

# Help! I Found a Baby Bunny...

Spring has sprung, and so has a new crop of baby animals. Do you know what to do if you find one? Here are some common questions and answers we found on the Internet about how to handle wild baby animals.



## 1) Help! My cat cornered a baby bird. What should I do?

At <http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=fact-or-fiction-birds-abandon-young-at-human-touch> you learn most experts say to leave it alone. Usually, the parents are watching from a distance. See how to build a bird's nest at <http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci/birdsnests.html>.

## 2) I found nest of baby rabbits. Can I keep one for a pet?

At <http://www.rabbit.org/faq/sections/orphan.html>, you learn that rabbits sometimes hide their nests in the middle of grassy field. Then, they leave them during the daytime (according to [http://www.hopperhome.com/wild\\_bunnies.htm](http://www.hopperhome.com/wild_bunnies.htm)), so they don't draw the attention of preying animals. If a baby wanders from the nest, gently put it back. Whatever you do, don't take the babies from the mom, or she will be frantic. See how one family helps wild animals at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SmGzXajpUU>.



**3) Worms cover the sidewalk when it rains, and they seem so helpless. Can I help them?** Just don't step on them and chances are they'll be fine. At <http://www.wormdigest.org/content/view/100/2/> you learn that worms don't breathe like we do. They get oxygen right through their thin, moist skin. If the ground fills with water, they can't breathe, so they come to the surface, until their underground homes dry. The best way to learn about worms is to study them. Here's how you can make a worm observatory: [http://www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/educator/activities\\_observatory.html](http://www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/educator/activities_observatory.html).

## 4) I found a snake in my back yard. Should I be afraid?

Not likely, but don't touch it, just to be safe. Poisonous snakes are very rare. Take a digital photograph of it (use the zoom!) and visit a site like [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garter\\_snake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garter_snake) or <http://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/view/462/> to see what kind of snake you have. Chance are, it's a garter snake, which is very common in United States. This YouTube video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnD2m1vd2h4>, demonstrates how gentle garden snakes can be, if handled properly. At <http://www.littleclickers.com/snakes/snakes.htm>, you can learn more about snakes in general, including poisonous ones.



## 5) What is rabies, and why should I worry?

That little squirrel might look cute, but it could be infected with rabies, a horrible disease. At [http://kidshealth.org/kid/health\\_problems/infection/rabies.html?tracking=K\\_RelatedArticle](http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/infection/rabies.html?tracking=K_RelatedArticle) you learn that if you get scratched or bitten, you could get the same disease that could make you very sick.



## 6) Why should we not feed wild animals?

First of all, it is illegal in many places. At <http://tinyurl.com/illegaltofeedwildanimals>, you also learn that feeding any wild animal can be dangerous to both yourself — say if it's an alligator or a bear — and to the animal you are feeding. You lessen their chances of survival, because they learn to become dependant on humans for food. This, in turn, makes them more aggressive towards humans and more dangerous.

See <http://tinyurl.com/cfwlinfoontfeedanimals> for more reasons why it isn't safe to feed wild animals -- no matter how cute and cuddly they appear.



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