

WHEN TO RESCUE A WILD BABY ANIMAL

Wildlife should only be rescued if:

- It is injured or been attacked by another animal.
- It is lying flat out on its side, cold to the touch, or unconscious.
- It is covered with flies or maggots. (maggots look like rice grains)
- The den or nest has been completely destroyed.
- The baby's eyes are closed and it is out of the nest or den.
- It has been crying continuously for more than an hour.
- It non-aggressively keeps approaching people or pets.
- It is in immediate physical danger (in the street, water)
- The mother is definitely dead.

Many wild moms do not stay close to the nest or young full time. Just because you do not see the mom nearby does not mean the baby (especially bunnies and fawns) are orphaned. Even if you have touched them, babies can be reunited with mom. A Rehabilitator will tell you when and how to best reunite babies and mom.

- Wear gloves when handling wildlife.
- Put the baby in a secure box or pet carrier.
- Provide a heat source (a soda bottle filled with hot water put in a sock, or a sock filled with rice and heated till warm in the microwave are good sources of heat). Heat source must be maintained at constant.
- Do not leave the box in the sun or use heating lamp – you can literally cook the animal, especially babies
- Provide a blanket or towel to snuggle in and hide under.
- Keep rescued animals in dark, quiet place away from pets and children!
- PLEASE DO NOT FEED A WILD ANIMAL. COW'S MILK OR HUMAN BABY FORMULAS

FAWN: Rescue If:

- The baby has been crying for an hour or more. (a "maaaaapp" sound)
- The baby is injured or has been attacked.
- The baby is lying stretched out and is cold to the touch.
- The baby walks directly up to pets or humans.
- The edges of the ears are curled (A sign of dehydration).
- The baby is in a dangerous place (lying in water, wandering in the road or parking lot, etc.).
- The doe is dead and/or if there are flies around the fawn

OPOSSUM: Rescue If:

- The mother is dead or injured, (check the mothers' pouch for up to 16 babies).
- If hit by a car, the animal could be walking in circles.
- If the mother is dead, gently pull the babies off the nipples and warm them.
- The baby has been injured or attacked.
- The baby is lying stretched out or is cold to the touch.
- The baby is away from mom and siblings, and is less than 10" long from head to butt (not including the tail).
- There are flies around the animal.

SQUIRREL/FLYING SQUIRREL/CHIPMUNK: Rescue If:

- The baby is crying (a high pitched, almost continuously squealing sound).
- The baby is pink and/or its eyes are closed and it is out of the nest.
- The baby walks right up to pets or humans. (cold, hungry, baby squirrels will often walk right up to humans looking for warmth and food)
- The baby is injured or has been attacked.
- The mother has been removed, or relocated, or she is dead.
- There are flies around the baby.

RACCOON: Rescue If:

- The baby has been crying continuously.
- The raccoon remains in the same spot for 24 hours.
- The eyes are closed and baby is alone. (no mother)
- The baby is lying stretched out and is cold to the touch.
- The mother is dead or has been removed and relocated.
- The adult or baby is injured or has been attacked.
- The raccoon walks up to humans non-aggressively.
- There are flies around the raccoon

WOODCHUCK/GROUNDHOG: Rescue If:

- The baby's eyes are closed and it is out of the den.
- The animal is injured or has been attacked.
- The animal is lying stretched out and is cold to the touch.
- The mother is dead or has been removed or relocated.
- There are flies around the adult or baby.

SKUNK: Rescue If:

- The baby is crying continuously (mewing sound like a kitten).
- The baby's eyes are closed and it is out of the den.
- The baby is cold to the touch.
- The animal or baby is injured or has been attacked.
- The mother is dead or has been relocated.
- There are flies around the animal.

