



Wildlife Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines - Acquisition of rehabilitated wildlife that cannot be released into the wild

Objective

To ensure the best outcome for native fauna and wild populations through the management of individual fauna that is the property of the State, and that has been taken into care for rehabilitation, but does not meet the requirements to be successfully reintegrated back into the wild population.

Scope and Context

This document should be read in conjunction with the Draft Code of Practice for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Western Australia and Wildlife Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines - Euthanasia.

This document provides a decision-making framework for the management of fauna in Western Australia that has been admitted into care for the purpose of rehabilitation and which requires a management decision about its future. This includes fauna that is:

- sick/diseased; or
- injured; or
- abandoned juvenile fauna; and
- is not suitable for release to the wild.

This guideline pertains only to fauna as defined in the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Refer to the Draft Code of Practice for Wildlife Rehabilitation in Western Australia for details regarding management of animals not native to Australia, and/or species that are native to Australia but are outside their natural range or identified as pests.

The decision of how best to manage injured or abandoned juvenile fauna must consider both the welfare of the individual and the conservation of existing populations of that individual's species. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) has a number of standard operating procedures (SOPs). Despite being written from a research perspective, a number of these SOPs may provide further guidance, including care of ejected pouch young, First aid for animals, Humane killing of animals under field conditions and Managing disease risk in wildlife management <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/monitoring/standards-and-protocols/99-standard-operating-procedures>.

Following rehabilitation, if an individual animal is not deemed suitable for reintegration back into the wild, it must be assessed by DBCA for suitability of transition to another licence, such as a fauna possessing (display) licence. For example, the animal does not show normal 'fight' or 'flight' responses in the presence of danger or cannot naturally forage for food.

Assessment process

Once an individual animal has been identified as unsuitable for release into the wild by a wildlife rehabilitator, DBCA must be notified as soon as practicable for assessment of the individual's suitability for educational display or addition to a species management program. Notifications are to be forwarded in writing to wildlife.protection@dbca.wa.gov.au using the form at Appendix 1.

Criteria used by DBCA to assess the suitability of wildlife that is not deemed suitable for reintegrated back into the wild, for addition to a fauna possessing (display) licence or similar; include

- does not have any deformities, injuries or illnesses;
- is able to feed unaided;
- displays near natural behaviour;
- individual animal will actively contribute to the conservation or management of the species through training, education or other means; and
- welfare of the animal is not compromised by being held in captivity (species specific).

The DBCA fauna assessment team includes:

- DBCA Principal Zoologist;
- Perth Zoo veterinarian;
- DBCA Regional Wildlife Officer or Wildlife Protection Branch representative; and
- species expert (where required e.g. birds of prey, marine fauna).

Acquisition process

Wildlife that is not deemed suitable for reintegration back into the wild but that has been deemed suitable for display by DBCA assessment team will in the first instance be offered to the Perth Zoo, then other Western Australian Zoos and Aquarium Association (ZAA) full members, Australia wide ZAA members, followed by other Regulation 33 Fauna possessing (display) licence holders. Refer to Figure 1 for guidance.



Expression of Interest

Interested parties will be required to submit an expression of interest in writing. Applicants are encouraged to identify and attach any relevant supporting information to assist with the assessment process. These include guidelines, standards and codes of practice approved either nationally or by other Australian States or Territories that they propose to operate in accordance with, conservation and/or educational plans.

Where there is more than one suitable submission, the information provided in the expression of interest will be used to establish the most suitable placement of the animal. The criteria to be used will include:

- animals already held by the institution/centre;
- suitability of enclosures and facility;
- type of display (static or mobile) and the suitability of the species and proposed display method and management (e.g. additional requirements for nocturnal animals); and
- conservation and educational plans.

The successful applicant will be notified within two weeks of the expressions of interest closing. If the DBCA considers that an expression of interest has not provided sufficient information on which to make an assessment further information may be sought or, the assessment team may reject the nomination without providing a reason or notification.

Note, all acquisition costs, including transport are to be covered by the successful applicant.

