



Animal Emergency Initial Response Field Guide



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Instructions

Purpose

Provide first responders with critical species specific information when responding to an animal emergency situation in a user-friendly format.

Customization

Contacts for species specific professionals have been listed, when available. However, local partnerships will yield the best results. Agencies should identify and establish relationships with local individuals and groups within their geographic region. Contacts within the field guide should be updated annually to improve effectiveness.

Public Relations

PIOs should familiarize themselves with the field guide and develop a communication plan regarding animal emergencies and humane euthanasia. Be aware of public perception and ramifications of emergency response.

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Disclaimer statement

Animal emergency situations are potentially dangerous and can result in injury or death. The authors and sponsors of this Field Guide have taken great care in presenting this information. However, by necessity, this information is very general in nature, and every circumstance is unique. No warranties or representations of any nature are provided, and the authors and sponsors are not responsible for any damages incurred. Great caution should always be exercised in any animal emergency initial response. Use of information provided in this Field Guide is solely at your risk. When in doubt, it is recommended that you seek expert assistance before proceeding.

Bears and Large Cats (lions, tiger, pumas, leopards, etc.)

- Approach incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse animals.
- Call the nearest zoo.
- All should be considered dangerous, especially if wounded or cornered.
- Firearms and ammunition should be readily available at all times.
- In most situations, if animal has escaped, humane euthanasia may be the best option for safety of the animal and humans.
- An attempt to kill a carnivore should only be undertaken by skilled marksmen, as wounded carnivores are extremely dangerous.
- Large carnivores are solitary and territorial, with the exception of lions which are social.
- Most are agile climbers and will seek heights in times of stress. Lions generally remain on the ground.

Contacts

Name:
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Zoo Contact:
Title:
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Veterinarian
24 Hour Emergencies
Name:
24/7 Phone:

Birds (pet birds)

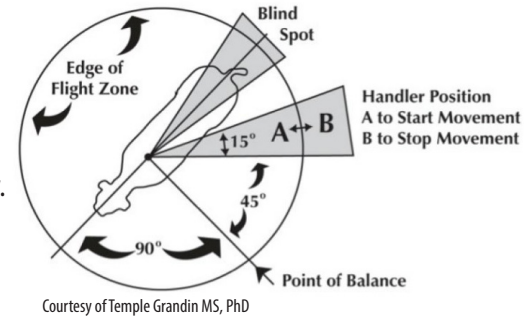
- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse birds.
- Because of the diversity in types of birds, the behavior, feeding, and housing requirements are highly variable.
- Birds will vary in behavior if they are wild caught versus captive reared.
- Most will be nervous in a crisis situation or when removed from their normal surroundings; some will be disoriented.
- The tendency will be to flee.
- Taking advantage of the nocturnal resting habits of many species may be necessary for successful capture.
- Baited traps and nets are recommended if capture is necessary.
- Handling should be done with care to avoid bone fractures.

Contacts

Name:	Local Wildlife Rehabilitation Center	Dr. Lindsey Long
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	Name:	Wildlife Veterinarian
Org:	Title:	Wisconsin DNR
Email:	Org:	lindsey.long@wisconsin.gov
24/7 Phone:	Email:	608-221-6337
	24/7 Phone:	888-936-7463 (7am-10pm)
Ann Stewart		800-837-9367 (DNR hotline)
UW School of Veterinary Medicine	Local Veterinarian	
stewart@svm.vetmed.wisc.edu	24 Hour Emergencies	
608 246-0820	Name:	
	24/7 Phone:	

Cattle (beef and dairy)

- Approach an incident with cattle utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse cattle.
- Cattle that are injured or frightened can be highly unpredictable. Do not chase.
- Let cattle graze in grassy areas (backyards, fields, etc.) if they are out of harm's way.
- Cattle are herd animals and will seek other cattle company.
- Once an animal is stressed or excited it takes 30 minutes for them to calm down. An excited or scared animal may charge. Avoid chasing and loud noise.
- Cattle have flight zones (personal space). Understanding and respect for flight zone will ease handling. Avoid deep penetration of flight zone. See chart.
- Plan for and implement containment prior to approaching individual animals.
- Containment can be achieved utilizing single or multiple lines of police/caution tape at distance from the incident. Often setting initial containment 50' or more away from the animals will not initiate a fear flight reaction.
- Hazards to responders include kicks, crushing and charging.



