

# Society for the Preservation of Raptors (Inc.)

## Code of Practice

### REPRESENTATION

Members of the Society for the Preservation of Raptors (Inc.) (hereinafter referred to as "the Society") should always endeavour to ensure that any information given to any person is of a true and correct nature. Members should not speak on behalf of the Society unless the information being provided is considered common knowledge, or authorised for dissemination on behalf of the Society by the Coordinator.

At no time will any member of the Society make any statement, spoken or in writing, or undertake any action that misrepresents the aims, goals, intentions or activities of the Society, or which could conceivably bring the good name of the Society into disrepute.

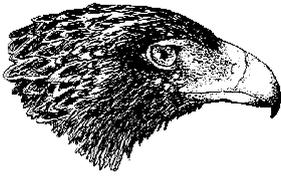
### CARING FOR SICK, INJURED OR ORPHANED RAPTORS

*At all times when caring for wildlife, the rehabilitator's primary and overriding consideration must be the physical, emotional and mental health and well being of the animal. All animal handlers must act with regard to the welfare and dignity of the fauna entrusted to their care.*

In order to be covered under the Department of Parks and Wildlife's (DPaW) personal injury and public liability insurance policy, members of the Society who intend taking wildlife into care must register as volunteer wildlife rehabilitators. To achieve registration, new members should attend the DPaW Basic Course in Wildlife Rehabilitation, complete the mentorship period as required by DPaW and on being assessed as competent by their mentor, complete the registration forms and pass inspection by a Wildlife Officer. Registered rehabilitators should then meet the on-going requirements of DPaW for continued registration.

As part of their mentorship programme, new members must demonstrate that they possess basic knowledge in how to care for, feed, clean and treat a sick, injured or orphaned bird of prey. This basic knowledge may be obtained by either visiting the Eagles Heritage Raptor Wildlife Centre for a minimum of three full days under the supervision of the Coordinator (or his delegate) or working with an experienced Society member for a minimum of forty-eight hours over three months. New members in remote regional areas should discuss their situation with the Coordinator and make alternative arrangements.

Only those individuals assessed as competent by the Coordinator (or his delegate) who have the appropriate facilities to properly care for and maintain a raptorial bird will have such birds entrusted to their care. Each individual case will be considered on its merits by the Coordinator (or his delegate.)



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### KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

All rehabilitators and educators must demonstrate:

- Respect for the welfare and dignity of all fauna.
- Basic knowledge of primary care and stages of rehabilitation.
- Correct diet and housing requirements for each species in care in accordance with DPaW minimum standards.
- Competency (as assessed by the Coordinator or his delegate) in handling particular species in care.
- Competency (as assessed by the Coordinator or his delegate) in how to correctly catch up and handle raptors that need daily or regular treatment for injuries.
- A working relationship with a veterinarian and/or veterinary health facility to which sick, injured and orphaned wildlife may be referred.

New members should endeavour to assist other rehabilitators when treating injured raptors to gain the necessary experience to be a competent assistant. They should become familiar with correct holding of birds to facilitate bandaging, jessing, wound treatment, physical examination, banding and measuring.

New members should seek out a mentor from among the experienced rehabilitators and trainers within the Society.

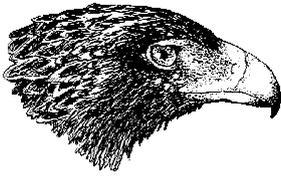
New members may look after a specific species of injured raptor at their own facilities only if they have been deemed competent in the care of that species by their mentor and only if they have or have access to a suitable enclosure that is appropriate to the species and is suitable to that particular bird's needs.

Experienced members should wherever possible share knowledge and skills with newer and less experienced members and be prepared to act as mentors for new rehabilitators.

All members should strive to achieve high standards of knowledge and skill in the rescue, treatment and rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned raptors through participation in continuing education and events such as conferences and workshops.

### RECORDING AND REPORTING

Society members will meet DPaW minimum standards and/or licensing conditions in regard to the recording and reporting or data relating to activities involving wildlife.



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### FINAL DISPOSITION

Only appropriately imprinted raptors at full hunting fitness can be released back into the wild. Preferably, raptors should be released back in their home territory (ie: where they were found) but in cases where the habitat in that area has been compromised (eg: logging, development, clearing etc) permission should be sought from DPaW to release the animal in an alternative area with habitat suitable to the species concerned.

