Keep Wildlife Wild!

A Lesson Plan for Grades 4-6
A young wild animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother.
Keep Wildlife Wild
Lesson Plan Committee

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In the State of Wisconsin, only people with appropriate licenses and permits are legally allowed to keep sick, injured or truly orphaned wild animals in captivity for longer than 24 hours.
Dear Wisconsin Teacher

Thank you for your interest in teaching about Wisconsin wildlife!

Wildlife is one of our state’s great natural resources. Wild animals are valued by many people and we all share in the responsibility to conserve wild animals for current and future generations. Wisconsin’s year-round outdoor activities often provide us with direct opportunities to view and appreciate this wonderful natural resource. It is important, however, for children (and adults) to understand the importance of observing wildlife from a respectful distance in order to keep these animals wild.

This lesson plan includes:

- a 20-minute scripted PowerPoint slide show called “Keep Wildlife Wild”
- a classroom activity called “What a Dilemma!”
- an optional reading assignment involving critical thinking
- Project WILD activity adaptations
- word games & puzzles to reinforce concepts learned

These activities can be readily adapted to grades 4, 5 or 6. To make this lesson plan as relevant to your students as possible, we suggest you conduct the activities in early spring, prior to the appearance of young birds and mammals. Sharing these activities from late March through mid-April will prepare children for the upcoming season of wildlife renewal and the potential encounters they may experience with young animals. However, if this time frame is inconvenient for you, feel free to use it anytime of the year.

Keep Wildlife Wild
Lesson Plan Subcommittee
INTRODUCTION
Spring and early summer are the seasons of the year when your students are likely to encounter young wild animals.
Background Information

What is a “wild” animal?  How does a wild animal differ from a domestic animal?  Wild animals, collectively referred to as “wildlife,” live in native, wild or natural habitats and can freely roam on their own and find all the food, water and shelter they need to survive. Wild animals can live without the direct influence of people, although they may accept some help (such as nesting structures, sunflower seeds, suet). They have developed behaviors and adaptations to make them successful in surviving in complex wild environments. They are not well-adapted to living in your house.

A few examples of wild animals living in Wisconsin include white-tailed deer, coyote, gray fox, raccoon, opossum, cottontail, gray squirrel, woodchuck, eastern chipmunk, bluebird, cardinal, black-capped chickadee, Canada goose, painted turtle, snapping turtle, garter snake, green frog, and American toad.

Domestic animals have been selectively propagated and nurtured by people over many generations. Historically, in the domestication process, our ancestors took wild species and selected for special characteristics such as size, shape, color and the ability to live in close proximity to people and other domestic animals without showing the aggression typical of wild animals. Most domestic animals are used by people in some way, and they often develop bonds with people. Pets, such as dogs, cats, hamsters and parakeets, are domesticated animals traditionally kept for pleasure and companionship.

What’s wrong with keeping a wild animal as a pet?
Most people lack the detailed knowledge and extensive training required to adequately care for wild animals in captivity. They do not understand the behavioral, social, nutritional and psychological needs of wild animals and, in particular, how to meet the very specialized needs of young wild animals--needs that are usually met in the wild by the animal’s mother. Here are the six main reasons to Keep Wildlife Wild:

1. Proper Food: Wild animals have specialized dietary needs not easily met in captivity. Young wild animals especially require a specific, complete diet; otherwise they are at a high risk of suffering serious nutritional deficiencies that can leave them handicapped for life. Without the proper training, most people do not know what wild animals require to survive and thrive.

2. Increased Stress: Wild animals require space and freedom that they don’t have if kept in a house or a backyard cage. Such captive environments can be very stressful for wild animals not accustomed to living in confined areas.
Stress can cause captive wild animals to become sick and even die from the tremendous amount of anxiety they encounter in captivity.

3. **Habituation:** Young wild animals learn survival skills and normal social behaviors from their wild parents. When held in captivity, they become abnormally accustomed to human activity and often learn abnormal behaviors from people or domestic animals. They lose their natural fear of people and predators. Such animals will likely not survive when released back into the wild because they have not learned the correct survival skills.

4. **Dangerous Wild Behavior:** As young wild animals grow into adults, their natural survival instincts kick in and they may demonstrate aggressive, dangerous behaviors that can threaten the safety of people and domestic animals. Wild animals are not domesticated or tame and are much less predictable than pets or livestock. They have a greater tendency to bite, kick, scratch or attack people, including children, guests or neighbors. Car horns, ambulance sirens, fireworks or other unexpected loud noises typical of the human environment may startle captive wild animals and cause them to panic. Just as owners of domestic pets are responsible for the actions of their domesticated companions, so are those who illegally keep wild animals in their home or backyards.
5. **Disease:** It is an unfortunate fact of life that SOME wild animals may carry diseases (such as rabies, canine distemper, mange, and salmonella) that are dangerous and sometimes deadly to people or pets. When animals are healthy, they behave normally, which means that they shy away from people. But if they become sick, diseased animals may appear confused and disoriented as they wander aimlessly about. An additional concern with some diseases, such as rabies and distemper, is that the infected animals often act as though they have lost all their natural fear of people to the point of appearing tame. These behaviors may tempt an unknowing person to pick up a wild animal. **But P-L-E-A-S-E …NEVER do so!!**

6. **It's Illegal:** Keeping wild birds and mammals (and some reptiles and amphibians) captive as pets is illegal in Wisconsin and most other states for the reasons mentioned above. Wisconsin state laws--and for most wild birds, federal laws--closely regulate facility standards and training requirements, and require careful reporting for any person who is licensed or permitted to keep wild animals. These laws regulate the exact size of cages required to keep each type of wild animal confined. The average person does not have the appropriate holding facilities to keep a wild animal safely and properly confined. Wisconsin's captive wildlife regulations allow a person to possess a wild animal for up to 24 hours for the purpose of transferring that animal to an appropriately licensed individual, such as a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or a veterinarian. Even though young wild animals are cute, they should never be viewed as pets. It's illegal and not the right thing for the animal.

Some people wrongly keep wild animals as pets. They are either unaware of regulations that have been adopted to keep wildlife healthy and free from captivity, abuse and neglect or are unwilling to follow the rules. These individuals often claim that their situation is different and that they are the exception to the rule. Unlawful keepers of wild animals often say "MY raccoon (or my skunk or my fox) is different… It loves me and would never hurt me!" This may be true…until the day it isn’t. Wild animals held in captivity can exhibit unpredictable and dangerous behaviors. There have been numerous cases in Wisconsin where captive wild animals have caused severe injuries to people and domestic animals. Please help your students learn the proper ways of interacting with wild animals. It could save a life!
Lesson One
Keep Wildlife Wild
PowerPoint
Keep Wildlife Wild

Goal
Students understand the difference between wild and domestic animals and why young wild animals should be left in the wild.

Objectives
Students will be able to:
- Describe the difference between wild and domesticated animals.
- List 4 to 6 reasons why it is not a good idea to capture a wild animal and keep it at home or in one’s backyard.
- State that keeping most wild animals--particularly native birds and mammals—is illegal in Wisconsin and most other states.

Subjects  Science or Social Science

Grades  4-6

Time  25 minutes

Materials and Equipment:
- **Keep Wildlife Wild** PowerPoint program
- **Keep Wildlife Wild** script (pages 12-25)
- Laptop or other computer to run Microsoft PowerPoint
- Projector with appropriate connecting cables
- Projection screen
- Electrical extension cord
Teacher Preparation:

- Set up and connect computer and projector.
- Load the Keep Wildlife Wild PowerPoint presentation onto the computer.
- Rehearse the printed script prior to class (pages 12-25).

Procedure

Introduce the Keep Wildlife Wild slide presentation by explaining that you will be sharing some important information about Wisconsin’s wildlife. Spring is the season of the year when young wild animals are out and about. Sometimes these young wild animals may be found without the natural parent nearby. It is important for students to know what steps they should take if they encounter a young wild animal.

You may wish to first review some of the words used in the slide show. We have provided you with a vocabulary list on pages 8-10.

The slide show explains what a wild animal is and how it is different from a domestic animal. The presentation explores some of the adaptations that young wild animals possess to help them survive—even without the presence of their parents. Finally, the program discusses what students need to do if they should encounter a young wild animal in a situation that seems like the animal needs help.

Begin the PowerPoint presentation using the script provided on pages 12-25.

When you are finished showing the PowerPoint, explain that you are now going to provide students with some interesting dilemmas involving some young wild animals common to Wisconsin. Proceed to Lesson 2: What a Dilemma!
Vocabulary
The words or phrases defined below are described in terms of how they are used in the Keep Wildlife Wild PowerPoint program.

Animal Husbandry: The science of caring for animals.

Aggressive or Aggression: An animal that is ready or likely to attack or confront a person or another animal.

Binoculars: An optical instrument with a lens for each eye used by people for viewing distant objects (such as wild animals).

Captive or Capture: Refers to a wild animal held or confined by people against its will.

Deformity: A misshaped part of an animal’s body, such as feathers that grow unnaturally outward from a wing.

Disease: An abnormal impairment in the function of a specified bodily organ or system in a animal, especially one that produces specific symptoms that make the animal ill and that is not simply a direct result of physical injury.

Doe: A female deer or rabbit.

Domestic Animal or Domestication: A tame animal or the act of taming an animal through generations of breeding wild animals to bring out specific characteristics desirable to people such as milder personalities that allow the animal to live in close association with people (as a pet or work animal), or animals that are heavier, taller, differently colored or shaped than the wild ancestor. Such animals usually are very dependent on people to the extent that they lose the ability to survive in the wild.

Enriching or Enrichment: To improve or enhance the quality of a captive animal’s life by providing stimulating experiences that engage one or more of its senses.
Euthanize: To put a sick or injured animal to death gently and humanely.

Fawn: The young offspring of a deer.

Fledgling: A young songbird that is nearly fully feathered. Its eyes are open, it is alert and it can flap its wings though it may not yet be able to fly any distance. It is active and ready to leave the nest.

Illegal: An act that is forbidden by law and often punishable by fines or even time in jail.

Injured: An animal that is physically damaged and hurt, often from an accident (falling, getting hit by a car, being captured by a predator).

Kit: The young of a rabbit, fox, skunk, squirrel or badger.

Legal: Allowable under the law.

License or Licensed: Permission (through the issuance of an official document) to carry out an action in accordance with the law.

Nestling: A naked, downy, or partially feathered baby bird that is too young to be out of the nest. Its eyes may still be closed and its head may be wobbly. It needs assistance and cannot fend for itself.

Nutrition or Nutritious: These words are used in reference to providing food to wild animals that is nourishing and full of essential nutrients important for the health and growth of the animal.

Obesity: The condition of being grossly overweight.

Orphan: An animal whose parents are dead.

Predator: An animal that eats meat and that catches and kills other animals (prey) for food.
Prey: An animal that is hunted and killed by another for food.

Rehabilitate or Rehabilitation: The act of restoring an orphaned, sick or injured animal back to health.

Rehabilitator: A person with the skills, training, and necessary licenses and permits to rescue an orphaned, sick or injured animal and restore it back to health for release back to the wild.

Scent: An odor left behind by an animal.

Sick: Physically ill and unhealthy.

Social Behavior: The way an animal acts with others of its species.

Temperament: An animal’s (or person’s) general attitude towards people an other animals. Temperament traits include, in part, shyness, aggressiveness, protectiveness, prey instincts, and self-defense instincts.

Veterinarian: A person trained, skilled, qualified and professionally licensed through an accredited university to treat diseased or injured animals (domestic or wild) to diagnose health problems and to treat the ailments to bring the animal back to good health.

Wild Animal or Wildlife: Referring to those animals that are able to obtain—all on their own—all the food, water, shelter and other life requirements they need to live in nature without the aid of people.
Wild or Domestic?

It isn’t always easy to look at an animal and know if it is wild or domestic. Often, though, domestic animals have louder, brighter, flashier colors than their wild cousins. The sunny yellow farm duckling (upper left) is a domestic animal, whereas the mallard duckling (lower, right) with its more muted, camouflaged colors is a wild animal.
Keep Wildlife Wild Slide Show Script

1. Blank, Black Slide

2. Today, we’re going to talk about wildlife and I’m going to help you understand why it is important to Keep Wildlife Wild. I hope you come away from this program understanding one important concept— that a young wild animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother...in the wild.

3. Before we continue, I want to make sure you understand what I mean when I talk about a “wild animal.” Can you tell if an animal is wild or not, simply by LOOKING at it?

4. I’m sure you agree that THESE animals are NOT wild. Right? Pets, like dogs & cats, parakeets & goldfish and farm animals like the cow, goat, chicken & pig are what we call DOMESTIC animals. The word “domestic” simply means “belonging to the home.” So domestic pets and farm animals are those animals that live around our homes and farms.

5. Domestic pets and farm animals depend on people for their food, water and shelter.

6. WILD animals, on the other hand, are what conservationists call WILDLIFE. Unlike domestic animals, wild animals do not directly depend on people for survival.

7. They must find all their food, water and shelter on their own.

8. Watching wildlife is a very fun activity. Sometimes you can get really up close and personal with wild animals.

9. Other times, you need to keep a more respectful distance.

10. Now, you probably already know that some times of the year are better for finding YOUNG wild animals than other times of the year.

11. May and June are the prime months when wild animals are busy raising a brand new crop of inexperienced young.
12. It’s during these warm spring days that you are most likely to find a young animal out and about….apparently on its own.

