

IACUC POLICY ON PROTOCOLS FOR THE USE OF VERTEBRATES AT OR IN ASSOCIATION WITH UVA FIELD STATIONS

CONTENTS

1. *Essential points*
2. *Introduction*
3. *Regulatory oversight*
4. *Scope of activities overseen by UVA IACUC*
5. *IACUC policy on non-UVA protocols for vertebrate work at UVA field stations*
6. *IACUC policy on UVA protocols for vertebrate work at or in association with UVA field stations*
7. *Training responsibilities and risk acknowledgments*
8. *Useful references*

1. ESSENTIAL POINTS

- UVA maintains three field stations: Blandy Experimental Farm; Anheuser-Busch Coastal Research Center; and Mountain Lake Biological Station
- Individuals with an approved UVA protocol can conduct research involving live vertebrates at or in association with a UVA field station.
- Individuals with a non-UVA protocol approved by their home institution are eligible to conduct research involving live vertebrates on the premises of UVA field stations, with UVA IACUC permission pursuant to review of their protocol.
- Any and all instruction (teaching, outreach, etc.) involving live vertebrates at UVA field stations must be done through a UVA instructional protocol on which a field station director or associate director is the PI.

2. INTRODUCTION

The University of Virginia (UVA) maintains three field stations in Virginia: Blandy Experimental Farm; Anheuser-Busch Coastal Research Center; and Mountain Lake Biological Station. Vertebrate animals may be used at and in association with UVA field stations in both research and teaching. UVA faculty must submit animal use protocols to the UVA IACUC for review and approval. Non-UVA faculty must submit an approved IACUC animal use protocol from their home institution for review by the UVA IACUC before work at the UVA field stations can proceed. All individuals holding or otherwise named as a responsible party on an IACUC protocol, whether UVA or non-UVA protocol, operate under the immediate authority of the Field Station Director, or their designee, when conducting research, teaching, or receiving training in association with the University of Virginia field stations.

Field station animals, when transported and then housed in captivity on central UVA grounds are addressed in other UVA IACUC policies. UVA IACUC oversight extends to any research activity

implemented on UVA grounds to study vertebrate animals that directly or potentially impacts their short or long-term well-being (i.e., increase or decrease in survival or breeding success). Activities in which animals are trapped, handled or otherwise manipulated off central UVA grounds (and not in association with a UVA field station) are not under the purview of the UVA IACUC. Passive observational studies (e.g., bird-watching) are not covered by IACUC oversight.

3. REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Vertebrate animal care and use must adhere to the following regulatory guidelines: [The Animal Welfare Act and Regulations](#), [Public Health Service \(PHS\) Policy](#), [The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), [U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#), and the [2020 American Veterinary Medicine Association Guidelines on Euthanasia](#).

Personnel performing vertebrate research on UVA field station property must comply with UVA's Public Health Service Assurance of Compliance, UVA IACUC Policies, and other local, state, and federal regulations. Researchers and instructors must possess current valid local, state, and federal permits (e.g., collecting, banding, endangered species, interstate transport, CDC biohazard, nuisance wildlife, etc.) as required by applicable laws and regulations. UVA and non-UVA PIs with their own protocols or on a field station field protocol must submit copies of pertinent permits to the UVA IACUC office as well.

4. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES OVERSEEN BY UVA IACUC

UVA research protocols

For UVA protocols in which research on vertebrates involves a UVA field station in any way (including logistics and investigator housing), UVA IACUC oversees all work involving live animals on or off field station premises. This includes the following: (1) Trapping, holding, marking, measuring or otherwise manipulating animals; (2) Collecting tissue or blood samples from animals; (3) Temporarily housing animals; (4) Euthanizing animals; (5) Performing experiments with animals; and (6) Performing surgery on animals. UVA IACUC also oversees activities associated with live animal work that may generate certain concerns beyond its purview, such as pathogens inadvertently brought back to the station in traps, and hazardous chemicals used at, or brought back to, the field station.

Non-UVA research protocols

For non-UVA protocols, UVA IACUC oversight focuses on live animal work done on UVA field station premises, but the Committee reviews protocols from home institutions in their entirety and may extend their oversight to off field station premises as well. This includes oversight of the same activities listed above for UVA protocols.

Instructional protocols

All instructional activities involving vertebrates and associated with UVA field stations are done through instructional protocols in which field station directors or associate directors are PI's.

