

Waterfowl

Be sure the bird or birds have been abandoned before you remove them from the water. Remember - no mummy, no waterproofing. Once the baby waterfowl are in your care, keep them as warm as possible e.g. Next to a warm part of your body for the journey home. If they look dead, as soon as possible gently warm them up with a hair dryer. Very often this will revive cold, unconscious waterbirds.

Short-term feeding

They must be kept warm, by a lamp if possible, but anything will suffice till help can be found.

Short-term feeding can be done with a little cereal such as Weetabix or porridge mixed with water to form a mush. Drinking water should be shallow so that birds cannot get into it and get wet: a lid with an upside-down egg cup in it is ideal.

Other leaflets in this wildlife care series include: Hedgehogs in your back yard, The pipistrelle bat, Prevention is better than cure.

This leaflet is designed to assist you. If you need further assistance, then please try one of the telephone numbers below. If you cannot get through, leave a clear message and telephone number on the answer machine. Remember volunteers are assisting in their own time, with no payment. Please always be polite as they are doing a good job.



Some useful telephone numbers

RSPCA	0300 1234 999
British Hedgehog Society	01584 890801
RSPCA - North Wilts Branch 10 am - 12 noon ~ Mon-Fri	01793 640136

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Fledglings

Keeping a baby bird alive until help can be found



Information



THE SOUTH WEST
SWAN SANCTUARY



In
conjunction with the
North Wilts RSPCA

How to start

Establish first that the bird is orphaned and needs help. Many young birds leave the nest before they can fly. The parents encourage the young to disperse into different hideaways where feeding can carry on. This is Nature's way of spreading the risk of the young being taken by predators. By watching an apparently orphaned bird from a distance you can see if the parent bird returns to feed the young.



Leave fledglings alone unless:-

- ! There is danger from a predator.
- ! There are environmental hazards e.g. a road or water.
- ! The parents have definitely been killed or injured.
- ! The parents do not return after about an hour.
- ! The fledgling is injured in any way.

Only pick it up if at least one of the above conditions apply.

Do's

- ! Keep it warm (lamp - all round heat).
- ! Give it the correct food.
- ! Feed it correctly.

Don'ts

- ! NEVER feed a baby-bird seed, bread or milk.
- ! NEVER put baby waterfowl onto water.
- ! NEVER feed worms from the garden.
- ☐ NEVER blame yourself if the bird dies, remember you gave it a second chance. Your best is all anyone can ask.

Short-term (overnight)

Equipment required :-

- ☐ Food - e.g. Meat based baby food, boiled or scrambled egg minced up, any raw or cooked meat, if nothing else is available try a stock cube. For waterfowl Weetabix or rusks (mixed into a paste with boiled water).
- ! A red light bulb, or a hot-water bottle, remember this will vary in temperature.
- ! Feeding tools - tweezers, eye dropper, syringe, coffee stirrers.
- ! A small container to put the bird in.



To feed it correctly first open its beak: this is done by giving the container a little shake or by passing your hand in front of the lamp (creating a shadow) or touching the beak. If this does not work, drip a little liquid onto the end of the beak, if the bird drinks it do it until it stops. Then try later with the food. If you are feeding it dry food e.g. mincemeat, dip a few pieces in water.

How often do I feed it?

- ! A featherless bird needs to be fed about every half-hour (little but often).
- ! A bird with feathers feeds about every two hours but increase this to every hour in the evening. This should see it through to the early morning.
- ! A hungry bird will open its beak and call out.



Remember, information is always a telephone call away.