to help but cannot volunteer for the Center, there are many more ways you can help. . .

- Collect and donate items from our wish list, such as towels, blankets, cages, vegetables, fruits, dry foods for dogs/ cats, enrichment toys, etc.;
- Donate funds to support our lifesaving and life changing services;
- Save newspapers for our cages or learn to unfold the newspapers at home and bring them in;
- Spread the word about the Elizabeth Wildlife Center, our services and mission;
- We welcome your creativity! Use your imagination!

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Volunteer Attire

Volunteers must dress appropriately throughout participation. Since we work around animals and may become dirty. Please dress accordingly. It is recommended that you keep in mind that many of our animals are ill/ wild and if you have children or animals at home, you may want to bring a change of clothes to change into before you go home.

Media Procedures

So efforts are not duplicated and information is accurate, it is essential that for any dealings with the media must be brought to the attention to Elizabeth Melnick or her designate if she is out of town. Please contact the onsite supervisor for guidance.

Harassment

The Elizabeth Wildlife Center forbids harassment of volunteers whether by supervisory volunteers, fellow volunteers, or other individuals that a volunteer may come into contact with as part of their assigned task or event. Harassment is deemed to have occurred

when the conduct interferes with the volunteer's performance at the assigned task or event or creates a hostile environment for the volunteer. The Elizabeth Wildlife Center requests that any volunteer who may experience such harassment to promptly notify the Volunteer Coordinator, or the Founder/ Manager Elizabeth Melnick so that an investigation can take place and appropriate action taken.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol are not to be used by volunteers during volunteer duties, activities and events.

Theft

Theft of any The Elizabeth Wildlife Center materials is cause for immediate dismissal from the volunteer program. Depending on the severity of the theft, legal action may also occur.

Health

All volunteers should be in general good health. Any physical limitation should be noted on the application for volunteer service so appropriate work may be selected. If it is discovered at the assigned event that you are unable to fully perform an assigned task, please consult with the Volunteer Coordinator promptly so that you can be assigned an alternative task.

Medical Coverage

The Elizabeth Wildlife Center does not cover medical costs and therefore all volunteers are required to sign a release form for the protection of the organization and are required to have their own health insurance coverage before participating.

Termination

If the volunteer's performance continues to deteriorate or corrective action is not adhered to, the Volunteer Coordinator should, after consultation with the Founder/ Manager Elizabeth Melnick,

prepare and deliver to the volunteer a memorandum summarizing all previous corrective actions and the specific problem(s) that warranted the termination action. Possible reasons may include:

- Failure to adhere to volunteer Guide guidelines;
- For conduct on duty which would be detrimental to the organization and/or the animals, including any breach of confidence or procedure;
- Reporting to an event under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
- Theft of property or funds;
- No call/No show for events/ shifts;
- Any abuse or mistreatment of animals;
- Releasing of confidential information;
- Gross misconduct or insubordination;

The decision for termination shall be made after securing the facts from all concerned parties.

Volunteer Positions Description

Care Center Workers

The Care Centre Workers position involves assisting in the care of our wildlife patients at the center. An up-to-date tetanus vaccination and be able to work as part of a team. Care Center Workers volunteers perform much of the essential daily animal care and maintenance that occurs at our facility. These volunteers, together with Care Centre staff, work to keep the centre in operation 365 days a year.

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The Care Center Workers Responsibilities will include:

- Assisting staff with care and maintenance of wildlife patients;
- Preparing housing for new admissions and pre-release cases;
- Preparing diets and feedings;
- Disinfecting equipment;
- Cleaning cages and aviaries
- Setting up habitats for both indoor and outdoor animals;
- Feeding on site animals.

Skills that are required include:

- Reliability;
- Honesty;
- Good physical health;
- Patience and the ability to work alone or in a group;
- Good communication skills;
- Comfortable around small birds and mammals;
- Previous animal handling experience is an asset.

Transportation Volunteer

Each year, on-call transportation volunteers deliver hundreds of patients local care centers. We are especially reliant on these volunteers during our busy spring and summer months. If you have access to a vehicle, have a valid BC driver's license and live in the Fraser Valley, you can help! Volunteers drive to locations throughout the Fraser Valley and Lower Mainland to pick up injured wildlife that have been confined, and need to be delivered to local facilities.

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The Transportation Volunteer provides transportation of injured wildlife for members of the public who do not have the ability to bring the animal in to the facility. This interaction with the public is intended to increase public awareness about local wildlife and the services that the Elizabeth Wildlife Center provides.

The Transportation Volunteer will be required to have a valid BC drivers license and use of their own vehicle.

Responsibilities will include job duties that are performed both on and off site. Off site job responsibilities include transportation of wildlife to the local care facilities and raising public awareness. On site jobs may include assisting with moving new animals to the center into temporary cages. Skills that are required include being reliable, a good ability to communicate with the public, basic knowledge of local wildlife and previous animal handling experience an asset.