5. IACUC POLICY ON NON-UVA PROTOCOLS FOR VERTEBRATE WORK AT UVA FIELD STATIONS

Research Protocols

Anyone who intends to conduct research at a UVA field station through a non-UVA protocol must submit an approved IACUC protocol from his or her home institution to the UVA IACUC for review and approval before beginning vertebrate work. The protocol must include the specific UVA field station to be used and a description of the research activities to be conducted while at the station. An approved home-institution protocol submitted by a non-UVA researcher will receive designated member review by the UVA IACUC. Although the home institution may be in a better position to evaluate the research protocol, UVA IACUC requires that the PI's possesses an approved animal protocol from their home institution *and* that the UVA IACUC has the opportunity to read that approved protocol. Any UVA IACUC member may request the protocol be reviewed by the full committee at a regularly convened meeting. The UVA IACUC reserves the right to approve, modify, table, or withhold approval of any non-UVA research protocol involving vertebrate animal work on the premises of a UVA field station. In general, the UVA IACUC will defer to protocol approval by the PI's home institution; however, UVA IACUC reserves the right to render a decision it deems to be in the best interests of the animals, the University, or to maintain UVA's regulatory compliance.

The PI must submit the following documents to the UVA IACUC:

1. A copy of the approved protocol from the home institution
2. A copy of the home institution's IACUC approval letter for the approved protocol
3. A Letter of Endorsement from the appropriate Field Station Director/designee. If appropriate, this endorsement will include consideration of hazards (e.g. biohazardous, radiological, and chemical) and Occupational Health concerns related to non-UVA PI activities, and assurance to the UVA IACUC that the project is both feasible and acceptable.
4. Copies of current and valid federal and state permits, if required
5. If animals are to be housed over 24 hours at a field station facility, submit a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document to the IACUC Office at time of protocol submission. The SOP document provides details regarding important aspects of housing and husbandry, and method of euthanasia. The SOP must be updated if there is a change in housing and husbandry practices, and at a minimum every three years at the time of Third Year Animal Use Protocol Renewal.

The PI can submit the documents directly to the UVA IACUC, or they can be submitted by the UVA Field Station Director or their designee. These documents are typically submitted to the Field Station Director or designee by the PI, approximately 60-90 days prior to the anticipated arrival time at the field station and start-date of the research. Ultimately, all these documents must be received by the UVA IACUC Office at least 30-60 days prior to arrival and initiation of research to ensure adequate time for review and approval.

Instructional Protocols

Courses taught by non-UVA faculty must be done through a UVA IACUC instructional protocol held by a Field Station Director. Any new UVA courses at the field stations using vertebrate animals not currently covered by an instructional protocol will require prior approvals by the relevant Department's Curriculum Committee and subsequently the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences prior to the

associated animal use protocol being considered for approval by the UVA IACUC (for further information see point 8 at URL <http://www.virginia.edu/vpr/iacuc/docs/CreatingNewProtocol2009.pdf> or contact the UVA-IACUC office at 434-924-0405.

The on-line animal use protocol form and directions for completion and submission are available at: <https://researchcompliance.web.virginia.edu/acuc/>.

6. IACUC POLICY ON UVA PROTOCOLS FOR VERTEBRATE WORK AT OR IN ASSOCIATION WITH UVA FIELD STATIONS

Research Protocols

A UVA faculty member who intends to conduct research using vertebrate animals at a UVA field station or in any way use a UVA field station in order to conduct research using vertebrate animals, must submit an animal use protocol to the UVA IACUC on which he or she is named as the PI. Prior to protocol submission, the PI must notify the Field Station Director or designee of his or her intention to conduct research at the field station. Once the UVA IACUC has provided protocol approval, the PI must notify the Field Station Director or designee at least one week prior to arriving at the Field Station of his or her proposed start-date of the research. These notifications are required annually. If a PI intends to go to a Field Station multiple times during the year they must inform the Field Station Director one week in advance of each proposed arrival date. Prior to each visit to a Field Station, it is the responsibility of the PI to make certain that copies of all required documents (e.g., approved IACUC protocol and applicable current and valid permits) are provided to the Field Station Director or their designee.

Instructional Protocols

A UVA faculty member who intends to perform instruction or otherwise teach using vertebrate animals at a UVA field station can either submit his or her own UVA teaching protocol, or can be named in an omnibus instructional protocol if one is held by the Field Station Director or their designee. The PI must ensure that all vertebrate species being studied and all activities involving those species, are thoroughly described in the animal use instructional protocol. After UVA IACUC protocol approval is received, the PI must provide the Field Station Director or their designee at least one week advance notice of the arrival of any instructional protocol participants at the Field Station, and of the proposed start-date of any activities associated with the instructional protocol. The provision of these documents (e.g., approved IACUC protocol and applicable current and valid permits) must be renewed annually, as well as advance notification of intent to use the Field Station. The PI must provide copies of all required paperwork at that time to the Field Station Director, or designee.

