

Your Failures May be Gold—Don't Throw Them Away!

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"The contribution of salvaged material to scientific collections is great." was my opening sentence of an earlier article I addressed to birdwatchers. I would modify that now to read "The contribution of material from rehabilitators (*at least those who keep accurate data*) is incalculable."

When I anticipated writing this presentation, I contacted curators and collections' managers who had had significant contact with rehabilitators. They uniformly stressed the absolute need for accurate data, but also stressed the valuable contributions of received material! They tended to emphasize the fact that rehabilitators offer a tremendously large receiving network, and thus were a source of the uncommon occurrence, *ie.* the rarities, and they mentioned the first this or that record specimen that they had received from rehabilitators. Indeed I also mentioned those when I presented a paper orally. While none of us would deny that receiving a headline-deserving specimen does make for a very special day, receiving numbers of certain more common species that would not otherwise be available is, I believe, far more important scientifically. And I should add—a species of great scientific interest in one part of the country may be of far lesser interest in another!

Several colleagues stressed the importance of salvaged birds in two areas: a) raptors, a group I believe that most, if not all (even those of us with fully legal and scientifically justifiable reasons), are reluctant to collect, and b) urban-adapted species which are virtually "out-of-bounds" to scientific collecting.

The USFWS Special Purpose - Salvage permit (50 CFR 21.27) regulations, which I expect apply to the carcass of a euthanized bird, state that each bird salvaged should be tagged by the permittee. It then specifies the information that must be recorded, of which the first thing is "date and location specimen was salvaged." I would add "date of death" in the case of a bird received from a rehabilitator. Ideally this information should be on a data slip accompanying the carcass (Fig. 1). However, with groups handling large numbers of birds, instead of filling out complete data slips for all

birds, many of which will not be preserved, a number may be attached to the carcass. The pertinent information may be entered into the group's database, from which it can be forwarded by email to the scientist/teacher etc. interested in preserving the selected material.

Appended is a list of some museums that are interested in receiving salvaged material, but for convenience, I would first contact your nearest major institution. The listed museums should be contacted to ascertain that they are indeed ready to receive material (and if they have specific needs or limitations), and to obtain their recommendation as to their preferred method of shipment. Needless to say, they would expect to cover shipping costs. Finally, I can be contacted at the above address if I can be of further help.

Museums Interested in Receiving Salvaged Birds

ALASKA
University of Alaska Museum
907 Yukon Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99775
Attn. Kevin Winker
tel. 907 474-7027
ffksw@uaf.edu

CALIFORNIA
**Natural History Museum
of Los Angeles**
Section of Ornithology
900 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
Attn. Kimball L. Garrett
tel. 213 763-3368
kgarret@nhm.org

San Bernadino County Museum
Biological Science Section
2024 Orange Tree Lane
Redlands, CA 92374
Attn. Robert L. McKernan
tel. 909 307-2669, ext. 232
rmckernan@ccr.co.san-bernardino.ca.us

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CALIFORNIA, *continued*
San Diego
Natural History Museum
PO Box 1390
San Diego, CA 92112
Attn. Philip Unitt
tel. 619 232-3821
unitt@ibm.net

DELAWARE
Delaware Museum
of Natural History
PO Box 3937
Greenville, DE 19807
Attn. Gene K. Hess
tel. 302 658-9111
hessgk@delmnh.org

NEW MEXICO
Museum of
Southwestern Biology
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131
Attn. Robert W. Dickerman
tel. 505 277-3315
bobdickm@unm.edu

NEW YORK
American Museum
of Natural History
Department of Ornithology
79th Street at Central Park West
New York, NY 10024-5192
Attn. Paul Sweet
tel 212 769-5780
sweet@amnh.org

Cornell University
Museum of Vertebrates
Department of Ecology and
Evolutionary Biology
Corson Hall, Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853-2701
Attn. Kevin McGowan
tel. 607 257-8135
kjm2@cornell.edu

NORTH CAROLINA
North Carolina State
Museum of Natural Science
210 N. Dawson Street
Raleigh, NC 27603
Attn. John A. Gerwin
tel. 919 715-2600
ncs1416@interpath.com

PENNSYLVANIA
Academy of Natural Sciences
of Philadelphia
1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1195
Attn. Leo Joseph
tel. 215 299-1023
joseph@acnatsci.org

WASHINGTON
Slater Museum
of Natural History
University of Puget Sound
Tacoma, WA 98416
Attn. Dennis Paulson
tel. 253 756-3798
dpaulson@ups.edu

I.D. # _____
Species _____
Location Found (<i>BE SPECIFIC!</i>) _____

County _____
Date Found _____ Date Death _____
Rehabilitator _____
Phone _____

FIGURE 1

“Date Found,” the “location” specimen was salvaged, and “date of death” are the mandatory items of information. This data slip also contains all the other information ideal for a museum. The note to *BE SPECIFIC!* on location means, *i.e.* “mile marker 286 on southbound I-25, approx. 13 miles south of Albuquerque, New Mexico.” You may xerox this for use; attach it to each specimen.