

Science **STORIES!**



W.K. Kellogg
Biological Station
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

kbs.msu.edu

SARA DEPEW-BÄBY

Animal Caretaker

W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary

SO, WHAT DO YOU DO?

As the animal caretaker at the W.K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, my job is to make sure all of the birds have the proper care and educate other staff about the health and enrichment needs of the birds in our care.



HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY TO THIS CAREER PATH?

I have always enjoyed learning about the natural world, conservation, and wildlife. Growing up, my family lived in the country and I raised animals like chickens, rabbits and goats at home. I began my career as a teenager, volunteering at a raptor rehabilitation and wildlife center, and moved on to internships and seasonal positions during college.

I have a degree in zoology and environmental science from Miami University, and am a member of the American Association of Zookeepers. Since my career began, I have worked in zoos, nature centers and aquariums. Through that work I've gained experience with hundreds of wildlife species, including over 90 species of birds.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL DAY LIKE FOR YOU?

Animal keepers are prepared to work with animals each day, in all kinds of weather. I've cared for animals on weekends, over holidays, and even during snowstorms!

On a typical day, I start my day reading notes and email, to see if anything happened while I was away. Next, I venture outside to check the animals, clean their habitats, and give them food and water.

The rest of my days are filled with ordering food, leading programs, conducting health exams on our resident birds, or greeting visitors to our gift shop. If there is time, I might even take a walk with one of our glove-trained animal ambassadors!

It's work like mine that guides future animal keepers and inspires people to care about birds!

CONNECT

WITH SARA:

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