

SWAN Student Workshop 2007: Wildlife Permitting

Introductions

SWAN Student Advisory Committee

- Hayley Gillespie (chair), University of Texas At Austin (hayleygillespie@mail.utexas.edu)
- Jacqueline Paritte, University of Oklahoma (jparitte@ou.edu)
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- Kendra Phelps, Sternberg Museum of Natural History, Fort Hayes State University (klphelps@fhsu.org)
- Noe de la Sancha, Texas Tech University (delasancha@msn.com)

Guest Speakers

- Dr. Cornelio Sánchez Hernández, Instituto de Biología UNAM, Departamento de Zoología, Laboratorio de Mastozoología (cornelio@servidor.unam.mx)
- Dr. Mike Kennedy, University of Memphis Ecological Research Center, wildlife biology and mammology (mlkennedy@memphis.edu)
- Dr. Gary Schnell, Curator of Birds & Professor of Zoology, Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, University of Oklahoma (gschnell@ou.edu)

Student Business

- Student Membership
- Student Travel Awards/Student Naturalist Fund
 - rules for student awards & abstract submission
- Student Website/Listserv/Social Network Site

I. Choose your study animal

A. What kind of question are you asking? Will it be a lab study or field study?

1. Lab – something easy to keep in captivity that is conducive to the lab study you seek to do (flies, mice, rats, fish; a common model system for your question)

a) Does someone at your institution already work with these that could let you use their lab or show you what to do?

2. Field – something common, unless you're interested in the fact that it's a rare/threatened/endangered species

a) Do you know the system – is it easily accessible/do you have funding if it is not easily accessible

II. IACUC approval – Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

A. Every university that has any sort of animal research program (even involving the interview of human subjects) has an IACUC with their own policies and procedures. Go to the IACUC office on campus and make friends, learn the rules and get the forms.

1. Usually applies if you're using a "vertebrate" – check with your institution to see if your animal is under their jurisdiction.
2. An IACUC meets periodically (monthly or quarterly), so plan ahead for a one to two month turnaround on project approval.
3. Proposals must include exact experimental protocol, husbandry methods, tranquilizing or anesthesia methods, euthanasia (if necessary) methods, disposal or transfer of specimen methods. Get to know the literature on common methods before you start writing.

III. Common Species

A. Usually state permits or hunting/fishing licenses are required to gather even common species from the wild, depending on the animal or plant (usually applies to vertebrate animals, sometimes plants)

B. CALL your state agency first (links below) – find out who's in charge, ask what kinds of permits (if any) are needed to collect or manipulate your species in the field.

1. Fishing and Hunting licenses are often sold simply at sporting goods stores.
2. Go to the website – often state agencies (like parks & wildlife) will have permit application forms on their website. Check to see if you qualify for any reduction in or waiver of application or processing fees as a member of an academic institution.

C. Your common species lives in federally protected habitat, but it's not endangered itself

1. You must get an incidental take permit from FWS in order to enter the habitat and collect your specimens. Often, this depends on how destructive your sampling methods are – so make sure to talk to your local FWS person about this before applying to make sure you need it. If there's anywhere else you can get your specimens, get them there and avoid this permit.

D. Your common species lives on a national wildlife refuge, state park, or other publicly managed land OR you're focusing on an ecosystem itself.

1. Speak to the park/land manager(s) immediately about your project and whether any permits or written permissions are needed in order to manipulate field environments.

IV. Threatened/Endangered Species (in US only): USFWS & NMFS

A. Make sure you are up for the time commitment; this can be a 1+ year process in some cases. There is a supposed set of protocols that dictate endangered species permitting – but often it comes down to who you know, and whether or not they trust you (believe it or not, there is a lot of "ownership" and "possession" felt for these species in some agencies, and you may have to get around this by being around a while and showing you're a dedicated student rather than a flaky citizen).

