

ETHICS IN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION

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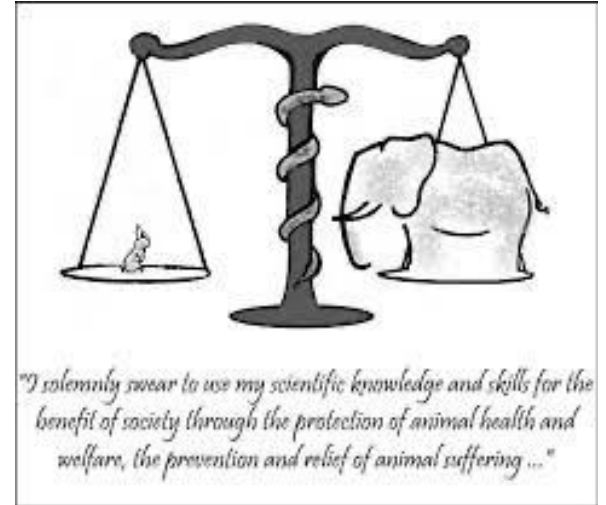
ABOUT ME

- Wildlife Biology Student at LMC
- Three Years of Rehabilitation Experience at Various
- Volunteered over 3000 hours at Possumwood Acres
- Specializing in Avian Species, Primarily Seabirds



AGENDA

- Ethics Definition
- NWRA Code of Ethics
- Volunteers & Ethics
- Ambassadors
- Conversation



"I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering ..."

WHAT ARE ETHICS?

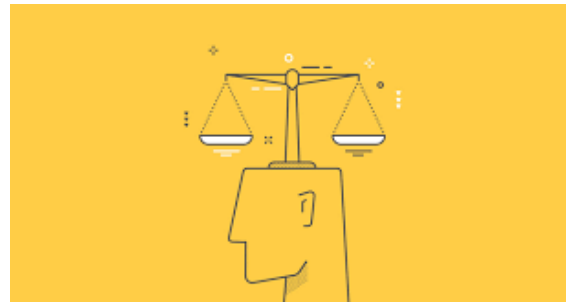
- Moral principles
- Governs a person 's behaviour
- Not everybody will have the
- Our perception of right and wrong is
- Laws and ethics don 't always coincide
- Some laws may be unethical and some



same ethics

based on our

ethics ma



ORIGIN TO ETHICS



- The word *ethics* is derived from the Ancient Greek word *ēthikós* (ἠθικός)
- *Ēthikós*, meaning relating to one's character, (ἠθος) meaning "character, moral nature" – Wikipedia
- Greek as *Ēthos* -> Latin as *ethica* -> French as *éthique*
- Western ethics originated in Ancient Greece, with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle being key individuals

the Ancient Greek word

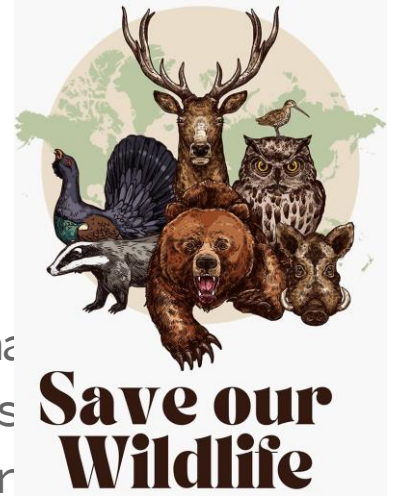
comes from root word *ēthos*

French as
Ancient



HOW AND WHY DO THEY APPLY TO REHABILITATORS?

- To provide the best possible care
- Moral governing body for what we do & how we run our rehab
- Multiple national/state rehabilitation agencies follow and tis
- Facilities may come up with a code of ethics to accurately fits their



EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION WORLDWIDE

CONTINUING EDUCATION

“A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to achieve high standards of animal care through knowledge and an understanding of the field. Individuals must make an effort to be informed of current rehabilitation information, methods, and regulations through participation in continuing education.” – NWRA



- Conferences
- Symposiums
- Webinars
- Online Courses
- Networking



QUALITY OF CARE

“A wildlife rehabilitator should be responsible, conscientious, and dedicated, and should work continuously toward improving the quality of care given to wild animals undergoing rehabilitation.” – NWRA