Young birds should not be released back into their parents' territories after extensive rehabilitation, especially if the release date coincides with the breeding season as the resident adult birds may attack and kill the youngsters.

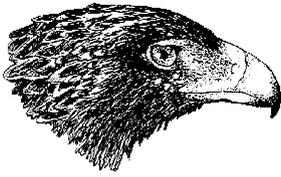
Birds with permanent disabilities are classified as non-releasable. Those birds which qualify for placement in an education programme or which can be taken on by a facility such as a zoo or wildlife park may be so placed providing the programme and/or facility is approved by the Coordinator.

Birds should only be retained in captivity if they have:

- No more than 40% disability – ie: at least 60% flight capability, able to stand and perch correctly, able to climb or fly to high perches for roosting and be able to land safely without crashing.
- All four limbs – if a raptor has to have a wing or leg amputated due to the severity of its injuries, then it should be euthanised. All one-winged or one-legged raptors will suffer physical and mental health problems that in most cases will eventually necessitate that bird being put down for humane reasons.

All non-releasable birds retained by Society members must be suitable for either:

- Captive breeding – the bird must be capable of breeding and have quality of life in a suitable enclosure, free from any on-going health problems associated with its disability. Furthermore, captive breeding may only be carried out with the written approval of DPaW and members engaging in approved captive breeding must have the necessary management techniques and DPaW- authorised hack and/or release programmes operating.
- Fostering – the bird must be able to have quality of life in a suitable enclosure and be free from any on-going health problems associated with its disability. It must be of a suitable temperament and disposition to foster young birds.
- Community environmental education – the bird must be handled and trained and have a temperament suitable for public educational displays. Furthermore the bird should be kept under the auspices of an appropriate Regulation 16 Wildlife Display license issued by DPaW.



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Non-releasable birds which cannot be suitably placed and have quality of life in captivity should be humanely euthanised.

Euthanasia will ideally be carried out by a suitably qualified animal health professional using anaesthesia followed by administration of a lethal barbiturate overdose. However, in cases where the services of a veterinarian cannot be secured in a timely manner, euthanasia must be carried out in accordance with DPaW Minimum Standards.

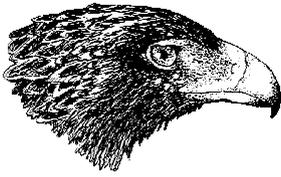
### **COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

Wildlife may only be displayed to the public under the applicable Wildlife Regulations and in accordance with the conditions of appropriate Regulation 16 Wildlife Display licenses as issued by DPaW.

Any bird used for educational programmes must not have more than 40% disability, being classified as disabled but not badly disfigured. Birds used for education must not have any of the following health problems:

- Obvious wounds on legs, shoulders, wings, cere or feet.
- No badly damaged, broken or missing feathers on wings or tail – eg: displaced feathers on wings, obvious excessive trace or fret marks on wings and tail or whose plumage is in an overall scruffy appearance.
- Excessive feathers in quill.
- Discharge from eyes, mouth or external nares.
- Excessive twitching or shivering associated with nerve damage.

Members wishing to train raptors for educational programmes should always make the welfare of the bird their primary and overarching consideration at all times. Educational packages should always include a conservation message and not be delivered purely for the purposes of entertainment or personal gain. All fauna should be exhibited with respect, dignity and compassion.



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### ETHICS

Society members will:

- Give primary consideration to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of fauna in care at all times, regardless of the activity being undertaken.
- Respect the wild nature of native raptors and maintain the dignity of each individual at all times.
- Carry out all activities in accordance with the relevant legislation and edicts of local, state and federal government and the relevant governing bodies including but not limited to the Wildlife Act and the Animal Welfare Act and any such Acts of Parliament passed at State or Federal level affecting the activities of the Society.
- Establish safe working conditions for themselves, volunteers and visitors.
- Work on the basis of sound ecological principles, incorporating appropriate conservation ethics and an attitude of stewardship.
- Seek out veterinary advice, direction and assistance wherever appropriate, and work toward building positive, productive relationships with animal health professionals.
- Respect colleagues and organisations in related fields, sharing skills and knowledge in a spirit of cooperation for the welfare and conservation of wildlife.
- Conduct all activities with professionalism, honesty, integrity and compassion in the awareness that the conduct of all members reflects back on the Society and the related fields of wildlife rehabilitation and environmental education as a whole.