I Found a Baby Bird... **Now What?!**

Wild birds live near our homes and work places. Sometimes they need help and sometimes they do not, but how can you tell?

*This chart should help, but if you are ever in doubt, please call us first, since the baby’s best chance of survival is with its parents.*

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**Is the Bird Hurt or Sick?**

Unable to flutter wings? Bleeding?

Wings drooping unevenly? Weak or shivering? Attacked by cat/dog?

- **YES**
  - **Call WRCNU.**
  - 801-814-7888

- **NO**

**Is the Bird a Nestling?**

It needs help!

Can you find the nest?

Is the nest intact? Is the baby warm to the touch?

- **NO**
  - Put baby back in nest (if you can do it safely).
  - Observe from a distance for an hour.
  - Are parents visiting nest?

  - **NO**
    - **Bring the baby to WRCNU.**
    - Can you transport it immediately?

  - **YES**
    - **Call WRCNU.**
    - 801-814-7888

  - **YES**
    - Leave the Area.
    - Baby is OK.

- **YES**

**Is the Bird a Fledgling?**

Hopping on the ground is normal if the parents are still feeding it.

Is the bird safe from cats, dogs, and people?

- **NO**
  - Put bird in bushes or on a low tree limb nearby.
  - Watch from a distance for an hour.
  - Are parents nearby?

  - **NO**
    - **See Instruction Box on next page.**

  - **YES**
    - **Call WRCNU.**
    - 801-814-7888
Instructions for Taking a Sick, Injured, or Orphaned Bird to a Wildlife Rehabilitator
(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 hole.

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.** We recommend the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Northern Utah in Ogden, 801-814-7888.

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REMEMBER: 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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By Shannon K. Jacobs
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