Submission Instructions

1. Submit a UVA online research or instructional animal use protocol to the UVA-IACUC Office. The on-line protocol form and directions for completion and submission are available at: <https://researchcompliance.web.virginia.edu/acuc/>. The submitted protocol will undergo UVA IACUC review and if approved will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. Submit copies of valid federal and state permits to the IACUC Office at time of protocol submission.
3. If animals are to be housed over 24 hours at a field station facility, submit a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document for the care and maintenance of the species in captivity to the IACUC Office at time of protocol submission. The SOP document provides details regarding all aspects of housing and animal husbandry, and methods of euthanasia. The SOP must be updated if there is a change in housing and husbandry practices, and at a minimum resubmitted every three years concurrent with the Third Year Animal Use Protocol Renewal.
4. For instructional protocols, the PI must submit a letter of approval from the appropriate Department's Curriculum Committee to the IACUC Office at time of protocol submission. An approval letter must be resubmitted whenever the course aims or methods have been significantly altered, and at a minimum every three years with the Third Year Protocol Renewal.

7. TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES AND RISK ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Training

Researchers and instructors must assure the adequate training and experience of their personnel who will be handling vertebrates, or assess the adequacy of an individual's prior training by direct supervision. For untrained students, researchers and instructors must state that the personnel are students whose participation is for training purposes. Documentation of sufficient animal handling experience and training with each species, and a description of vertebrate animal procedures to be performed, are required for all personnel that are supervising or training others and must be outlined in the appropriate protocol. Trainees must be adequately supervised by experienced personnel listed on the approved protocol. Training requirements will vary depending on the nature of the research or instructional course, and also on the species involved. Instructional training must be described in the approved animal care and use protocol; it may consist of a combination of computerized training modules, class instruction and onsite hands-on techniques training, all at the discretion of the PI and responsible parties. All PIs, supervisors and instructors (i.e., the responsible parties) must be familiar with federal, state and UVA-specific rules, regulations and policies regarding the humane care and use of vertebrate animals. Training of students must include instructing them on the humane and ethical treatment of animals, acceptable methods of euthanasia, and how to report violations of regulations they observe or perceive (i.e., reporting animal welfare concerns). The responsible parties named in a protocol may require additional training not described here (such as that required at another institution), that is also detailed in the training section of the animal use protocol.

A list of all personnel that will be responsible parties named on instructional protocols must be provided to the UVA IACUC. This list of responsible parties handling vertebrate animals must include the procedures each person will perform, and a synopsis of each person's training/experience. Most or all of this information may be included in the protocol. The information for any such responsible parties not given in the protocol must be provided separately, before these personnel engage in any vertebrate-related work.

Risk Acknowledgement; General Liability Waiver

Each person performing research or obtaining instruction as a field station participant (i.e., researchers, instructors, students), whether they are working with vertebrates or not, must complete an online Field Station Risk Acknowledgement Form (also called the Assumption of Risk and Liability) received during the registration process. If the participant is less than 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must complete and submit the application. This document provides information on general risks associated with any activities at the field station. Failure to complete this document will prohibit the participant's ability to finish their on-line Field Station registration. It is the responsibility of the PI, their designee, or the instructor named on an instructional protocol, to ensure that all participants have completed this process prior to their involvement in any vertebrate work.

Disease Risk

Information specific to interaction with vertebrate animals regarding the general risks of acquiring infectious diseases associated with wildlife (zoonoses) may be found at URL: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/10/12/04-0707_article. Disease information specific to wildlife in Virginia can be found at URL <https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/diseases/>. It is the responsibility of the PI or the instructor named on an omnibus instructional protocol, to ensure that all participants have acknowledged they have been informed of this additional vertebrate disease risk prior to their involvement in any vertebrate work. If personnel at the field station have additional questions, they are encouraged to contact their course instructor, the Station Director, or the UVA Attending Veterinarian in the Center for Comparative Medicine for clarification. This will assist in ensuring that they have access to all the information they need to make an informed decision about their own personal risk.

All documentation required by this Section (except course or other minor changes as defined by UVA IACUC policy) must be received by the UVA IACUC at least 60 days prior to initiating research, training or course work to allow sufficient time for processing and approval. Generally, this information from non-UVA PIs is routed by the PIs through the Field Station Director or designee.

8. USEFUL REFERENCES

- [American Society of Mammologists Animal Care and Use Guidelines](#)
- [Ornithological Council Guidelines to the Use of Wild Birds in Research](#)
- [American Fisheries Society, American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists, and American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists Guidelines to the Use of Fishes in Research](#)
- [American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists Guidelines to the Use of Amphibians and Reptiles in Research](#)

Revision History: 03-08-22; 04-09-19; 06-09-15; 07-21-11; 03-18-03