

## Raccoons



Raccoons are born very softly furred, traces of their later markings showing very faintly. The eyes open at about three weeks. They nurse for about ten weeks - though they grow very

rapidly! The mother will take them out foraging for solid foods. They remain with the mother for about a year.

## Possoms



Sometimes found still alive in the pocket of a mother killed beside the road, possums must be kept very warm and dark. Feeding with a syringe is easiest. They will be

weaned at about eight weeks, but will require care and feeding for another couple of months.

## Coyotes



The coyote pups are sometimes found in the city. They are born blind, but their eyes open somewhere between 8 to 14 days. Weaning begins at about

eight weeks. They will learn to forage with both parents.

This information is given to help you when you first find an orphaned wild animal. Please remember that the responsibility of raising each animal is great. To have the best chance at a normal life, it must be given to experienced people just as soon as possible.

For more information, advice and drop-off sites call:



1116 Crawford Street,  
Rosseau, Ontario, Canada P0C 1J0  
Tel: 705-732-6368 Fax: 705-732-1929  
[www.aspenvalleywildlifesanctuary.com](http://www.aspenvalleywildlifesanctuary.com)

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# ORPHANED WILD LIFE



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

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## What to do

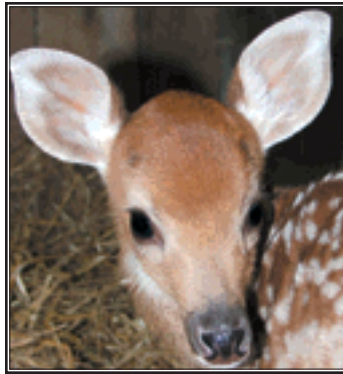
You have found the tiny baby raccoons! They are huddled in a forlorn heap at the edge of a parking lot. Beyond, on a nearby highway, the cars are whizzing by. What should you do? As urbanization increases, the conflict between we humans and the natural world around us increases. Often, wild animals are the victims of our way of life. And so they are, also, our responsibility.

### You Can Help...

When you find that little huddle of wildlife — raccoons or skunks, squirrels or possums, groundhogs, porcupines, beavers, there are things you can do...

- 1) Assess the situation carefully—is the mother likely to return? Are cars, dogs, other wild animals, or even other humans, a threat? If it is safe, and possible, you might watch for awhile and see if a mother does return. However, if the area is one of traffic and human activity, the likelihood is slim.
- 2) **Use gloves, or a blanket or towel, to pick it up**—it will be frightened and will not know you are a friend. **Put it deep in a dark box, with warm towel and blankets**—or even your old sweaters! Darkness and warmth are very very necessary. So is quietness. Handle as little as possible. Children may have a peek, but should not play with them.
- 3) Food is necessary—but let them become warm and comfortable before you try to feed. **Cows milk will kill – the food must be lactose free.** The vet has esbilac available. If you are not able to have the esbilac, go to the nearest grocery store and buy Similac—a lactose free milk for babies. An ordinary baby bottle can be used, with an ordinary nipple. If the animal is too small, use a small syringe. Again, the drink should be warm.
- 4) Contact wildlife caregivers. Check the net, or phone Aspen Valley – we will give you the numbers of the nearest reliable caregivers. **Before you turn the animals over to them, ask questions – How will it be taken care of? Will it be euthanized?** What is its future? Be satisfied!
- 5) As long as you **keep yourself clean, you are very unlikely to suffer from any diseases.** Just keep yourself, the animal and the box clean.
- 6) Realize—it is illegal to keep any wild animal as a pet
- 7) Realize—it will want to live the free life for which it was intended. The time will come, when it is mature and would be breaking the bond with its own parent in the wild, and it will desire freedom above everything else. Be sure it is given to an accredited place, where that will be its future.

## Fawns and Rabbits



One must think twice about “rescuing” one of these! They will often seem to be abandoned – however, the parent will leave them alone for long long periods of time. If you find a nest of small rabbits, deep

in the grass, just watch — the mother may return after a matter of hours. Since a fawn is born without scent and is therefore relatively safe from predators, the doe will leave it for some hours. Watch from a distance. Rabbits will die from fright, so be very careful in handling them – they need warmth, darkness, and quiet. Do not let children play with them. Get the fawn to an experienced rehabilitator as soon as possible.

## Skunks



Skunks are born naked, but with the colour of the stripes showing. The fur will grow gradually for the first three weeks,

when the eyes open. At about seven weeks they can begin to eat some solid foods (cat food) but they are not fully weaned until they are eight weeks old. Feed with a syringe. Though they cannot spray more than a tiny tiny drop, for your own peace of mind, handle them with the tail held down in your hand.

## Groundhogs



Blind and naked at birth, groundhogs grow very quickly. The eyes open at twenty days. They are weaned at between five and six weeks. By the end of the second month they can forage on their own –

and will be so big that their mother would make them leave!

## Foxes



Foxes are born a dark brown colour and do not attain the rustic redish colour until they are about six weeks old. They are weaned at about eight weeks, and then begin to eat meat.

## Beavers



Beavers are born fully furred, their eyes open and their teeth developed. The beaver kit will nurse for about three months – after that, weaning is sporadic. They will begin to forage with their parents, to swim with them, and to play with them. Beavers are

very family oriented, and stay with their parents for two years. Since even small kits defecate in the water, they should be put in a shallow pan of warm water at a minimum of once a day.