Volunteer Waiver

Release of liability

I recognize that working with animals places me at physical risk, and I agree to assume that risk. I realize that although Elizabeth Wildlife Center has taken all reasonable measures to protect me, accidents and injuries may still occur. Therefore, I hereby completely release and entirely discharge Elizabeth Wildlife Center from any and all claims and causes of action of negligence or gross negligence that I or another might have or bring relating to or arising from any injury or damage that I should sustain while assisting Elizabeth Wildlife Center or in connection with my volunteer work for Elizabeth Wildlife Center.

Understanding and acceptance of volunteer guidelines

I have read, understand and agree to the volunteer guidelines set forth in the Elizabeth Wildlife Center volunteer manual. I fully understand and agree that I am providing my services in a volunteer capacity without any expressed or implied promise of compensation. I agree to perform my volunteer duties to the best of my ability and to adhere to the guidelines detailed in the Volunteer Guide. I further understand that my volunteer involvement may be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Volunteer Guide.

Photo Release

During my volunteer time with Elizabeth Wildlife Center, I understand my photo may be taken at various events and projects. By signing below I also hereby grant Elizabeth Wildlife Center permission to use my likeness in photograph(s) and/or video(s) in any and all of its publications or on the World Wide Web, whether now known or hereafter existing. I will make no monetary or other claim against Elizabeth Wildlife Center for the use of the photograph(s) and/or video(s).

Volunteer Signature Volunteer Name (printed)

Date

Volunteer Coordinator Signature Coordinator Name (printed)

Date



Part II

Cleaning, Admissions, Safety and Observations of Wildlife Patients



Safety

Your personal safety and the safety of other volunteers, staff members and the animals are our primary concerns. Risks to your safety will be minimized if you understand and follow safety procedures. Please report any injuries to staff immediately.

Personal Considerations

Sickness- Please STAY HOME if you are sick. You may come in contact with bacteria that you may not be able to protect yourself from if your immune system is weakened.

Pregnancy- Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator if you are pregnant. You will need to get your doctor's permission to continue volunteering.

Hygiene- WASH YOUR HAND FREQUENTLY!!!!

Pet Ownership- Make sure you change your clothes and wash your hands before handling your personal pets. Make sure YOU and your pets have up to date shots.



Disease and Prevention

Can I Catch that?

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that humans can get from animals. The most effective means of preventing the spread of zoonotic disease is to:

- **Wash your hands frequently with antibacterial soap, or hand sanitizer, especially after handling any animal prior to eating.**
- Wear gloves when cleaning or changing papers.
- Immediately disinfect scratches and bite wounds.

Just a few of the illnesses that humans can catch from animals include: Ringworm, External Parasites (mites, fleas), Giardia, Nematode (worm) infections, Rabies and Salmonella. You should not let this list alarm you, but rather remind you that you are volunteering in a hospital-like environment where they often exist, so the above precautions are important.

Can my pets catch that from me?

Just as you can catch illnesses from animals, you can also unknowingly carry illnesses home to your pets. The most effective means of preventing the spread of illness to your pets (or spreading illness from your pets to our Center animals) is to:

- Make sure that your own animals are up-to-date on all their vaccinations;
- Change your Center clothes before socializing with your animals at home, and vice-versa;
- Check the soles of your shoes before leaving the Center to ensure you are not tracking feces into your car and home (even better, designate a pair of shoes to be your “Center shoes” and take them off before entering your home).

Preventing Illness in Center Animals

The animals that enter our Center come from all types of situations. Sadly, too many have not been provided with adequate veterinary care. Some animals are sick or “break” with an illness after arriving. We take every precaution to protect our animals, and we need you to be cautious as well. Here are some ways you can help:

- Reduce stress by providing a quiet, calm environment;
- Eliminate external parasites like fleas through bathing and topical treatments. Disinfect the beds, cages, bowls with designated cleaning solutions after moving and changing bedding, cages and food bowls.
- Sanitize hands between handling each animal so as not to pass germs.

LAYOUT and CARE OF THE CENTER

Examination Room

The Examination Room is the main building on the facility grounds. **If you see that there is a procedure occurring upon your arrival, get permission FIRST before entering the building.** Do not handle waste material used during a procedure (needles, scalpels, etc). Keep the doors to this building closed at ALL times.

Do not remove or handle medications in the room unless specific permission has been obtained from Elizabeth Melnick.

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Sink/ Washing Station

- Never place sharp knives, blender blades, tins cans, etc in the sink with the other dishes. Set them on the side of the sink so that others will not cut themselves with them.
- Please clean ALL dishes, bowls, syringes, etc at the end of the day. No dirty utensils or dishes shall be left in the center at the end of the shift.
- Please empty the water from the sink and give it a wash down with soap at the end of its use.
- If the dishes, bowls, utensils are CLEAN and DRY. Please put them away.

Cleaning the Center

- Know which spray bottles are used for cleaning.
- Do not clean crates/kennels with a **STAFF ONLY** sign attached. These may contain specific animals that need to be tended to by trained staff attendants ONLY.
- Inspect EVERYTHING before cleaning. Materials such as boards and perches may have wires still attached.

