

LIVING COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Description of the Living Collection

The Living Collection has intrinsic value to the study and interpretation of science, which supports MOSH's mission and is held and curated on a permanent basis. The Living Collection consists of more than 350 live zoological specimens which are cared for and exhibited on a permanent basis. The Living Collection is made up primarily of specimens that are indigenous to Northeast Florida. Also, the collection includes several invasive and non-native species for comparative purposes. The collection includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. The Museum works closely with local wildlife enforcement, zoos and rehabilitation centers.

Acquisition Policy

The Museum seeks acquisitions to strengthen and broaden its existing Living Collection through gift, purchase, exchange, field find and catch and release. All living specimens accepted into the Living Collection become the Museum's exclusive property. Living specimens are accepted into the collection using the following criteria:

- Ownership of the specimen will not conflict with any applicable local, state or federal laws.
- There should be a clear relationship between the specimen and the overall mission of the Museum.
- The specimen will not be an unnecessary duplicate of specimens already in the collection.
- The specimen will be of such size and condition that the Museum can provide it with proper care without undue expense or drain of the Museum's resources.

The Curator will accession specimens into the Living Collection in accordance with the following procedures:

- Approval from the Executive Director will be sought for specimens that require a large or unusual expense for care.
- A Record of Accession (Appendix B) will be created.
- A Deed of Gift form (Appendix A) will accompany the accession record for any specimens acquired through gift or exchange.
- A Bill of Sale will accompany the accession record for specimens acquired through purchase.
- All Living Collection accession records will be stored in the registration cabinet located in the History Collection storage room on the third floor of the Museum and filed in order of accession number.
- A digital record will be created in the Collection database.

Acquisition through Reproduction Policy

Due to the nature of this collection, occasionally reproduction will occur. As it is outside of the Museum's mission, breeding within the Living Collection will be prevented whenever possible. When applicable, a program of spaying or neutering will be followed for mammals. When feasible, reptiles, amphibians, and birds will be housed separately by sex during breeding season. If eggs are laid, the Florida Naturalist Center staff will remove them as quickly as possible.

If, despite the efforts of the Naturalist Center staff, babies are produced, the Naturalist Center Manager will make a recommendation to the Curator to either accession the animal or transfer it to a qualified institution or individual. Only those with appropriate permitting will be considered when transferring specimens.

Deaccession Policy

In the event of the death of a living specimen, the Curator must adhere to the following procedures:

- A Living Collection Report of Injury or Death Form (Appendix M) will be created by the Naturalist Center Manager and signed by the Naturalist Center Manager, the Curator and the Executive Director. The record will be filed with the corresponding accession record in the registration cabinet.
- The specimen will be permanently disposed of in one of the following ways. Specimens that are euthanized at the veterinarian's office will be disposed of through their office. If a specimen expires at the Museum, it will be securely bagged and marked for disposal. Specimens for disposal will be stored in the non-living collection room freezer. Once a year the deceased specimens will be collected and destroyed by a professional hazardous materials contractor.
- The digital accession record in the Collection database will be updated with deaccession information.

In the event of a lost or stolen living specimen, a Deaccession Record (Appendix C) will be completed. The record will be filed with the corresponding accession record in the registration cabinet and the digital accession record will be updated. In addition, a Damage, Recovery and Salvage Report (Appendix N) will be created by the Naturalist Center Manager. The record will be filed with the corresponding accession record. A copy of the report will be filed with the Director of Finance and Administration.

In rare cases, a living specimen that has not been lost or has not expired may be deaccessioned from the Living collection. This action may only be carried out if the specimen falls outside of the Museum's mission, care of the specimen has created an

undue drain on the Museum's resources, or the needs of the specimen can no longer be met. In this case a Deaccession Record (Appendix C) will be completed and signed by the Curator and Executive Director. The record will be filed with the corresponding accession record in the registration cabinet and the digital accession record will be updated. The specimen may be transferred to an organization or individual possessing the appropriate permits at the discretion of the Curator.

Loan Policy

Incoming Loans

Only one incoming loan is currently authorized for the Living Collection. The loan is documented by the Curator with an Incoming Loan Agreement (Appendix D).

Outgoing Loans

Specimens from the Living Collection will not be loaned under any circumstances.

Using the Living Collection for Educational Outreach

Specimens from the Living Collection are used periodically for educational outreaches to schools and other organizations in an effort to raise awareness about Florida wildlife. Outreaches will be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Specimens will be chosen for use in outreaches at the discretion of the Naturalist.
- Outreaches will neither interrupt feeding and care schedules nor compromise the health of the specimen in any way.
- Only trained staff and volunteers will be authorized to transport the specimens to and from the outreach location.
- Specimens will remain under the close supervision of a trained staff member or volunteer at all times.
- Permits issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will accompany the staff member or volunteer while away from the Museum.

Inventory Procedures

Developing and maintaining an accurate inventory of the Living Collection is the responsibility of the Naturalist and Registrar. Each specimen- or groups of specimens- in the collection is given a unique catalog number and storage location.

The Naturalist and his/her staff will conduct an inventory of the Living Collection on a daily basis as part of the feeding and care schedule. Status, storage location and care records will be updated accordingly as changes occur.

Management of Living Collection Records

Professional management of the Living Collection relies heavily upon the development and maintenance of records. The Naturalist Manager and Registrar are responsible for obtaining, creating and maintaining up-to-date records consisting of, but not limited to, the following: documents recording the legal status of specimens (bill of sale, deed of gift, etc.); local, state and federal permits; detailed care and veterinary records; documents regarding deaccession; and any other records of a living specimen's use and movement within the building.

Living Collection paper records will be stored in a registration cabinet. Digital collection records will be stored in the Collection database. Digital records will be backed up nightly and stored on the Museum's server.

Permit Requirements

The Museum strictly adheres to all permit requirements set forth by the United States Federal Government and the State of Florida for wildlife possession, exhibition and transport. It is the responsibility of the Naturalist Manager to obtain, manage and maintain proper permitting for specimens in the Living Collection. Past and current permits will be stored in the Naturalist Manager's office on the first floor. A digital copy of all permits will be stored on the Museum's servers.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Museum has received a MBTA exemption letter from the Federal government. The letter is stored in the Naturalist Manager's office on the first floor. A digital copy of the letter is stored on the Museum's server. The Museum must still receive permission for possession of migratory birds from the state of Florida under the Protected/Listed Species permit (formerly called Wildlife Possession/Institutional Permit).

Protected/Listed Species Permits

The Museum is required to have an up-to-date permit for migratory birds, endangered species, threatened species and species of concern.

Class I & II Wildlife Permit

The Museum is required to have an up-to date permit for the exhibition of Class II wildlife.

Class III Wildlife Permit

The Museum is required to have an up-to-date permit for the exhibition of Class III Wildlife including amphibians, birds and Class III reptiles.

USDA Animal Exhibitor License

The Museum is required to have an up-to-date license for the exhibition of mammals.

Living Collection Care

Immediate care of the specimens in the Living Collection is the responsibility of the Naturalist Manager and other trained staff. The Procedure Manual is updated by the staff as needed in accordance with best practices.

Living Collection Access

Only the Curator, Naturalist Manager and trained staff and volunteers are authorized to feed, care for and move specimens in the Living Collection. However, untrained staff and public visitors will be allowed to handle and touch specimens under the close supervision of a trained staff member or volunteer at the Naturalist Manager's discretion.