



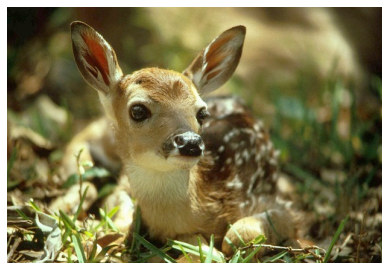
Baby Deer

****Due to the fact that we are located close to downtown Grand Rapids and are on a limited amount of property, we do not take in fawns. Read the following information and if you believe the fawn is TRULY ORPHANED, you can call our friends at The Lowell Farm & Wildlife Rescue at 616-885-4223.**

If you have found a wildlife baby of ANY kind, first assess the baby's well being with the following questions:

- Does Baby feel cold and lethargic?
- Is Baby covered with parasites (fleas, fly strike or ticks)?
- Has Baby been in a dog or cat's mouth? Are there punctures or wounds?
- Does Baby have a broken limb or other obvious injury?
- Does Baby have abrasions?
- Is Baby having difficulty breathing (gaspings, gurgling)?
- Is Baby's coat matted and/or patchy?
- Does Baby have a head tilt and cannot hold its head straight?
- Is Baby exhibiting odd behavior (circling, falling over, etc.)?
- Is Baby bleeding?
- Did you find what you believe to be Mom dead?

If you answered YES to any of the above questions, reuniting babies with Mom is no longer an option and baby needs to get to a rehabber immediately. Please call the Wildlife Rehab Center for further assistance. Regardless of species or time of year, ALWAYS make sure that babies are WARM to the touch. A water bottle with hot water with a sock over it will work to warm babies, or a heating pad will do as well. You can make your own heat source for babies by taking a clean tube sock, filling it with uncooked rice, tie the end of the sock so it won't spill and microwave for 1-2 minutes. Place the warm sock in with the babies and let them decide if they want to be on it or away from it. If you decide to use a water bottle, make absolutely sure that you do not let that bottle get cold! Once the bottle is cold it will suck heat away from babies instead of warming them. NEVER feed or give water without instruction from a rehabber! *If you think baby needs food or water, call us first PLEASE!*



We found a fawn and aren't sure what to do.

Our most common call concerning our local deer is when a person finds a fawn, or two, under their porch in their back yard. Mom is nowhere to be seen, and it seems as though these poor fawns have been abandoned at your house. We love this call. Mother deer leave their young somewhere safe during the day while they go out and run their mommy-errands. They take the fawns to a secure place, usually under a porch or in a field with tall grasses, and they tell the kids to lie low until Mom gets back at dusk. If you leave the fawn alone and keep an eye out you will get to witness the most amazing thing – a mother deer returning to get her young, and the family reunion takes place right in front of you. This is one to call your kids in for, and grab the camera. The kids act as though Mom has been gone for a month. They are so happy to see her that they often jump and skip around, nuzzle Mom's mouth, as if kissing her hello, and run circles around her in joy. It is very sweet to watch, and at times you get to see it multiple days in a row. If Mom decides your porch is her best option for deer day-care, she will use your home for multiple days before moving on. If you wish to deter her from doing so, you can make her less comfortable by making sure someone or something (a family pet) is out in the yard during the early morning hours. You can also purchase a motion activated sprinkler that will deter the deer from your yard if you so wish. It doesn't take much to make Mom decide that your home is not a safe spot. She's a typical overprotective mother, and it takes very little to make her anxious about the children's safety.

To reduce the risks of a predator locating her fawn, a doe seeks seclusion just prior to birth, trying to be less conspicuous by avoiding other deer. For the first few weeks of the fawn's life, the doe keeps the fawn hidden except for suckling bouts. The doe may also feed and bed a considerable distance from the fawn's bed site. This way, even if a predator detects the doe, the fawn may still have a chance of avoiding detection. To further keep her fawn safe from predators, the doe consumes the fawn's urine and droppings to help keep the fawn as scent-free as possible. The droppings provide the mother with further nutrition at a time when it is much-needed.

When not nursing, the fawn curls up in a bed site and remains motionless, its white spots blending in well with the sun-flecked ground. Fawns lose their spots at 90 to 120 days of age, when they begin growing their winter coats. Every year, wildlife departments and wildlife rehabilitators receive calls about "orphaned" fawns. Callers are told that in the spring it is a perfectly natural occurrence to come across a fawn that is seemingly by itself in the woods. The fawn is probably not alone; its mother is nearby, aware, and attentive. (Just like the fawn under the porch) The advice to anyone encountering a fawn lying quietly alone in the woods is to leave it alone. Mother will be nearby and will be taking care of it once you move away, or at dusk when she returns from foraging.

If you have moved the fawn, return it to where it was found. Fawns can often be returned to their mothers if taken back to where they were found within eight hours.

If a fawn appears cold, weak, thin, or injured, and its mother does not return in approximately eight hours, it may be orphaned. In such a case, you can call our friends at The Lowell Farm & Wildlife Rescue at 616-885-4223.

When Deer Truly Need Intervention

Deer are naturally nervous animals and even fawns (baby deer) can be extremely powerful, causing physical harm to anyone and anything nearby by kicking and bucking. Because of this they should NEVER be handled by anyone other than experienced professionals. Once you have decided that a deer is in need of assistance, please contact the hotline or your local rehab facility before attempting any sort of novice rescue.

Considering the nervous nature of deer, it is always important to keep your distance whenever possible. Human intervention can at times be more detrimental than helpful. Some injuries in deer, while they might look terrible, have to be left alone to heal as nature intended because the rehab process would be more harmful to the deer psychologically than it would be helpful physically. Keeping this in mind, there are circumstances where human intervention is helpful, and at times necessary.



- Deer/Fawn attacked by dog, cat, other animal, and is DOWN, not able to run away. Initially deer attacked by another animal will most likely be stunned and in shock. This time period is crucial, as the animal will only be approachable and easy to catch for a small amount of time. Please contact the hotline or your local rehab facility as soon as possible if you witness an attack like this.
- Deer/Dawn hit by car and DOWN on road, shoulder, etc, This happens far more often than any of us would like. Some car vs deer incidents result in the deer running off into the woods. Some do not. If you are a part of, or witness to a car vs deer incident, please try to not MOVE the deer at all. Instead, cover the animals face/head with a blanket/coat/etc. to de-stress the animal. The less a deer can see around them, the better. The commotion of people walking around them, cars driving around them, are all too much for this species to take. If you cover the face, it will give you time to contact the hotline for assistance. In the case of a deer blocking train tracks, a major roadway, etc. there are times that the local police can assist with this as well. Be forewarned though, often these situations do not have a good result, no matter what we do. Many times, the result is local law enforcement or a conservation department officer coming out to put the deer down. We sincerely wish that there were more cases that we could save, but many times this is not possible.