

Standard Operating Procedures

#AU 0013 Zoonoses (Avian Field Studies)

Materials:

Hand Sanitizer Liquid or Wipes

Risk:

Most avian diseases cannot be contracted by humans. However, there is always a slight risk of transmission when handling wild birds (e.g. salmonella, avian influenza). In addition, field workers should also be aware of the risks of insect transmitted diseases such as Lyme Disease (deer tick) and West-Nile Virus (mosquito). See SOP #AU 0010 (Insect Bites) for more details.

Prevention/Precaution:

After handling birds, clean hands with hand-sanitizer or disinfecting hand wipes while in the field. When you return from the field, wash your hands with soap and water and launder your clothes before wearing them again. Check your body carefully for ticks, especially from May-June when they are most commonly found in Ontario.

Procedure:

Medical attention should be sought for any illness that cannot be easily explained or is persistent (e.g. extreme and persistent fatigue). Medical professionals should then be made aware that the researcher spends time regularly in the field and also handles birds so that non-traditional diagnoses can be considered.

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