



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.

1. Re-sealable plastic (poly) bags

A variety of sizes for various amounts of debris. Re-sealable bags help keep odors to a minimum.

2. Sharpie Markers

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

3. 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. Ideally, use ethanol (also called ethyl alcohol) 70% or higher concentration if available. Alcohol content should be a minimum of 40% or greater. 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 but **DO NOT CUT FEATHERS!**)
- Tongue depressors, tweezers, cotton swabs/cotton-tipped applicators
- Hand cleaners, or other alcohol based gel hand sanitizers. **DO NOT USE BLEACH ON BIRDSTRIKE SAMPLES.**

Extra Safety Items

- Latex Gloves
- Protective Eyewear
- Face Masks: Regular surgical-type hygiene 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/hand washing supplies
- Be sure personnel are briefed on proper carcass disposal protocols.
- Stay informed to the status of the HPAI H5N1 avian flu virus The following websites have excellent coverage:

<http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/facts.htm>

For more information contact:
The Feather Identification Lab
Smithsonian Institution
MRC 116, E-600,
PO Box 37012
Washington, DC 20013-7012
(202) 633-0801

dovec@si.edu
whattonj@si.edu

OR

CNIC BASH Program Contacts:

James E. (Julio) Higgins, CDR (Ret), PMP, CNIC N32 Air Operations; BASH and NATOPS
Program Director; (904)-542-6969; james.higgins2@navy.mil

Paul Block, Ecologist, CNIC/NAVFAC BASH Natural Resource Program Manager; (757)322-
8499; paul.block@navy.mil

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