

# RECOGNIZING ORPHANINGS & INJURIES FOR WILDLIFE FIRST RESPONDERS

NATURAL HISTORY CRIB BOOKLET



2<sup>ND</sup> IN A SERIES OF  
NATURAL HISTORY CRIB BOOKLETS ©2019



FELLOW MORTALS WILDLIFE HOSPITAL  
LAKE GENEVA, WI [WWW.FELLOWMORTALS.ORG](http://WWW.FELLOWMORTALS.ORG)



“

**I'M TRULY SORRY MAN'S DOMINION HAS  
BROKEN NATURE'S SOCIAL UNION, AN' JUSTIFIES  
THAT ILL OPINION WHICH MAKES THEE STARTLE  
AT ME, THY POOR EARTH-BORN COMPANION,  
AN' FELLOW MORTAL.**

”

ROBERT BURNS, 'TO A MOUSE' 1785

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**ALL OF THE WILD ONES PICTURED IN THIS BOOKLET WERE EITHER KEPT WITH THEIR PARENTS IN THE WILD, OR RECEIVED CARE AT FELLOW MORTALS. BECAUSE FELLOW MORTALS WORKS WITH INJURED, ORPHANED, AND SICK WILDLIFE, THE PICTURES REFLECT ACTUAL INJURIES AND CONDITIONS THAT WERE TREATED AT THE HOSPITAL.**

**THE MAJORITY OF WILD ONES BROUGHT TO US ARE SUCCESSFULLY REHABILITATED.**

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# 👍 WHAT DOES A HEALTHY BABY LOOK LIKE?



- **BRIGHT, ROUND EYES**
- **PRESENCE OF FECAL BY BABY**
- **ALERT & ABLE TO BEG FOR FOOD**
- **CLEAN, SLEEK FUR**
- **WELL NOURISHED**
- **NORMAL POSTURE**

Clockwise from top: Cooper's hawk; Cottontail rabbit; Grey squirrel; European starling; American robin; Common grackle

# BABIES TOO YOUNG TO BE OUT OF THE NEST

NESTLING BIRDS CAN'T  
HOP OR FLY AND AREN'T  
FULLY FEATHERED

FEATHERS ARE ABSENT OR  
STILL ENCLOSED IN QUILLS



INFANT MAMMALS STILL HAVE  
EYES CLOSED AND ARE NOT  
FULLY FURRED



Clockwise from top: Grey squirrel; White-footed mouse; Cottontail rabbit; House sparrow; Mourning dove; Great horned owl

# BABIES TOO YOUNG TO BE WITHOUT PARENTS



**JUVENILE MAMMALS MAY  
STILL BE NURSING OR NEED  
THE PROTECTION OF PARENTS**



**FLEDGLING BIRDS  
CANNOT FEED  
THEMSELVES—EVEN  
THOUGH THEY CAN FLY**

**PRECOCIAL ANIMALS RELY ON  
PARENTS FOR PROTECTION FROM  
PREDATORS AND TO LEARN  
IMPORTANT BEHAVIORS**

Clockwise from top: Grey squirrel; Great horned owl; Virginia opossum; Mallard; White-tailed deer; American robin

# 📌 IDENTIFYING STARVATION & DEHYDRATION IN BIRDS



- EYES CLOSED OR SLITTED
- VISIBLE SKIN DRY AND WRINKLED
- FEATHERS ROUGH & DIRTY
- 'PUFFY' APPEARANCE
- LETHARGIC & QUIET
- PALE, DRY MOUTH



Clockwise from top: Common nighthawk; European starling; Great horned owl; Broad-winged hawk; European starling; Cowbird



# IDENTIFYING STARVATION & DEHYDRATION IN MAMMALS



- EYES CLOSED OR SLITTED
- VISIBLE SKIN DRY AND WRINKLED
- HEAD 'TOO BIG' FOR BODY
- FUR ROUGH & DIRTY
- 'BONY' APPEARANCE
- 'PUFFY' APPEARANCE
- LETHARGIC & QUIET
- PALE, DRY MOUTH



Clockwise from top: Eastern cottontail; Eastern cottontail; Eastern chipmunk; Grey squirrel; White-tailed deer

# IDENTIFYING ORPHANED FAWN

**HEALTHY FAWNS TUCK TO HIDE AND SLEEP  
TAIL AND BOTTOM ARE CLEAN AND DRY**

**ORPHANED & INJURED FAWN ARE WEAK  
TAIL AND BOTTOM CAN BE DIRTY AND WET**







## **NORMAL FAWN BEHAVIOR**



**NO EXPERIENCE WITH HUMANS OR  
HUMAN THINGS MEANS  
NO UNDERSTANDING OF DANGER**

**DEER USED TO HUMAN ACTIVITY MAY  
LEAVE BABIES NEXT TO A HOUSE, ON  
A PORCH OR EVEN ON THE SIDE OF  
THE ROAD BETWEEN FEEDINGS**

**INSTINCT TELLS THEM TO LIE STILL AND QUIET  
FOR THE HOURS BETWEEN FEEDINGS**



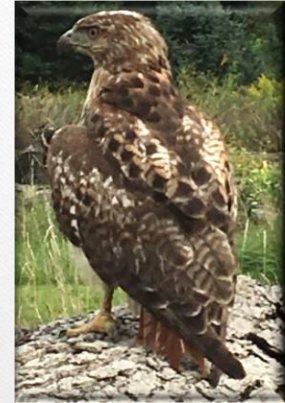
# LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE WHAT'S NORMAL & WHAT'S NOT