- Following best practices
- Continuing education
- Improving techniques, resources, equipment, etc



LAWS

“A wildlife rehabilitator must abide by local, state, provincial and federal laws concerning wildlife, wildlife rehabilitation, and associated activities.” – NWRA



- Licensing
- Permitted / Regulated Species
- State Wildlife Agencies
- Fish and Wildlife



HEALTHY AND SAFETY

“A wildlife rehabilitator should establish safe work habits and conditions, abiding by current health and safety practices at all times.” – NWRA



- Proper PPE
- Protecting against zoonotic diseases
- Proper quarantines and testing



ACKNOWLEDGING LIMITATIONS

“A wildlife rehabilitator should acknowledge limitations and enlist the assistance of a veterinarian and other trained professionals when appropriate.” – NWRA

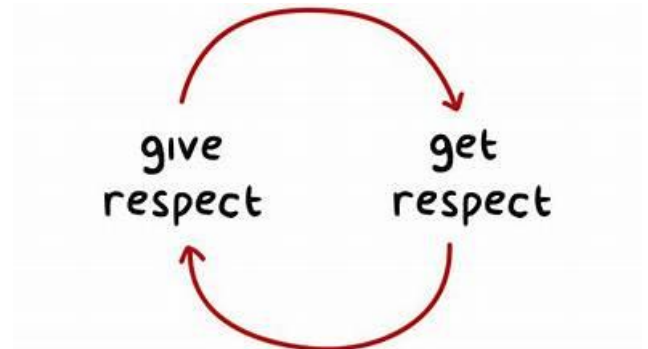
- Critical Cases
- Unknown Cases
- Uncommon Species
- It is okay to ask for help!



COOPERATION AND RESPECT

“A wildlife rehabilitator should respect other rehabilitators and persons in related fields, sharing skills and knowledge in the spirit of cooperation for the welfare of animals.” – NWRA

- Working together
- Respecting others
- Professionalism
- Networking
- Animals come first!

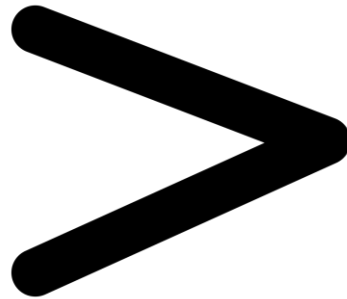


WILDLIFE OVER PERSONAL GAIN

“A wildlife rehabilitator should place optimum animal care above personal gain.”

– NWRA

- Personal and professional.
- Animals are most important.
- Do not exploit or use wildlife.



WILDLIFE RESPECT AND EUTHANASIA

“A wildlife rehabilitator should strive to provide professional and humane care in all phases of wildlife rehabilitation, protecting the welfare, respecting the wildness, and maintaining the dignity of each animal in life and in death. Releasable animals should be maintained in a wild condition and released as soon as appropriate. Non-Releasable animals have a right to euthanasia.” – NWRA

- Humane and accepted methods of euthanasia (AVMA, NWRA)
- Placement vs. euthanasia
- Educational ambassadors
- Imprinting & habituation



VOLUNTEERS & EDUCATION

“A wildlife rehabilitator should encourage community support and involvement through volunteer training and public education. The common goal should be to promote a responsible concern for living beings and the welfare of the environment.” – NWRA

- Volunteer programs
- Internship programs
- Outreach programs
- Instilling passion in the public



ECOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

“A wildlife rehabilitator should work from a foundation of sound ecological principles, incorporating appropriate conservation ethics and an attitude of stewardship.” – NWRA

- Invasive species
- Working with biologists
- Endangered species
- Disease control



PROFESSIONALISM

“A wildlife rehabilitator should conduct all business, activities, and communications in a professional manner, with honesty, integrity, compassion, and commitment, realizing that an individual's conduct reflects on the entire field of wildlife rehabilitation.” – NWRA

- Compassion for rescuers .
- Phone calls .
- Education programs .



DISCUSSING ETHICS WITH VOLUNTEERS

- Screening Process
- Volunteer Workshop
- Why talk about it?



