

General Information for Collecting Birdstrike Material

Feather Identification Lab, Smithsonian Institution

COLLECTING REMAINS

Feathers:

Whole Bird: Pluck a variety of feathers (breast, back, wing, tail)

Partial Bird: Collect a variety of feathers with color or pattern

Feathers only: Send all materials

Do not cut feathers from the bird (we need the down at the base)

Do not use any sticky substance (no tape or glue)

Place remains in a re-closeable bag

Allow remains to dry before sealing bag.

Blood / Tissue (“Snarge”):

Place dry snarge in a re-closeable bag

If need, wipe off with alcohol wipe or paper towel sprayed with 70% alcohol

Please do not use water or bleach – it is not compatible with our dna analysis

- Include copy of FAA 5200-7 report
- Include contact information

SHIPPING

Routine / Non-Damaging Cases: *US Postal Service*

Feather Identification Lab
Smithsonian Institution
NHB E600, MRC 116
P.O. Box 37012
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Priority / Damaging Cases: *Overnight Shipping*

Feather Identification Lab
Smithsonian Institution
NHB, E600, MRC 116
10th & Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20560-0116

WEBSITES

Civil Aviation: <http://wildlife-mitigation.tc.faa.gov>
Birdstrike Committee: www.birdstrike.org

Feather Lab Contact Information

202-633-0801
dovec@si.edu
heackerm@si.edu

* Basic safety measures and good hygiene when collecting material is encouraged. Use latex gloves, face mask and eye protection; always thoroughly wash hands after handling remains.

"MAKE-YOUR-OWN" - BIRDSTRIKE COLLECTING KITS

Birdstrike Collecting Kits are cheap to make and easy to assemble. Having pre-made kits available improves birdstrike reporting and encourages the sampling of birdstrike remains. Most folks assemble the contents into individual bags or envelopes and keep a supply in field vehicles or office supply cabinets for quick access. Below is a list of recommended items to include in your birdstrike collecting kits; mix and match as budgets permit:

Re-sealable Plastic Bags

A variety of sizes; Re-sealable bags help contain liquids and keeps odors to a minimum.

Sharpie Markers

Permanent markers are water resistant and used for writing data (date, time, aircraft, etc) directly on the bag of remains.

Alcohol Wipes

Pre-packaged alcohol hand-wipes can be used to wipe "snarge" off aircraft. Alcohol is better than water at preserving DNA, preventing mold growth, and is more sanitary for humans. Alternatively, use a spray bottle with 70% alcohol to spray the area before wiping with paper towels. Do not use bleach wipes, it destroys DNA. .

Miscellaneous Items for Birdstrike Collecting

Kitchen shears - good for cutting feet, wings, bills

Tongue depressors, tweezers, cotton swabs/cotton-tipped applicators

Hand cleaners, or other alcohol based gel hand sanitizers.

FTA® DNA collecting cards: If you send a lot of blood/tissue ("snarge") samples for DNA identification, you may want to look into getting Whatman FTA® DNA cards. The material is sampled with a sterile applicator and placed onto the surface of the card that "fixes" the dna in the sample. For more information on ordering these items contact the Feather Lab.

Note: If you only occasionally send blood/tissue samples - a paper towel with alcohol, or alcohol wipe is still a good option for blood/tissue samples.

(collecting kit cont.)

Extra Safety Items

Latex Gloves

Protective Eyewear

Face masks: If avian flu is a concern, the Center for Disease Control recommends NIOSH rated N95 face masks. (These may be referred to as respirators.) There is a disposable version of these masks by 3M that looks similar to the regular "cup" style face masks.

Reminders

Always encourage proper hygiene & provide personnel easy access to cleaning/hygiene supplies

Do not cut off the fluffy down at the bottom of feathers

Do not use bleach on samples

Be sure personnel are briefed on proper carcass disposal protocols

Stay informed to the status of HPAI H5N1 avian flu virus. The following website has excellent coverage:

The American Ornithologists' Union Ornithological Council

<http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/OC/avianinfluenza.html>

Contact Information

Feather Identificaiton Lab 202-633-0801

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HOW TO COLLECT BIRDSTRIKE EVIDENCE

