

## TELEPHONE PROTOCOLS: BIRDS OF PREY

Birds of prey are dangerous. Their talons can cause severe damage and puncture wounds to people. They will flip onto their backs and lash out with their feet to approaching hands. Once they clamp on with their talons it is very difficult to get them to release. It is best to avoid that situation.

**Any hawk** that is down on the ground needs to be evaluated for rescue. **Any owl** that is down on the ground needs to be observed from a distance for an hour or so, then evaluated for rescue.

### **CAPTURE:**

Most Raptors reported to us are in a weakened state. Most can be captured by throwing a towel over them. Both hawks and owls will bite. Always keep an eye on the head and feet of a raptor when using a towel to capture. Advise callers to use thick gloves if they have them. Some callers already have the bird captured, others offer to confine the bird. Never tell a caller they have to capture a raptor. They can observe the bird until a rescuer or other experienced animal handler arrives.

If a raptor is demonstrating aggressiveness, it can be gently 'swept' with a broom or stick into a cardboard box turned on its side.

All cardboard boxes need air holds poked in the sides prior to placing a raptor inside. Loud noises frighten birds. If possible, place a towel inside the box to keep the bird clean and cushioned during transport. Use tape (duct or masking) or bungee cords to secure the lid if it does not latch.

### **TRANSPORT – No Radio**

Some people are kind enough to transport injured or sick raptors to the Center. Others are afraid of the birds. Please advise people if they are holding a raptor for pick up, to keep the bird in a quiet dark location if possible. Always keep the bird's container covered with a sheet or towel, and away from pets or other animals. Remember to keep noise to a minimum when transporting a raptor or any other injured or sick animal.

### **BABY BIRD SEASON:**

Spring time brings unique situations for raptors. It is best to call an advisor for help, since each situation may be unique.

It is not uncommon to find fledglings on the ground. If the caller knows the nest is in the vicinity, call an advisor for help evaluating the situation and the bird. Emaciation and wing fractures from a fall can ground fledglings.

**\* If a juvenile raptor is being rescued, make sure to have the rescuer obtain the necessary re-nesting information (see Juvenile Raptor Form), before bringing the bird in, so it can later be returned to its parents.**

***Do not hesitate to call an advisor for help. Do not assess situations over the phone. It is best to send a rescuer or advisor out to observe the situation in person.***