13. It’s not unusual to have tender feelings for these young animals…particularly if they are cute and fluffy…

14. …or furry and funny. Such little animals look harmless….they just seem to be crying out “I’d like to play with you! Won’t you pick me up?” But PLEASE NEVER EVER touch, move or capture a wild animal. In just a moment, we’ll learn WHY picking up a wild animal is NOT a very good idea.

15. If you are ever tempted to capture a young wild animal that you THINK needs help, or—WORSE— that you would like to take home with you and keep as a pet…PLEASE THINK AGAIN!

16. You should never keep a wild animal as a pet. Trying to make a pet from a young wild animal isn’t the same thing as keeping a parakeet in a cage or a gecko in a terrarium.

17. When young wild animals appear alone or out of place we tend to think they are either lost or that their mother has abandoned them or that she was hit by a car…leaving her young as ORPHANS.

18. Our natural sense of kindness and sympathy drives many of us to want to reach out and rescue them because they appear so helpless. We just naturally assume “They MUST need my help!”

19. But stop and think again!

20. Did you know that MOST young wild animals you find alone in the wild have AMAZING abilities to survive and that they usually are not orphans?

21. In fact, most times their wild parent is nearby, out of sight, anxiously waiting for you to leave the area so she can attend to her young.

22. Did you also know that many wild MAMMALS, like this white-tailed DOE, DELIBERATELY leave their young somewhere they think is safe?
23. Experienced wild mothers instinctively know the best place to hide their offspring. A doe may place her fawn in a quiet meadow filled with tall grasses and fragrant wildflowers…

24. …where her fawn will rest quietly and remain still all day long.

25. Or she may select a quiet spot on the forest floor, hidden under a brush pile.

26. A cottontail Doe will cover her nest of Kits with dry grass. Those young cottontails will stay there all day long.

27. Once the wild mothers have placed their young in a safe location, they wander off to feed and rest themselves during the day.

28. By leaving her young alone during the day, a wild mother’s Scents drifts away on the breeze making it more difficult for wandering predators to detect her hidden young. Can you spot the young animal hiding here?

29. Only later, under the safety of a darkening sky as the evening sun begins to set, does the white-tail doe come back to feed her fawn….

30. …or the cottontail doe return to nurse her kits.

31. It’s natural for young animals to begin exploring the wild on their own when mother is away.

32. If a young cottontail is fully furred, with eyes wide open, and ears perked up, it is usually able to feed on its own, even if its mother is absent.

33. When songbirds are newly hatched like these day-old bluebird Nestlings, they are basically naked and their eyes are closed. Such tiny, helpless birds would need the expert advice of a wildlife rehabilitator if you found them out of their nest.

34. But nestlings quickly grow fatter, with more feathers and their eyes eventually open.

35. When songbirds reach two weeks of age, like these bluebird Fledglings, they are fully feathered and their eyes are open and alert. These birds are almost ready to leave the nest.
36. Most of the young birds **YOU** are likely to encounter in the spring will be feathered fledglings hopping around on the ground. Though fledglings aren’t fully able to fly right away, they **ARE** at that stage where they are **SUPPOSED** to leave the nest. These birds, with their parents nearby to assist them, are capable of surviving on their own--as long as you keep your pets locked inside your house!

37. So, if you happen to find a young wild animal that you **THINK** may be on its own...

38. ...remember that its mother is very likely nearby.

39. **NEVER** attempt to rescue a young animal on your own...

40. and **NEVER EVER** try to keep a wild animal as a pet. As I mentioned earlier, some young animals, like this fledgling, are **SUPPOSED** to be on their own.

41. Keeping a wild animal captive at home is cause for concern...for several reasons.

42. Put yourself in the position of these rescued raccoon kits. How would **YOU** feel if people or pets suddenly started looking in on you: sniffing you, touching you, licking you, petting you? You’d probably be pretty scared, wouldn’t you?

43. Many of us just can’t help ourselves. If we see a young animal all alone in the wild, we just want to rescue it. The majority of us are good-hearted; and we mean well.

44. But, stop and think again.

45. Being well-meaning isn’t a substitute for being well-trained.

46. It is important to **THINK** before we ACT.

47. You may **THINK** you would make a great foster parent to a truly orphaned young wild animal, but the reality is that most of us haven’t a clue how difficult that job is. A lot of skills and knowledge are necessary for that job. Let’s take a look!
48. One of the first job skills a wild parent must have is the ability to build the right kind of nest or den for its young. Wild parents know the best materials as well as the best techniques for building a proper home.

49. Job Skill #2 relates to knowing how much room a wild orphan needs while in captivity to prevent it from feeling cramped or overcrowded. Most well-meaning people simply do NOT have cages of the correct size at home or in their backyards to provide the required amount of space needed to keep wild orphans content as they grow healthy and strong.

50. Being held captive in a cramped cage can be very stressful to a wild animal.

51. Job Skill #3 relates to providing the right kinds of food to keep wild orphans healthy. While we may occasionally provide OUR pets with little treats from the cupboard, we don’t feed them such food day in and day out, do we?

52. Feeding human food, such as popcorn, white bread, crackers, peanut butter or even cow’s milk from the local grocery store can actually—in the long run—do more harm than good.

53. Every wild animal has a very specific diet that is difficult to duplicate under captive, household conditions.

54. INFANT wild animals, in particular, need extra care with feeding. Just like human babies, infant wild orphans require VERY specialized diets that are complete in nutrition. Wild parents, like this mother robin, automatically know the best kinds of NATURAL foods to feed their young.

55. When wild orphans are fed poor diets, they often end up suffering serious nutritional deficiencies that can lead to such health problems as OBESITY…

56. And physical DEFORMITIES.

57. Natural foods derived from the wild are SO much more NUTRITIOUS than processed foods—even pet food kibbles—that come from a can or a bag.

58. Job Skill #4 deals with knowing not only WHAT to feed a wild orphan, but also WHEN to feed it, HOW MUCH to feed it and HOW MANY TIMES during the day to feed it.
59. How often do you think songbird parents feed their nestlings? Would you believe every 15 to 20 minutes?? And that’s from sunrise until sunset. That’s probably way past your bedtime.

60. It always turns out that an animal’s NATURAL mother is BEST equipped to provide the most appropriate nutrition, in just the right amounts and at just the right times. That’s why it’s important to remember that….

61. “A young wild animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother.”

62. I call Job Skill #5: PARTY TIME! to reflect the fact that young wild mammals and birds like to—and NEED to—hang around together…

63. … at least when the young are being raised.

64. Time spent as a family unit is an example of a type of behavior that scientists call…

65. SOCIAL BEHAVIOR. Most young birds and mammals benefit from being around their parents and siblings.

66. Being together as a family helps young birds and mammals learn the necessary skills of survival. Wild parents can’t shout to their youngsters “Look both ways before crossing the road!!!” Instead, the young ones LEARN from each other by following their parents and watching what they do.

67. Another form of social behavior that young MAMMALS exhibit is called PLAY. [Do you play with your brothers or sisters or parents?]. But play isn’t just all “fun and games”…it is CRITICAL to the growth and learning of young mammals.

68. Play is what helps young PREDATORS learn the art of stalking, hunting and catching their PREY.

69. And it’s what helps prey animals learn some of the survival skills needed to defend themselves from predators.

70. Social time in a family unit also helps young animals learn what to eat, what time of the year to search for certain types of foods, where the nearest water hole is and where the best hiding spots are.
71. Being held captive all alone in a cage at the home of a well-meaning, though inexperienced, person acting as a foster parent prevents a young mammal...

72. ...from gaining key learning experiences it would normally get while in the company of its family.

73. Wild animals held captive learn abnormal behaviors from people and their domestic animals. Unfortunately, these captive wild animals will likely not survive when released back into the wild because they have not learned the correct survival skills. They become used to being around our dwellings and have lost their natural fear of people and predators.

74. Finally, Job skill #6, deals with the development of a wild orphan’s brain and its five senses. WE develop our brains in a number of ways. Our parents often tell us that reading is a great way of ENRICHING our lives.

75. Wild orphans held in captivity also need activities to ENRICH their daily lives by challenging them to use and develop all of their senses.

76. But we all know that animals can’t read. So THEIR enrichment activities need to be in some other form.

77. For instance, fledgling birds and young bats need opportunities to stretch and exercise their wings every day to help them learn to fly.

78. Tree-dwelling orphans, like this little squirrel, need opportunities to climb and scurry about from one tree branch to another.

79. Animals that normally spend time underground, such as badgers, chipmunks, woodchucks or ground squirrels, need opportunities to dig in the earth.

80. Animals that normally live near water benefit by having some supervised time spent in the water even if it’s just a small rubber tub or play pool.

81. Hiding food under leaves is an excellent ENRICHMENT activity that helps wild orphans develop their five senses.
82. So let’s summarize the six job skills needed by any person who THINKS they have what it takes to be a good foster parent to a truly orphaned wild animal. [Review the list in your own way.] I hope you see that most of us do not have the required job skills necessary to raise a wild orphan to the point that it can be successfully returned back to the wild.

83. Besides the fact that most of us lack the skills to raise a wild animal, there are a few more very good reasons not to try to do this at home on your own. The first of these has to do with a wild animal’s natural personality or temperament.

84. As we mentioned moments ago, mammals learn through rough and tumble play. But what appears as harmless activity when the an animal is very young…

85. …eventually blossoms into more aggressive behaviors as it grows older and its natural defensive survival instincts kick in.

86. This young raccoon appears meek and mild to the point that you would think it would be easy to pick up…but BEWARE!!!!

87. …even tiny young animals have very sharp teeth, beaks, hooves and claws that they are more than willing to use if you try to capture them.

88. If you’ve ever raised a kitten or puppy you know they have a natural tendency to nip and gnaw when they are young.

89. You may think such playful behavior is amusing,

90. And you may even tolerate such behavior when your pet is young. But this is unwise, because, if you do nothing now to stop this early expression of aggressive behavior…

91. …it can blow up into something hurtful, dangerous, and potentially deadly as your pet matures into an adult. Now these are PETS I’ve just been talking about. Domestic pets are usually much more mild-mannered than wild animals.

92. If you thought kittens and puppies were a little nippy, imagine the level of aggressive behavior that wild animals are capable of inflicting on people. Wild animals couldn’t survive in the wild if they were gentle and meek.
93. No matter how cute and cuddly young wild animals seem at first...they always grow up.

94. Time and again, well-meaning—though inexperienced—people who try to rescue what they THINK is a truly orphaned wild animal—or worse, who try to take one home as a pet(!!!)—quickly come to regret their act of kindness when...

95. ...the young animal grows up and its instinctive defense behaviors kick in.

96. All adult wild animals have a natural tendency to fight. After all, they have to fight every day of their lives just to survive in the wild.

97. More than one inexperienced person handling a wild animal without the proper training and skills has been bitten.

98. Ouch! That hurts!

99. It can be quite an unpleasant and painful experience. I don’t want this to happen to YOU!! Harboring a wild animal—either to try to rehabilitate it, or worse, to keep it as a pet—is NEVER a good idea.

100. Being bitten by a wild animal is serious business. If you ever get bitten, tell your parents immediately and have them rush you to the emergency room to be examined as soon as possible.

101. Now let’s explore another good reason why you should NEVER pick up a wild animal: It’s an unfortunate fact of life that SOME wild mammals—though certainly NOT ALL—may become infected with DISEASES.

102. That’s very unfortunate—not only for the animal that happens to be ill, but also for you, your family or your pets who may come in contact with the infected animal if you try to rescue it on your own.

103. Not only may your PETS contract diseases when they come into contact with diseased wild animals that you may bring home....

104. But you or your family members can become sick to your stomach, get severe cramps, a bad case of diarrhea...or WORSE!
105. Not all sick animals appear sick…especially in the early stages of a disease.

106. Merely handling a wild animal…particularly those that live in water….can make you ill.

107. If you forget my cautions and happened to pick up a wild animal, such as a turtle, a duckling, or a frog, then PLEASE be SURE to WASH YOUR HANDS thoroughly soon after you’ve released the animal back into the wild.

108. An additional concern with diseased wildlife is that they may act as though they have lost all their natural fear of people to the point of appearing tame.

109. It’s true that some mammals living in urban areas get used to being around people and they may appear “tame,” but if an animal doesn’t run away when you approach it, or if it appears confused and disoriented as it wanders aimlessly about, then BEWARE! This is not normal behavior and you should leave the area immediately.

110. Now let’s discuss one last— but very important—reason why it is a bad idea to rescue wild orphans on your own or—as this family is doing— to keep a wild animal as a pet.

111. It happens to be ILLEGAL!!! You don’t want to break the law do you?

112. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has developed detailed RULES and REGULATIONS that set the standards of care and maintenance for wild animals held in captivity.

113. This is the law not only in Wisconsin….

114. …but also in most other states. These laws are not intended to make our lives complicated or miserable.

115. These laws are designed for a very good reason: To protect wild animals from neglect and abuse and protect people from injury and disease.

116. There may be times, however, when you may find an animal truly in need of help. It may actually be orphaned, injured or sick. Very few of us want to leave a wild animal to die a slow death if it can be helped.
Perhaps you found a young bird that has become tangled in fishing line along the shores of Lake Michigan.

Or you may have discovered a young raccoon that looks sick: It has a runny nose and matted eyes, and seems overly weary and exhausted.

