**Birds Husbandry and Care**

Last Reviewed: March 13, 2024

**I.  Purpose**

This standard operating procedure outlines the animal care requirements associated with the daily husbandry of captive birds to ensure consistent and uniform care. This procedure applies to all personnel involved in the care of captive birds housed at the Fort Missoula Field Research Station’s (FMFRS) outdoor or indoor aviaries.

**II. Policy**

It is a LAR policy to meet or exceed all federal, state, and local regulations and guidelines and to comply with all institutional policies and procedures as they apply to the use of animals in research. LAR personnel or investigators involved in husbandry and care must pass online animal training modules and attend applicable training in animal care and use, occupational health and safety, and equipment operation prior to performing activities outlined in this SOP. Animal housing rooms should be entered using appropriate personal protective gear for the species and disease or hazard containment level.

**III. Husbandry and Care Procedures**

Due to the widely varying requirements for diet, enrichment, housing, and prevention of stress each species-specific needs will be addressed in the investigator’s Animal Use Protocol (AUP). Captive living conditions should be appropriate for each species of bird and should contribute both to health and comfort.

1. Check for any special feeding or watering instructions listed on the bird care sheet posted outside each indoor aviary or on the west wall near the exit to the outdoor aviaries
2. Observe the birds for signs of disease, illness or injury
3. Check to see if the birds have eaten and are drinking water
4. Note any changes in urine or feces
5. Report any problems to the Attending Veterinarian

**IV. Daily Routine for Indoor Aviaries**

1. Observe animals for signs of disease or illness as above
2. Rinse and refill all water dishes or bottles daily
3. If water is in bottles, check to ensure the lixits are free of debris and the water flows freely before replacing on the bottles
4. Feed will be appropriate for the species housed as outlined in the approved AUP
5. Food will be fed ad libitum unless a different feeding regimen is specified in the approved AUP
6. The cleaning regimen for bird caging or indoor flight room will be specified in the  
   approved AUP
7. Sweep and mop the floor with Peroxigard
8. Empty the trash daily to ensure no seed refuse remains to attract rodents
9. Replenish bedding (if present) as needed
10. Fill out the daily checklist sheet, census sheet, and an initial the appropriate boxes on the daily log (**if you do not initial the daily checklist, it will be assumed the work was not performed**)
11. Enrichment will be provided and appropriate for the species being housed

**V.  Daily Routine for Outdoor Aviaries**

1. Observe animals for signs of disease or illness
2. Rinse and refill all water dishes or bottles daily
3. If water is in bottles, check to ensure the lixits are free of debris and the water flows freely before replacing on the bottles
4. Feed will be appropriate for the species housed as outlined in the approved AUP
5. Food will be fed ad libitum unless a different feeding regimen is specified in the approved AUP
6. The cleaning regimen for the outdoor aviary will be specified in the approved AUP but in general should include:
   1. Remove all excess seed or food items from the ground
   2. Rake the aviary as needed to prevent the accumulation of excess fecal matter
7. Fill out checklist sheet, census sheet, and initial the daily checklist (**if you do not initial** **the daily checklist, it will be assumed the work was not performed**)
8. Enrichment will be provided and appropriate for the species being housed (perches, shrubbery or grasses for hiding, etc.)

**VI. Weekend Routine**

Follow the daily routine with the exception of mopping the floor

**VII. Indoor Aviary ASC**

Indoor aviary All Surface Cleaning (ASC) schedules shall be addressed in the approved AUP if the study is of long duration and will accommodate for the species being housed to prevent stress.

ASC should include the following

1. Wash walls, feed bin, sink, counters, light diffusers, floor, door, and threshold with disinfectant (let stand 10 minutes).
2. Rinse with clean water
3. Dry with a paper towel if necessary
4. Initial ASC log