

I FOUND A BABY BIRD...WHAT DO I DO?

- ❖ If the baby bird is on the ground and doesn't move away as you approach, it needs to be rescued. Pick it up! Do NOT leave it on the ground where it can be attacked by cats, dogs, grackles (black birds) or ants.
- ❖ Baby doves that are healthy and alert can be re-nested. Click on our DOVE icon for info on how to do this.
- ❖ Bring the bird inside especially here in AZ where the dry heat will quickly add to dehydration. Put the bird in safe, covered containment such as a shoe box with a lid. Line with paper towels, old cloth, pine needles, or dried grass. Do not use fresh grass. Putting the bird in a cage is not recommended; it will do better in a warm, dark place like a box.
- ❖ If you have cats and/or dogs, put the box in a closed room such as a bathroom, closet, or laundry room. Many rehabbers also have cats and/or dogs so this isn't a deal breaker.

- ❖ A compromised bird (sick, injured, or orphaned) needs to be kept warm with a heat source. This means a heating pad on low or hot water bottle (fill an empty plastic milk/water/OJ jug with hot water from the faucet. Put the cap back on and place next to the bird or box. The bird needs to be next to something that is radiating heat. *Putting the bird in a blanket, towel, cotton balls, or warm room will not help.* Do not put the bird outside in the sun.



- ❖ A bird must be warm and hydrated before it can digest food. Otherwise it will use its last bit of energy to try to digest because if the bird is cold, its systems start to shut down. Once the bird is warm and alert, put drops of water along the outside of the bill. Do NOT squirt water down the bird's throat as you could get fluid into the lungs. Always gently place water along the outside of the bill or the front of the mouth and allow the bird to swallow by itself.

- ❖ Once the bird is warm and hydrated (it will produce a moist dropping), it will probably be hungry. Doves and pigeons do not open their mouth for food so trying to feed them is more difficult. **For babies that are opening their mouths for food (these are songbirds)**, hard boil an egg and feed small pieces. You can soak dry cat or dog kibble until spongy (a good quality kitten kibble is best) and feed that or buy a jar of strained chicken baby food (Gerbers or Beechnut) and feed from a small artist's paintbrush. **Do not feed bread, milk, sugar water, raw hamburger, or honey.**



Note: If the baby bird you have found looks like any of the ones below, go to the appropriate page for instructions as these babies need specialized care and diet.



Quail chicks, like chickens and ducks, are precocial which means they peck at food on their own.

Click on the photo for more information on quail.



Nestling hummingbirds need a specialized hummingbird formula (not sugar water for hummingbird feeders)

Click on the photo for more information on hummingbirds.



Doves and pigeons don't open their mouth for food.

Click on the photo for more information on doves and pigeons.

- ❖ Contact a rehabber. If you are in the Phoenix area, email evwildlife@aol.com and include your major cross streets and a photo of the bird for ID. We will help you find the closest rehabber and you can bring the bird to them. If you live elsewhere, Google "wildlife rehabilitation" in your area. Or call local veterinarians, zoo, Humane Society, ASPCA, or other animal organizations that might know of a local rehabber or wildlife facility. Transport the bird in a small box or brown paper bag lined with paper towels or an old cloth. The smaller the box, the less sliding around the bird will do during transport. Do NOT put water in the box or bag. Make sure box has a lid or paper bag is stapled/paper clipped on top. Don't blast the radio as this is very stressful.



Note: Some baby birds leave the nest and are on the ground for a day or two before they can fly up into a tree. Doves are on the ground for 3-4 days! The bird should try to get away from you if you approach and possibly flutter fly a short distance. Give these kids a chance as parents are still feeding them and teaching them how to find food. They don't need to be rescued unless you see a cat nearby or other predators are a problem. If the bird opens his mouth to be feed as you approach, then he is too young to be out of the nest.