

Baby Rabbits

Rabbits are independent animals, not orphans, if they are:

- * More than four inches long
- * Have full fur, open eyes, and erect ears

Rabbit nests are usually found in a shallow, furlined depression in the grass. If you come upon furless young who are out of the nest, return them to the nest. Reform the nest if it has been destroyed, cover the young rabbits with loose grass, and then mark the nest with an X using sticks or some natural-colored material, such as wool ribbon.

Female rabbits only feed their babies at dawn and dusk, so you are unlikely to see the mother return. If she returns, she will move the marker when she enters the nest. If the marker remains undisturbed and the baby rabbits' abdomens appear sunken the next day, then the mother has not returned to feed them, and you should contact a rehabilitator. Young rabbits easily succumb to stress, so you should handle them only as a last resort.

- * Put the rabbit in a closed escape-proof container with a soft ravel-free cloth.
- * If the eyes are closed, it will require a small amount of heat. You may put the box half on and half off a heating pad set on low. Monitor it so it does not get too hot, the rabbit should feel warm, but not hot to the touch. Older rabbits will not require heat.
- * Cover the box with a towel, and put it in a quiet place away from children and pets.
- * Do not attempt to feed. Rabbits only eat every 12 hours, and it will not hurt the animal to wait until you get it to a qualified caretaker. Call the Project Wildlife Hot Line
- * Call 619-225-9202 to find a volunteer near you.

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