



Wildlife triage and initial care

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Content

1. History taking and triage
2. Outcomes of triage
3. Common conditions and Initial care



History and Triage



History

- Starts at the initial phone call
- What is the species?
- Where was it found?
- Why is it coming in?
- How long has it had the problem for?

Date and time of admission:

Species:

Weight on admission:

Age (if known - circle as appropriate):

Birds - Nestling Fledgling Juvenile Adult

Mammals - Unweaned Weaned Juvenile Adult

Location found (as exact as possible, postcode if known - important for badgers/foxes/hedgehogs/birds of prey):

Name and phone number of finder if to be released on their property (needed for adult resident hedgehogs or any fox/badger - must have finder's permission to pass on to us - we won't be able to release other animals back to finder's property due to limited resources)

Reason for admission (if known):

Vet initial triage notes/findings:

Treatment:

Please keep this form with the animal during its time in care. Continue to record on a daily basis the animal's weight, feeding, motions, treatment given (times) and if any fluids were given (times).

Triage

- Initial assessment to see if treatable or needs euthanasia
- Should occur as soon animal arrives at the practise by a vet or experienced VN
- Minimise stress for the animal



Triage - Important considerations

- Must be fit to be released back into the wild and be able to compete with conspecifics
- All limbs functioning, 2 visual eyes, not tame
- Legal considerations, species differences



Triage - The numbers

- 50% euthanised on admission
- 3% die in the first 48 hours
- Success rate after 48 hours is 70-80% to release



Avian Influenza

- Practises should not be turning away birds because of AI
- Triage over the phone and outside of the practise in high risk birds
- Wear appropriate PPE



Health and Safety

Talons and Kicks

- Correct handling dependant on species
- Restraint aids



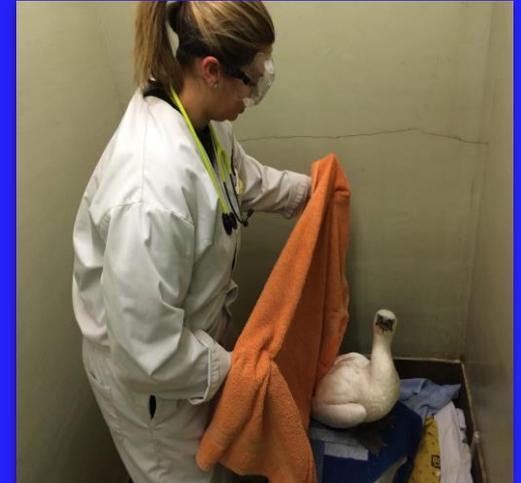
Disease

- Increased shedding
- Risk to other patients and staff
- PPE, disinfection
- Vaccination



Bites and Long bills

- Eye protection
- Towel
- Gauntlets
- Sedation/crush cage (Badgers)



Common reasons for presentation

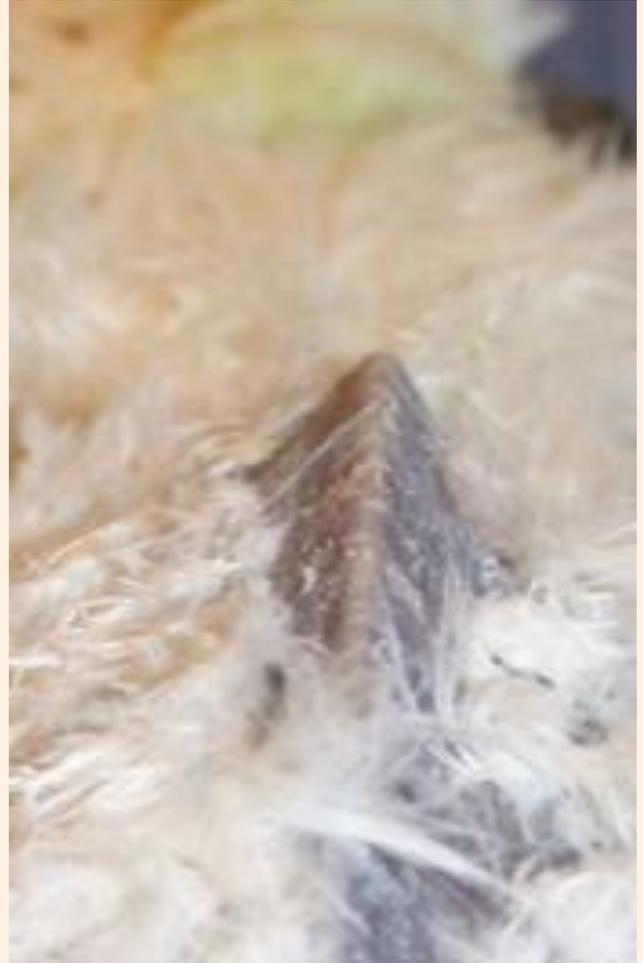
- “Orphan”/inexperienced juvenile
- Attacked by another animal
- Collision - Window/RTA/Powerline
- Disease
- Anthropogenic - shot/fishing line/entanglement/oiled/trimmer
- Abnormal behaviour/out during the day hog



