

PhD Dissertation
Department of Environmental Science and Policy
College of Science
George Mason University

Candidate: Jessica Roberts

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Title: The Use of Behavior-Based Management in Avian Conservation Translocations

Dissertation Director: Dr. David Luther

Committee: Drs. Elizabeth Freeman, Jennifer Salerno, and Thomas H. White, Jr.

ABSTRACT

Though often necessary before conservation translocation, rearing birds in captivity can lead to animal behavior challenges that decrease their survival in the wild. Through analysis of avian conservation translocation literature, this dissertation examines the impact of behavior-based management, a technique used to ameliorate captive animal maladapted behaviors, on avian post-release survival. Additionally, using giving up density and personality tests during a captive-reared passerine's anti-predator training, this research provides a thorough examination of the behavioral challenges and consequences following this specific behavior-based management technique. The aim of this research is to provide more evidence-based information for improving avian conservation translocation programs.