Buckets- spray with cleaner, scrub down and let dry.

Dishes- scrape leftovers from the dishes in the garbage. Stack dishes in the sink at the sink/washing station. Stack/ soak in wash solution and hot water. Rinse thoroughly. Dry and put away with a clean cloth.

Glass and Tin containers- wash and put in the recycling container.

Floors- Sweep and mop the floors every night.

Garbage- Take all garbage and recycling out at the end of the day. Please replace garbage bag with a fresh, clean new bag.

Feeding Duties

Important in the Evening

- Check bird seed supply and make sure bowls are full. Re-fill resident animals bowls.
- Soak the possum mix and dog food mix and make a new mix for the next day so it can soak overnight.
- Notify staff if something is used up or almost used up, including dry storage items.

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To Wash

- Shake/ scrape debris from laundry into the garbage prior to loading into the wash.
- Wash everything in cold water.
- Load the washer no more than 2/3 full. Balance the load.
- Use 1 cup of detergent, located next to the washer.

To Dry

- Put a small load in the dryer (or a large blanket by itself).
- Clean the lint trap before and after every load.
- Fold and put away neatly according to the labels provided on the shelving. If you are unsure where to put the item, leave it aside.



Animals and Handling

If a bird escapes...

- Shout “Bird Out” to notify others that a bird is loose.
- Close all the doors and lock the door that leads outside to prevent the bird from escaping or anyone opening the door while the bird is loose.
- Allow staff/ other volunteers to capture the bird if you are not trained.
- Never grab a loose bird with bare hands. Always use a net.

Handling Bird and Mammals

- Handle animals ONLY if you are trained.
- Use a towel to pick up birds, making sure the head and body are covered.
- Hold animals firmly, at waist height, and control the head of larger birds.
- Place bird in a box if you are holding it longer than a minute.

Euthanasia – Why is it necessary?

Euthanasia is probably the most difficult subject to understand at the Elizabeth Wilderness Center. Most people would rather not even think about it when considering working at the shelter. Yet it is a very real part of working at a shelter, and therefore, something we want to face up front. Many wildlife are left to starve to death, or die after being hit by a car, poisoned, or attacked by a predator.

Animals brought into the Center are cared for in the most humane manner possible, with food, shelter and most importantly, people to give them the care and attention they need.

Keeping this in mind, We respect the rights of wildlife to exist in its natural or adapted habitat, to receive responsible rehabilitation and humane euthanasia, with consideration for the quality of life.

NO volunteer will be involved or witness the euthanasia of any animal in the care of the Elizabeth Wildlife Center. The only person who has this authority is Elizabeth Melnick.



Admissions

Elizabeth Wildlife Center DOES NOT accept domestic (i.e., dogs or cats) or exotic animals. If you are unsure whether an animal is domestic or exotic, check with staff before admitting the animal. If the animal is domestic, refer the finders to the SPCA.

All admissions and inquiries about admissions shall be referred to Elizabeth Melnick or other senior staff on site.

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The Public

Call for staff or experienced volunteers if you have difficulties dealing with a member of the public.

The Elizabeth Wildlife Center is not open for tours because it is stressful on the animals and Government Regulations prohibit the display of convalescing animals.

PART III

Observations of Wildlife Patients



Common Observations with Short Explanations

****THIS IS FOR QUICK REFERENCE- DO NOT TREAT ANY ANIMALS WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION FROM ELIZABETH MELNICK**** if you note any of these symptoms with one of the animals- ALERT senior staff immediately.

- Fluffed up feathers — cold, difficulty regulating body temperature.
- Remains near heating pad — heat-seeking, difficulty regulating body temperature.
- Green, runny feces — not eating, internal parasites.
- Not eating during day — stress, illness, head trauma, age.
- Not eating during the night — see above; birds eat less in winter than summer.
- Drinking all the water right away — disease, diabetes.
- Holding head straight back — nutritional deficiencies, disease.
- Convulsing — disease, head trauma, poison.
- Half-open/closed eyes — shock, illness/injury.
- Sitting down (not standing) — head trauma, deteriorating condition.
- Holding one foot up or has one drooping wing — leg/foot injury, wing injuries, nerve damage, head trauma.
- Bleeding — injury, possibly to head/mouth.
- Lesions on feet/face — disease, especially avian pox.
- Producing foul odour — bacterial infections.

Feces Evaluation

What to look for:

- Check the condition of wild birds and mammals by examining their feces.
- Size, age, and diet affect the colour and amount.
- Check droppings first thing in the morning and several times during the day.

Bird feces: Normal

- Dark fecal matter;
- Watery urine;
- White urates.

Bird feces: Irregularities

- Black blood — digested blood from upper intestinal tract
- Bright green — lead poisoning
- Brown water — infection, stress
- Dark green — passing bile, not eating
- Fecal matter, no bile — constipation, intestinal tract blockage
- Mucous coating — chronic problem

- Red blood—bleeding in lower bowel;
- Soft Stool—diarrhea;
- Visible food droppings — digestive problems.
- Yellow urates — possible Hepatitis.



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