

VANCOUVER AVIAN RESEARCH CENTRE
RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

TO: Vancouver Avian Research Centre (“**VARC**”), Metro Vancouver, and their respective directors, officers, employees, volunteers, contractors, representatives, agents, successors, administrators and assigns (collectively, the “**Releasees**”):

In consideration of permitting me to participate in VARC activities, including its bird monitoring and banding programs, public outreach and education activities and granting access to and use of the locations and facilities at which the such activities take place (collectively, the “**Activities**”), I do hereby for myself and my respective heirs, legal personal representatives, successors and assigns release the Releasees from all liability for injury or damage of any nature, and from all claims, actions, causes of action, suits, demands and damages of every nature and kind whatsoever, at law or in equity (collectively, “**Claims**”) arising out of my participation in the Activities.

This release shall include but not be limited to all Claims caused or contributed to by the negligence or other fault of any Releasee or of any person or entity for whose negligence or other act or omission any Releasee is responsible or liable.

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to the attached Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Risks.

I confirm that I understand and agree that VARC is a party to and beneficiary of this Release on its own behalf and is also authorized to accept this Release as agent for and on behalf of the other Releasees, who shall also be parties to and beneficiaries of this Release.

I confirm that I have read and understood this Release, have been given the opportunity to obtain independent professional advice about its terms, and agree to its terms on behalf of myself and my respective heirs, legal personal representatives, successors and assigns.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Print Name

Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and ACCEPTANCE of RISKS

Working with birds and being in the field presents risks which all volunteers should be aware of and know how to avoid. The purpose of this information is to ensure that volunteers are aware of the risks associated with the Activities, can freely and knowingly choose whether to assume such risks by participating in the Activities, and can take steps to mitigate such risks.

1. Responsibility to be Informed and take Precautions

It is your responsibility to ensure you understand the information provided and that you understand the risks when participating in the Activities. In addition to understanding and accepting this acknowledgement and acceptance of risks, you agree to do the following:

- a) You must read and understand the VARC Protocol, Banders' Code of Ethics and Volunteer Levels Assessment before participating in the Activities;
- b) You must seek appropriate clarification and direction from a senior member of the VARC staff if you do not understand any portion of the VARC Protocol, Banders' Code of Ethics and Volunteer Levels Assessment before participating in the Activities.
- c) You should consult medically trained personnel for further medical information and advice about the risks of working with or near wildlife, and you agree that you have been provided with the opportunity to undertake such consultations before participating in the Activities.
- d) You must be familiar with the rating systems used by VARC to determine which tasks you are capable of performing and must be aware of your rating for each task at any time. You must never perform a task unsupervised for which you do not have the appropriate rating. This information is contained in the VARC Volunteer Levels Assessment document.

Furthermore, you are responsible to take all reasonable measures to reduce risks to your health and person. These measures include, but are not limited to the following:

- e) Careful washing of hands after handling birds and keeping human food away from bird and animal areas;
- f) Seeking immediate medical attention in the event of any illness or injury. Always inform your doctor that you are in close contact with wild birds and animals;
- g) Seeking appropriate clarification and direction from a senior member of the VARC staff before doing any work with birds and animals when participating in the Activities;
- h) Wearing appropriate clothing, footwear and safety apparatus at any and all times when participating in the Activities;

2. Acknowledgement of Risks

Working for VARC may involve a variety of tasks, such as

- Open and closing of nets
- Extracting birds from nets
- Handling, banding and processing of birds
- Banding data recording

- Maintenance of the station through net lane and trail clearing, grass mowing and toilet cleaning/burning
- Monitoring and cleaning bird nest boxes and feeders
- Construction tasks (e.g. repairs and maintenance of banding facilities and nets/traps
- There are risks involved in these tasks, both from working in an outdoor environment as well as working with wildlife. When working for VARC, you acknowledge and accept these risks, which include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Some diseases are common to both birds and humans and if transferred to humans pose hazards to human health. Birds can carry some human diseases although the animals appear completely healthy.
 - Parasites such as fleas, mites and ticks may transfer from birds to humans and may cause or carry diseases.
 - Individuals who have increased vulnerability due to personal health issues should inform their physicians that they are considering volunteering at VARC. Some of the conditions or circumstances that may lead to a compromised immune system include, but are not limited to HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, chemotherapy for cancer, taking immunosuppressive medications (for arthritis, asthma, etc.), being a recipient of an organ, bone marrow or tissue transplant, being geriatric, or recently experiencing extreme stress or trauma.
 - Some people may be allergic to feathers, bird excrement or food products (such as fish or peanuts), plants or other animals found at any of the facilities where the Activities are conducted.
 - Birds' beaks, claws and other hard, sharp or dangerous body parts may cause injuries such as scratches and punctures. Infections may result from injuries, particularly if wounds are not immediately cleaned and dressed.

3. Acknowledgements

By signing VARC's Release and Waiver of Liability and by participating in the Activities, you acknowledge that:

- You fully understand the nature and extent of the risks to your health and person that you face when participating in the Activities or accessing/using the Facilities;
- You accept such risks, will take all reasonable measures to reduce such risks, and are entering into this agreement voluntarily;
- You accept responsibility for your own safety when participating in the Activities or accessing/using the Facilities;
- You will not volunteer for any task for which you are not physically able and will take the necessary precautions to ensure your own safety; and
- You understand that you have the option of NOT participating in the Activities or attending the Facilities, and that you are making an informed choice to do so with prior knowledge of the risks.