Maybe your house cat escaped out your back door and destroyed a bird nest, killing both parents and all but a nestling or two.

Or, perhaps you found a dead doe alongside the road near your house and later heard a young fawn bawling like a lost lamb. Your heart goes out to this little orphan and you truly believe it needs some kind of help.

Hopefully you’ll know by now that you should NEVER EVER capture a wild animal and try to raise it at home on your own! Most of us lack the necessary job skills; it isn’t in the best interests of the young wild animal to be taken from the wild; you might get kicked, scratched or bitten; you, your family and your pets may become sick; and it is illegal.

Rather than attempting to rescue a truly orphaned wild animal on your own,

THINK AGAIN! Always tell your parents or other adult about the situation….

….and ask them to contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources IMMEDIATELY.

If you have a home computer with internet access, ask your parents to go online and search for Wisconsin DNR.

Click on that link to get to the Wisconsin DNR homepage.

Once there, your parents can type in “Keep Wildlife Wild” on the search line.

This will take them to the Keep Wildlife Wild webpage where they will find great fact sheets to help them decide the appropriate steps to take in case the animal you found is truly orphaned. They can also find the list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators to turn to for advice.

If you don’t have a home computer with internet access, then ask your parents to call the Wisconsin DNR …
130. It’s a toll-free number and fairly easy to remember: it’s 1-888-WDNR-INFo. That’s 1-888-WDNR-INFo.

131. A helpful DNR employee will answer your parent’s phone call and gladly provide them with step-by-step information about how to handle your situation. The DNR customer service representative can also provide the contact information for the licensed wildlife rehabilitators nearest your home.

132. Licensed wildlife **REHABILITATORS** are wonderful people to get to know. They know the best methods for capturing and transporting an orphaned wild animal. Their methods are safe not only for the animal itself, but also for the person handling the animal.

133. If the wildlife rehabilitator cannot personally make the rescue call to your home, he or she can provide your parents with specific instructions on how to safely capture the orphaned animal and transport it safely to the rehabilitator’s facility.

134. The rehabilitator may instruct your parents to use heavy leather work gloves to protect hands and arms from sharp talons or claws…

135. …and they’ll explain the best kind of fabrics to use during transportation…

136. Such materials happen to be soft, velvety, non-looped, non-ravelling fabrics that can keep tiny toenails from getting snagged in the cloth fibers.

137. The wildlife rehabilitator will also explain how to build a cardboard crate where you will place the wild orphans.

138. They’ll explain how to punch ventilation holes into the side of the box.

139. These holes must be small enough to prevent the animals’ escape…

140. …but large enough to let in plenty of fresh air so that the little orphans can breathe easily while your parents drive them to the wildlife rehabilitator.

141. The law allows you 24 hours to transfer a wild animal from your possession to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. For the animals’ sake, however, make the transfer as soon as possible.
142. Licensed wildlife rehabilitators have lots of experience in the temporary care and treatment of wild orphans or sick and injured wildlife.

143. They have well-stocked and appropriately-equipped care facilities with all the tools, foods, medicines and other materials needed to care for orphaned animals.

144. And they have properly-sized holding pens that conform to Wisconsin’s captive wildlife laws.

145. Wildlife rehabilitators maintain close working relationships with local veterinarians who understand wildlife health and disease better than anyone.

146. Wisconsin’s licensed wildlife rehabilitators have detailed knowledge about wildlife health and disease, animal behavior, dietary nutrition and animal husbandry. They understand the unique, complex set of needs of wildlife and how best to raise wild orphans to adulthood successfully.

147. When wildlife rehabilitators take in a wild orphan brought to their facility, they quickly assess the health of the animal, then decide on the proper course of action.

148. Their overall goal is to raise wild orphans as quickly as possible and to mend any minor injuries so that the animals may be RELEASED back into the wild once they are healthy and strong.

149. If an injury, such as a blind eye or a deformed leg, cannot be mended and it severely hinders an orphaned animal’s survival in the wild, then the rehabilitator may keep or find suitable placement for the animal for educational purposes. These disabled animals become AMBASSADORS or OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES for their species when the rehabilitator gives educational programs about wildlife for school or other civic groups.

150. In the most severe cases, if an orphaned animal is too sick or injured for it to either fully recover so it can survive in the wild or be humanely kept for education programs, then the wildlife rehabilitator takes the next sad step that involves gently and humanely euthanizing the animal.

151. In conclusion, remember that spring is the time of the year when Wisconsin’s young wild animals are out and about.
152. Young wild animals possess amazing abilities to survive on their own. Just because they are small, doesn’t mean they are helpless.

153. Generally, young wild animals found without a parent in the wild, like these red fox kits, are not orphans.

154. Most of the time the wild parent, usually the mother, is hiding somewhere nearby…waiting for you to leave the area so she can retrieve her young.

155. Most importantly of all, if you find a young wild animal you think may be an orphan, PLEASE DO NOT touch it, chase it, capture it, or take it home as a pet.

156. Let’s review the reasons why (review the list on the screen).

157. However, if you DO find a young wild animal you suspect is truly an orphan, tell your parents and ask them to contact either the Wisconsin DNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for further information on how to handle the situation.

158. No matter how CUTE a young wild animal may appear, it is still WILD, with wild--sometimes defensive and dangerous--natural instincts to help it survive.

159. But don’t be afraid of wildlife. I encourage you and your family to get outdoors and watch wildlife from a safe and respectful distance.

160. Using binoculars and cameras can help you get a closer look, without interfering with the animals’ natural behavior.

161. Won’t you please join me in taking a pledge to Keep Wildlife Wild because wild animals, like these little stinkers, are happiest and healthiest in the wild.

162. After all, a wild baby animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother…. 

163. …in the wild. So let’s leave them there.

164. Keep Wildlife Wild!

165. (Credit Slide)

166. (Credit Slide)

167. Thank you!
Lesson Two

What a Dilemma!
What a Dilemma!

Goal
The goal of this activity is to help students understand that people can make a variety of personal decisions to take certain actions if they find a young bird or mammal. Generally, the best first course of action is to contact the nearest licensed wildlife rehabilitator or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to request assistance and further information.

Objectives
Students will be able to:
- State at least five of the eight Key Messages, with the most important two being 1) Never pick up a wild animal and 2) ask an adult to contact WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Subjects  Science or Social Science

Grades  4-6

Time  20-25 minutes

Materials
- Copies of the 8 dilemma cards (The number depends on the size of your class)
- Keep Wildlife Wild bookmarks to hand out after the activity.
- Classroom set of the 7 Keep Wildlife Wild Wild Cards.
- For the cartoon portion of the activity, set up your computer and projector to show the PDF cartoon pages on the classroom screen (pages 44-45).
Key Messages

- A young wild animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother.
- Young wild animals (often referred to as “baby” animals) that are found alone are rarely orphans: a parent is often nearby.
- Never chase, touch or pick up a wild animal.
- **Wild animals DO NOT make good pets!** Captive animals are difficult to care for at home or in your backyard:
  - They often become stressed which may lead to illness or even death.
  - Even young wild animals are unpredictable and may exhibit dangerous behaviors that may threaten the safety of people and domestic animals.
  - Every wild animal has specific dietary needs not easily met with food from your cupboard or refrigerator. Wild animals may get sick from eating the foods we eat.
  - Captive wild animals are prone to becoming used to being around your house and yard. They may lose their natural fear of people, domestic animals and even natural predators--behaviors not helpful to their survival when they are finally released back into the wild.
  - While most wild animals are healthy, some may carry diseases or parasites that may spread to people and domestic animals.
- It is illegal to keep wild mammals and birds captive in Wisconsin without proper permits and licenses.
- If you find a sick, injured or truly orphaned wild animal, tell an adult and ask him or her to contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
- You have 24 hours to legally transfer a wild animal to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, but please do so as soon as possible.
Procedure

Prior to the lesson, reproduce enough of the eight What a Dilemma! cards so that each team has a card to discuss. Print these double-sided so that the Dilemma is printed on the front of the card, and the four possible actions are printed on the reverse side. Larger classes may require duplicate dilemma cards.

Ask your school librarian to select a variety of books appropriate for your class that cover such topics as wild animal rescue, the remarkable survival adaptations of common urban wildlife, and careers in wildlife-related fields. A suggested list of potential titles follows the What a Dilemma! activity (pages 35-42).

Following the Keep Wildlife Wild PowerPoint presentation, explain to your students that you will now present them with a dilemma about a young wild animal. Ask students what the word “dilemma” means. Confirm that a dilemma is a situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternative actions. Some actions may be better than others.

As a helpful example to begin the dilemma activity, project Page 1 of the “Keep Wildlife Wild” cartoon (page 44). Ask for three volunteers: two boys to play the part of the two school classmates and one girl to play the role of the DNR employee/mother. As you project the cartoon ask the two boys to recite their lines.

The first page of the cartoon sets up a dilemma for the students to consider. After the volunteers recite their
lines, ask your class what they think should be done with the white-tailed fawn that the two boys have discovered. Do they think the fawn is really scared? Why or why not? How would you know if a young wild animal is frightened?

After a round of discussion, project Page 2 of the cartoon (page 45) on the screen and ask the two boys and the girl to recite their new lines.

Draw your students’ attention to the frame on Page 2 in which the mom (DNR employee) is carrying the fawn to a safer location. What does she have on her hands? (Answer: blue gloves). Why would she be carrying the fawn using gloved hands?

Ask your class what they learned from this dilemma presented in cartoon format. Answers may include:

- Wild animals do not make good pets as do dogs or cats.
- A young wild animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother.
- Mother deer (called does) usually leave their fawns alone during the day and come back to feed them at dawn or dusk.
- It’s wise to ask for advice from a parent or other adult.
- Never pick up a wild animal...let an adult handle the situation.
- Adults should wear protective gloves if they must pick up or move a young wild animal.
- Sometimes wild animals need intervention from people to assist with their survival.
Now, divide your class into small groups. Distribute one dilemma card to each team. Separate teams into various corners of your room. You have two courses of action, depending on your time:

1. Ask each team to select a leader who will quietly read the dilemma aloud. Encourage teams to talk quietly among themselves as they discuss what course of action they should take to resolve the dilemma. After the teams arrive at their first course of action, hand team members a Wild Card appropriate to the focal species of their dilemma. Ask them to read their card and if the information they learned requires them to modify their first course of action.

2. If time permits, ask teams to now turn over their assigned dilemma card. Ask the team leader to quietly read aloud each of the four potential courses of action listed on the back of the dilemma card. As each course of action is read, team members should discuss the pros and cons of that action.

Many birds are adapted to living near people’s homes. American Robins, House Wrens, Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and even Barn Swallows, shown above, readily raise their young in nests placed on or around our dwellings.
Ask each team leader to carefully formulate his or her team’s response. Now, ask students to return to their assigned seating. Direct each team leader to the front of the classroom to report what his or her team’s dilemma was and what the team decided was the best course of action to take and WHY. Ask the class if they agree or disagree with that team’s decision.

As the classroom instructor, refer to the information presented in the Possible Actions--Teacher Info cards (pages 55-63) to help guide the classroom discussion. This is particularly important if your class had time to discuss each of the four potential actions on the back of their dilemma card. **This information is critical to help your students reach a common understanding about what actions are appropriate** and what actions are not if they find a young wild animal alone in the wild. **Be sure your students know that they should NEVER chase, hold or pick up a wild bird or mammal by themselves.** Instead, they should tell an adult about the wild animal situation and ask the adult to contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Finally, ask the students the followup question presented in the Note section on the Possible Actions--Teacher Info cards.
Activity Extension: The After Word

Critical Reading and Thinking Skills

After your presentation of the Keep Wildlife Wild PowerPoint slide show and the What a Dilemma! activity, give each student a Keep Wildlife Wild bookmark. Review the information on the back of the bookmark with your class.

Encourage students to show their bookmark to their parents and ask them to keep the WDNR webpage information and phone number handy in case they ever need to contact a local wildlife rehabilitator for information on how to handle a situation with a wild animal.

Misinformation may sometimes be presented in books and magazines about how to interact with wildlife, depending on the author’s personal beliefs. This activity extension encourages students to visit the school library and check out one of the books on rescued wildlife, adaptations of young wild animals, or wildlife-related careers that your school librarian has set aside for your class. Ask your students to read their selected book with a careful and critical eye, keeping in mind the main points they learned in the lesson today (they can refer to the back of their bookmarks for a quick reminder of these points). Do the authors of their selected books provide accurate information to readers? What actions taken by the book’s main characters follow the information as presented in the Keep Wildlife Wild slide show? Which actions go against the main points of Keep Wildlife Wild?

The following list of books has been included simply based on the information presented in on-line descriptions of each book’s content. Age levels may vary, but most books should be appropriate for grades 4-6. Ask your students to keep a critical eye on how accurate the information is presented compared to what they learned in the Keep Wildlife Wild lessons.
Suggested List of Books

Animal Hospital: Rescuing Urban Wildlife by Julia Coey
This book describes how injured and orphaned wild animals are rehabilitated and cared for after being rescued from perilous situations. It follows the activities of an urban animal rescue facility and the efforts of the trained professionals that rescue, treat, rehabilitate and release the animals. Students will learn about the amazing wild animals that they may encounter in their neighborhoods. Even the most recognizable have fascinating traits. They will get tips on how to protect and support urban wildlife, and learn what to do if they encounter an animal that needs help. Exciting real-life stories include animals in North America, as well as describe international efforts that encourage conservation and awareness.

