

# What to do if you find an injured raptor in Iowa:

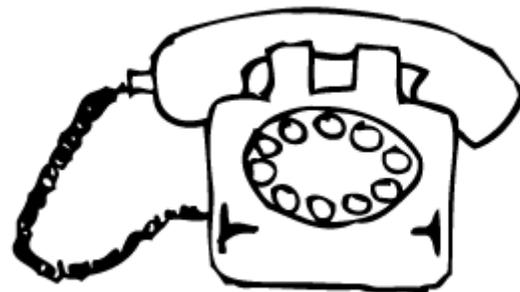
(Information adapted from the University of Minnesota [Raptor Center](#))

## Tips for handling injured raptors

1. Please do not attempt to rehabilitate a raptor on your own. Always contact a licensed professional.

### Who do I call?

Pick the closest facility to you and call – remember that most facilities are staffed by volunteers. If someone does not answer the phone, please leave your name and phone number and any details you may have about the bird. The facility may direct you to a licensed individual rehabilitator nearer you.



SW, WC, and Des Moines Area

SOAR - Saving Our Avian Resources - 712-830-6116

NW Iowa / Spirit Lake Area

Frank's Wildlife - 712-832-9509

Black Hawk County and surrounding area

Black Hawk Wildlife Rehabilitation Project - 319-277-6511

EC, SE Iowa and also NW Illinois and NE Missouri

The RARE Group - 319-248-9770, or send email to [help@theraregroup.org](mailto:help@theraregroup.org)

2. If you must handle or move a bird, first protect yourself by wearing heavy gloves and safety glasses and then cover the bird with a blanket or towel to reduce its visual stimulation. Then, gently fold the bird's wings into its body with your two gloved hands. Gently but firmly lift the bird into a transport container. Remember, even a seriously injured raptor is potentially dangerous. Wild birds do not understand that you are trying to help and will defend themselves. They are quite unpredictable, and you should be especially aware of their sharp beak and talons.



The best way to transport a raptor is in a plastic dog or cat kennel or in a sturdy cardboard box with the top closed. Avoid bird or wire cages, as these can cause feather and soft tissue damage. The carrier should have plenty of ventilation holes and should only be slightly larger than the size of the bird. The less room an injured bird has to move around, the less likely it is to cause more injury. However, on the flip side, if a container is too small, a bird can sustain extensive wing and feather damage.



3. **Never** feed an injured raptor unless you have been instructed to do so by a licensed rehabilitator. The dietary needs of raptors are more delicately balanced than people realize. Even the juiciest steak imaginable will not provide a raptor with what it needs. Also, most injured birds are suffering from dehydration, and attempting to feed them or give them water may worsen their condition. If a bird has not eaten for a while, its digestive system shuts down and it cannot handle any food. Rehabilitators give these patients a special fluid therapy for a day or two to jump-start their systems before any type of food is provided.



4. Handle an injured raptor as little as possible. Stress resulting from human contact can reduce a bird's chance of recovery.
5. Until the bird can be transferred, provide it with a dark, quiet, calm, warm environment. Darkness has a calming effect on birds. Extra care should be taken to keep the bird away from children and pets.
6. Do not keep a raptor any longer than is necessary to get it to a raptor rehabilitator or veterinary professional.