



ANIMAL SERVICES

Information Series

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Wildlife and You

Wildlife Is All Around Us

One of the great things about living in the beautiful Pacific Northwest is our everyday encounters with wildlife. Eagles fly overhead, crows call after us as we walk down the street, raccoons steal cat food off the back porch, squirrels race across the streets and orcas thrill us with their beauty in Puget Sound.

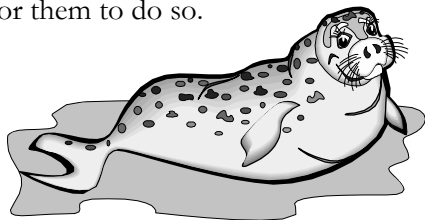


It is inevitable that humans and animals will occasionally cross paths.

This brochure is designed to help you know what to do when you come face to face with wildlife.

Understanding wild ways...

Part of living in harmony with Nature is understanding “wild ways.” Some things that don’t make sense to us make perfect sense in the scheme of living wild. For instance, a human mother would never dream of leaving her newborn infant alone in the woods, or on the edge of a beach, but that is exactly what mother deer and seals do – and it is perfectly normal and right for them to do so.



If you see a baby animal, the best thing to do is to leave it alone. Observe it for a moment – from a distance – and notice the following:

- Is it well hidden, or is it sitting out in the open like on a sidewalk?
- If it is a bird, is it fully feathered? Look up to see if you can find a nest it may have come from. Put it back in the nest if possible. You can touch birds with your bare hands. If you can’t reach the nest, nail a box to the tree (as high as you can reach) and place the bird in it, or in a shrub or on a shaded portion of a roof, out of the way of cats, dogs and children. Do not unnecessarily handle or move it from the general area where it was found.
- Does the animal appear healthy? Is it bleeding or have other obvious injuries?
- Is it in danger of being disturbed by cats, dogs or children?
- Is it a native animal? Some people release non-native animals into the wild, and these animals often fail to adapt. Call the Department of Wildlife or a local wildlife rehabilitator if you have questions concerning what is or is not a native animal.

Common questions and answers about wildlife:

Q) How do I know if a baby animal is abandoned or simply waiting for its mother to return?

A) Believe it or not, many baby animals are left alone for the greater part of the day. The chances of you finding a baby deer, seal or

rabbit **with** its mother is far less than finding the baby alone. Deer and rabbits only return to nurse their babies once or twice a day. **It is normal to find baby deer, seals or rabbits alone.**

Q) Shouldn't baby seals be out in the water with their mothers?

A) No. Young harbor seals spend most of their time on shore while their mother stays out in the water. She will return to her baby to nurse and check on him. **DO NOT TOUCH BABY SEALS!** They carry diseases such as herpes which are transmittable to humans. Keep dogs away from seals as well. Not only may the dog harm the seal, but seals and dogs share many serious diseases such as distemper.

Q) I just found a baby crow hopping around the yard – it can't fly. Is it injured?

A) Fledglings, or young birds just learning to fly, go through a stage where they live on the ground. This phase lasts about two weeks. During this time they make short bursts of flight, but may appear as if they are injured and unable to obtain true flight. Their parents are nearby and caring for them during this time. You can help these young birds survive this tough transitional stage by making sure they are safe from cats, dogs and children.



Q) How can I tell if a wild animal needs my help?

A) There are times when wild animals do need our help. If any of the following are true, the animal may be in distress and rescue may be necessary:

- Animal is cold and listless
- Animal is very thin with bones protruding
- The animal's parent or siblings are dead nearby

- Animal has obvious signs of injury
- The animal's home or nest has been destroyed

Q) What do I do with an injured or orphaned animal?

A) Call a wildlife rehabilitator to see if they can help. Be aware that most wildlife is protected by state and federal laws which prohibit care by anyone who is not a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. If an animal does need help, use a towel to pick the animal up. Place it in an appropriately sized cardboard box which is padded with blankets or towels. Place the box in a **QUIET**, darkened area. Do **NOT** attempt to feed or give water to the animal.

Department of Fish and Wildlife
360-902-2515

Wildlife Rehabilitators

Carol Ekker
360-264-4283
Small mammals

Claudia Supensky - For Heaven's Sake Animal Rescue and Rehab
360-273-0550
www.fhswildliferehab.org
Mammals and non-migratory birds

Sarvey Wildlife Care Center
360-435-4817
www.sarveywildlife.org
Mammals and birds

Yelm Veterinary Hospital
360-458-7707
Mammals and birds