The Animal Rescue Club by John Himmelman
Jeffrey, Beaner, Raymond and Mike--they are the Animal Rescue Club. If a squirrel is caught in the mud, an opossum in a gutter, or a goose with a wounded foot, these youngsters are off to the rescue. The creatures are taken to an animal hospital where an adult oversees the animals’ care. After the wildlings have recovered, the children release the creatures back into their natural habitats. This story is based on real events. Although an author’s note explains that it is dangerous to approach injured animals and that wildlife rehabilitators must be trained and licensed, adults do not assist with the rescues and no mention of training is made in the narrative. The images in the story contrast with the warnings: a youngster rides his bike with a squirrel peeking out of his backpack, a boy totters on a high ladder with an opossum clinging to his shirt, and a girl puts her arms around a huge goose that is pulling her hair. While this book features characters that do important work with courage and competence, issues about safety and the proper treatment of wild animals make it a good book to discuss as a class using the information learned in the Keep Wildlife Wild Lesson Plan.

Animal Rescue Team: Gator on the Loose! by Sue Stauffacher
Meet the Carters: Mr. and Mrs. Carter, 10-year-old daughter Keisha, five-year-old Razi, baby Paolo, and Grandma Alice. Together, they run Carters’ Urban Rescue, the place you call when you’ve got an animal where it shouldn’t be. In their first adventure of this series, there’s a baby alligator at the city pool, which will seriously interfere with opening day, especially Keisha’s cannonball practice. So it’s up to the whole family to figure out what to do with the poor guy who has no business hanging around Michigan.
Animal Rescue Team: Special Delivery! by Sue Stauffacher
Keisha and her family are just sitting down to Saturday-morning breakfast when the phone rings. Uh-oh! There seems to be a skunk at the community garden, and it’s dug a hole under the shed. At the same time, Mr. Sanders can’t deliver the mail to a certain house because crows keep dive-bombing him when he gets near the mailbox. Time for the Animal Rescue Team to spring into action! This time they’ve got two mysteries to solve: What could crows have against mail delivery? And what really dug that hole at the community garden—as Mama knows, it’s too big to have been dug by a skunk. Once again, it’ll take the whole team, along with help from some new friends, to sort out what, and who, is creating all this mayhem around town.

Animal Rescue Team: Hide and Seek! by Sue Stauffacher
The Carters’ have another problem to solve in this third installment of Animal Rescue Team. In this book, it’s autumn in Grand River, and that means getting ready for Halloween. As Keisha and her pals prepare for the school’s annual Halloween parade, the Carters are getting ready for trick-or-treaters. Unfortunately, the phone rings one morning. A young deer’s curiosity has gotten the best of him. He was enjoying a treat of birdseed inside a plastic pumpkin when his antlers got caught! Now he’s wandering through the neighborhood with a pumpkin on his head. What’s a deer to do? And how do you get a plastic pumpkin off a deer’s head when you can’t catch it?

Animal Rescue Team: Show Time! by Sue Stauffacher
The squirrels at Mt. Mercy College are getting too friendly—they’re frightening the students, making the nuns jumpy . . . and they’re super messy. It’s time to call the Animal Rescue Team!

Wildlife Rescue by Jennifer Dewey
Grades 4-6. An engaging picture of wildlife rehabilitation. From beaver kits to deer to great horned owls, the dedicated staff at the Wildlife Center in Espanola, New Mexico, headed by veterinarian Kathleen Ramsay, deals with an array of injuries and situations. Readers learn about the circumstances that land the various creatures in the center, about its operations, the kinds of surgeries that are performed, and the monitoring and medicating of the patients. Part Two focuses on “baby season,” a time of year when many orphans are taken in. The effects of imprinting are explained in detail—how humans as “mothers” can present difficulties when later setting the animals free. The last section, “Return to the Wild,” tells of the various nature reserves that take in once-injured creatures and protect them, and describes the joyous occasion of releasing three birds of prey into the wild. This well-written book, illustrated with many clear, full-color photographs, will prove interesting to anyone curious about this timely subject.
About the *Wildlife Rescue Series* by Diane Haynes
When you carve a city out of a rainforest, you can be sure the animals are going to need somebody on their side. In this series of books, reluctant heroine Jane Ray is that somebody. The series explores the challenges and rewards of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. *The books are* packed with fascinating facts and interactive resources including volunteer opportunities and animal rescue how-to's.

*Wildlife Rescue Series: Crow Medicine* by Diane Haynes
This book opens under the impending threat of West Nile virus. Jane Ray's favorite animals at the Urban Wildlife Rescue Centre (UWRC) are the juvenile crows--mischievous tricksters with blue-black feathers and an appetite for all that sparkles. But the inexplicable deaths of crows in the city, public fear and media frenzy culminate in the center's policy to euthanize all crows admitted to it, in order to protect staff and volunteers from the deadly disease. Torn between her love for the crows and her loyalty to the center, Jane sets out on a quest to bring a controversial vaccine back over the Rocky Mountains—in time, she hopes, to save the birds. *Crow Medicine* features natural history, facts about the West Nile virus and Native mythology.

*Wildlife Rescue Series: Gaia Wild* by Diane Haynes
When a film production company arrives in Cedar's Ridge to shoot a movie, everyone in the city is excited—except Jane Ray. One of the film stars is not being treated very well: Gaia the elephant is kept in tiny quarters and forced to kneel, walk and trumpet on command. Jane soon learns that Animal Actors Inc. wants to buy Gaia from the local zoo and put her to work, and Jane is determined to sabotage their plans. When the sale falls through and Gaia is scheduled to be euthanized, Jane decides it's up to her to save Gaia's life and restore the elephant's freedom.

*Wildlife Rescue Series: Flight or Fight* by Diane Haynes
When shy, quiet Jane Ray rescues a drowning seabird from an oil spill in Vancouver's Burrard Inlet, she finds herself face-to-face with national television cameras—and head to head with the alleged culprit, SeaKing Shipping Pacific. Jane discovers that there comes a time when everyone has to choose between running and taking a stand. Impassioned by the dedication of animal rescue crews working around the clock to save hundreds of oiled birds, Jane volunteers with the Urban Wildlife Rescue Center and begins a campaign urging SeaKing to take responsibility for the spill. Jane grows frustrated by the lack of response, but far from ignoring her, SeaKing executives are growing worried about the vocal young girl. Will they resort to drastic measures to keep her quiet? Jane is going to need all the help she can get from her two best friends—and a couple of surprising allies as well.
Lesson 2

Keep Wildlife Wild

Backyard Rescue by Hope Ryden
Ten-year-olds Greta and Lindsay are friends who become involved in caring for injured wildlife in their backyard. Once they start caring for an injured screech owl, word gets around and kids start bringing them all kinds of wounded wildlife: a raccoon, snake, red squirrel, and a grebe. The girls research feeding and care of wildlife through books and magazines. They talk with veterinarians, teachers, parents. Then a State Fish and Game Officer comes to investigate and the girls must fight tooth and claw to save their furred and feathered patients from being destroyed. How can something that seems so right be against the law?

A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold
When his veterinarian mom brings home a stray baby skunk that needs rehabilitation before it can be placed in a wild animal shelter, Bat, who has autism, resolves to prove that he is up to the challenge of caring for the skunk permanently.

Julie and the Eagles by Megan McDonald
Julie and her best friend, Ivy, find a baby owl in Golden Gate Park—and it needs help. At a wildlife rescue center, Julie meets Shasta and Sierra, two bald eagles that will be caged for life, unless money is raised to release them back into the wild. For Earth Day, Julie thinks of a unique way to tell the public of the eagles’ plight. The “Looking Back” section explores the beginning of the environmental movement.

Kit: The Adventures of a Raccoon by Shirley Woods
Born in the hollow of a maple tree, Kit spends his early days sleeping and eating. But the security of his mother’s warmth and milk are soon things of the past as he learns to fend for himself in the wild. His mother teaches Kit and his siblings how to fish and forage, but the young raccoons learn other survival skills through trial and error. Meanwhile, the family is always on the move, as Mama raccoon struggles to keep her family safe from predators. But without success. After Kit’s sisters are killed—one by an owl, another by a car—Kit finds himself on his own, and life becomes even more of an adventure. He’s trapped while investigating a family’s garbage cans and later is chased out of a cornfield by hounds. In the end, he survives it all, finds a mate, and becomes a parent of his own litter.

Amber: The Story of a Red Fox by Shirley Woods
A touching and accurate depiction of the life cycle of a family of red foxes...filled with factual information about foxes without detracting from the excitement and adventure of the story. The author excels at capturing the extreme moments of danger that Amber faces and accurately conveys feelings of suspense.
**Black Nell: The Adventures of a Coyote** *by Shirley Woods*

Nell is born into a litter of four coyotes in a den in northern Ontario. Her black fur makes her an anomaly—and also a prime target for hunters. As they grow, she and her siblings learn how to dodge threats from people and wildlife. Sometimes the pups learn from their parents, other times they learn from experience, as when they gobble wild blueberries directly under the nose of a black bear. Other adventures show Nell steering clear of a trapper, escaping a wildfire, and fleeing from a deer hunter. Eventually, Nell must leave the nest. Her quest for food brings her too close to people and she is struck by a car. Caring wildlife rehabilitators nurse her back to health and release her back into a protected wilderness park, where she will be able to find a mate and carry on with her life.

**Jack: The Story of a Beaver** *by Shirley Woods*

The world is a dangerous place for a young beaver. Jack, along with his three siblings, learns quickly that even their lodge is not always safe: Bears, wolves, bobcats, and even birds of prey are a constant threat to the young kits. Mother, Father, the yearlings, and their old Uncle all work hard to protect them. Nevertheless, out of the original litter of four, only Jack and his sister survive their first summer of life on the pond. As Jack matures, he quickly becomes a working member of the colony. While he is expected to protect his mother’s new litter, he also learns to fell trees and repair the lodge. One day Jack will set out alone on a long journey of discovery. It is time for him to leave the colony, find a mate, and establish a home of his own.

**Rascal** *by Sterling North*

At 11 years of age, young Sterling North found himself the caretaker of a baby raccoon named Rascal. This long-enjoyed Newbery Honor book provides the details of a year in the life of a boy and a raccoon. Set in 1918, Sterling’s father is often absent and perpetually involved in research for a novel about the Fox and Winnebago Indians. Sterling’s mother is deceased, and he is often left to his own devices. Rascal therefore enjoys such comforts as sleeping in Sterling’s bed and attending the county fair. As Rascal ages, Sterling is aware that the raccoon is having normal springtime urges and is not happy residing in the pen Sterling has constructed for his raccoon.

**Baby Owl’s Rescue** *by Jennifer Keats Curtis*

Join brother and sister Max and Maddie who just wanted to play baseball one day. They never expected to come face-to-face with a wild animal! What if you found a baby owl in your backyard? Would you know what to do? Where would you go to find help? Includes “For Creative Minds” educational section.
**Saving Animal Babies** by Amy Shields

These heartwarming stories of animal babies, rescued and nursed back to health by caring people, will pull at the heart strings and make kids realize there’s a survivor inside all of us. Photos document the animal recoveries.

**Prince William** by Gloria Rand

After a tanker accident occurs near her home on Prince William Sound, Denny discovers an oil-covered, newborn seal on a polluted beach. The baby is rushed to a busy animal rescue center, where dedicated veterinarians and volunteers care for the wildlife affected by the disaster. The girl names the seal Prince William and follows his recovery over the next ten weeks. Progress is made on the beaches too, as cleanup efforts begin in earnest. Finally, Denny is present as the seal is flown to Halibut Cove and released into clean water.

**The Eye of the Whale: A Rescue Story** by Jennifer O’Connell

On a cool December morning near San Francisco, a distress call is radioed to shore by a local fisherman. He has discovered a humpback whale tangled in hundreds of yards of crab-trap lines, struggling to stay at the surface to breathe. In this true story, a team of volunteers answered the call, and four divers risk their lives to rescue the enormous animal.

**Beardance** by Will Hobbs

While accompanying an elderly rancher on a trip into the San Juan Mountains, Cloyd, a Ute Indian boy, tries to help two orphaned grizzly cubs survive the winter and, at the same time, completes his spirit mission.

**Saving Samantha: A True Story** by Robbyn Smith van Frankenhuyzen and Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen (Illustrator)

Gijsbert and wife Robbyn team up for wildlife tale drawn from their encounters with the animal kingdom. Told in journal format and rendered in beautifully detailed artwork, the van Frankenhuyzens give a “day in the life” view as the fox Samantha begins her journey from injured kit to independent adult living on her own. Always respecting the boundaries between the wild and the ways of people and based on years of work as licensed wildlife rehabilitators, Gijsbert and Robbyn recommend readers “do not try this at home.”
Adopted by an Owl: The True Story of Jackson the Owl
by Robbyn Smith van Frankenhuyzen and Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen (Illustrator)
For twenty years the van Frankenhuyzens have rehabilitated a wide variety of wild critters, from fawns, foxes, skunks, and crows to opossums, raccoons, rabbits, and owls. Some of the animals were injured adults, others were orphaned babies, but all of them were in need of a little help to get them back into the wild. Growing up on a farm, as well as Robbyn’s training as an animal technician, prepared her for many of the medical situations that arose.

