



WILDLIFE IN NEED CENTER

Baby Bird Feeding FAQ's

HOW OLD DO I HAVE TO BE TO FEED BABY BIRDS?

You can be 12 or 13 years old, but must volunteer with an adult such as a parent or grandparent. If you are 14 years of age and older, you can volunteer to feed baby birds without an adult.

ARE CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE ALLOWED TO VOLUNTEER?

No. Baby birds require special care to survive in a rehabilitation setting that involves a level of manual dexterity and a length and quality of concentration. Experience has shown us that 12 years of age is a good age level for those skills.

CAN I LEAVE MY 12 OR 13 YEAR OLD AT THE CENTER, IF OTHER ADULTS OR TEENAGERS ARE WORKING IN THE BABY BIRD NURSERY?

No, 12 and 13 years olds must be supervised by their parent/guardian. The child/adult team must volunteer together for the summer season when the child is under 14 years of age. For liability reasons, as well as to provide adequate supervision, the Center must require this rule.

ARE THE ADULTS OF A 12 OR 13 YEAR OLD REQUIRED TO ACTIVELY VOLUNTEER WITH THEIR CHILDREN, OR CAN THEY JUST SUPERVISE?

Adults of 12 and 13 year olds will be actively volunteering with their children. It's a team approach to caring for the baby birds. Many of the tasks related to the care of the birds are best assisted by an adult when the age of the volunteer is 12 and 13. These tasks will be explained in more detail at the orientation class.

CAN ADULTS VOLUNTEER TO FEED BABY BIRDS?

Yes, many adults and seniors find feeding baby birds to be a very rewarding experience. Bird watchers don't often get to observe the quantities and species of native songbird infants you can see in one room here at WINC. Also, many parents and grandparents find that feeding and caring for baby birds with their student volunteer can be a great bonding experience.

WHERE IS WILDLIFE IN NEED LOCATED?

Our location is W349 S1480 S. Waterville Rd, Suite B, Oconomowoc, WI 53066. We are approximately 1/2 mile south of Hwy 18 on Waterville Rd at the UW-Waukesha's Field Station property. If you get to the bike trail you've gone too far.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

Baby bird feeders are asked to commit to one 4.5 hour shift a week for twelve weeks. Basically, from the time school is out in spring until school begins in fall. Some bird feeders will start volunteering on weekends or evenings before their school session ends and continue into fall, until the last baby bird has fledged! WINC is open seven days a week (also holidays).

WHAT TIME(S) ARE THE VOLUNTEER SHIFTS?

Shift times are: 8:30 to 1:00 p.m.
 1:00 to 5:30 p.m.
 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. seven days a week

WE'VE PLANNED A VACATION, OR SOMETHING UNEXPECTED COMES UP AND I HAVE TO MISS MY SCHEDULED VOLUNTEER SHIFT/DAY. WHAT DO I DO?

We know that families plan vacations for the summer months and so we will work with you to have your shift covered when you are gone. Vacation requests should be submitted two weeks in advance or sooner so we can plan coverage. If you are sick, or an unexpected situation arises that doesn't allow you to volunteer on your scheduled shift, we ask that you call in to the Center at 262-965-3090. Please speak to someone in our office or leave a message on the answering machine. Arrangements can also be made for you to volunteer on another day.

WHAT TYPE OF WORK WILL I BE DOING?

Baby birds require feeding every 30 or 60 minutes depending on their age. You are the bird's parent and will be moving from cage to cage feeding singles, or groups of birds. In addition to feeding birds, you will be preparing their diets, handling and cleaning the birds as needed, cleaning their cages, making new nests and recording your feeding times on a daily timesheet. You must be patient, pay attention to details, and be able to read and understand specific directions.

WHAT TYPE OF CLOTHING SHOULD I WEAR?

Our volunteers are on their feet for most of the day, so comfortable shoes are a must! No sandals or clogs. Shoes must be closed-toed. Clothing should be comfortable and something you don't mind getting dirty. Clothing should not be revealing or vulgar. Shorts in summer are O.K. Belly shirts are not ok. You need to be adequately covered so that you are safe around the animals and equipment.

CAN I WALK AROUND THE CLINIC/GROUNDS AND LOOK AT THE OTHER ANIMALS?

Baby bird feeders under the age of 18 are restricted to the baby bird room. Why? Many mammals, adult birds and herps are kept clinic rooms and the outside cages. We require that individuals must be over 18 to work with other patients than baby birds. Also for liability reasons, the Center cannot have minors in other areas of the facility. Keep in mind, we are a rehabilitation center, and that our patients are sick, injured or orphaned wild animals. It is for your safety and for the safety of our wildlife patients that we make this rule.

For more information about the Wildlife in Need Center, its mission and purpose log on to www.helpingwildlife.org, or call (262) 965-3090.