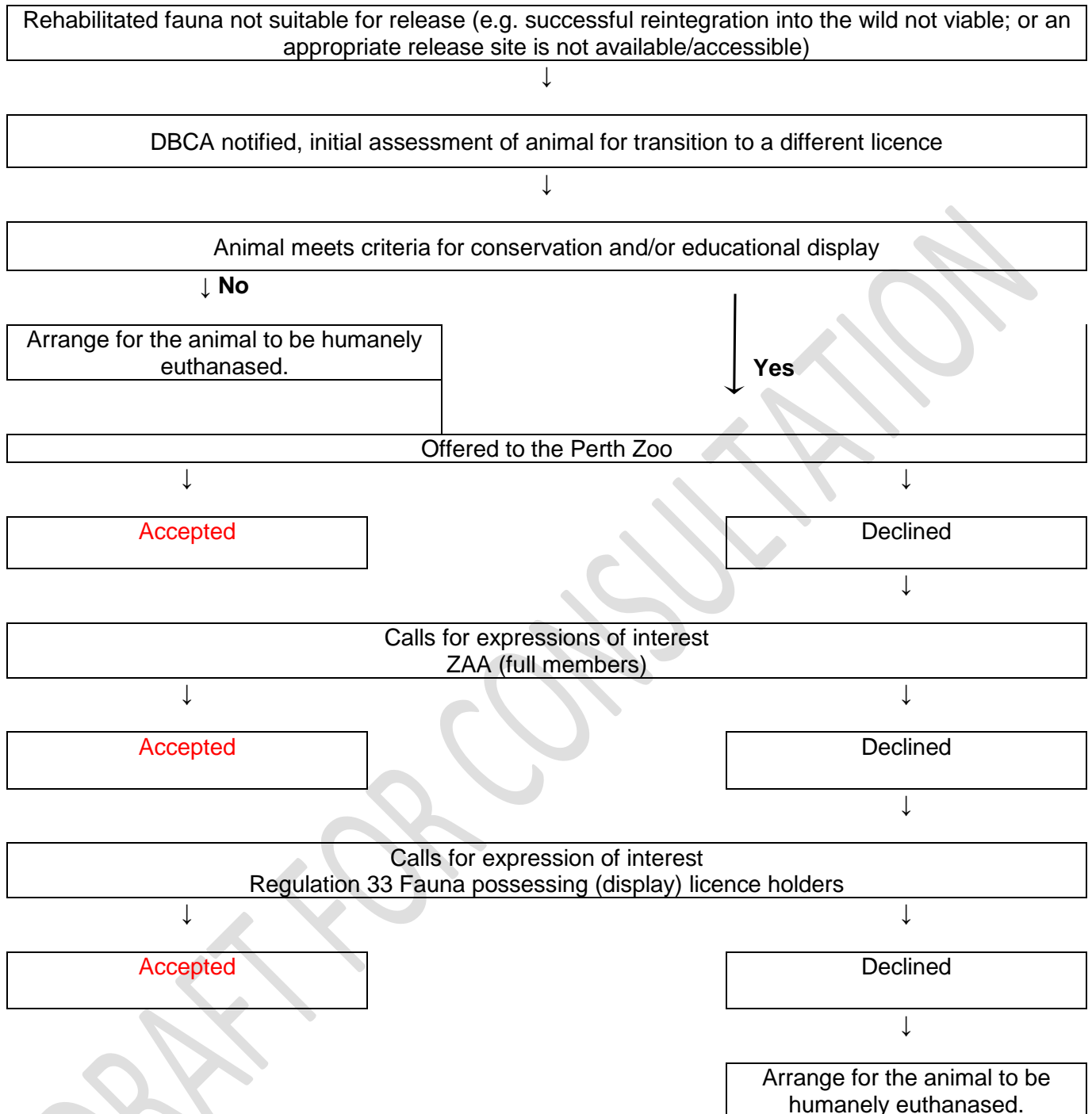


Figure 1: Summary of the assessment and acquisition process for transition of rehabilitated wildlife to a Regulation 33 Fauna possessing (display) licence or similar.



Appendix 1



Rehabilitated Fauna Notification Form

Assessment of rehabilitated wildlife that is not deemed suitable for release back into the wild for addition to a display licence or similar

Please complete ALL sections and forward to DBCA: wildlife.protection@dbca.wa.gov.au.

Further information may be obtained from Wildlife Protection Branch, wildlife.protection@dbca.wa.gov.au, or 9219 9840.

1. Contact Information			
First Name			
Surname			
Residential address			
Phone contact No.			
Email			
Fauna possessing (other purposes) licence - Rehabilitation	Licence No.		Expiry date
2. Species Information			
Species			
Sex			
Age (neonate, juvenile, sub-adult, adult)			
Date found/taken into care and by who			
Address/location where fauna was found			
Reason for fauna being possessed (include details of injuries, diseases, mobility, abnormal behaviour etc.)			
Address of where the fauna is being kept			
Reason for fauna not being suitable for reintegration into the wild (provide detail)			