RABBIT: Rescue If:

- The baby is crying in a high-pitched scream.
- The nest is flooded and/or destroyed.
- There are other dead babies around the nest.
- The mother is dead. (Mother rabbits rarely abandon their nests. They hide nearby and only visit the babies when it is time to feed them, usually at dusk, during the night and at dawn.) Place string or yarn over the nest in a tic-tac-toe pattern. Check the pattern. If disturbed, the mother rabbit is returning to the nest.
- The baby's eyes are closed and it is out of the nest.
- The baby is wet and/or cold and/or if there are flies around the baby

FOX/COYOTE: Rescue If:

- The baby's eyes are closed and it is out of the den.
- The baby is injured or has been attacked.
- The pup is lying stretched out and is cold to the touch.
- The pup is by itself and there are no siblings or mother nearby.
- The mother is dead or has been relocated.
- There are flies around the pup.

BAT: Rescue If:

- The bat pup is on the ground and its eyes are closed.
- The bat pup is cold.
- There are flies around the bat.
- The bat pup is pink and has no fur.
- A female bat is on the ground with her pups attached to her.
- The bat pup is injured or has been attacked.

GENERAL BABY INFO

Warm all babies either with a heating pad or warm bottle, (expired 250cc or 500cc IV bags make excellent hot water bottles, warm in microwave and put in a sock, knot end and put next to baby.) The IV bag sock provides both warmth and comfort decreasing the level of stress for the baby. Use soft blankets for bedding-never wood chips.

Stress is a big factor contributing to the death of wildlife. Remember that you are a predator! Barking dogs, the smell of cats and large humans can scare baby animals to death. Cover the baby's eyes to reduce sensory overload. If treating a wound or injury does it in short sessions allowing time for the animal to calm down and rest in between.

Baby animals should be hydrated with warmed Lactate Ringers or Pedialyte. Add ¼ teaspoon of sugar to ½ cup of Pedialyte. NEVER FEED a COLD BABY. Babies must be warmed for 40 minutes before feeding. Warmed LR sub Q can be given but remember that this can cause undo stress. Hydrate by mouth whenever possible. Always hold the baby in a natural position so not to drown the baby – NEVER HOLD ON HIS BACK. NEVER FORCE the feeding instrument in the mouth or throat of a baby or force any liquid in as it will go right into the lungs. Tube feeding should only be attempted by an experienced person as you could pierce organs or drown the baby very easily if you do not know what you are doing.

Caught by Cat: Baby animals reported to have been caught by a cat, must be put on antibiotics ASAP. Baby squirrels and bunnies should have .02cc ob injectable Baytril QD X 3days for small or unseen puncture and X 5 days for de-gloving wounds.

Fleas: Fleas drain tiny babies of their blood and strength very quickly. Fleas can be removed by spraying Adams Kitten Flea and Tick sprayed on a towel and then rub down the baby. Fleas will die off in just a few minutes.

All babies should be checked for maggot eggs. You may not be able to see them, as flies can lay them deep in the fur, close to the skin. Use a flea comb and comb through the baby's fur opposite from the way it is growing. Maggot eggs look like oatmeal and are easily removed by dusting the fur with corn starch and using the the flea comb to brush them out. Be careful to check the ears, eyes, nostrils, mouth and anus for eggs. If there are maggots that have already hatched treat with cap star and antibiotics. (antibiotics should be given to treat the toxic effect of the dead, decaying maggots inside the body). Maggots can be smothered out of the wound by covering the wound with Neosporin and other antibiotic ointments.

Shock and head injuries should be treated with dexamethasone (dosing by weight) and fluids. Dex should be given every 12 hours post trauma X 3 doses and then once per day X 5 days.

Potty time: All babies with their eyes closed need to be stimulated to urinate and defecate. Use a warm, wet cotton ball, gently rub the gene Talia.

FAWN:

Does leave their young fawns while they graze. They can leave them for up to 24 hours, especially if she has twins. She will put each twin in a different place and travel between them to nurse them. If the fawn is lying down in a curled up position, it should be left alone as it is waiting for its mother. Fawns stress very easily. Keep things quiet, cover the fawn's eyes. Check for maggots; hydrate either orally or by IV. Once hydrated give diluted goats milk for first 2 feedings, then full strength. Fawns can be fed with a human baby bottle. In case of head trauma (car crash) treat with dexamethasone, small crate rest and quiet.

