

I Found a Baby Bird

Now What?



To Find a wildlife rehabilitator in your area, contact

- Your state wildlife agency
- Humane Society
- Audubon Society
- Wild bird stores
- City Animal control officer
- Veterinarian (wildlife/exotic)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Is bird hurt or sick (unable to flutter wings; bleeding, wings drooping unevenly; weak or shivering; attacked by cat/dog?)

No

Yes

Is bird feathered?

No

Yes

Call a wildlife rehabilitator.

It's a nestling.
(needs help!)
Can you find the nest?
Is it intact?

It's a fledgling.
(Normal behavior to be hopping on ground; parents are still feeding it.)
Is bird safe from cats, dogs and people?

Unable to reach a wildlife rehabilitator?
Call your state wildlife agency or a wildlife Veterinarian.

No

Yes

No

Yes

Make a substitute nest.
Poke holes in bottom of berry basket/margarine tub; line with dry grass, the old nest, or pine needles; hang from original or nearby tree.

Put baby back in nest.
Observe from a distance.
Are parents visiting nest?

Put bird in bushes or on a tree limb nearby.
Watch from a distance.
Are parents nearby?

Leave the area.
Baby is OK.

If you are unable to reach any of the above, see instructions on back of this page: **"How to rescue Baby Birds"**

Yes

No

No

Yes

Put baby in nest.
Observe from a distance.
Are parents visiting nest?

Leave the area.
Baby is OK.

Call a wildlife rehabilitator.

Leave the area.
Baby is OK.

Yes

No

Leave the area.
Baby is OK.

Call a wildlife rehabilitator.

If you find a baby duck, goose, quail or killdeer:

- If you know the mother is dead, or if baby is injured, call a wildlife rehabilitator right away.
- If baby is separated from the mother and you know where she is, place baby close by so she can hear it. Watch from a distance.
- If the mother is not found or does not claim the baby within an hour, call a wildlife rehabilitator. If you cannot reach one, rescue the baby (see instructions on back).

A baby's best chance for survival is its mother

From *Healers of the Wild: People Who Care for Injured and Orphaned Wildlife*
By Shannon K. Jacobs
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Denver, CO 80206 (303) 316-4633
www.oneeyedcat.com/Healers_of_the_Wild/

How to Rescue Baby Birds

(Only adults should rescue baby birds. Before rescuing adult birds, seek guidance from a wildlife rehabilitator.)

- 1. Prepare a container.** Place a clean, soft cloth with no strings or loops on the bottom of a cardboard box or cat/dog carrier with a lid. If it doesn't have air holes, make some. For smaller birds, you can use a paper sack with air holes..
- 2. Protect yourself.** Wear gloves, if possible. Some birds may stab with their beaks, slice with their *talons* (claws) and slap with their wings, to protect themselves, even if sick; birds commonly have parasites (fleas, lice, ticks) and carry diseases.
- 3. Cover the bird with a light sheet or towel.**
- 4. Gently pick up the bird and put it in the prepared container.**
- 5. Warm the animal if it's cold out or if the animal is chilled.** Put one end of the container on a heating pad set on low. Or fill a zip-top plastic bag, plastic soft drink container with a screw lid, or a rubber glove with hot water; wrap warm container with cloth, and put it next to the animal. Make sure the container doesn't leak, or the animal will get wet and chilled.
- 6. Tape the box shut or roll the top of the paper bag closed.**
- 7. Note exactly where you found the bird.** This will be very important for release.
- 8. Keep the bird in a warm, dark, quiet place.**
Don't give it food or water.
Leave the bird alone; don't handle or bother it.
Keep children and pets away.
- 9. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator, state wildlife agency, or wildlife veterinarian as soon as possible.**
Don't keep the bird at your home longer than necessary.
Keep the bird in a container; don't let it loose in your house or car.
- 10. Wash your hands after contact with the bird.**
Wash anything the bird was in contact with — towel, jacket, blanket, pet carrier — to prevent the spread of diseases and/or parasites to you or your pets.
- 11. Get the bird to a wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.**

It's against the law in most states to keep wild animals if you don't have permits, even if you plan to release them.

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