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Clinical Exam - A few pointers - Birds

- Weigh and BCS!
- Retinal exam in all birds of prey
- Blow on feathers if suspected caught by cat
- Care with window strike birds
- Examine crop, pectoral girdle and proptagium
- Check all limbs for full range of movement
- Check the mouth - trichomoniasis/beak fractures



Clinical exam - Mammals

- Weight and BCS!
- Uncurl hedgehogs by stroking, tickling or bouncing
- Check all 4 limbs!
- Gender
- Smell is very useful
- Assess gait of both birds and mammals on the floor





Outcomes of Triage



Outcomes of Triage

- (1) Patient dies
- (2) Patient can be released
- (3) Patient requires euthanasia
- (4) Patient is suitable for treatment and rehabilitation



Immediate Euthanasia

- In extremis
- Emaciation
- Open Fracture*
- Fracture at joint or dislocation
- Missing limb/eye/blind/permanent disability
- Extensive soft tissue trauma/ligament damage
- Severe/end stage disease -
severe mange/ringworm/flystrike**
- Infectious disease - Leptospirosis, myxomatosis
- Eyes closed mammals/naked chicks
- Pelvic fracture/spinal fracture



Hedgehogs

- Severe damage to the nose



Pigeons

- Severe trichomoniasis especially wood pigeons
- Paramyxovirus
- Psittacosis



Other birds

- Corvids with poor feathering
- Severe intoxication/botulism



Common conditions and Initial Care



Common treatable conditions

- **Window strike birds**
 - Treat shock before full exam
 - Check for fracture to pectoral girdle - CARE
 - Air sac damage
- **Caught by cat birds or mammals**
 - Antibiotics even if no wound found
 - Drain subcutaneous emphysema



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Common treatable conditions

- **Scalped birds**
 - Usually pigeons
 - Often easily closed surgically
 - Keep wound moist until surgery
- **Crop wounds**
 - Small holes hard to find
 - Antibiotics and surgery
- **Botulism in gulls**
 - Weak, poor jaw tone
 - Respond well to fluids



Common treatable conditions - Soft tissue injuries

- Sparingly remove fur/feather/spines
- Dilute chlorhexidine or saline flush
- Tissue glue useful for small wounds
- Care with wound ointments
- Monitor ligature wounds for at least 48 hours



Common treatable conditions

- Parasites

- **Lungworm in hedgehogs**
 - Autumn juveniles
 - Start treatment if clinical signs
 - Faecal sample to confirm
- **Mild ringworm/mange/flystrike**
 - Ringworm and mange zoonotic
 - Carefully check all wounds for maggots/eggs
- **Trichomoniasis**
 - Feral pigeons and birds of prey
 - White/cream spots in mouth
 - Mild cases treat with metronidazole or carnidazole