OPOSSUM:

Check pouch for joeys. Babies that have no fur and are pink should be left in the pouch. They are not viable. Baby opossum swallow the nipple in their mother's pouch. Removing pink babies will kill them. Babies should be kept

warm preferably in a moister environment such as a damp wash cloth next to a heat source. Heat source must remain constant!

Older baby opossums, those with fur and color, greater than 24 grams can be saved. Carefully and slowly remove the joey from the nipple by putting your index and middle fingers on either side of the joey's head and carefully slip him off the nipple. Joeys can be fed with a 3½ F or 5F feeding tube. LR or Pedialyte for first 4 feedings, then dilute Esbilac working up to a full strength formula. Potty and return to warm box.

SQUIRREL/FLYING SQUIRREL/CHIPMUNK:

Check, and if necessary, treat for fleas. Check for maggot eggs. Use flea comb, go against the grain of the fur. Check the entire body, paying strict attention to the back of the neck, groin, underarms, nose, eyes, anus and mouth. Look in the mouth with a small lighted otoscope. Swab mouth with a moistened Q-tip. Warm baby for at least 40 minutes before feeding. Feed LR or Pedialyte using a 1cc syringe. Formula used is Esbilac or Fox Valley.

Hypoglycemia: Baby squirrels that have been without food for a long period of time can have seizures that can be stopped by using the following protocol: Give the baby 2cc of Pedialyte with sugar (¼ cup Pedialyte or Lactate Ringers to ¼ tsp. sugar). Every 20 mins X 3 doses, then in 45 mins, 1½ hour, and then feed as normal, increasing the formula every 2nd feeding to ½ strength, ¾ strength and then full strength.

RACCOON:

Raccoons carry a roundworm in their digestive system that, if ingested, will travel to all other mammals including human brains. WEAR GLOVES no matter how small the baby is. This animal should only be handled by those who have had the pre-exposure rabies vaccine. They must be hydrated with Pedialyte – they must be warm – Fox Valley raccoon formula is great. You must use a preemie-baby nipple – SIMILAC red nipples are the best. To get them to take the bottle, stimulate by gently scratching them on the back or nape of the neck and they will make a purring sound – this is what the mother does to get them to suck. They also need to be stimulated when going to the bathroom. Hold the animal flat on their stomach to avoid drowning!

WOODCHUCK/GROUNDHOG/SKUNK:

Groundhogs/skunks are also a rabies vector species. Be careful when handling. Adult groundhogs typically come in with head trauma. See protocol for shock and head injury. Baby groundhogs/skunks after being warmed and hydrated can be fed Esbilac increased from ¼ strength to full. Older baby ground hogs can be fed baby food vegetable and fruit via syringe. Do not force feed – let the babies lick.

RABBIT:

Check the rabbit for fleas and ticks (often found on the ears). Check for injuries. Using a tissue folded three times, hold the baby in the palm of your hand and flip it over on its back; rapidly tap or wave the tissue across the baby's genitals to stimulate urination. The tissue should be almost completely soaked. Depending on the baby's weight for the amount, start them on warm Pedialyte (dye & color free) for the first 24 hours. Do not feed upside down or on back. Stimulate urination before each feeding. Smaller babies must be fed 3-4 feedings a day and older babies 2 times a day. After the first 24 hours, start mixing Fox Valley formula with the Pedialyte and after 4-5 days replace Pedialyte with water. Always feed the babies when they and the formula are warm. Once the babies start hopping around the box, introduce dry, non-instant oatmeal. Clover, strained baby foods (fruits & veggies), young grass, dark or red lettuce, other greens can be added one at a time. If diarrhea develops go back to just Pedialyte. Rabbits can be released in an appropriate habitat once they have reach 120-140 grams or are the size of a large orange or small grapefruit. Never use woodchips for bedding – use soft blankets or towels and change frequently.

