

# IMPORTANT WILDLIFE INFORMATION

## for the public to know

### *What if I Already Rescued the Wild Animal?*

- MINIMIZE HANDLING
- Injured or orphaned wild animals should be kept in a secured container so they cannot harm people, be harmed by people or pets, or escape.
- Keep the container with the wild animal in a quiet, warm, and dark place.
- Do not feed the wild animal!!!
- Contact a wildlife rehabilitator immediately.
- If there has been any injury from the wild animal, contact a physician immediately and get professional care!

### *Why Should I Contact a Wildlife Rehabilitator?*

- Wild animals are not like domestic animals.
- Rehabilitators have special training and knowledge to work with wildlife.
- Wild animals have the potential to transmit diseases and parasites to humans and other animals, such as pets and livestock.
- Wild animals require special supplies and facilities.
- Local, state, and federal laws often prohibit possession of wildlife, even if you plan to release the animal.
- Rehabilitators have the special permits and licenses that allow them to care for and then release wildlife.
- There are many injuries, health problems, and diseases that wildlife may have that are difficult to notice.
- Wild animals need to be raised with their own species.
- Most veterinarians have education and experience with companion animals or livestock, not wildlife.



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*If you are interested in rehabilitating wildlife, contact a trained, permitted, and knowledgeable rehabilitator.*

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### *Tips for Preventing Human-Wildlife Conflicts and Problems*

- Do not feed wildlife.
- Feed your pets indoors and refrain from leaving pet food outdoors.
- Keep domestic pets indoors, fenced, or leashed.
- Restrict access to buildings by keeping doors or windows closed or screened.
- Check for animal nests before cleaning the chimney or eaves, or before trimming or cutting down trees.
- Use wildlife-proof garbage containers.
- Dispose of all litter properly.
- Do not release balloons outside.
- If you have more questions about wildlife problems contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

### *How Might a Wildlife Rehabilitator Rescue an Animal?*

- They start by thinking about safety.
- If a wildlife disease is suspected or there are other concerns, the rehabilitator may contact other experts within their network for advice or help before taking action.
- Rehabilitators wear gloves, use handling equipment, and have a container ready before approaching or capturing the animal.
- Rehabilitators use their training and past experiences with wild animals to develop a plan to help the animal.
- Rehabilitators immediately transport the wild animal to the rehabilitation facility or cooperating veterinarian.
- Rehabilitators emphasize the importance of not placing people at risk to rescue a wild animal.

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### *What if I Find an Abandoned Baby Animal...?*

- If you find what you think is an orphaned mammal, do not touch it. Some mammals carry rabies and you should speak with a rehabilitator before you attempt to handle them.

- A young wild animal that is alone is not necessarily cause for immediate alarm or rescue.
- Do not turn a desire to help these baby animals into a kidnapping.
- Never give food or water without consulting a wildlife rehabilitator first. Giving food or water to an injured or orphaned animal can cause illness or death.

### *What if You Find an Adult Wild Animal that Seems Hurt or Sick?*

- Do not touch the animal. Watch first from a safe distance. Determine if what you are seeing is truly an injury. It is possible that this is just a normal behavior that you have never seen before?
- Bring your pets indoors (a large number of all wildlife injuries treated by rehabilitators are caused by domestic pets).
- Write down a good description of the animal, its location, and what you think is wrong. You can also take pictures/videos with your phone to document what you are witnessing. Please do not put yourself in harm's way to get a video.
- Call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for advice.
- Remember, there are real risks in handling wild animals, even if they may appear to be young, small, or "safe" to handle.

### *What if I Find an Abandoned Baby Bird?*

- If a nest with young birds has fallen down, the parents will often continue to raise the youngsters.
- If a baby bird is on the ground, check to see if it has feathers. Birds with most of their feathers that hop or run are usually not orphans. They have left the nest a day or so early and their parents will care for them on the ground while they are learning to fly. This is a natural part of their development to fall from the nest to the ground.
- If you find a bird without most of its feathers, try to find the nest and return it. The parents will take it back and continue to care for it as long as it is healthy.
- If you are unable to find the nest, place the bird in a small box with a soft, clean cloth in the bottom, and keep it warm. Call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator immediately. Do not feed it anything as you do not know what species the bird may be and an improper diet is deadly.



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### *What if I Think a Wild Animal Does Need Rescue?*

- Check the list above to decide if the wild animal really does need rescue.
- Contact a wildlife rehabilitator, wildlife agency, animal control officer, or other expert for advice.
- Remember, it is not appropriate for a member of the public to capture and handle wild animals.