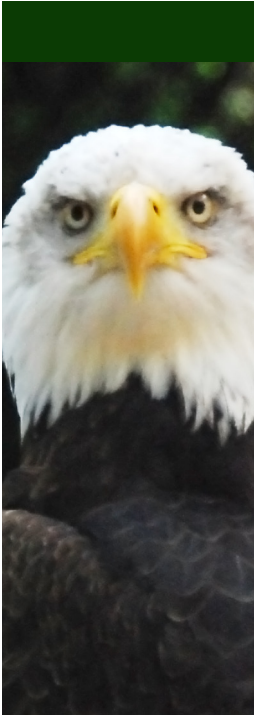


# BIRD ELECTROCUTIONS

## Edmonton: A Shared Community

Birds live in Edmonton with us. Unfortunately, some of our necessities of life are dangerous to our wildlife neighbours. Together as a community we can minimize our impact on wildlife and stop many of their avoidable injuries and deaths. Awareness is the first step.

Educate yourself about bird electrocutions, how to prevent them and what to do if you find an electrocuted bird. WRSE's website and the resources in this pamphlet are a great place to start!



Help conserve our beautiful and helpful neighbours: *Birds!*

**Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton**  
Compassionate Care of Injured and Orphaned Wildlife



**Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton,  
Box 66065, Heritage Postal Outlet,  
Edmonton, AB, T6J 6T4  
Hotline: 780 914 - 4118  
Shelter: 780 433 - 0884  
info@wildlife-edm.ca  
www.wildlife-edm.ca**

Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton

## BIRD ELECTROCUTIONS



Photo Credit: Todd Kemper

Prevent Birds From Getting Electrocuted

**Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Edmonton**  
Compassionate Care of Injured and Orphaned Wildlife



### **How do electrocutions occur?**

An electrocution occurs when a bird simultaneously contacts either two energized components, or one energized and one grounded component on a power pole that is not built to bird-safe standards. Electrocutions usually involve raptors (ie. hawks, owls, eagles, and falcons) because they are large and use power poles to hunt, rest and feed.

### **Are electrocutions common?**

Unfortunately, yes. Electrocutions have been documented all over the world, wherever raptors and power lines co-exist. Estimates of just how common they are is difficult to determine, however, because generally we only find out about them if the power goes out and a carcass is found. It is likely, though, that hundreds or even thousands of electrocutions occur within Alberta each year<sup>1</sup>.

### **What can I do to help prevent raptors from electrocution?**

1. Call your power company. Request that your power company build new poles, and modify older poles, so that they are safe for birds. Many companies have started programs to address electrocutions, but most power poles are not yet bird-safe.
  2. Contact the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC).
- “The AUC ensures that electric facilities are built, operated, and decommissioned in an efficient and environmentally responsible way<sup>2</sup>.”
  - Request that the AUC make it mandatory that all new power poles be built to raptor-safe standards (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee standards<sup>3</sup>).
  - AUC’s Utilities Complaints phone number is 780-427-4903, or contact them via email at [utilitiesconcerns@auc.ab.ca](mailto:utilitiesconcerns@auc.ab.ca)



Photo Credit: Todd Kemper



Photo Credit: Barb Eglinski

### **What should I do if I find an electrocuted bird?**

If you are comfortable collecting the bird, be sure to use gloves and wear safety glasses. Throw a towel over the bird and carefully place the bird in a cardboard box that you have lined with paper towels. Close the box, and put it in a warm, dark, quiet place. Call our hotline at (780) 914-4118 and we will advise you how to get the bird to us for medical attention. If you are uncomfortable collecting the bird, call our hotline for direction. If the bird is already deceased, report it to your local Fish and Wildlife office and seek direction on what to do with the carcass.

### **Resources**

1. Platt, C.M. 2005. Patterns of raptor electrocution mortality on distribution power lines in southeast Alberta. M.Sc. Thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 140pp.
2. <http://www.auc.ab.ca/about-the-auc/who-we-are/Pages/default.aspx>
3. APLIC. 2006. Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: the State of the Art in 2006. Edison Electric Institute, APLIC, and the California Energy Commission. Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, CA.