Contacts

Name:	Local Large Animal Veterinarian
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	24 Hour Emergencies
Org:	Name:
Email:	24/7 Phone:
24/7 Phone:	

Dogs and Cats

- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse both dogs and cats.
- Beware of aggression including biting and scratching.
- Household pets can become aggressive when scared and displaced.
- Displaced pets (especially cats) will look for a hiding place. Baited traps at near the cat's home territory are effective.
- Dogs are not as easily trapped, but can be restrained with a muzzle or leash. Slip nooses can be used.
- Keep dogs and cats separate. Cats prefer dimly lit small confinement area (carrier/cage/kennel).

Contacts

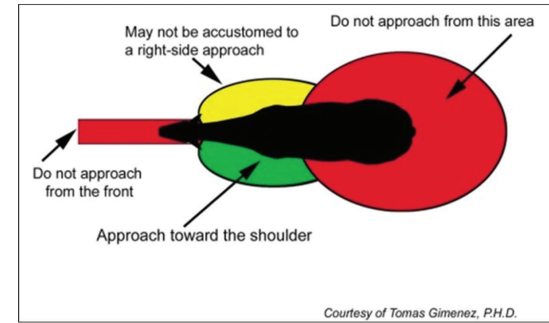
Name:
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Humane Society/Shelter
Name:
Title:
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Veterinarian
24 Hour Emergencies
Name:
24/7 Phone:

Equine (horses, donkeys, mules)

- Approach an incident with horses utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse horses.
- Horses that are injured or frightened can be highly unpredictable, but usually will not be aggressive and often will attempt to flee the scene.
- Plan for and implement containment prior to approaching individual animals.
- Containment can be achieved utilizing single or multiple lines of police/caution tape at distance from the incident. Often setting initial containment 50' or more away from the animals will not initiate a fear flight reaction.
- After containment has been established waiting for secondary animal responders is recommended. Smoke residue on turnout gear can initiate a fear response.
- Utilizing feed/grazing in the form of grass (roadside or lawn) can be an effective way to calm agitated horses without approaching the individual animals.
- Hazards to responders include kicks from the front and rear legs, bites, and crushing injuries when working with horses. Transmissible risks are minimal to responders from horses.



Contacts

Name:

Local Equine Veterinarian

Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer

24 Hour Emergencies

Org:

Name:

Email:

24/7 Phone:

24/7 Phone:

Lab Animals (rats, mice, ferrets, primates, dogs, cats, ruminants, rabbits)

- DANGEROUS: Disease risk to humans. Various species of laboratory animals are used for infectious disease studies, which may pose risks to human beings and animals in the immediate area.
- Contact lab personnel immediately.
- Do not approach primates. Primates are always dangers and pose a risk to your health.
- Many will approach human beings in a way that may be perceived as unusual behavior for a wild animal of the same species.
- See appropriate tab for animal species

Contacts

Name:	USGS Nation Wildlife Health Center	UW School of Veterinary Medicine
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	Christopher J. Johnson, PhD	Primates:
Org:	Research Biologist	Sevario Capuano
Email:	6006 Schroeder Road	O: 608 263-3571
24/7 Phone:	Madison, WI 53711	C: 608 209-6846
	P: 608-270-2442	capuano@primate.wisc.edu
Local Veterinarian	F: 608-270-2415	
24 Hour Emergencies	cjjohnson@usgs.gov	ACLAM
Name:	ASLAP Administrative Office	96 Chester Street
24/7 Phone:	11300 Rockville Pike, Suite 1211	Chester, NH 03036
	Rockville, MD 20852-3035	Phone: 603-887-2467
	O: 608 265-2695	Fax: 603-887-0096
	Phone: 301-231-6349	Website: www.aclam.org
	C: 608 220-0682	
	Phone: 301-231-6071	
	Welter@rarc.wisc.edu	
	Website: www.aslap.org	