I Love You Just Enough by Robbyn Smith van Frankenhuyzen, Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen (Illustrator)
When her bus drops her off to begin her summer vacation, Heather is overjoyed with the promise of new adventures. While helping her dad weed the garden, she discovers a baby duckling. She begs to adopt the little fluff ball, but her father warns her about the responsibilities of raising a wild animal, particularly the difficulty of letting the duck return to its natural habitat when the time comes. The title reflects his caution that Heather can love the bird but not too much. In a gentle, compassionate voice, the text details the work and joys of protecting and caring for a wild animal.

Itsy Bitsy and Teeny Weeny by Robbyn Smith van Frankenhuyzen, Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen (Illustrator)
Spring arrives at Hazel Ridge Farm that also serves as a wildlife rescue station. As a mother sheep gives birth, the author spies a smaller, almost dead lamb. This lamb is too weak to be accepted by the lamb’s mother, so the lamb is taken into the house. Meanwhile a fawn is dropped off. Two little ones are as easy to tend as one is, so into the house both of the animals go. The lamb is named Teeny Weeny and the fawn is named Itsy Bitsy. Their rehabilitation and extra canine caregivers make for an amusing and interesting telling about rescued wildlife. As the seasons change, Itsy Bitsy longs to join wild animals. At first, the caregiver wants to hold the young deer back. When Itsy Bitsy gets caught in the wire, his caregiver realizes it is time for the deer to join the wild. The book shows caring for orphaned wildlife and the need to treat wild creatures respectfully.
Books on Careers for People Who Love Wildlife:

Careers with Animals Series: Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Worker
*by Ruth Bjorklund*
Young readers learn what skills are needed to become a person who is trained to rescue and rehabilitate wildlife in need of help.

Animal Helpers: Wildlife Rehabilitators *by Jennifer Keats Curtis*
Young readers are given a “behind the scenes” look at the work that takes place at four different wildlife rehabilitation centers, where animals are nursed back to health and released back into the wild when possible. Includes “For Creative Minds” educational section.

Raptor Centers *by Jennifer Keats Curtis*
Even powerful birds of prey can get sick or hurt. When that happens, animal helpers at raptor centers come to the rescue! Dedicated employees treat injured, sick, and orphaned animals. They return the birds to their native environment or find homes at education and raptor centers for those that can’t survive in the wild. Follow along in this photographic journal as staff and volunteers come together to care for these remarkable birds.

I Want to be a Zookeeper *by Dan Liebman*
This book shows zookeepers interacting with the animals in their daily routines, providing an engaging look at the job. This short text also provides good quick-reference and good entertainment value for anyone. Finally, this book reads like someone’s own scrapbook.

I Want to be a Veterinarian *by Stephanie Maze*
Ideal for kids who love animals, this book explores the many interesting facets of a veterinary career. Exciting full-color photographs complement intriguing facts about the many different kinds of vets, how veterinary science began, and its future.

Cool Careers Without College for People Who Love Animals *by Carol Hand*
This book explores the job descriptions, education and training requirements, salary, and outlook predictions for careers working with animals that do not require a college education.
Not all young wild animals found without their mothers are orphans. Mammal mothers, in particular, leave their young for much of the day, and return under the safety of darkness to feed their young. Cottontail kits like the ones pictured above, are fed when their mother returns at dawn and dusk. Otherwise, they stay in their nest all day without their mother present.
Hey, I think I see a fawn over there!

Oh... that fawn looks scared...

Aww geez, poor guy.

I'm gonna go see if I can find the mother nearby.

Cool. My mom works for the Department of Natural Resources, I'll call her to see if we can do anything to help!

No mom in sight, and that fawn is awfully close to the road...

I couldn't find the mother. I bet this fawn is an orphan.

My mom should be here shortly, let's see what she has to say.
Soon...

Here he is!
Thanks for calling, boys.

I was thinking, because we couldn’t find the mother...

Could we take him home and take care of him ourselves?

Sorry boys, we shouldn’t do that.
That’s a wild animal, its best chance of survival is with its mother.

It’s not like a cat or dog.

His mom is around here, we just can’t see her.
She feeds away from the fawn most of the day to keep it safe...she’ll be back.

However, you’re right that the fawn is too close to the road...we should move it.

Can do!
What a Dilemma!
Student Dilemma Cards

Print off the following eight Dilemma Cards using two-sided printing. The front of each card poses the dilemma. The back of each card presents four possible actions that students may possibly take to resolve the dilemma. Once the cards have been printed, cut each sheet in half. This will give you a total of eight dilemma cards.

A fledgling is a young bird that is nearly fully feathered. Its eyes are open, it is alert and it can flap its wings though it may not yet be able to fly any distance. This fledgling robin is at the stage of life when it is supposed to leave the nest. One or both of its parents is probably nearby. Parent songbirds fend for their young for a week or more once the young have fledged.
What a Dilemma!

It’s a May afternoon and you are in the yard playing with your dog. Suddenly your dog goes over to an area, sniffs and digs around a bit and comes back with a baby bunny (called a cottontail kit) in its mouth. It drops the kit at your feet. The kit doesn’t appear to be injured—just a bit wet from your dog’s saliva. The kit still has its eyes closed. You look where your dog had just been and find a nest of kits. The mother cottontail doesn’t seem to be anywhere around.

What would you do?

What a Dilemma!

You are in your backyard playing soccer with your younger sister when she accidentally kicks the soccer ball into the woods behind your house. As you enter the woods to retrieve the ball, you discover a baby squirrel (called a kit) lying on the ground. The kit does not appear to be injured. It is about 3-4 inches long and its eyes are still closed. As you survey the surrounding area, you see what appears to be a squirrel nest high in a nearby tree. You don’t see any adult squirrels in the area.

What would you do?
Possible Actions

1. You put the cottontail kit back in the nest, covering it as best as you can. You then leave the area with your dog, and watch from inside the house to see if the mother cottontail returns.

2. You take your dog inside the house and tell your mom who grabs her leather garden gloves. You show her where you found the kit. She carefully picks it up with gloved hands and places it back into the nest. Then she covers the kit with the remains of the nest. She says your dog must be on a leash when outside, until the kits have left the nest.

3. You know your friends would be envious if you show them the kits, so you pick them up and carry them—wrapped in the hem of your T-shirt—into your house. You intend to raise them and keep them as pets. What a neat school science project this will be.

4. You just learned about wildlife rehabilitation in your class. You remembered that the DNR webpage has a list of rehabilitators so you go online and jot down the address of the closest rehabilitator. You then tell your parents who then place the kits in a cardboard box and drive you and the kits to that rehabilitator as soon as possible.

Possible Actions

1. You leave the squirrel kit exactly where you found it, being careful not to touch it and hope for the best.

2. You take the squirrel kit inside your house, put it in a cardboard box with a non-raveling cloth (so it can't get tangled up) and offer it warm milk using an eye dropper.

3. You tell your parents about the squirrel and ask them to call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator to get their advice.

4. You take the squirrel to school to show your teacher.
What a Dilemma!

It’s a lovely Saturday morning in late May. As you walk to your friend’s house in a wooded neighborhood, you hear a bird scolding near some bushes in a neighbor’s yard. You walk over and find the neighbor’s cat crouched in the shrubs with a young baby bird (called a nestling) in its mouth. Two other nestlings lie dead on the ground. You shoo the cat away. The adult bird has flown off. Searching deeper into the bushes, you locate the plundered nest with one remaining nestling inside. What would you do?

What a Dilemma!

You and your friend are walking home from school together. You are almost home when you notice a baby white-tailed deer (called a fawn) wandering around the neighborhood. It doesn’t look injured and isn’t crying. You don’t see any other deer in the neighborhood. What would you do?
Possible Actions

1. You pick up the nestling and take it to your friend’s house, where the two of you watch it for awhile. You then find a small shrub in your friend’s yard and craft a makeshift nest out of grass and leaves and place the nestling in the nest and leave.

2. You knock on the neighbor’s door and tell him about the bird nest with one nestling in it. His cat has killed two nestlings. You politely ask him to call a wildlife rehabilitator for advice and to watch to see if the parent bird returns. You also suggest that he keep his cat indoors.

3. You quickly run home and tell your mom or dad what happened. You ask your parent to go online and look for the Keep Wildlife Wild website to find the list of wildlife rehabilitators and give the nearest one a call to get advice on what to do.

4. You take the nestling and the nest back home with you and put it in a cardboard box in a corner of the garage. You then go out and dig worms to feed the nestling. You intend to raise the tiny bird and keep it as a pet.

Possible Actions

1. Scare the fawn away. There are cars and dogs in your neighborhood, and the fawn isn’t safe here.

2. Pet the fawn. It’s really soft, and probably needs your help. It would make a really cool pet. Maybe you can talk your parents into letting you keep it.

3. Go home and tell your parents, so they can call the WDNR or a wildlife rehabilitator for help. The fawn probably shouldn’t be in the neighborhood, but you don’t know what you should do. But your parents probably know!

4. Ignore the fawn. It doesn’t look hurt, and you’ve seen deer walk through the neighborhood before. Its mom probably left it here for safety, and she will be back soon.
What a Dilemma!

One spring day, you are walking with your friends near the pond in your neighborhood park. You hear a peeping sound, and see a downy baby goose, called a **gosling**, wandering on its own on the shore, looking and sounding very distressed. You don’t see any other geese around. **What would you do?**

What a Dilemma!

An early morning spring storm with high winds causes a big old tree in your yard to fall down. No one is hurt, but when you go outside after breakfast, you find three baby raccoons, known as **kits**, on the ground next to the fallen tree. They are small and do not yet have their eyes open. There is no mother raccoon in sight. **What would you do?**
Possible Actions

1. You and your friends rush after the gosling and catch it. You then tell your friends that you’ll accept the responsibility to take the gosling home to raise it by yourself. You know your mother wouldn’t mind.

2. You quickly go home and tell your parents what you’ve found and ask them to call the Wisconsin DNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice on what you should do.

3. You and your friends shoo the gosling out into the water where you think it will be safer.

4. One of your friends reminds you that the local petting zoo is nearby, so you take the gosling there and ask the zookeeper to raise it so it can be on display when it reaches adulthood.

Possible Actions

1. You pick up the kits and bring them into your house. Then you go online to see what to feed them so you can take care of them until they are older.

2. You decide to leave them where they are and tell your parents what you’ve found, and ask them to call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator to get advice.

3. You go back inside your house, and watch out your window from a distance to see if the mother raccoon returns to her kits.

4. You call your friends to come over so you can show them the kits. Each of your friends picks up a kit and cuddles and pets it. They are so small, you know they appreciate the extra warmth and attention.
What a Dilemma!

It’s a great May morning and you are playing Pokemon Go in your yard with some friends when you find a mother duck sitting on eggs in a nest under some shrubs. You call your friends over to see and the mother duck flies away. One of your friends touches one of the eggs. **What would you do?**

What a Dilemma!

It’s June and spring cleaning time. One of your chores is to clean the fireplace. It is full of dust and spider webs. While cleaning, you hear noises coming from inside the chimney. It’s too dark to see so you grab a flashlight and look up. You are startled to see many eyes shining back at you! Panicking to get away from the multi-eyed monster, you quickly find a parent. Together you check out the mysterious creature and find that the eyes belong to a family of raccoons whose mother has decided your chimney makes a great nursery for her babies, known as **kits**. **What would you do?**
Possible Actions

1. You’ve heard that once a person touches an egg or a baby animal its parents will reject it, so you take the eggs home to try to hatch them.

2. You and your friends leave the area right away so the mother duck will feel safe enough to return to her nest.

3. You gather up all the eggs and the nest and move them to a place that you think is safer.

4. You and your friends each pick up some of the eggs and hold them in your hands to try to keep them warm until the mother duck returns.

Possible Actions

1. You decide to wait until the kits have grown and they will naturally leave on their own. You tell your parents about the situation. They decide to bar the opening of the fireplace with plywood. Once the raccoons have left, your dad will put a cap on the chimney to prevent any animals from coming back.

2. You tell your parents you learned what wildlife rehabilitators do. You ask your parents to contact Wisconsin DNR to get the phone number for a local rehabilitator. The experienced rehabilitator will probably give you good advice on how to handle the situation.

3. You figure that smoke will chase the raccoons away and encourage them not to come back. But, you don’t want them to inhale a lot of smoke all at once, so you start a small fire, then make it bigger for more smoke.

4. You believe you can lure the raccoons out with a treat. You grab some sandwich meat from the fridge and hold it in the fireplace to see if the raccoons will climb down and take it from your hands. You’ll wash your hands after you’ve moved them out.
What a Dilemma!
Possible Actions--Teacher Info Cards

Refer to the eight Teacher Info Cards (pages 56-63) that give background information relating to each of the four possible actions for each of the eight student Dilemma Cards. Each Teacher Info Card has a small graphic icon that will help you correspond it to the appropriate student Dilemma Card. As each team leader reports his or her team’s response to the four actions, you, the classroom instructor, should read through the information presented on the corresponding Teacher Info Card. If the team leaders do not give the appropriate answers, use the Teacher Info Cards to share the correct answers with the classroom.

It’s important for your students to understand that they should NEVER chase, touch or pick up a wild animal, even if it is a “cute baby.” Wild animals are well-adapted for survival and they know how to kick, scratch and bite. Some, unfortunately, may carry diseases that may be transmitted to people or pets. Your students should ALWAYS alert an adult and request that they contact WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice.
Possible Actions--Teacher Info

Cottontail Kit Dilemma

1. No! Children should never pick up a wild animal by themselves, especially with bare hands. Touching a wild mammal with bare hands is a bad idea because wild animals MAY carry diseases or parasites that may be transmitted to people and pets. Young wild mammals are capable of kicking, scratching and biting. Since cottontail mothers return usually at dawn and dusk, watching from a window may prove frustrating and fruitless.

