



## Do's & Don'ts for Orphaned & Injured Wildlife

Do: Know the laws! Keeping wildlife is illegal under state and federal laws.

- \* Includes all fur-bearing animals, endangered or threatened species, native reptiles & amphibians, & migratory (crossed state lines) birds.
- \* Includes (except when in season= see DNR hunting & trapping guide for dates) game birds which can legally be hunted (ducks, pheasants, turkeys & doves).
- \* Excludes pest (or are humans the pests?!) species (pigeons, English sparrows, & starlings).
- \* DNR will allow a private citizen, acting in good faith, to rescue an injured or orphaned animal in order to transport it IMMEDIATELY to a permitted Wildlife Rehabilitator, or a permitted veterinarian for appropriate care.

Do: Make sure the animal is really orphaned or injured.

- \* Cat & dog attacks ALWAYS need treatment!!!!!!
- \* Fawn seen alone is normal; the moms have them in open fields, backyards sometimes, wherever there is an open area, at times for 24-36 hours. Fawns

are born without a smell, so the mother places them in the open; they are safer than in the trees.

If still there after 36 hours, or deceased mother deer in road, babies are more than likely orphaned

- \* Rabbits' nest is a hole around 6" in depth with grass lining and mom rabbit's fur, which she pulls from her own body. If nest is disrupted (lawn mower, dog, cat, etc.), place two sticks or strings criss-crossed over nest and spread flour around nest. The strings will be moved when mom comes back and the flour will have her footprints on it. Remember: Mom rabbit ONLY comes at night. You WILL NOT see her. If no activity the next morning, babies ARE orphaned!
- \* If a birds' nest has fallen down, put nest back where it came from. If not possible, put nest back as close as you can and as high as you can to original location. The mother WILL NOT abandon her babies due to human scent, as birds do not smell very well.
- \* If a bird is on the ground, can't fly very well, and seems "clumsy", it is a "fledgling" (meaning teenager) learning to fly. Both parents in most bird species take care of young, even one parent alone can raise young.

## **ANYTIME YOU SEE A MOTHER KILLED, THE YOUNG ARE ORPHANED!!!!!!**

(Some male species will feed young, but this is very uncommon and mostly only in bird species.)

- \* Do: Take note of surrounding area before making calls.
  - \* Landmarks: Edge of road? In a field? Cultivated or not? Foot of tree or building? Pond or stream nearby? Development (or is it destruction?) in the area? This is important because the animal

may move before someone can get there. If the “rescuer” can get the animal contained, as long as the rescuer doesn’t put him/herself in danger, that is the best option.

- \* All of this information could be useful to biologists and wildlife rehabilitators for future studies.
  
- \*Do: Call the professionals to handle wildlife rescue situations.
  - \* Michelle Manker (317)585-9036=Home (Reptiles, Mammals, & some birds)
  - \* Liz Hatten (317)877-1187=Home (songbirds, birds of prey, and some ducks & geese)
  - \* Kristein Heitman (317)902-DUCK=Cell
  - \* DNR (Department of Natural Resources) (317)232-4010=Office
  - \* Local law enforcement/sheriff
  - \* Local humane society
  - \* Local veterinarian  
(These three options could refer you to a Wildlife Rehabilitator close to you.)
  
- \* Do: Consider the anatomy of the animal before transporting.
  
- \* Don’t: Use wire cages for birds. Stress damage to feathers and tissues is certain when a wire cage is used. Cat/Dog carriers or boxes work best.
  - \* For baby birds & small mammals, use box or small carrier with shredded paper or towels.
  - \* For larger birds & mammals, use carriers, boxes, or trash cans.
  - \* For reptiles & amphibians, use coolers or aquariums. To keep warm, take a potato and microwave it for about 4-5 minutes, wrap a small towel around it (so it doesn’t burn their skin!) and duct tape it to box (so it doesn’t roll over on them!). This will

keep them warm long enough to get to a Wildlife  
Rehabilitator.

## **DON'T: OFFER FOOD OR WATER UNLESS INSTUCTED TO DO SO.**

\*Don't: Take risks! Wildlife can carry diseases! They do not understand we are trying to help them and WILL bite, scratch, or kick to avoid rescue!

\*Don't: Handle wildlife without gloves, towels, blankets, nets or some form of protection!!!!!!!!!!

**Remember:** They do not understand that you are trying to help them. All they know is something is trying to catch them!!!!!!!!!! NEVER, EVER try to rehab without proper training. You can do more harm than good, and even possibly kill the animal. The best chance they have is with a trained and permitted professional!!!!!!!!!!!!!!