

1b.1 Guidelines – Avian Restraint

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1. Purpose

These guidelines identify the circumstances and methods which are currently considered for flight restraint, including pinioning, in birds for Zoo and Aquarium Association members. Recognising the increasing industry debate on the value of pinioning and other procedures to achieve permanent flight restraint in birds the following has been developed in order to provide Zoo and Aquarium Association organisations with guidelines on this issue.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the following policies, procedures and guidelines of the Association:

- (a) Code of Practice

2. Definitions

Feather Clipping – A procedure resulting in temporary (until next moult) flight control involving cutting of the flight (primary) feathers of one wing.

Flight Control – Methods use to prevent flight in birds, typically employed so that birds may be displayed in open enclosures.

Patagiectomy - A surgical procedure that is the removal of a wedge resection of the propatagium on one wing leaving the bird fully feathered but flight impaired.

Pinioning - A surgical procedure performed on a bird's wing to render the bird permanently incapable of flight. The operation typically involves amputation of that part of the wingtip from which the flight (primary) feathers grow.

Tendonectomy - A surgical procedure that involves the removal of the extensor carpi radialis tendon on one wing leaving the bird fully feathered but flight impaired.

3. Guideline statement

It is the intent that Zoo and Aquarium Association member organisations will evolve toward the deletion of the practice of pinioning in birds through a commitment to replacing open exhibits with facilities that do not require pinioning as a management practice and no development of new facilities that also require pinioning to facilitate stocking those exhibits as part of an institution's strategic planning process. Zoo and Aquarium Association members are to note that all Federal and State legislation must be observed as a prerequisite to these guidelines.

Zoo and Aquarium Association member institutions shall not specifically engage non-Zoo and Aquarium Association institutions or individuals to pinion specimens outside of these guidelines for the purposes of acquisition. It is acknowledged that some individuals have been pinioned historically and the acquisition of such specimens is considered appropriate.

4. Species

Several species have formally been analysed by the combined Avian TAG processes and the agreement to avoid pinioning of any of the birds in the Order Ciconiiformes, Pelicaniformes or Gruiformes currently established. This has been established on the basis of the bird's normal behaviour patterns and ability to successfully reproduce. It is proposed to limit pinioning only to those species as listed below and that as at the date of endorsement of this document all other species will not be pinioned.

Species endorsed for pinioning within the scope of this Zoo and Aquarium Association Guideline.

Order: Anseriformes (Ducks, Geese, Swans)

5. Preferred method for flight control

5.1 Pinioning

Pinioning is the only form of permanent flight restraint to be endorsed by Zoo and Aquarium Association.

Other procedures, including tendonectomy and patagiectomy are not endorsed by Zoo and Aquarium Association due to the significant failure rates and invasive nature of surgery associated with these procedures.

5.2 Feather-clipping

Feather-clipping may be used as a method to render birds temporarily incapable of flight, consistent with procedures described in these guidelines.

6. Procedure

6.1 Pinioning

The following procedure shall be applied to pinioning of Anseriformes at Zoo and Aquarium Association member institutions.

Pinioning of bird species within the Order Anseriformes should only occur:

- (a) when all other avenues for alternative methods of containment have been investigated; or,
- (b) to prevent accidental escape of waterfowl targeted to be free ranging in zoo grounds or targeted to be housed in open enclosures.

The procedure should be conducted by a veterinarian experienced in pinioning procedures.

For approved species, only birds under three days of age should be pinioned using the wingtip amputation method without anaesthesia which typically involves amputation of the wingtip which the flight (primary) feathers grow, by severing the third and fourth metacarpal bones, as close to the carpus as possible, but not including the alular digit. At this age, their wingtips are relatively undeveloped, the procedure is quick and haemorrhaging minimal.

Surgical flight restraint of adult birds is not to be undertaken. It is noted that as a result of injury/trauma where there is no alternative but to remove a portion of the wing, a surgical procedure resulting in pinioning may be required. The physiological and psychological consequences of such a procedure on the individual may mean that euthanasia is a more appropriate outcome.

6.2 Feather clipping

- (a) Feather clipping involves the cutting of the flight (primary) feathers of one wing, rendering the bird temporarily incapable of flight until the feathers are replaced at the next moult.
- (b) Depending on the species this procedure is usually only required once a year, as the adults of most bird species only moult once annually.
- (c) Juveniles may go through a series of moults during early development and may require feather clipping after each moult to ensure that flight is not possible.
- (d) Feather clipping is a successful technique as long as keeping staff observe the feather re growth and take action re-clip if the re growth could sustain flight.
- (e) Each feather clipping event must be recorded to enable staff to know which individuals have been clipped and when it is likely to need re-clipping.

- (f) Prior to clipping all feathers must be checked for development of emerging blood feathers and these left intact until fully formed.
- (g) As with pinioning, the physiological and psychological consequences of feather-clipping on birds should be considered.

7. Managing pinioned/flight inhibited specimens

Enclosures used to house birds that have been pinioned or had their feathers clipped must provide predator control through the use of night shelters, security fencing, baiting programs, keeper supervision or other effective means.

8. Approval

These guidelines were approved by the Board of the Association on 23/07/2010. Endorsed by the Accreditation and Animal Welfare Committee and the ASMP committee.

Revision Record

Approved / Amended/ Rescinded / Reviewed	Date	Board / Executive Director	Description