FOX/COYOTE:

One of the most common ailments for fox and coyote is mange. Mange is very treatable. Remember to treat the triad.

1. Mites: Ivermectin 2/10 cc once a week either injected directly into the fox or injected into a dead mouse or chicken leg.
2. Secondary infections: should be treated with amoxi dosed by weight.
3. Nutrition: A varied diet is best consisting of a meat protein, eggs, fruit (blueberries, banana, watermelon, peaches, and pears) and acorns.

BAT:

Because of White Nose Syndrome bats should be taken and treated only by those rehabilitators with the proper set up.

WILDLIFE BEHAVIOR TIPS

I FOUND A BABY SQUIRREL.

Mother squirrels will often retrieve their babies and return them to the nest. Squirrels also make alternate nests, so retrieval can occur even if the original nest has been destroyed. If the squirrel is not injured (no blood, bruises or fly eggs), place him in a box in a safe location, as near as possible to where the baby was found. Put a hot water bottle covered with fabric in the box to keep the baby warm. The box should not be so tall as to prevent mom from jumping in and out with the baby in her mouth. Do not wrap the baby in fabric as mom will want to retrieve him quickly. Keep the baby in the warm box for up to eight hours (you will likely have to change the hot water bottle during this time). If mom does not retrieve after 6 to 8 hours, the baby will need to be taken to a wildlife rehabilitation center.



A BIRD SEEMS TO BE ATTACKING MY WINDOW.

The bird can see her reflection in the glass and perceives herself as another intruding bird. You can draw your curtains or pull your shade to change the reflections. Yes, a bird can injure herself by doing this. If the behavior continues, try soaping the window or attaching predator decals or paper streamers to the outside of the window. This will distract the bird and the noise from the streamers may scare her away.

A WOODPECKER IS PECKING ON MY HOUSE.

Sometimes this is a territorial claim, especially on rain gutters, where a loud noise resonates when the bird pecks. Often, however, the bird can hear bugs in your soffets or roof and he is attempting to uncover them. It's a good idea to bring in a bug specialist when a woodpecker begins viewing your house as dinner.

A DUCK BROUGHT HER BABIES TO MY POOL AND WON'T LEAVE.

The babies may not be able to climb out since the sides are vertical cliffs to ducklings. The chlorine water won't kill the babies. They will be able to fly in just a few weeks after hatching. You can offer them a "ramp" to exit the pool, and if you are willing to feed them while in your pool, they will grow faster and leave sooner.

THERE'S A SKUNK IN MY WINDOW WELL OR AN OPOSSUM IN MY GARBAGE CAN.

Simply put a wooden board at an angle into the window well so that the skunk can climb out at night. Skunks have poor vision, so approach slowly and unless the skunk begins pounding with her feet or turns her tail towards you, don't worry about getting sprayed. The skunk probably won't leave until dark, however. Ditto with the opossum.

You can gently tip the garbage can onto its side, but the opossum may be too frightened to move (hence the saying, "playing opossum"). Opossums are one of the gentlest creatures, but their impressive set of teeth, scare even the bravest soul. Unfortunately, when frightened the opossum opens his mouth to breathe (like hyperventilating) and begins to drool. Folks confuse this "rabid frothing" when in fact the little guy is scared to death. If you care to notice, he's also wet and dirtied himself too. Opossums are also sensitive to sound. If waiting it out is not an option, try crumpling a plastic bag near the opossum, as they hate the noise. She should leave on her own. Visit Opossum Society of the United States at <http://www.opossumsocietyus.org> for more info.



THERE'S A BAT IN MY HOUSE.

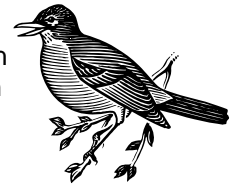
Do not attempt to chase her or catch her. Close the door to the room the bat is in, open a window, and the bat will fly out. If the bat lands on a surface, wearing gloves to protect yourself, gently place a container (like a container from Cool Whip) over the bat, then slide a piece of stiff cardboard between the bat and the surface. Take the bat outside and place her on an elevated surface like a roof or on tree bark. Do not put her on flat ground as she will be landlocked. Bats need air under their wings and must drop down in order to take flight.