2. This decision has some good points. Taking your dog inside the house and keeping it there is wise because once a dog finds a nest, it will keep pestering the nest and likely harm the kits every time you let your dog out. Keep your dog leashed until the kits have grown and left the nest. Involving your parents is a good thing, too. Children should never try to rescue a wild animal on their own. In this case, the mother knew enough to use leather gloves. Even though she didn’t contact a wildlife rehabilitator for advice, she must have learned somewhere, how to handle cottontail kits.

3. Science project or not, this is definitely NOT a wise decision! It is illegal to keep wild animals as pets. Wild animals do not make good pets. They have special diets difficult to duplicate under captive conditions. As young animals grow up, their defensive behaviors emerge and they become capable of kicking, biting and scratching. Also, sometimes wild animals carry diseases or parasites (even fleas!) that may be transmitted to people and pets.

4. There are some pros and cons to this answer. While trying to locate the nearest wildlife rehabilitator is a great decision, the best decision would be to call the rehabilitator FIRST rather than just assuming the rehabilitator will automatically accept the cottontail kit. Not all rehabilitators accept all wild animals. More importantly, if the kit’s mother is alive and nearby, she normally would try to return to the nest to care for its young. If you move the kit away, you’ve reduced or eliminated the possibility of the kit being raised by its rightful mother. Call the rehabilitator first, and he or she may well direct you to the information provided in decision #2, above.

Note: For further discussion, ask “How can you tell if a mother cottontail is attending her kits overnight?” Answer: The best way of monitoring a cottontail nest is to place long strips of dried grass, small twigs or even construction paper strips in a crisscross pattern over the nest. In the morning, if the pattern has been disturbed but the kits are still in the nest, mother cottontail is taking care of her young. If the pattern hasn’t been disturbed, the mother may have died and the child’s parent should call the local rehabilitator for advice.

For more information, visit

dnr.wi.gov

search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Squirrel Kit Dilemma

1. This is a legitimate option if the weather conditions are mild. However, if it is cold and/or raining, then it would be best to call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator to get their advice considering the specific conditions.

2. Unless directed by a wildlife rehabilitator, it would be best to leave the kit outside near the tree/nest where it has a better chance of being found by its mother. The kit should only be taken inside if directed to do so by a wildlife rehabilitator and with the assistance of an adult. Feeding the kit cow’s milk can cause diarrhea, dehydration and even death.

3. Overall, this is the best approach to take. What will the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator tell your parents to do? Have your students read the Squirrel Kit Wild Card. They’ll learn that their parents should find a shallow cardboard box and place a non-raveling cloth in the bottom. Then, with gloved hands, they should place the squirrel kit in the box and leave it at the base of the tree that has the nest in it. Everyone can then go inside and observe from a distance to see if the mother returns. Since squirrels are active during the day, it is very likely that you will see the mother squirrel return.

4. No! This option is simply wrong and would not be the correct thing to do under any circumstances. However, if you and your parents follow the steps in #3, you could take a quick photo of the squirrel kit in the box or create a poster describing the steps you took to reunite the kit with its mother. Then you could share the experience with your classmates to help them learn how to Keep Wildlife Wild.

Note: For further discussion ask “What should be done if the mother squirrel does not return after several hours?” Answer: The parents should call the WDNR or a licensed rehabilitator to get further instruction.

For more information, visit
dnr.wi.gov
search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Songbird Nestling Dilemma

1. **No!** This is NOT wise. Children should NEVER pick up a wild animal. Nestlings are fragile and can easily be injured. Wild animals may have diseases that people and pets may catch. Moving a nestling or a fledgling from the area in which you found it will make it nearly impossible for the wild parents to locate their young. Moving a nestling (or a fledgling) to a new area may well mean the death of the young bird.

2. Under certain circumstances, this might be a good decision, but only if you know the neighbor very well and your parents would be OK with you approaching him on your own. Ideally, you should involve one of your parents first. It would be wonderful if the neighbor would take your advice to keep his cat indoors. Cats that are allowed to roam kill billions of birds and other small wild animals in the U.S. each year, and many die young. It's best to leave the area so the parent bird can feel safe enough to return to tend to its young.

3. This decision is wise. Involving adults (parents or teachers, for instance) is a very good idea. Then they may contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for helpful advice. If your parents know the neighbor well, they may be willing to suggest that he keep his cat inside so both the cat and wildlife will be safer. With a little effort, domestic cats can readily adapt to life indoors and live a long and happy life.

4. **No!** This decision is definitely not a good idea. Children should NEVER touch a wild animal because they may carry diseases, parasites or fleas that can spread to people or pets. Most people are inadequately trained to care for a young animal, particularly an infant animal that requires extra special handling and feeding.

**Note:** For further discussion, ask “What’s the difference between a nestling and a fledgling?”

**Answer:** A **nestling** is a naked, downy, or partially feathered baby bird that is too young to be out of the nest. Its eyes may still be closed and its head may be wobbly. They need assistance and cannot fend for themselves. A **fledgling** is an older baby bird that has most of its feathers, though its flight feathers may not be fully formed. Fledglings are **supposed** to leave the nest, often when they are not fully prepared to fly. The act of leaving the nest is called “fledging.” Fledglings will remain on the ground or in tree branches and flap their wings, as they learn to fly. Their parents are busy finding food to keep their fledglings full. If a predator lurks nearby, parent birds will often make noise, flap their wings rapidly and act as though they are injured to try to draw the predator’s attention to them and away from their young. Fledglings usually do not need your help.

For more information, visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Fawn Dilemma

1. This is not an option. Scaring the fawn from the area where its mother placed it in the first place could mean that the mother doe won’t find her fawn.

2. This is not an option. It is illegal to keep wild animals as pets, and it’s not in the best interest of the animal. A wild animal has specific needs that people cannot meet. A young animal’s best chance of survival is with its mother. Also, although you should never handle a wild animal, particularly with your bare hands, it is a myth that a mother will abandon her baby if she smells human scent.

3. This is an option, but not the best option. It is normal for a doe to leave her fawn unattended for long periods of time; keeping fawns hidden and alone is actually an adaptation to protect them from predators. A wildlife rehabilitator or the WDNR will tell you to leave the animal alone.

4. If the fawn is quietly walking around and is not in immediate danger, this is the best option. The mother doe left the fawn in a protected area and fawns will sometimes get up and move around. The fawn will find its way back to that protected spot. However, if the fawn is in immediate danger from cars or pets, you may get an adult to help you slowly, quietly and gently guide the fawn away from hazards and back to safety, being careful to watch out for your own safety as you do so.

Note: A final point for class discussion is, “What should be done if the fawn seems injured or is making loud crying noises?” Answer: Your parents should call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for further instruction. If a fawn is obviously injured or has been wandering and making loud crying noises for more than an hour, the fawn may be orphaned. Remember: only a licensed wildlife rehabilitator has the knowledge to care for an orphaned wild animal!

For more information, visit
dnr.wi.gov
search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Gosling Dilemma

1. No! This decision is not a good one because children should NEVER touch, chase or capture wild animals, particularly with bare hands. Wild animals may carry diseases, parasites and fleas that can spread to people and pets. Only wildlife rehabilitators or adults under the direction of a licensed wildlife rehabilitator should try to capture a wild animal—once it has been determined that the animal is truly in need of help. Chasing wild animals stresses them, and depending on the animal, it may feel cornered or trapped and may turn on the chaser to defend itself. Also, keeping the gosling as a pet is illegal in Wisconsin. Only licensed wildlife rehabilitators may legally keep wild animals in captivity with the goal of raising young ones to maturity or healing sick or injured wild animals so that all may be returned to the wild.

2. Calling for help is an excellent decision. Even better is to first check out the Wisconsin DNR Keep Wildlife Wild webpage which has links to Wisconsin’s licensed wildlife rehabilitators who can provide expert advice. The DNR webpage also has downloadable pdf files that discuss how to handle a situation in which you find what you think is an orphaned bird, mammal or fawn. If information cannot be obtained from the website, then call WDNR at 1-888-WDNR-INFO for additional help.

3. Chasing wild animals is never a good idea as mentioned in #1, above. In addition, there is no guarantee that the family group to which the lone gosling belongs is even in the area. So getting a gosling to the relative safety of water may not be all that is needed to save it. You should call WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice.

4. The zoo may not want the animal—then what? At a minimum, the person finding the gosling should CALL first before just capturing it and taking it to the zoo. The zoo may or may not have a licensed wildlife rehabilitator on staff. Licensed wildlife rehabilitators are best trained and equipped for handling truly orphaned animals and they have the goal of releasing the animal back to the wild as soon as the animal is able to successfully care for itself. A life in the wild is a much better ending than being held captive in a zoo.

Note: A final point for class discussion is, “What if the gosling is limping?” Answer: You should run home and ask your parents to call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for further instructions. You should not try to pick up the injured gosling or care for its injury. Only licensed wildlife rehabilitators have the training and experience to treat injured wildlife.

For more information, visit dnr.wi.gov search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Raccoon Kit Dilemma

1. This decision is not a good one. You should never pick up a wild animal and bring it into your house. This is very stressful to the animal. Only licensed wildlife rehabilitators are certified to care for sick, injured or truly orphaned animals. You cannot learn enough about caring for a wild animal by merely reading some information you find on a website; it takes training and experience. Also, Wisconsin law says you have only 24 hours to have a wild animal in your possession. This allows you enough time to transfer the animal to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator who is expertly trained and experienced.

2. Telling your parents about the situation and asking them to contact WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice is a good decision. Wildlife rehabilitators have the experience to be able to decide the best course of action.

3. Watching a wild animal from a safe and respectful distance is a good decision. However, you may be waiting a LONG time if you anticipate the mother raccoon's immediate return. She may do so, but only after dark. Contacting a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and asking their advice would be best. They can provide guidance on what to do if you don't see the mother return.

4. This alternative is not a good decision. You should NEVER pick up a wild animal, particularly with bare hands. Not only can wild animals kick, bite and scratch you, they also may carry diseases or parasites that you, your friends or your pets could catch. Since mammals do recognize human scent, picking up the young raccoon puts it at risk that a predator may smell your scent and discover--and attack--the young one.

Note: A final point for class discussion is, “What if one of the kits is clearly injured?” Answer: Your parents should call the WDNR or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for further instructions. You should not try to pick up the injured kit or care for its injury. Only licensed wildlife rehabilitators have the training and experience to treat injured wildlife.

For more information, visit
dnr.wi.gov
search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Duckling Eggs Dilemma

1. No! Taking a duckling egg home to raise is not an appropriate action to take. It is not true that a wild animal mother will automatically reject an egg or baby animal if a person has touched it, leaving his or her scent behind. Most birds have a poor sense of smell. Sometimes inexperienced waterfowl may leave their nest if they sense their nest has been disturbed, but experienced mothers will generally remain faithful to their nest. The other inappropriate behavior is touching the egg in the first place. When dealing with wild animals, it is always best to observe from a safe and respectful distance to determine if help is needed. If a young animal truly needs help, then the person should contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible. The list of rehabilitators may be found at the website listed below.

2. This decision is best. A wild mother usually remains committed to her nest--if her nest has not been disturbed. It is very likely that she will return if people leave the area as soon as possible.

3. This decision is not logical. The mother duck knows where she put her nest. She wouldn’t have a clue where to look if you move the nest. In addition, by picking up the nest and eggs, you are leaving your scent behind, and while birds usually cannot detect your scent, a prowling predator like a raccoon, fox, or opossum could be inclined to check out the interesting new scent. Leave the nest where it is.

4. This decision is unwise because the mother duck will not return if you are in the area. Also, leaving your scent on the eggs will likely attract a ground predator to the nest. Also, there is increased risk of injuring the eggs if you pick them up.

Note: A final point for class discussion is, “What if you find a lone mallard duckling?” Answer: If you see a lone duckling or multiple ducklings without their mother, stop, look and listen for the mother and other siblings. If the rest of the family is not nearby or does not find the duckling(s) within an hour, please do not attempt to place a duckling with another duck family in the wild. If it is not the duckling’s own family, the new “substitute” mother will reject the duckling and may even harm it by trying to drive it away.

For more information, visit
dnr.wi.gov
search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
Possible Actions--Teacher Info
Raccoons in Chimney Dilemma

1. This action would be a good idea for several reasons. One, there is no direct interference with the wild animal. Two, telling an adult is always right and proper. Three, barring the fireplace with plywood keeps the raccoons from entering the house. Once your wild visitors have left the chimney from the top, then dad or another adult can put a cap on the chimney so no more animals can get in.

2. This is the best idea. Wildlife rehabilitators can offer the best suggestions in terms of encouraging your wild visitors to leave.

3. Not a good idea. Smoking the raccoons out may cause more problems in the long run. Even if mom can get out of the chimney, her kits might not be able to escape and they may die from smoke inhalation or overheating. Sometimes, the adults can’t make it out either and may die trying to escape or by helping their kits to escape.