SCREENING PROCESS

- Heavily screen
- Ask questions about how they feel on various topics.
- Euthanasia
- Live prey (Fish, Insects, Rodents)
- Invasive species
- Understand and listen to their ethical values
- This will ensure that you know if they are suitable for your facility
- Be upfront about ethics, this will conserve energy later



ETHICS WORKSHOP

- Monthly mandatory class
- Talking to volunteers and educating them
- Best practices
- The do's and don'ts
- Bringing up difficult topics
- Ensuring they understand your ethics
- They do not have to agree with everything but they must be behind your mission and be able to speak intelligently on the topics



TOPICS

- Ambassador animals
- Live prey
- Leaving wildlife alone
- Imprinting/Habituation
- Legalities
- Speaking with the public
- And more!



THE IMPORTANCE

- Opens up conversations
- Educates volunteers
- Builds trust
- Commitment



AMBASSADOR ANIMALS

- Ambassador animals make up a large part of wildlife education, whether it be display or outreach animals
- We must treat them with respect and dignity
- They rely on us for care and treatment



CONSIDERATIONS FOR AMBASSADORS

- Age
- Injuries
- Pain
- Temperament
- Mental Wellbeing/Stress
- Species
- Use? Education, Display, Fostering



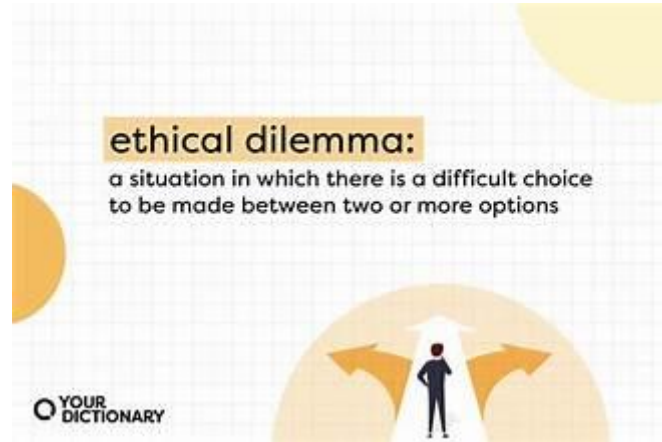
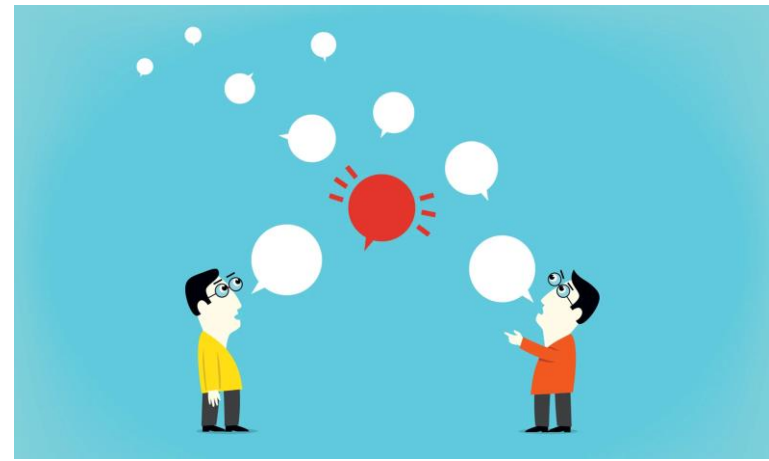
REMINDERS



- This is a collective effort, we must work together
- We must not only respect our wildlife patients, but each other as well
- If we don't respect each other, the public won't trust us to do our job
- We must focus on the animals and prioritize them
- Our job is not only to care for our wildlife patients, but to also educate the public on what we do and why it is important to conserve them
- Ethics are complex and not always straightforward

A CONVERSATION

- Where do you draw YOUR line?
- Live Feeding
- Euthanasia
- Non-Native Species
- Various Ethical Dilemmas



THANK YOU!!!

THANK YOU

- Marge Gibson (Raptor Education Group Inc.)
- Lauren Glickman (Foray Consulting)
- Thank you to these two amazing individuals for allowing me to interview them and pick their brains on the topic of ethics in wildlife rehabilitation