Poultry (farm raised/backyard flocks: chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, game birds, peacocks)

- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse birds.
- Moving slowly and not making sudden movements that will startle them will keep them calm and will make handling easier.
- Poultry are flock animals. They are more comfortable being together in groups.
- Handling should be done with care to avoid bone fractures.
- They have very good eyesight and will fly or attempt to fly whenever approached by non-familiar persons or objects.
- Poultry are very uncomfortable whenever there is a change in the daily routine or surroundings and will become extremely agitated and try to fly away from the unusual.
- They will hide under objects especially in dark or shaded locations.
- Placing birds in a quiet area of low light intensity together in a group will help to calm them.
- Chickens can fly and will fly out of any enclosure without a top.
- Can use nets to capture.

Contacts

Name:	UW School of Veterinary Medicine	Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Lab
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	Ann Stewart	Cindy Bell, DVM
Org:	608 246-0820	608 262-5432 ext 1228
Email:	stewart@svm.vetmed.wisc.edu	920 344-8198
24/7 Phone:		cindy.bell@wvdl.wisc.edu

Local Veterinarian	Name:
24 Hour Emergencies	24/7 Phone:

Primates

- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse animals.
- **DANGEROUS:** Large primates (chimps) are extremely dangerous and in some instances are as or more dangerous than a tiger.
- Keep visual contact – do not approach and call contacts below.
- Firearms and ammunition should be readily available at all times.
- In most situations, if animal has escaped, humane euthanasia may be the best option for safety of the animal and humans.
- An attempt to kill a primate should only be undertaken by skilled marksmen, as wounded carnivores are extremely dangerous.
- All primates are very agile and curious. These animals may be human-oriented if they were hand-raised as pets or housed in a facility that handled them frequently or used them for shows. Others will avoid human beings.
- All primates will bite when threatened and unable to flee.
- Primates may be able to be moved by providing directed escape routes. Baiting enclosures with a preferred food item (such as fruit) may be used if the animals are human-oriented

Contacts

Name:
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Zoo Contact:
Title:
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Veterinarian
24 Hour Emergencies
Name:
24/7 Phone:

Reptiles (crocodiles, iguana, snakes, turtles, lizards, etc.)

- Keep visual contact. Do not approach.
- As a rule they are solitary creatures, but may aggregate in areas with appropriate environmental conditions
- They rely on the temperature of the environment to regulate their body temp.
- Some reptiles become aggressive when approached and may attack humans.
- Most escaped reptiles will seek cover immediately.
- Once they find a suitable hiding spot they may remain there for a considerable amount of time. For this reason escaped reptiles are unlikely to be obvious in the immediate aftermath of a crisis.
- All snakes should be treated as venomous unless a positive identification can be made otherwise.
- Human workers should wear high leather boots and long pants if a venomous snake is suspected of being at large.
- Aquatic specimens such as crocodilians, aquatic turtles, some snakes and lizards will seek a body of water for refuge. It is extremely difficult to recapture most animals that reach rivers or other flowing bodies of water.
- Crocodilians can move extremely fast. In addition to a strong bite, a crocodilian may attack by whipping its tail. The tail is strong enough to knock down and stun a human.

Contacts

Name:	Local Veterinarian
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	24 Hour Emergencies
Org:	Name:
Email:	24/7 Phone:
24/7 Phone:	

Small Hoofstock: Sheep, Goats, Cervids (deer), Camelids (llama, alpacas, camels)

- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic. Move slowly and quietly.
- These animals tend to have herding tendencies.
- Group of animals may be herded to the holding area by manipulation of a visual barrier such as opaque plastic sheeting or baffle boards.
- During a disaster, they might become disoriented and flee from perceived threats. There is a risk of injury (trampling each other) during flight.
- Should be considered dangerous to humans because of charging and kicking injuries, horns, antlers.
- Let animals graze in grassy areas (backyards, fields, etc.) if they are out of harm's way.