**WELL-NOURISHED (L) v STARVING (R)**



**WINGS ARE SPREAD FOR DEFENSE  
WINGS DROOP WHEN A BIRD IS  
SICK, INJURED OR STARVING**



**ORPHANED, THIN & DEHYDRATED**



**BOTH THE GOSLING  
& THE OWLET HAVE  
DIRTY, WET  
BOTTOMS—THE LEGS  
APPEAR LONGER  
THAN NORMAL**





# RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS OF HEAD TRAUMA

HEAD TRAUMA NEEDS TO BE TREATED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE



## SYMPTOMS INCLUDE—

- BRUISING, LACERATIONS
- MISSHAPEN HEAD & EYES
- DROOPING HEAD & NECK
- DIFFERENT SIZED PUPILS
- EYE DAMAGE
- DIFFICULTY STANDING
- TORTICOLLIS ('HEAD TILT')
- ADULT BIRD NOT FLYING



Clockwise from top: Blue jay; European starling; Grey squirrel; Great horned owl; Cooper's hawk; Cooper's hawk

# RECOGNIZING OTHER CONDITIONS



**FINCH CONJUNCTIVITIS**  
(*MYCOPLASMA GALLISEPTICUM*)

**EYE DISEASE & INFLAMMATION  
AFFECTS VISION & ABILITY TO  
FIND FOOD & ELUDE  
PREDATORS**

**THIS CONDITION CAN BE  
TREATED, BUT TAKES SEVERAL  
WEEKS IN REHABILITATION**



**BIRDS CAN SUFFER  
EXTENSIVE FEATHER  
DAMAGE AS A RESULT OF  
FLYING THROUGH  
METHANE FLARE AT  
LANDFILLS.**

**IT CAN TAKE AN ENTIRE  
YEAR FOR THEM TO MOLT  
DAMAGED FEATHERS AND  
GROW NEW ONES**

**FLY EGGS  
APPEAR LIKE  
TINY GRAINS  
OF RICE**

**IF NOT  
REMOVED  
THEY HATCH  
INTO  
MAGGOTS**



**PRESENCE OF FLIES  
INDICATES BABY MAY  
BE ORPHANED  
OR INJURED**

Clockwise from top: House finch; White-tailed deer; Grey squirrel; Red-tailed hawk

## 'ANGEL' WING IN JUVENILE CANADA GEESE



GEESE ARE PRECOCIAL AND CAN WALK AND FEED THEMSELVES 24 HOURS AFTER HATCHING. THEY GROW QUICKLY AND SOME GOSLINGS DEVELOP A WING DEFORMITY KNOWN AS 'ANGEL' WING.

IF NOT TREATED, THE BIRD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FLY.

'ANGEL' WING CAN BE CORRECTED IF THE GOSLING IS RESCUED IN TIME.

OLDER GOSLINGS CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY THE DOWNY YELLOW FUZZ ON THEIR HEADS, BY TAIL FEATHERS THAT ARE SHORTER THAN THOSE OF THE ADULTS, AND BY CHEEK PATCHES THAT ARE MORE GREY THAN WHITE.



## CAN YOU IDENTIFY WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE ANIMALS IN THE BOTTOM ROW?



White-tailed deer (head trauma); Green heron (head trauma, dehydration); European starling (emaciated, dehydration)

# SHOCK & STRESS—WHAT LIES BENEATH

ONCE AN ANIMAL IS WARM, IT MAY BECOME MORE ACTIVE—THIS ANIMAL IS NOT 'BETTER'—IT HAS JUST REALIZED THAT IT IS IN DANGEROUS PROXIMITY TO A PREDATOR—YOU.

MANY INJURIES, CONDITIONS, AND DISEASES ARE NOT VISIBLE. ANY INJURY—WHETHER OR NOT THERE IS BLOOD—CAN BE FATAL. NEVER RELEASE AN ANIMAL YOU HAVE CONTAINED FOR INJURY OR ORPHANING WITHOUT BEING INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY A LICENSED WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR.

FEEDING AN INJURED OR ORPHANED ANIMAL COULD MAKE A CONDITION WORSE, OR RESULT IN DEATH.

THIS GOOSE HAD NO VISIBLE INJURIES BUT HAD EATEN LEAD SHOT. IF THIS GOOSE HAD BEEN GIVEN FOOD BEFORE RECEIVING TREATMENT FOR LEAD POISONING, IT WOULD HAVE DIED



Canada goose with impacted crop and x-ray showing lead in gizzard

VISIBLE INJURIES THAT APPEAR 'MINOR' MAY BE AN INDICATION OF LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS.

THIS FAWN HAD VISIBLE PUNCTURE WOUNDS—AND A SKULL FRACTURE



Fawn admitted with head injuries and x-ray showing skull fracture



# Fellow Mortals

SERVING WILD & HUMAN  
COMMUNITIES SINCE 1985

## WILDLIFE FIRST RESPONDERS

### YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST!

#### CONTACT A WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR FOR ADVICE BEFORE ATTEMPTING RESCUE.

- Use personal protection—gloves & safety glasses. *Wild animals will defend themselves.*
- Contain the animal as directed—do not hold or cuddle it. *Human touch is stressful, not calming.*
- Keep animal contained and in a warm and quiet place. *Human activity is stressful to the animal.*
- Do not feed the animal. *Feeding or providing liquids can cause further injury and damage.*
- Keep wildlife away from pets & children.
- Transport the animal to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.

*Animals must be transported in an enclosed, quiet space (not the back of a pick up truck).  
Radio should be off, talking kept quiet and to a minimum, and pets should be left at home.*

**FELLOW MORTALS WILDLIFE HOSPITAL 262-248-5055 (ANSWERING MACHINE)**

LICENSED FOR BIRDS FROM WISCONSIN & ILLINOIS & NON-PREDATORY MAMMALS FROM WISCONSIN



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