4. This is not a good decision for a few reasons. First, you are reaching your hand into a raccoon’s personal space. When any animal feels threatened, their first instinct will be to protect themselves, usually in the form of biting. Not only will this hurt, but it may also spread disease! Raccoons are known to carry many diseases, including zoonotic diseases (transmissible from animals to people) such as rabies. Special note: 70% of adult raccoons and 90% of juvenile raccoons carry an intestinal parasitic roundworm, known as *Baylisascaris procyonis* (pronounced BAY-lis-AS-car-is, PRO-sy-OH-niss). Raccoons living in chimneys often drop their feces onto the floor of the fireplace. Such feces contain the eggs of this roundworm. It is rare for people to become infected with this parasite. However, ingesting the microscopic eggs of this parasite (in contaminated soil or raccoon droppings) can cause serious health problems. Reported disease has primarily been in children and almost all cases were a result of the ingestion of contaminated soil or feces.

**Note:** For further discussion, ask “What would you do if you woke up one morning and found a very young raccoon kit lying on the floor of a cold fireplace?” Answer: Contact Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the list of a local wildlife rehabilitator. The rehabilitator may suggest you place a large piece of plywood against the interior opening of the fireplace and then wait an hour of two. If the mother is alive and well, she will likely climb down and try to retrieve her kit.

For more information, visit

dnr.wi.gov

search keyword “Keep Wildlife Wild” or “Rehab”
If you or another teacher in your school or district has been trained in the national curriculum called Project WILD, you may find it helpful to adapt some of the activities in the Project WILD manual to fit the needs of your classroom’s Keep Wildlife Wild program.

Below is a list of activities from the 2002 Project WILD K-12 Curriculum & Activity Guide with suggestions of how you may adapt them to the topic the concepts in Keep Wildlife Wild.

What’s Wild? (Grade 4; Page 7): Students locate, classify and construct magazine photo collages of wild and domesticated animals. This activity reinforces the definitions of wild and domesticated animals as described in the Keep Wildlife Wild lessons.

Animal Charades (Grade 4; Page 280): Students are given the names of wild and domesticated animals (the teacher may add in some characteristics of the animal on the name card). Each student is given a short period of time (10-20 seconds) to dramatize his or her selected animal. This activity reinforces the definitions of wild and domesticated animals as described in the Keep Wildlife Wild lessons.

Wildlife is Everywhere (Grade 4; Page 51): Springtime is a wonderful time of year for a short “field trip” around your schoolyard, school forest or local city park. Adapt this Project WILD activity so that students not only search for common wild animals living in or near places where people live, but also look for signs of young wild animals (tree squirrel kits, cottontail kits, broods of mallard ducklings or Canada goose goslings, an American robin nest in a tree, a chipping sparrow nest in a small bush, an eastern phoebe or barn swallow nest under the eaves of a building, etc.).
What’s That, Habitat? (Grade 4; Page 56) & Everybody Needs a Home (Grade 4; page 59): Wild animals, as opposed to domesticated animals, can find all their food, water, shelter and space completely on their own. These two Project WILD activities are very similar. Basically, each requires the student to draw either their house or a floor plan of their house showing where they get their food, water, shelter and space. Then they draw a similar diagram for a wild animal. Adapt either activity by asking students to draw the habitat “floor plan” or “house” of common birds and mammals of the urban environment. For either activity, ask them to consider the location of the animal’s nursery (where the young animals are born and raised). Have them consider where a cottontails, gray squirrels, raccoons, white-tailed deer, woodchucks, mallards, Canada geese, American robins or house wrens would locate their nursery.

Beautiful Basics (Grade 4; Page 58): Label three columns on a dry eraser board: “People,” “Domesticated Animals,” and “Wildlife.” Ask students to list all the things that these three groups of animals (people are mammals, too!) need to survive. Group similar concepts into food, water, shelter or space. Compare the needs of all three groups of animals.

Too Close for Comfort (Grade 4; Page 300): To help students understand levels of stress that young wild animals endure when they are held by people or are put in situations where they are too close to household pets and children, students are encouraged to assume the role of a young wild animal that commonly lives near people. They can experiment with different physical distances and levels of comfort and then hypothesize about other indicators of discomfort when wild animals are held captive.

Environmental Barometer (Grade 4; Page 77) & Habitrekking (Grade 4; Page 79): Both Project WILD activities involve short “field trips” around the school yard, school forest or local city park where students observe, count and/or collect data on the wild animals they find. Adapt this activity so that students focus on young birds, mammals, tadpoles, turtles, snakes, etc.
Thicket Game (Grade 4; page 114): Young wild animals have amazing adaptations that help them survive. Some young wild animals, like cottontail kits and fawns of white-tailed deer, are on their own at a very early age. They have innate abilities to evade predators. Predators must teach their young the skills of stalking and listening for their prey. In this game, one blindfolded student becomes the “predator” and the rest of the class becomes “prey.” After counting to 20, the “predator” removes the blindfold and uses all senses to try to detect the prey hidden from view. Adapt this game of “hide ‘n seek” to include young animals common to our urban environments and their natural predators, such as cottontail kits and red fox, white-tailed fawns and coyotes, or gray squirrel kits and red-tailed hawks. You may toss in a player or two who portrays an on-the-loose cat or dog running wild among the “prey” trying to capture the “prey.” Play this game first in a rather open area with minimal hiding places and a second round in a forested environment with more places in which the “prey” may find cover. Consider the survival challenges that young wildlife face in environments filled with people and on-the-loose pets.

Habitat Lap Sit (Grades 5 & 6: page 61): Use this very fun, physical activity to reinforce the concepts of habitat (Food, Water, Shelter, Space). Adapt the activity by focusing on the needs of young wild animals, and what challenges they may face in environments near people (e.g., housing construction has destroyed the space in which a white-tailed doe usually hides her fawn; mowing has destroyed a cottontail kit’s nest; a disease has killed a tree near a house and the homeowner cuts down the tree that contains a squirrel den; a homeowner has not kept his or her birdfeeder clean and the food has become contaminated with salmonella bacteria; a homeowner sprays herbicides near a small pond polluting the water. etc.). Use this activity to reinforce the concept that wild animals living near people experience a variety of problems that may leave their young in jeopardy.
Oh Deer! (Grades 5 & 6; Page 36): This game of tag can be adapted to reinforce the concept that wild animals are not dependent on people for their survival but have the ability to find the essential elements within a habitat that they need to survive and that those basic elements include food, water, shelter and space.

Quick Frozen Critters (Grades 5 & 6; Page 122): Young wild animals have amazing adaptations to help them survive. Some young animals, like cottontail kits and white-tailed fawns, are on their own at a very early age. They have innate abilities to evade predators. Adapt this fast paced game of “freeze-tag” to include young animals common to our urban environments and their natural predators, such as cottontail kits and red fox, white-tailed fawns and coyotes, or gray squirrel kits and red-tailed hawks.

Interview a Spider (Grades 5 & 6; page 12): This activity can be adapted two ways to reinforce concepts learned in the Keep Wildlife Wild lesson plan. In both options, students will use news reporting techniques to develop a list of questions to ask their assigned “guest.” In option one, their guest is a young wild bird or mammal common to the urban environment. Have students develop questions that focus on the challenges such young animals face living around people and pets-on-the-loose. In option 2, students conduct research on what the job requirements and duties are of adults whose career involves working with wild animals such as a wildlife rehabilitator, wildlife veterinarian, zookeeper, wildlife biologist, wildlife technician or wildlife researcher. They may conduct their research either online or by reading some of the books in the Suggested List of Books section on pages 35-42 of this Keep Wildlife Wild lesson plan.

My Kingdom for a Shelter (Grades 5 & 6; page 28): Adapt this activity in which you take a short “field trip” to your school yard, school forest or local park. If using a non-school property, always seek landowner permission first. Have the students gather some natural materials such as grass, twigs, leaves, soil, moss, pieces of bark or even stones. Remind them not to touch or damage real nests or dens and not to collect feathers (though you may provide
feathers from domesticated birds that you purchased from a craft store). Back in the classroom, assign each student to a different wild animal that commonly lives near people and ask them to construct a nest or den in which their animal would raise young. Ask them what challenges young wild animals face in the built environment.

**Polar Bears in Phoenix?** (Grades 5 & 6; Page 125). While this particular *Project WILD* activity focuses exclusively on Polar Bears, the heart of the activity concentrates on student ability to consider and identify potential problems when a person takes a wild animal out of its natural habitat and into captivity. The original *Project WILD* activity states: “The major purpose of this activity is for students to recognize that animals are adapted to the environments in which they have lived for a long time. If people move animals to environments different from those for which the animals are adapted, then special attention must be paid to creating conditions in which the animals can live.”

Adapt this activity by selecting those birds, mammals, reptiles or amphibians (and/or their young) that commonly live near people (such as the American Robin, Barn Swallow, Eastern Phoebe, House Wren, Bluebird, Mallard, Canada Goose, Gray Squirrel, Raccoon, Cottontail, White-tailed Deer, Red Fox, Coyote, Painted Turtle, Garter Snake, Toad, etc.). Ask your students to design—either by drawing on paper or constructing a shoebox diorama—three settings for their assigned animal:

1) the animal’s normal, native, natural habitat
2) an enclosure that may be provided in an average person’s home or backyard
3) an enclosure provided by a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or zookeeper when a wild animal is brought to that person’s home or facility.

Ask students to list some of the important features they should consider when designing an enclosure provided by people: the enclosure’s size and shape, the materials used in the construction of
the enclosure, design elements needed to prevent accidental escape, environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, color of enclosure, light intensity and length of exposure, air pressure, wind velocity and direction), the types of receptacles used to contain food and water, maintenance concerns such as type of floor covering, slope of floor, ability to clean the enclosure adequately (e.g., are there floor drains?); where the captive wild animal will be kept while its enclosure is being cleaned.

Refer your students to pages 20-21 in *Wildlife Rehabilitation in Wisconsin: An introduction and study guide* which describe the facility standards that must be adhered to by persons legally licensed to hold wild animals captive. This publication is found online at: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/documents/RehabGuide.pdf

**Adaptation Artistry (Grades 5 & 6; Page 128):** The *Keep Wildlife Wild* program discusses the fact that young wild animals possess amazing adaptations that help them survive, sometimes even in the absence of a wild parent. Rather than having students draw or sculpt *imaginary* wildlife, have them first research the survival adaptations of young wild animals that commonly live near people and then invite your students to design their selected animal emphasizing those special adaptations.

**Cartoons and Bumper Stickers (Grades 5 & 6; Page 192):** Adapt this activity by asking students to design one of several options:

- public service announcement (for a newspaper, website or radio)
- cartoon
- billboard
- bumper sticker

that encourages people to *Keep Wildlife Wild*. If space allows, they should include information about where people may turn to for help should they find a sick, injured or truly orphaned wild animal.
Power of a Song (Grades 5 & 6; Page 194): Adapt this activity so that your students (in small groups or as a class) create a song with the title Keep Wildlife Wild. The song should have Keep Wildlife Wild in the chorus and incorporate into the verses some of the messages they learned in the Keep Wildlife Wild activities.

Animal Poetry (Grades 5 & 6; Page 282): Adapt this activity by asking students to pick a wild animal that commonly lives near people’s homes (or farms) and write two poems (Haiku, Cinquain or Diamante): One poem should represent the young of their selected wild animal and the other poem should represent the adult of that wild animal. How and why are these poems similar or different?

For Your Eyes Only (Grades 5 & 6; Page 197): Each person holds a unique view of wildlife. Adapt the basic concept of this Project WILD activity by asking students to role play people with different attitudes and viewpoints (use those viewpoints listed on pages 198-199 in the Project WILD activity guide). These include political, economic, religious, ecological, scientific, cultural, educational, aesthetic, social, recreational, egocentric, health-related, ethical/moral, historical, anthropocentric, biocentric, philosophical viewpoints. Create a scenario in which a young wild animal (seemingly in need of help) has been found. You may use one of the Keep Wildlife Wild Dilemma Card scenarios (beginning on page 46 of this lesson plan) or create one of your own. Assign a particular viewpoint to each student, then ask each student to role play how he or she would handle the scenario considering the viewpoint they are representing. Remind students to respect the rights of others to express different attitudes and viewpoints.

Changing Attitudes (Grades 5 & 6; page 255): Adapt this Project WILD activity by asking students how people’s attitudes toward some animals that live in close proximity to people (e.g., geese, ducks, deer, squirrels, etc) have changed over time. Also, have students discuss how people’s attitudes toward young wild animals are the same or different from their attitudes toward adult wild animals.
Let’s Talk Turkey (Grades 5 & 6; Page 248): One of the concepts in the Keep Wildlife Wild lesson plan is the difference between wild and domesticated animals. All domesticated animals originated from some wild ancestor. This Project WILD activity focuses on the origin and development of the domestic turkey from the wild turkey. You may adapt this activity by asking students to investigate the history of domestication of ducks, geese, cats, dogs and other common domesticated animals. How do the domesticated varieties differ from the original wild ancestor?