1. First, see the questionnaire on the USFWS website; it's a helpful start <http://www.fws.gov/permits/instructions/ObtainPermit.shtml>
2. CALL the closest USFWS ecological field services office and ask who oversees your species. It's good to make friends with this person – they can offer you advice on who to talk to and what permits to acquire. This may include FWS, state parks offices and local governmental offices, depending on who is responsible for the species.

a) Ask what permit(s) you need and what the application procedure is for all three levels of government (Federal, State and Local levels). You may have to talk to several people to make sure you cover all your bases.

b) Get the forms and applications (usually on the FWS website, or can be sent to you by the personnel you've contacted).

c) Send in the forms as soon as you can (they can be in review for several months). Don't wait until you absolutely need the permit – do it early!

d) Call and gently inquire about the status of your permit after about a month – do this monthly until you get some answers. DON'T be pushy or rude – this is a highly bureaucratic process and you need HELP, not ENEMIES! Things can move slowly, so be patient and realize that the offices can get slammed with permits to process.

3. Transport of endangered species across STATE lines

a) You need an interstate commerce permit from USFWS.

V. Permitting in Mexico: (Dr. Cornelio Sanchez Hernandez)

VI. International Transport of Specimens or CITES protected species:

A. *CITES – Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species.* This international agency consists of many countries who have signed a treaty to introduce wildlife-protecting legislation (the US form of this legislation is the Endangered Species Act). CITES controls trade and use of endangered species across the globe. They mainly do import/export permitting, since their main focus is on controlling illegal trade of endangered species between countries.

B. *APHIS – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.* This agency is operated by US Department of Agriculture and focuses on keeping control of mainly agricultural diseases, pests and invasive species. If you are planning to import biological material into the US, you will probably need a permit from APHIS and perhaps the CDC (Center for Disease Control) depending on what it is.

USEFUL LINKS

Start Here: USFWS How to Obtain a Permit Questionnaire
<http://www.fws.gov/permits/instructions/ObtainPermit.shtml>

Responsible Laboratory Animal Care & Animal Laws:

- IACUC: <http://www.iacuc.org/>
- US. Animal Laws: <http://www.nabr.org/AnimalLaw/index.htm>

State Permitting:

- US State Wildlife agency links: <http://www.fws.gov/offices/statelinks.html>
- Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (represents all North American agencies): <http://www.fishwildlife.org/>

US Federal Permitting:

- United States Fish & Wildlife Service: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/overview/overview.shtml>
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), (for Endangered Species or Marine Mammal Protection Acts, they have a nice pre-application guide to see if you need a permit): <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/>
- US Geological Survey Bird Banding Permits: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/default.htm>
- Migratory Bird Permits: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/mbpermits/birdbasics.html>

International Permitting:

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) (you can find lists of management authorities in all participating countries here, as well as import/export information): <http://www.cite.org>
- Canadian Wildlife Service: http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/index_e.cfm
- Environment Canada: <http://www.ec.gc.ca>
- Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT): <http://www.semarnat.gob.mx/>
- Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management: <http://www.trilat.org> (Environment Canada/Canadian Wildlife Service, USFWS & SEMARNAT)

Import/Export Permitting:

- USFWS Law Enforcement Office (port permits, CITES and import/export licenses): http://www.fws.gov/le/ImpExp/Regional_Permit_Offices.htm
- USFWS Import/Export Information: <http://www.fws.gov/permits/ImportExport/ImportExport.shtml>
- USFWS International Affairs: <http://www.fws.gov/international/permits/location.htm>
- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS): <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>
- US Customs & Border Control (agricultural inspection/pests): http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/import/commercial_enforcement/agric_quar_insp/agri_ins_overview.xml
- US Center for Disease Control (import of pets or biological material): <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm>

Special Information on Ornithology (from Dr. Gary Schnell):

- Ornithological Council: www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET
Ellen Paul (ellen.paul@verizon.net) has done a tremendous job of researching permits and requirements. The BIRDNET site has documents on permits that are more comprehensive than I have found any other place. Permitting for birds is more complex than for other organisms, at least in part because of long-standing international agreements concerning migratory birds. However, many of the issues facing ornithologists are similar to those that need to be addressed by others. We are fortunate in ornithology to have a Council and particularly an Executive Director who have spent countless hours trying to understand the labyrinth of permit issues. The BIRDNET site is a good one to list for everyone. They have a list serve (PERMIT-L@SI-LISTSERV.SI.EDU) that one can get on (instructions are on the website).
Also, if one is working with birds and collecting birds, one might be interested in joining the list serve **AVECOL-L**. It is AVECOL-L@LISTSERV.LSU.EDU and is administered by Van Remsen (najames@lsu.edu), the curator of birds at the museum at Louisiana State University. They are focused on bird collections, but often have items on permits.