Contacts

Name:

Local Large Animal Veterinarian

Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer

24 Hour Emergencies

Org:

Name:

Email:

24/7 Phone:

24/7 Phone:

Small Mammals (mice, hamsters, gerbils, rabbits, hedgehogs, ferrets)

**If lab animals, please refer to lab animals section.*

- Approach an incident utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse animals
- These animals will tend to flee and find the first available “safe” hiding spot.
- Setting baited live traps is probably the best method of capture.
- These animals are not aggressive unless threatened and unable to flee.
- Most of these animals should be individually housed in small pet carrier or crates.
- Animals should be kept in a quiet darkened area, away from loud noises, traffic, and inquisitive people to minimize injuries.

Contacts

Name:
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer
Org:
Email:
24/7 Phone:

Local Veterinarian
24 Hour Emergencies
Name:
24/7 Phone:

Swine

- Approach an incident with swine utilizing emergency lights without sirens- the auditory stimulus is likely to panic and potentially disperse.
- Swine are most commonly raised in a farm situation; however, some are raised as a household pet. Household pets are more likely to respond to human handling.
- Swine from farms will not congregate with other animals.
- Swine will quickly begin foraging for food.
- Swine are deceptively elusive and will attempt to run under or through barricades toward open spaces.
- Swine can be driven to desired locations by slowly moving toward them from the sides and rear of the intended direction.
- Use of gates or panels to block view of open spaces will help direct swine movement.
- Move slowly without excitement or they will bolt and scatter in all directions.
- They should be driven slowly to an enclosure with a single open entrance.
- Food placed on the ground within the enclosure will encourage entry.
- Mature male swine (boars) are capable of immediate and severe damage to animals and to human beings by use of their tusk teeth.
- Adult females (gilts/sows), especially with young, are capable of immediate and severe damage to animals and humans.
- Hearing protection may be needed.

Contacts

Name:	Local Large Animal Veterinarian
Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer	24 Hour Emergencies
Org:	Name:
Email:	24/7 Phone:
24/7 Phone:	

Wildlife (deer, raccoons, skunks, bats, etc.)

- **Rabies risk. Do not approach.**
- Keep visual contact
- Contact the DNR

Contacts

Name:

Dr. Lindsey Long

Local Veterinarian

Animal Services Officer/Humane Officer

Wildlife Veterinarian

24 Hour Emergencies

Org:

Wisconsin DNR

Name:

Email:

lindsey.long@wisconsin.gov

24/7 Phone:

24/7 Phone:

608-221-6337

888-936-7463 (7am-10pm)

800-837-9367 (DNR hotline)

Euthanasia

Definition: From Greek: “good death”: εὖ, eu; “well” or “good”; thanatos; “death” – induce loss of consciousness followed by cessation of heart and respiration function

General Considerations

- Emergency responder should receive authorization to euthanize the animal as per applicable laws, situational assessment, local or state agency, insurance company, and/or owner consent.
- Contact local, species specific veterinarian (see species tab in field guide)
- Reduce or minimize stress prior to and during euthanasia.

Euthanasia Considerations

- Is public safety at risk?
- Is the animal suffering?
- Is the person qualified to perform humane euthanasia?
- Method of humane euthanasia is species specific.
- If using firearms, be aware of surroundings and surfaces
- Confirm death
- Be aware of public perception and potential ramifications

Rabies Considerations – public health risk

- If the animal is considered a rabies suspect public safety is highest priority.
- Common signs may include: abnormal behavior like aggressiveness and lethargy, frothing or excessive salivation, seizures, etc.
- Maintain integrity of the skull and tissue. Use caution when handling animal carcass.
- Immediately submit to Public Health Laboratory for testing.

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**Materials compiled and created by the
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