Ethi-Thinking (Grades 5 & 6; page 303): Adapt this activity to slightly higher grades than those suggested by the original Project WILD activity. Ask students to consider people’s activities and how some activities either help or harm wild animals. Ask students to also consider activities that may result in wild animals becoming sick, injured or orphaned. Examples of activities that may help wild animals include providing plenty of good wildlife habitat in one’s backyard, voting to increase the number of acres of parkland in urban areas, using organic principles in caring for lawns and gardens, and maintaining nesting structures. Examples of activities that may lead to wild animals becoming sick, injured or orphaned include feeding human food to wild animals at parks, spraying poisonous herbicides or pesticides on lawns and gardens, pouring used motor oil down street drains, cutting down old or dead trees with nesting cavities, driving too fast near wetlands or wooded urban areas where wild animals tend to concentrate, chasing wild animals, destroying bird nests, erecting curbs and other structures that pose as barriers to the season migrations of wild animals like turtles, snakes, and broods of ducks and geese.
Migration Barriers (Grades 5 & 6; page 308), Changing the Land (Grade 6; page 345), Planning for People and Wildlife (Grades 5 & 6, Page 436) & Improving Wildlife Habitat in the Community (Grades 5 & 6; Page 440): These four activities are similar and can be worked together as a unit. They consider the effects of people’s actions--some positive, some negative--on wildlife. Negative impacts include:

- disrupting historical migration routes used by wildlife by:
  - constructing curbs or railroad lines that prevent turtles from reaching their nesting grounds
  - constructing new roads near wetlands where broods of geese and ducks frequently walk back and forth between daytime feeding grounds and nighttime resting places on the water
  - constructing roads slicing wetland areas that interrupt the historical migratory pathways between the wintering grounds and breeding grounds of salamanders, frogs, toads and snakes
  - erecting high fences where white-tailed deer historically migrated between feeding areas and places where does normally concealed their fawns
  - fragmenting wildlife habitat by building of roads, snowmobile trails and housing developments or by clear-cutting large blocks of forest
  - applying chemical herbicides and pesticides to lawns and gardens in the wrong concentrations or at the wrong times of the year

Positive impacts include:

- restoring native tallgrass prairies
- managing water levels in wetlands and ponds
- building wildlife overpasses and underpasses to allow wildlife to travel their traditional migratory routes
- building and installing nest structures

After a thorough discussion of the positive and negative impacts that people have on wildlife, ask students to design innovative ways that allow wildlife and people to co-exist such as building passageways to
assist wild animals in their migratory crossings through the human-built environment or constructing an Eastern Bluebird nestbox trail. For inspiration, consider the amazing examples of wildlife bridges and underpasses that people have constructed around the world to help wildlife move along their traditional migratory paths. Visit the following You Tube video for that inspiration: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q_XzNz9v44


**Litter We Know** (Grades 5 & 6; Page 434) & **Noisy Neighbors** (Grades 5 & 6; Page 317): Both of these activities may be adapted to the concepts described in the *Keep Wildlife Wild* program. Each activity considers the impact of people’s behavior on wild animals. The main points are that high levels of artificially-produced noise can stress wild animals in urban environments and litter can cause wild animals to become sick, injured or orphaned.

**Enviro-Ethics** (Grades 5 & 6; Page 443): Adapt this activity in which students develop and use their own, personal, “Keep Wildlife Wild Code of Ethics.” Based on the information learned in the *Keep Wildlife Wild* lessons, students outline the steps they need to take if they wish to *Keep Wildlife Wild*. 
Fun & Games
Concept Reinforcement
Wild Times!

Goal
The goal of this activity is to reinforce some of the concepts and vocabulary presented in the two earlier lessons.

Objectives
Students will be able to:
- Have fun while learning!

Subjects  Science or Social Science

Grades  4-6

Time  Take home activity. Time will vary.

Materials
- Copies of the following word puzzles and/or maze.

Procedure
Following the presentation of the two main activities in this Keep Wildlife Wild lesson plan and any additional activities from the list of Project WILD activity adaptations, hand out one or more of the following puzzles and games to your students to help them use the vocabulary and concepts described in the Keep Wildlife Wild Program. The levels of difficulty range from easy to challenging.
Keep Wildlife Wild
Crossword Puzzle

3 4 5
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8 9 10
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12 13 14
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16 17
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20 21
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32
Crossword Puzzle Clues:

ACROSS
1 A: Young wild animals require a specific, complete diet; otherwise they run a high _ _ _ _ of suffering serious nutritional deficiencies.
4 A: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ are professionals that have graduated accredited universities or colleges to be able to diagnose and treat animals for illnesses and injuries.
6 A: A licensed wildlife _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is an individual who is trained, experienced and appropriately licensed to temporarily care for sick, injured or orphaned wild animals until they may be released back to the wild.
7 A: _ _ _ _ are major predators of songbirds and small mammals in urban and farmyard settings.
8 A: Some wild animals carry different diseases and parasites, some of which may be _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to people or pets.
10 A: Wild animals do _ _ _ _ make good pets.
12 A: Wild animals held captive may become _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and this may lead to illness and even death.
15 A: The young of raccoons, squirrels and cottontails.
17 A: Dogs and cats on the _ _ _ _ _ are responsible for the deaths of many young wild animals each spring.
18 A: By state regulation, a person must have a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to practice wildlife rehabilitation in Wisconsin.
19 A: A career or paid position of employment (such as a wildlife biologist or a veterinarian).
21 A: The young of a Canada goose.
22 A: A young wild animal whose parents are dead.
27 A: Through the act of playing, young mammals learn the essential skills of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ __.
28 A: The odor that an animal leaves behind.
29 A: _ _ _ _ _ _ distemper is a serious disease of dogs, wolves, coyotes and foxes.
30 A: A pocket-like abdominal receptacle in which marsupials, such as opossums, carry their young when they are still suckling on mother's milk.
31 A: Wild animals held captive at home are often _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of new environments that have strange sights, sounds and smells (from people and pets).
32 A: When people and pets come in contact with wild animals, they may become _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to diseases, parasites or even fleas.

DOWN
2 D: As wild animals grow, their natural _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for survival kick in.
3 D: Wildlife rehabilitators need a license to _ _ _ _ for sick, injured or orphaned wildlife.
5 D: Once a sick, injured or orphaned animal has been successfully raised to be a healthy adult, it will be _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ by the wildlife rehabilitator.
9 D: The young of a duck.
11 D: It is illegal to keep wild animals as _ _ _ _ _ .
13 D: Young songbirds that are ready to leave the nest.
14 D: Licensed wildlife rehabilitators must have regulation-sized pens and _ _ _ _ _ _ for housing the wild animals in their care.
16 D: Unleashed dogs may cause serious _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to young wild animals.
20 D: The young of a deer.
23 D: A group of eggs laid and incubated together.
24 D: It is illegal to keep and _ _ _ _ _ wild animals as pets.
25 D: A disorder or affliction that a wild animal may carry and which may be spread to people or pets.
26 D: _ _ _ _ are a primary carrier of the dreaded rabies virus.
Keep Wildlife Wild! If you believe a wild animal is sick or injured or truly orphaned, then please contact your local WDNR office (1-888-WDNR-INFO) where staff can give you the names of licensed wildlife rehabilitators in your local area. Remember, it is illegal to keep wild animals.
At the top of the page, a partial KEY lists all the letters from A through Z with a box below. Each of the letters will have a corresponding number. Some of the numbers have already been filled in for you. The bottom part of the cryptogram contains a SECRET PHRASE. Each of the blanks has a number underneath it. Fill in the remaining letters as best you can. If you think there are duplicate letters, fill in the number below the corresponding letter in the alphabet. See how fast you can decode this puzzle.
Wild or Domestic?

For each group of animals below, circle those that are wild animals.
Mother Knows Best

If you find a fawn in your neighborhood, don’t assume it’s orphaned. White-tailed mothers, called does, usually leave their babies, called fawns, alone in protected areas and only come back to feed them at dawn and dusk. See if you can find this fawn faster than the doe can.
Awesome Anagrams

Rearrange the letters in the words below to form a brand new word based on what you learned in the Keep Wildlife Wild program. You must use all of the letters.

specter
silenced
secure
jury + in
harped + on
if + willed
tom + her
ten + sling
cave + pit
ill + gale
net + rich + men
untie + haze
fling + geld
gags + is + ever
let + hers
coasted + timed
seas + died
intro + unit
halt + he

Now, rearrange the letters in the words below to form two to three new words (two answers contain hyphens). Remember to use all of the letters.

oh + aerobics + vail
into + a + crock
ancient + slam
loathed + wide + tie
tint + it + to + cloak
fine + lad + wheat + wit
Fun & Games!

Puzzle Answers

The following pages contain the answer keys to the crossword, word find, cryptogram and maze puzzles.

The best way that most people can interact with living wild animals is to watch them in their native habitats. Wildlife watching—from Acadian Flycatchers to Zebras—is an enjoyable and rewarding lifelong hobby. Many excellent wildlife identification guides are available. Using only their eyes, a pair of binoculars, a telephoto lens or a spotting scope, wildlife enthusiasts can rack up hours of healthy outdoor time.
Answers to Crossword Puzzle

R I S K
C V E T E R I N A R I A N S N
A E S
R E H A B I L I T A T O R C A T S
E E I
T R A N S M I T T E D N O T
P S U C
S T R E S S E D F C T C
T D L K I T S A
I S L O O S E L G
N D L I C E N S E
J O B G N S
U F G O S L I N G
O R P H A N I
Y W C N R
D N E S T L I N G A B
I U S R V I A L
S S C E N T S T
E C A N I N E E S
A P O U C H
S U F R I G H T E N E D
E X P O S E S
Keep Wildlife Wild

Fun & Games

Answers to Word Search

C L X R V N G I W G Z X D I S E A S E R
K O V V L C A U N P R E D I C T A B L E
M E W V Q B X I F J G P J O E A C E D H
F P H Z C T L W R K U E V B S T V R J A
S E V O L G M I O A D R P G W I A L Z B
I L Y F D A W K C O N M Y M T L B R S I
B L W E U S G A M E F I L D L I W A Y L
T K L G C W O E S E N T R O P B H Y S T
B F C E K C S T L U S S W E E Y A V M Y T
V V A Z L T L I L R P E F T H X L M A
W E F W I I S U O I V V D S E Z M U T
J K K C N K N A S W E T I J J R V M S
T E K G G L G R I K V L T V H X E N Y
M Y A L F J C A D T E G P E A G T X N P
C H F Y R N Z P T M K U A D R L P D O H
G C S O M W D I G M T L C I Q S W W H A
W T R A O J A A J S T R E S S J P Q X N
Y N Y S G L B G J H A O D T E B A K O F
F Z G B G L O M Y G V O G U Y R E U K U
R G I I Q Z L G D X S K Z O N D O X P Y
Cryptogram Answer:

A YOUNG WILD ANIMAL’S BEST CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IS WITH ITS MOTHER.
Wild or Domestic?

Below are the wild animals of each group. Most, but not all, wild animals are camouflaged in earth tones, whereas domestic farm animals have been typically bred to be pure white so that the customer can see how clean the animal has been kept before it is purchased. It is more difficult to cover up flaws when an animal is pure white.

Ducklings are small and vulnerable to predation. Wild mallard ducklings have darker colors for camouflage. Domestic ducklings are protected from predators by the farmer, so they often have been bred to be bright yellow...all the better for the farmer to see them.

Wild turkeys are camouflaged in browns and blacks. Domestic turkeys, like the ones you find at the grocery store around Thanksgiving time, are bred to be pure white. All the better to detect imperfections.

Both squirrels are wild. The all white version of the grey squirrel is an example of an albino...an animal that lacks pigmentation (color). Its eyelids, ears and even toenails lack color...the pink cast is the blood showing through the skin.

Only the cottontail is wild. Domestic rabbits have been bred to exhibit unusual characteristics, from very long silky fur to extra long ears...ears so long they “flop” over from the weight...NOT a good trait to have in the wild. Cottontails have upright ears to detect predators.

Were you able to recognize our wild native pigeon, called the mourning dove? The other bird is a parakeet. While parakeets may escape into the wild, most are held captive in people’s homes as pets.

Did you select the gray wolf as the wild canine? Dogs diverged from a now-extinct population of wolves when people were hunter-gatherers. In fact, dogs were the first domesticated animal. Some dogs, like Huskies, have wolf-like characteristics.

Two birds are wild: The prairie-chicken and the ring-necked pheasant. However, of the two, only the prairie-chicken is NATIVE to Wisconsin. The pheasant is native to China, but has been raised & released as a gamebird.

Snow and Canada geese are wild. Snow geese have two color variations: white and “blue.” What advantage would a wild goose have in being white? Swans are white, too.

In birds, the males of the species are often very colorful to attract mates. White domestic ducks sometimes mate with wild mallards. The result is the odd looking cross-breed mallard (3rd photo in that series).
Mother Knows Best

Fun & Games

A Lesson Plan for Grades 4-6
Awesome Anagrams Answers

specter = respect
silenced = licensed
secure = rescue
jury + in = injury
harped + on = orphaned
if + willed = wildlife
tom + her = mother
ten + sling = nestling
cave + pit = captive
ill + gale = illegal
net + rich + men = enrichment
untie + haze = euthanize
fling + geld = fledgling
gags + is + ever = aggressive
let + hers = shelter
coasted + timed = domesticated
seas + died = diseased
intro + unit = nutrition
halt + he = health

oh + aerobics + vail = social behavior
into + a + crock = raccoon kit
ancient + slam = animal scent
loathed + wide + tie = white-tailed doe
tint + it + to + cloak = cottontail kit
fine + lad + wheat + wit = white-tailed fawn
If you or your students find a sick, injured or truly orphaned wild animal, contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (1-888-WDNR-INFo or go on-line dnr.wi.gov search: Keep Wildlife Wild) or your local licensed wildlife rehabilitator. These experts can give you the information you need.