

## LIST OF COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED WILDLIFE

For specific details on what to do when you find one of these wildlife species, visit [wildohio.gov/staywild](http://wildohio.gov/staywild)

### White-tailed Deer (Fawns)

Raccoons

Rabbits

Squirrels

Baby Birds

Turtles

*IF YOU TAKE ME FROM THE WILD,  
THERE IS A 90% CHANCE I WILL  
NOT SURVIVE.*



**GOOD INTENTIONS CAN HURT.  
LEAVE WILDLIFE IN THE WILD.**

## REMEMBER ...

- Never chase a baby animal to capture it. The stress can be dangerous to a young animal which can lead to damage to internal organs, and even death.
- Never give food or water to injured or orphaned wildlife. Inappropriate food can lead to sickness or death. Fawns in particular have very sensitive stomachs and require a special diet.
- Each animal's nutritional, housing, and handling requirements are very specific and must be met if they have any chance of survival.

## WHY SHOULD WE KEEP WILDLIFE WILD?

- A baby wild animal's best chance for survival is with its mother.
- Wild animals are born to live their lives in the wild, not in a house or a cage.
- An animal that has become habituated to humans cannot be returned to the wild.
- Once they grow, wild animals are active and independent, which can make them dangerous and destructive.
- Wild animals have complex nutritional needs not easily met in captivity. Nutritional deficiencies can leave an animal deformed for life.
- Wild animals can carry diseases and parasites, some of which are transmissible to people or pets. Some diseases, like rabies, can cause serious human health problems.
- It is illegal to possess, restrain, or keep any wild animal. The purpose of the law is to protect wild animal populations and to protect people from disease and injury.



For more specific information on how to best help each species, or to contact a wildlife rehabilitator, visit [wildohio.gov/staywild](http://wildohio.gov/staywild)



## DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

### Headquarters

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1-800-WILDLIFE  
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### District Three

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Akron 44319  
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### District One

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LEAVE WILDLIFE IN THE WILD.



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
**DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**  
[wildohio.gov](http://wildohio.gov)

PHOTO BY MENNO SCHAEFER

# INJURED OR ORPHANED WILDLIFE?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW





### Have you found a baby wild animal?

In the spring and early summer you may have the good fortune of observing a baby animal in the wild. Often, the baby you see will be unattended by a parent. Unless something seems amiss, keep your distance and leave it alone. Human intervention is always a wild animal's LAST resort for survival, NEVER its best hope. Assess the situation by answering the following questions.

#### Do any of these apply?

- It is bleeding, has an open wound, or has a broken bone.
- It is covered in fly eggs (look like small grains of rice).
- It has been crying for more than one day.
- It appears weak AND is lying on its side.
- It was attacked by a pet.

It is natural for young wildlife to be left alone.

**YES**

The baby is likely injured or orphaned. Contact the nearest permitted wildlife rehabilitator for treatment.

Go to [wildohio.gov/staywild](http://wildohio.gov/staywild) for specially trained rehabilitators.

**NO**

#### Is it in a dangerous location?

The more time you spend in the area the more likely YOU are to attract predators to the location.

**YES**

The baby can be moved a short distance to a safer location. After moving the baby animal, quickly leave the area. Do not linger. If possible, you can monitor from afar with binoculars.

When moving a fawn, the young deer may try to follow you as you leave. Face it away from the direction in which you plan to leave it so it cannot watch you.

If you cannot reach a baby bird's nest, try placing the baby into a makeshift nest, like a basket, off of the ground.

Caring about wildlife means understanding it is born to live in the wild - not in a house or a cage.

**NO**

#### Leave the baby animal alone!

The baby animal is healthy and waiting for mom to return. Keep children and pets away. Monitor from a distance and reassess the situation the next day. Mothers will usually return and move the baby to a new location.

Visit [wildohio.gov/staywild](http://wildohio.gov/staywild) for more specific information on how to best help each species.

It is illegal to keep wildlife without a rehabilitators permit.

Some young are born nearly scentless.

- To avoid attracting predators adults do not stay with their young.
- The mother is likely nearby; only returning for quick feedings.

### IS THE ANIMAL REALLY ABANDONED?

Wildlife parents are very devoted to their young and rarely abandon them. Many species are only raised by the mother. Baby wildlife must be left alone the majority of the time while the mother ventures off to find food for herself and her young.

The best thing to do is to keep your distance, and keep children and pets away from the young animal. Wild animals can carry parasites or diseases that can be harmful to humans and pets. Wild animals also defend themselves by scratching or biting.



*I AM NOT LOST.*

### WHAT DO I DO IF AN ANIMAL IS TRULY ABANDONED OR INJURED?

If you see open wounds or other injuries, or you know without a doubt that a young wild animal has lost its parent, consult your nearest Wildlife District Office or local wildlife rehabilitator. Do not attempt to capture or feed it until expert guidance is provided to you. Also, limit contact with the animal to reduce stress and the possibility of it becoming habituated. Taming a young animal will make it unreleasable in the wild. It is illegal to keep wildlife without a rehabilitators permit. Rehabilitators go through extensive training on how to raise and treat young and injured wildlife. Leave it to the professionals and you'll greatly increase the animal's chance of survival.



*I AM NOT A PET.*

### WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT HARMING YOUNG WILDLIFE?

- Check for nests before cutting down trees or clearing brush. Autumn and winter is the best time for outdoor maintenance to avoid nesting seasons.
- Cap chimneys, vents, and window wells to prevent animals from nesting there or getting trapped.
- Keep pets under control to prevent wildlife from becoming injured.
- Educate friends and family about the importance of respecting wild animals. They are not pets and will not behave as pets.

*I AM NOT HELPLESS.*

