



Woodlands Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

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Manual Excerpt

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Woodlands Wildlife Refuge Mission Statement

To receive, rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned native wildlife.

To educate people about wild animal habits and habitats.

To protect and create natural environments where people and animals exist in harmony.

About Woodlands Wildlife Refuge

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer at Woodlands Wildlife Refuge.

Woodlands Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the care and release of New Jersey's orphaned and injured mammals and reptiles. The ultimate goal of this refuge is the release of those animals back to their natural habitats as healthy, well functioning wild animals.

Your role as a volunteer is very important and should not be taken lightly. As a care-giving facility everyone's actions count and make a difference-good or bad. While making a commitment to become a volunteer at Woodlands is serious, it can also be a wonderful and fulfilling learning experience.

Your responsibilities as a volunteer will be varied and can include feeding, cleaning, record keeping, and facility maintenance to mention a few. There are also extra jobs if you are interested (see volunteer information sheet). You will also have a certain amount of contact with the public as they come to the refuge.

Training new volunteers is time consuming and crucial. This time is best spent on those individuals who are making a serious commitment to our year round volunteer program.

"Those who wish to pet and baby wildlife love them, but those who respect their natures and wish to let them live their natural lives, love them more."

- Edwin Way Teale

History of Woodlands Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

1986 – Woodlands began with the care of two orphaned raccoons.

1987 – Apprenticeship completed and permit requirements met.

1988 – Initial permit received.

1990 – Woodlands Incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation.

1995 – Woodlands began a black bear rehabilitation program.

1997 – Woodlands received its 501(c)(3) charitable status.

2002 - Woodlands moved to its present location in Alexandria Township.

2005 – Woodlands begins to receive international interest about its highly successful black bear rehabilitation program.

2011 – Woodlands celebrates its 25th anniversary!

Woodlands mainly serves, but is not limited to, the communities and wildlife of central and northern New Jersey.

Woodlands is overseen by a Board of Directors and an Executive Director.

Woodlands holds permits from New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW) Captive Game Permits Section, NJDFW Endangered and Non-Game Section, and USDA/APHIS.

F.I.D. #22-3053310 N.J.C.H. #1632300

Policies and Procedures

Volunteers work with **WILD** animals. Every effort is made to assure that those animals are released **WILD**. This is the main goal of Woodlands. Except for a brief period during infancy, when nurturing is essential, and those few exceptional cases, **there will be no unnecessary handling, playing, cuddling, petting, or talking to or around these animals**. They are not to be treated as domestic animals, because they are not!

If these animals are allowed to imprint on us they will not survive in the wild and we will have defeated our purpose. Imprinting is likely to take place within the first 2 weeks after their eyes open. Extra precautions to prevent imprinting must be taken from that time through the rest of their stay at Woodlands.

All species cared for at this refuge are treated with the same respect. Volunteers are to keep any dislikes for a particular animal or species to themselves.

Working/assisting with potentially dangerous species such as black bears, bobcats, some snakes requires more than one full year of volunteer experience.

It is important to know that we cannot save them all. We do our best and sometimes that will mean we must give them a humane death or a quiet place to die. Animals are euthanized under the guidance of a veterinarian and only when absolutely necessary and there is no hope for recovery and release. A lot of thought and consideration goes into every decision concerning euthanasia.

Safety - Human

- **People** safety always comes first. Everyone wears gloves when handling animals, cleaning cages, and doing laundry or dishes. Heavier gloves are worn when handling rabies vector species such as raccoon, fox, coyote, skunk and woodchuck.
- Appropriate clothing must be worn. Long sleeves and long pants are recommended. Open toe shoes are not allowed. Provided aprons and lab coats must be worn.

Safety - Animal

- Every handler receives the same training regardless of previous experience and advances in skill each season.
- Perfume, cologne or after shave must be kept to a minimum or not at all
- Any cut or scratch, no matter how minor, should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as it occurs and Accident Report Forms are filled.

Animal Care

- All volunteers are well trained in all aspects of the selected volunteer opportunity (see volunteer information sheet)
- Acute animal senses are sensitive to sound. Voices and other noises must be kept low and at a minimum.
- All animals have running charts to monitor their progress. Charts are to be read *before* working with that animal. Fill in all necessary data when caring for them.
- All incoming raccoons, woodchucks, foxes and skunks will undergo a minimum of 14 days in physical quarantine before being placed with others of their species.

- Be observant. Make note of any unusual behavior or appearance, record it on the chart, and call it to the attention the Wildlife Care Supervisor or senior person as well as the next shift
- Do not assume anything! If something is unclear, don't hesitate to ask.

Hygiene

*Hygiene training for human and animal safety at a wildlife refuge is of great importance and must remain foremost in your mind and you will be thoroughly trained. This is for your protection as well as the animals'. There are several diseases that can pass from animal to man (zoonoses) and also between animals. You will learn how to function at Woodlands without unnecessarily exposing yourself or the animals to these diseases. Please read and familiarize yourself with the additional information about some common zoonoses. **These procedures are to be strictly adhered to as we are an animal hospital.***

Miscellaneous

- **Leave personal stresses at home. Your responsibility here is to care for the animals and they come first. This work requires your full attention, best attitude, concentration and consideration for both the animals and shift mates.**
- **Personality differences must be accepted.** They must not interfere with your work. If there is an on-going problem call it to the attention of a staff member. **We expect professionalism.**
- There will be no eating, drinking or smoking around the animals. Woodlands is a smoke-free environment. If you must smoke, do it in your vehicle. Take butts with you.
- Showing up for your shift under the influence of any drug or alcohol is forbidden.
- You are expected to arrive on time. If you are going to be 15 or more minutes late you must call the volunteer line that will be provided to you.
- Absence policies will be followed by all volunteers.
- The driveway speed limit is **10mph.**
- The use of cell phones is prohibited in the treatment area.
- There will be no visitors on your shift. If you should want to bring visitors at another time, all visitors must be approved ahead of time by the Director or supervising staff.

Woodlands' Policies Affecting Volunteers

Absence Policy

It is your responsibility to replace yourself *and* your skills if you cannot make your shift. Instructions for finding a replacement will be provided. This complete policy is in the full Volunteer Manual. It is your responsibility to understand it.

Inclement Weather Policy

Your safety is of the utmost importance to Woodlands. At the same time, the animal patients still need to receive care, even during inclement weather. Every effort must be made to best plan for changes due to weather; and your careful planning through good communication is critical. Communication must be by phone or in person. Do not rely on e-mail. Please abide by these procedures (found in full Volunteer Manual) in the event that weather conditions make it difficult to travel to and from Woodlands. It is critical that you monitor the weather forecast for days you are scheduled to work so that, if necessary, alternate plans of action for animal care can be put into place.

See these other policies in the full Volunteer Manual (given with orientation confirmation)

Anti-Harassment Policy
Mandatory Reporting of Harassment
Conduct by Non-Employees
Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment
Other Forms of Harassment
Harassment Complaint Process
Appropriate Discipline
Retaliation Prohibited
Drug and Alcohol Use
Smoking in the Workplace
Safety Policy
Violence in the Workplace Policy
Political Activity Policy
Off Duty Conduct
Woodlands Social Media/ Internet Policy
Policy Governing Speaking to the Media

We appreciate your cooperation. These rules are in effect for a reason! You never know who may see these photos and Woodlands or yourself could suffer serious consequences.



Thank you for your volunteer interest at Woodlands Wildlife Refuge

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