Why Keep Wildlife Wild:

Wild animals belong in the wild

- **A baby wild animal's best chance for survival is with its mother.**
- It is illegal to possess, own, control, restrain, or keep any wild animal.
- Wild animals may carry diseases, some of which are transmissible to people or domestic animals.
- Wild animals have complex nutritional needs not easily met in captivity.
- The best option for a wild animal is to learn normal behaviors from their own species in their natural environment.
- Wild animals can be highly stressed by sights, sounds, and smells from people and domestic animals, especially when in close proximity

For more information:

Call 1.888.WDNR.INFO
(1.888.936.7463)
dnr.wi.gov
keyword *"keep wildlife wild"*

Photos: Herbert Lange, Steve Keto, Jay Watson, Paul Samerdyke, Robert Rolley, Harvey Halvorsen & Stephanie Sanchez

CALL FIRST!

For more information and tips to determine if a wild animal is sick, injured or truly orphaned and for reasons to **Keep Wildlife Wild** visit the WI DNR website:
dnr.wi.gov
keyword *"keep wildlife wild"*
Or call the Wisconsin DNR at
1.888.WDNR.INFO 1.888.936.7463

The Wisconsin DNR and Wisconsin's wild animals thank you for helping!

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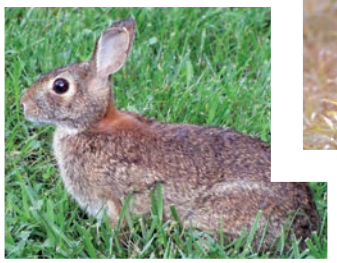
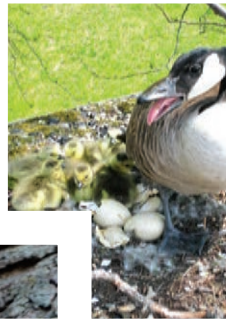
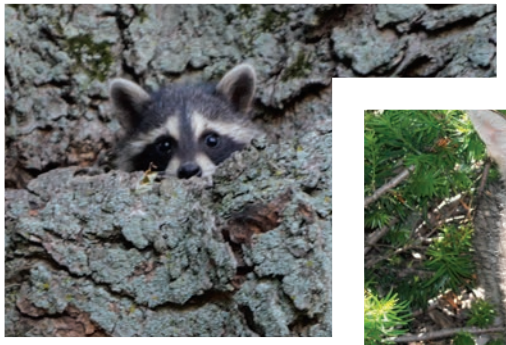


Keep Wildlife Wild

What you can do to help sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife.





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Wildlife that's sick? Injured? Orphaned?

Should you help?

Most of the time, leaving a baby animal where it's found IS helping.
If an animal is injured, sick, or truly orphaned, Wisconsin regulations allow a person up to 24 hours to transfer a wild animal to a licensed rehabilitator. It is best to transfer to a rehabilitator as soon as possible.

Wildlife rehabilitators are licensed and trained to provide temporary care to wild animals.

Tip: Go to dnr.wi.gov, keyword "rehab", to find a licensed rehabilitator near you and for more information about wildlife rehabilitation.

Is the baby wild animal truly orphaned?

Baby wild animals are commonly presumed orphaned because they are often found alone, without their parents near them. Many times the best way for wild animal parents to protect their young, is to leave them alone, or concealed within natural vegetation.

- White-tailed deer fawns hide and lie very still. Their spots and lack of scent protect them from predators. Their mother will return a few times a day to feed them.
- Cottontail rabbit babies are left hidden while their mother only returns at dusk and dawn to feed them.

- Raccoon babies are often active during the day without their mother. She is close by, but she usually only comes out at night to feed them.
- Songbird fledglings hopping on the ground have not yet learned how to fly. Their parents spend little time with them at this stage because they are busy looking for food to keep their babies fed.

Tip: Call First! Before assuming a baby wild animal is orphaned, call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or the DNR. They can help determine if a baby wild animal is truly orphaned or is exhibiting natural behaviors.

Sick or injured wildlife

Sometimes wild animals *are* sick or injured and in need of help. If an animal . . .

- is truly alone because parents are dead or relocated
- has been attacked by another animal
- is bleeding and appears injured
- is emaciated, very weak, cold, or soaking wet
- has many parasites
- is in a dangerous location

...then it needs help.

If it needs help:

- Contact a licensed rehabilitator near you. Visit dnr.wi.gov keyword "rehab" for a list or call the DNR at *1.888.WDNR.INFO*.
- Transfer the animal to a licensed rehabilitator as soon as possible.
- Do not feed or offer water to the animal unless specifically told to do so by a rehabilitator.
- Ask a rehabilitator for tips before attempting to transport the animal.
- Avoid contact with other animals and people to reduce further stressing the baby wild animal.

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