

Feather Lab Update

North American Aviation Wildlife Management Conference
August 26–28, 2025 | Portland, OR



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

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FY 24 Stats

| Agency | Samples | Cases | % total workload |
|--------|---------|-------|------------------|
| FAA | 7290 | 6742 | 58% |
| USAF | 4042 | 3091 | 32% |
| Navy | 1308 | 1157 | 10% |
| Total | 12640 | 10990 | |

Average of 49 per working day

-Current FY is about 17% more volume

Less than 4 business days to complete a case

FY 24 Species Stats

- Wildlife strike species identifications are critical for aviation wildlife management
- 93% of samples identified to species
- 545 different species identified

Top 5 species Identified in FY 24

- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| • Mourning Dove | 653 |
| • Horned Lark | 614 |
| • Barn Swallow | 546 |
| • Cliff Swallow | 314 |
| • Killdeer | 302 |

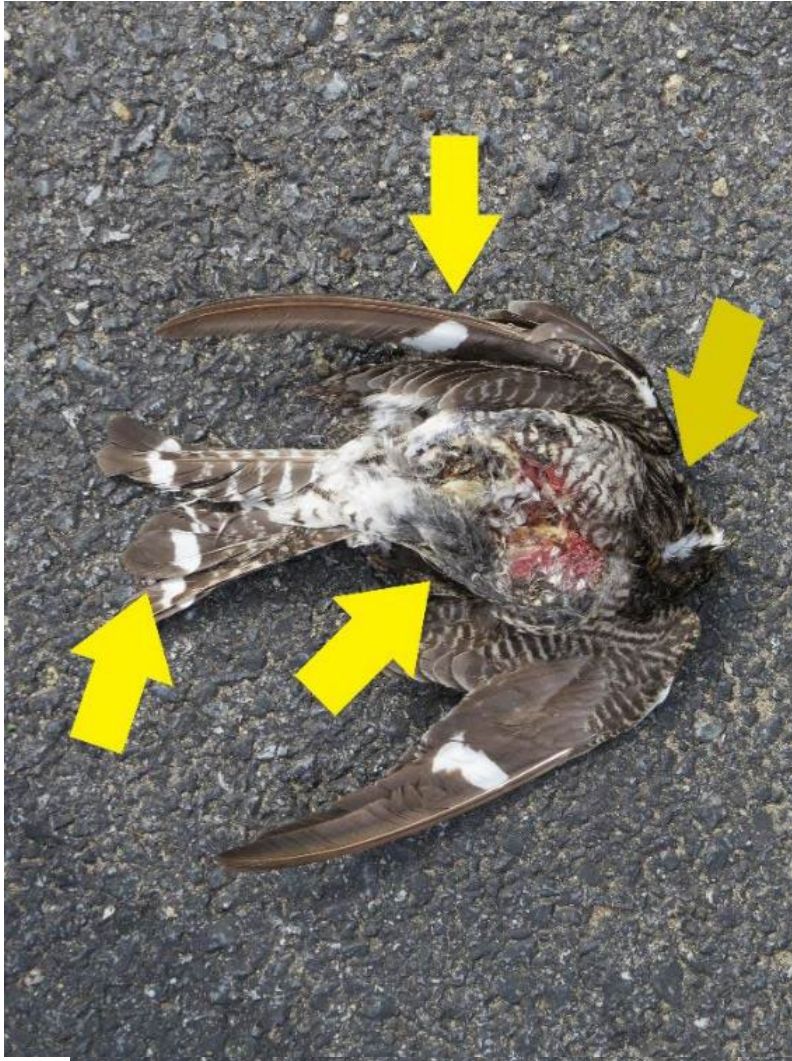


Noteworthy Cases and other 'goings on'

- Received material from the Jeju Air crash in Korea to confirm the bird identification
- Assisted with 5 NTSB cases
- Specimen exchange with Italian museum to improve our European holdings
- Hosted Bahrain Airport Company, wildlife manager for overview of Feather ID Lab



Birdstrike collection - Whole/partial carcass



- Pluck a variety of feathers including
 - wing, tail, breast, back, any feathers with color or pattern
- Do not cut feathers
- Limit amount of 'chunks' of tissue
- Don't send entire/partial carcass
- Take a photo

Birdstrike collection - Snarge/blood smear



- Wipe/Scrape off all snarge
- Use alcohol
 - Never use water, bleach, or cleansers
- Include feathers, if available
- Limit amount of 'chunks' of tissue

-Let sample dry before sealing in a bag.

-If extremely damaging or high profile strike, collect all available evidence.

-Each impact point on an aircraft and each carcass should be treated as a separate sample.

Online reporting

Create Report

Please file an online report or ensure one is filed

- AFSAS/RMI for Air Force, Navy, & Marines
- FAA wildlife strike database for Civil aviation

Print

Print BASH Shipping Sheet or Wildlife Strike Report form

- Ensure the **QR barcode** at top right corner prints

Contact info

Make sure contact info is in report and so you get a notification when the identification is complete



USAF BASH Shipping Sheet

Instructions
1. Complete and print this form and attach to the shipping container.
2. The shipping container must be sealed and labeled with the following information:
3. The shipping container must be labeled with the following information:
4. The shipping container must be labeled with the following information:
5. The shipping container must be labeled with the following information:

Ship To
U.S. Postal Service
Smithsonian Institution
Feather Identification Lab
E-600, MRC 116
PO Box 37012
Washington, DC 20013-7012

USAF BASH Shipping Sheet
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Expected Return
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Additional Notes
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Wildlife Strike Report Form

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Washington, D.C. 20013-7012

Courier / Shipping

(FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc)

Feather Identification Lab, MRC 116
National Museum of Natural History
1000 Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20560

Remains coming from overseas locations must be treated & include:

- Certificate of Treatment
- Certificate of Origin
- USDA APHIS permit

****US Postal Service mail sent to street address is irradiated****

Questions?

- Come see our posters tonight
- Self guided feather quiz

