

## Example Specification Language to Include in Tree Care Contract

Wildlife is an important part of our urban forest. Most wildlife species encountered in the urban forest are protected by law and cannot be harmed during tree care work. The intention of these measures are to ensure the protection of wildlife as a natural resource.

All tree care shall be performed using methods that minimize impacts to nesting wildlife. There are many methods to minimize impacts, but one methodology described in the *Tree Care for Wildlife Best Management Practices in California* ([www.treecareforbirds.com](http://www.treecareforbirds.com)) is summarized below.

1. Tree care should be supervised by a Certified Arborist with Wildlife Training (15-minute video available at [www.treecareforbirds.com](http://www.treecareforbirds.com)).
2. Tree care workers should have contact information for a local Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Rehabilitator available on-site in case a nest or injured wildlife are discovered.
3. Tree care workers should know whether a project falls into either Category 1, 2 or 3 based on the habitat value and breeding season. Each of these categories represents gradually increasing levels of risk of encountering nesting wildlife.
  - Category 1 Projects: should have a pre-work inspection for nesting wildlife performed by someone with Awareness Training (i.e., minimally, the worker has viewed the video).
  - Category 2 Projects: should have a pre-work inspection for nesting wildlife performed by a Wildlife Trained Arborist (i.e., at least 4 hours of training on regulations, bird breeding behavior, how to avoid impact to birds, and how to handle emergencies.)
  - Category 3 Projects: should have a pre-work inspection for nesting wildlife performed by a Wildlife Biologist (i.e., experience with local species, bird biology, tolerance to impacts, searching for nests, suitable buffers, etc.) All tree care in riparian areas should be performed under the recommendations of a Wildlife Biologist.
4. If an active nest is discovered, tree care operations should cease immediately within about 100 feet of passerine nests and about 300 feet of raptor nests. Work may resume after birds have left the nest and are no longer dependent on their parents.
  - In high-value habitats and riparian areas, buffers should be increased to 300 feet of passerine nests and 500 feet of raptor nests.
  - In emergency situations, if work needs to be done within these buffers, a Wildlife Biologist should be consulted to consider smaller buffers or other protections, monitor the nest during work, or obtain a permit for work to continue, if necessary.
5. If wildlife is injured during tree care operations, work should cease immediately. A local Wildlife Rehabilitator should be contacted, and their recommendations should be followed. A Wildlife Biologist should perform an inspection before work proceeds.