I'VE FOUND A BABY BIRD (UNFEATHERED) ON THE GROUND.

If you do not see injuries (blood, bruising, fly eggs), look for the nest and place the bird back inside the nest. If you see a nest, but it is too high to reach, you can make an alternate nest (mother birds will tend two nests). Use a porous container like a wicker basket or those little green berry baskets and place a porous medium into the container (like dried grass or leaves). Secure it as high into the tree as possible using rope or twine. Watch from a distance to see whether an adult approaches the nest within an hour. If not, get the bird to a rehab center.

I'VE FOUND AN INJURED BIRD ON THE GROUND.

Are you sure that the bird is injured and not a fledge (a young bird who cannot yet fly)? Can the bird hop, flap his wings and take short flights? Can he perch? Is he energetic? Listen and watch to see if adult birds are interacting with him. Many songbirds spend 3 to 5 days on the ground after leaving the nest before they become proficient flyers. This is a critical time when parents teach their offspring to hunt by sight and sound. A high percentage of fledges brought to rehab center are perfectly healthy and just days away from flying.

**I'VE FOUND AN ORPHANED NEST OF BUNNIES IN MY YARD.**

Mother bunny is likely nearby in a bush keeping watch. Because rabbits have no defense, they do not stay with their young which would attract predators. Instead, they come to the nest and nurse their babies in early morning and evening. Do not move or disturb the babies. To confirm that the mother is coming to the nest (you're not likely to see her), place the babies back in the nest (if they have been removed), cover them with the nesting material and cross some colored yarn or twigs over the top in a recognizable pattern. Check the nest in 24 hours. If the yarn/twigs have been disturbed you know the mother has been to feed her babies. If not, get the babies to a rehab center.

THE NEST IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE YARD/TRAFFIC, AND I DON'T WANT TO MOW OVER IT, OR I HAVE A DOG/CAT.

Since mom only visits in the early morning and evening hours, you can cover the nest with a breathable container (like a wicker laundry basket) and weight it down so your dog can't move it. Or, you can put chicken wire around the nest with stakes. During the days when kids and dogs/cats are outside, keep the wire down. In early evening, lift the wire all around about 12 inches so that mom can come to nurse at night and again in the morning.

**A TURTLE IS CROSSING A BUSY ROAD.**

There are two reasons why turtles cross roads. Water turtles, like a Snapper (large with pointy ridges on the tail), are going to a spot to lay eggs. Land turtles, like a Box (smallish turtle with a high dome shell), are foraging or trying to return to their original territory. Be careful when handling a snapping turtle as he can inflict a nasty bite. Do not offer him anything hard to bite on and do not pick him up by the tail. Gently push the turtle along with a stick or move him into a box. Always move the turtle to the side of the road where he was heading.

I WANT TO HAVE A WILD ANIMAL REMOVED FROM MY PROPERTY.

Trapping/relocation is not a solution to most problems. Removing an animal is like putting a vacancy sign up on one's lawn. Another animal will surely move into that open territory. Relocated animals put into saturated territories will likely be attacked as interlopers or die of starvation or exposure to elements. Also, the worst time to trap/relocate is the spring and summer when babies are born. If their mom is relocated, they will starve to death. For tips on Living with Wildlife, please contact us at 732-446-6808 for a free brochure.

If you find an injured or truly orphaned animal and are unable to reach a wildlife rehabilitator, keep the animal in a warm, dark, quiet location. Do not attempt to give food. If the animal is in extreme pain, you can contact a vet who can provide care for 24 hours before the animal must be transferred to a wildlife facility.

Wild animals surround us not because they want to but because we have taken away their land. They'll leave us alone if we do the same to them. With a little understanding and patience, people and animals can peacefully coexist.

Information provided by Brenda Malinics, an experienced wildlife rehabber