

[The FIRST thing to do if you have found a wild orphaned baby bird or songbird](#)

Category : [General Wildlife Info](#)

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It is critical to determine if the baby is a good candidate for renesting, or if the baby should be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator for further care. Use the steps outlined in the table below as a guide.

Step 1: Screen for Illnesses/Injuries Is it injured? Any evidence of blood in any amount, any signs of torn or punctured skin, breathing heavily, sitting or laying in an awkward position, etc.

Is it cold? A bird's body temperature can range from 104-109 degrees. They should feel very warm to the touch.

Does it's abdomen appear overly wrinkled or paperish-white? Skin should be stretched tight and pink like the inside of your forearm.

Does it's abdomen and eyes appear sunken-in? They should have bright round eyes and enormous pot-bellies.

Is it lethargic, inactive, keeps its eyes closed most of the time, prefers to keep its head tucked back into its feathers, or uninterested in it's surroundings?

Was it handled by a dog or cat/did you find it near a dog or cat?

Is it in imminent danger?

Are there dead siblings/parents near-by?

Are there flies or ants around the baby?


Does the baby seem extra fluffy or "puffy"?

Possible fractures? When you gently extend wings and legs, the baby should be able to easily pull them back into proper position.

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, skip to [Step 3](#) for information on what to do with this baby until you can locate a rehabilitator and transport the baby.

If "no" continue to [Step 1.a](#). 1.a Do you suspect that this baby fell from your dryer/kitchen/bathroom vent, eaves of your roof, attic, or any other area inside of or close to your house? If "yes" [Click Here](#)

. If "no" continue to [Step 2 below](#). Step 2: Determine Age It is important to age the baby to determine whether it is suitable for renesting. A baby could be too young and too fragile to survive the renesting process, or even too old to "cooperate" during a reunite attempt.



Hatchlings This refers to baby birds usually less than 5 days old that are naked or have minimal feather development. These birds quickly lose body temperature and require feedings every 10-15 minutes. They require specialized care and should be immediately taken to a wildlife rehabilitator.

Jump to [Step 3](#).



Nestlings Baby birds that are almost fully feathered. They may, or may not have exposed areas of skin, or have a little fuzzy down sticking out from their feathers. They have no tail feathers yet, or their tail feathers are less than half inch long. They may move around a little, maybe even hop a few steps, but prefer to sit in one spot. Skip to [Step 4](#).



Fledglings Birds that are fully feathered and very mobile. Their tail feathers are usually 3/4 inch long or longer. Not yet capable of flying or only partially flighted. They are not good candidates for re-nesting because they are the equivalent of a two-year old child and just won't "stay put" if placed in the original or a substitute nest. They require an alternative method to attempt to reunite them with their parents. They are very alert and active, and extremely difficult to catch. If your fledgling is *not* a bouncing ball of energy, and was fairly easy to catch go to [Step 3](#); otherwise ==> Skip to [Step 5](#).