

# What You Should & Should-Not Do If You Find a Baby Animal...

If intervention with a wild baby animal is needed:

Speak with a wildlife professional before handling!

Making an animal more comfortable for transport:

1. Place in a pet carrier (or) box with air circulation holes.
2. Wear protective gear (leather gloves, long sleeves, safety glasses, etc.).
3. Place the carrier in a warm, dark, quiet place. *This will help lower their stress level, as they are already in a compromised condition.*



State & federal laws make it illegal to: Possess, trap, destroy, or relocate a wild animal without a proper license.

Intervening when not necessary can actually decrease an animal's chance of survival.

## Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator:

If there is a genuine case of an abandoned animal, or sick/injured animal, they must go to a rehabber.

### Signs of when to take action:

The animal is in imminent danger;  
The animal is following you;  
You see the animal is an orphan (there is a deceased adult nearby).



## Signs of Injury/Illness

Visible wounds, flies around the animal, dehydration, lethargy, minimal response to stimulation, etc.

ACT NOW

## Safety First!

Moving wildlife should remain a last resort, and only attempted by a licensed wildlife rehabilitator: Young wild animals don't know that you are trying to help them:

They may try to bite or scratch you in order to protect themselves when handled.

Some species carry diseases that can be harmful to people, so contact with wildlife is not advisable.

**DO NOT** attempt to capture mammals such as raccoons, foxes, or bats—even babies.

CAUTION

## Rabbits & Deer:

Some animals may appear to be alone/abandoned, due to the fact that their parents visit them infrequently:

This is used as a way to reduce the attraction of predators to the nest/hiding spot.

Ex: cottontail rabbits & white-tailed deer.

They have fur that camouflages them; while they instinctually remain still and quiet.

Often times, this is normal, as the mother will only return at dusk and dawn to feed them.



## DEER



Mother deer will move their fawns once daily, hiding them in a spot where they can curl up and remain hidden (quietly & calmly) while she forages for food; and returns only occasionally to feed them.

Fawns are unable to follow their mothers for the first 2 weeks of life.

Mother deer will be wary of you, so your presence in the area could discourage her from returning.

## BIRD



*Eggs*: if you find eggs in an unoccupied nest, leave them be.

*Hatchlings*: completely featherless & their eyes are closed.

*Nestlings*: have some feathers developing & their eyes are open.

If *hatchlings* or *nestlings* are found out of the nest, unharmed, they can often be re-nested.

*Fledglings*: have feathers & can hop around and perch on a branch.

Birds at this age are just learning to fly. Parent birds are usually close by for protection.

## RABBIT



One way to see if baby rabbits are truly

abandoned is to do the flour test:

Sprinkle a circle of flour around the nest and check for tracks the next morning.

Rabbits are independent from their mother if:

They are at least 4 inches long, with open eyes, erect ears, and able to hop well.

## SQUIRREL



Baby squirrels often fall out of their nest:

When this happens, the mother will build a 2<sup>nd</sup> nest & then retrieve the babies.

If a juvenile squirrel continuously approaches and follows people, they are likely an orphan.

If a squirrel is on the ground with its eyes closed, or that can't move:

It's too young to be away from its mother.

## OPOSSUM



When an opossum is 3-4 inches long:

They begin riding on their mother's back.

At times, they may fall off without the mother noticing.

When an opossum is over 7 inches long (not including the tail):

They are old enough to be on their own.

## RACCOON



If a baby raccoon has been alone for more than a few hours, they are probably an orphan.

Mother raccoons don't let their young out of their site for long.

Remember, raccoons are nocturnal:

Adults come out at night to reclaim their baby.

## FOX



Baby foxes will often appear unsupervised for long periods of time:

This is while their parents are out hunting for food.

They will play around the site of their den until their parents return.

If they seem energetic & healthy, leave them alone.

## SKUNK



Skunks have poor eyesight:

If something scares the mother and they run off, the babies can quickly lose sight of them.

Since they are very near-sighted, fast movements can startle them into spraying.

