

### **If you find a duckling**

**Category : General Wildlife Info**

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Thank you for intervening on behalf of this baby. The fact that you have taken the first step will help ensure that this baby may have an opportunity to survive. Like you, wildlife rehabilitators volunteer to help wildlife when assistance would not normally be available.

Ducklings can get separated from their mom for several reasons, including late hatching, stray or too weak during walk back to water, injured, human interference. **Ducklings can die from cold** (hypothermia) even if the outdoor temperature is warm. Until they are several weeks old, ducklings can not generate their own body temperature without mom nearby for warmth, **Ducklings can drown**. Until they grow feathers, ducklings get their waterproofing ability from the oils on mom's feathers. Ducklings should never be placed in water. **Ducklings can die within 24 hours from lack of proper nutrition**. An improper diet can rapidly lead to hypoglycemia. A very young duckling that is staggering or appears "drunk" is hypoglycemic and will die unless it is provided with some source of sugar. Dextrose or a small amount of table sugar mixed with water can be smeared onto the duckling's tongue. It should respond to the sugar within 20-30 minutes. It should immediately be provided with the correct diet to prevent the condition from occurring again. **Ducklings can die from overhandling**. The majority of the organs in their abdomen are not protected by skeletal structure and can easily be bruised or damaged due to overhandling. Other ducks will not adopt lone ducklings (and may attempt to harm or drown them), so never attempt to place them with another mother, or try to guess who mom is. Lone or orphaned ducklings require rehabilitation. Please contact a [Wildlife Rehabilitator](#) immediately by phone. Please do not rely on email because most rehabilitators do not routinely access their computers. Visit [Emergency Care](#) for stabilization information until you can transport to a rehabilitator.