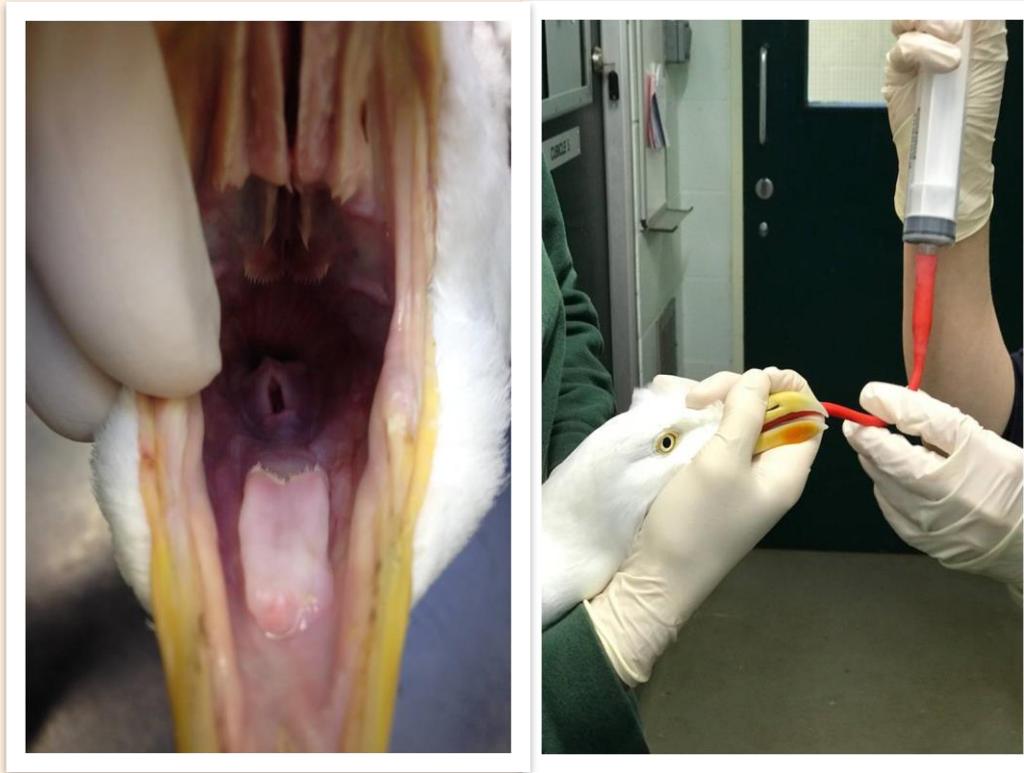
Initial Care - the first 24 hours

- Warmth
- Fluids
- Medication
- Housing
- Food



Fluid Administration - birds

- Hard to assess dehydration so assume 5%
- Oral gavage birds - 25ml/kg
- Owls - 12ml/kg
- S/C fluids easier under GA - Inguinal fold
- IV Catheter (swans)



Fluid Administration - mammals

- Assume all patients dehydrated
- Sub cutaneously (hogs/rabbits)
- Oral - Bats and small rodents
- IV Catheter (foxes)



Medication - Birds

Analgesia

- Meloxicam 1mg/kg BID
- Butorphanol 1mg/kg IM
- Avoid local anaesthetics

Antibiotics

- Amoxy/clav - 150mg/kg BID for small birds, 35mg/kg swans
- Clindamycin - 50mg/kg BID
- Baytril 15mg/kg BID



Medication - Mammals

	Hedgehogs	Rabbits	Rodents	Bats	Foxes/Badgers
Meloxicam	0.5mg/kg SID inj	0.6mg/kg SID-BID	1mg/kg BID orally	0.2mg/kg SID orally	As dogs
Buprenorphine	0.03mg/kg	0.03mg/kg	0.03mg/kg	0.1mg/kg	0.02mg/kg
Amoxyclav	50mg/kg SID inj	-	-	30mg/kg BID oral	As dogs
Clamoxyl LA	50mg/kg EOD inj	-	-	-	15mg/kg EOD inj
Baytril	10mg/kg BID oral or 20mg/kg SID injection				



Housing/Food

- Quiet
- Away from predators
- Risk of feather damage
- Only feed once warmed and hydrated



Initial care - Next few days

- Repeat fluids several times daily
- Oral liquid diets if not eating
- Do not rush to anaesthetise/do surgery
- Transfer if you do not have facilities or expertise



Clinical notes and patient transfer

- Up to date notes essential
- All details should be transferred with the patient

All animals going to Mallydams Wood must have the following details passed onto the wildlife centre

Veterinary practice (stamp or practice name and town):

Contact name and number:

Date of admission:

Species:

Location found (as exact as possible, postcode if known - important for badgers/ foxes/ hedgehogs/ birds of prey/ bats):

Reason for admission:

Treatment provided at practice (please provide copies of hospital sheet if available):

Summary

- Full history including location essential
- All animals need timely clinical exam with findings recorded
- Fluids on admission, warmth and analgesia
- Do not rush into anaesthetics or stressful procedures
- Transfer to reputable rehabber with full clinical notes



Thank you

