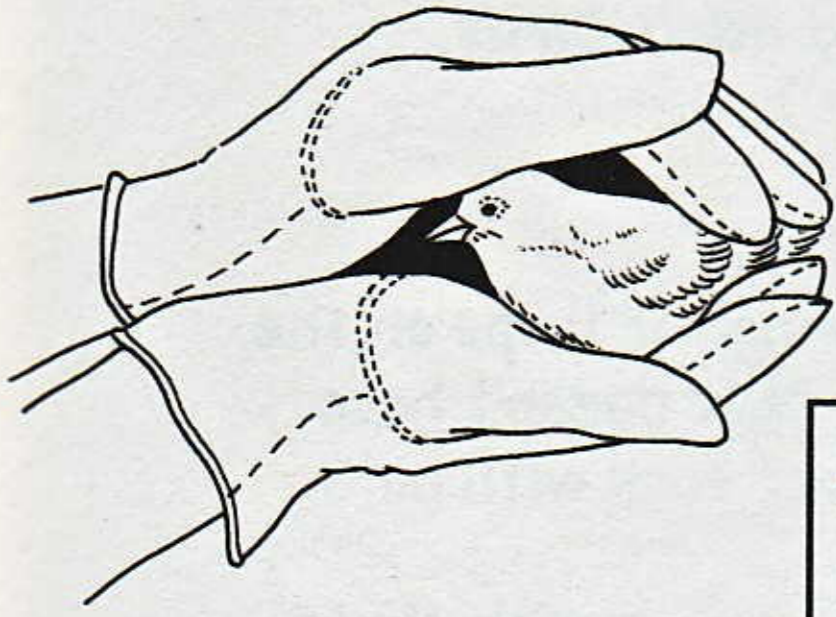# I Found a Baby Bird
Now What?

To find a wildlife rehabilitator in your area, contact:
- Your state wildlife agency
- Humane Society
- Audubon Society
- wild bird stores
- city animal control officer
- veterinarian (wildlife/exotic)
- Coast Guard or Marine Patrol
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- (online) Wildlife Rehabilitation Information Directory
- Fund for Animals Hotline: (203-389-4411) in Connecticut

Is the bird hurt or sick? *(Unable to flutter its wings, bleeding, wings drooping unevenly, weak or shivering, attacked by a cat or dog?)*

→ No: **Is the bird feathered?**

→ Yes: **Call a wildlife rehabilitator**

Is the bird feathered?

→ No: **It's a nestling.** (Needs help!) Can you find the nest? Is it intact?

→ Yes: **It's a fledgling.** (It's *normal* behavior to be hopping on ground; parents are still feeding it.) Is bird safe from cats, dogs, and people?

Call a wildlife rehabilitator

→ **Unable to reach a rehabilitator?** Call your state wildlife agency or a wildlife vet.

→ If you're unable to reach any of the above, see instructions on back of this page: **"How to Rescue Baby Birds"**

It's a nestling. (Needs help!) Can you find the nest? Is it intact?

→ No: **Make a substitute nest.** Poke holes in bottom of berry basket/margarine tub. Line with dry grass, the old nest, or pine needles. Hang from original or nearby tree.

→ Yes: **Put baby back in nest.** Watch from a distance. Are parents visiting the nest?

It's a fledgling. ... Is bird safe from cats, dogs, and people?

→ No: **Put baby in bushes or on tree limb nearby.** Watch from a distance. Are the parents nearby?

→ Yes: **Leave the area.** Baby is okay.

Put baby back in nest. Watch from a distance. Are parents visiting the nest?

→ Yes: **Leave the area.** Baby is okay.

→ No: **Call a wildlife rehabilitator.**

Put baby in bushes or on tree limb nearby. Watch from a distance. Are the parents nearby?

→ No: **Call a wildlife rehabilitator.**

→ Yes: **Leave the area.** Baby is okay.

Make a substitute nest. ... →
Put baby in the nest. Observe from a distance. Are parents visiting nest?

→ Yes: **Leave the area.** Baby is okay.

→ No: **Call a wildlife rehabilitator.**

A baby bird's best chance for survival is its mother!

If you find a baby duck, goose, quail, or killdeer:
- If you know the mother is dead, or if the baby is injured, call a wildlife rehabilitator right away.
- If baby is separated from the mother and you know where she is, place baby close by so she can hear it. Watch from a distance.
- If the mother is not found or does not claim the baby within an hour, call a wildlife rehabilitator. If you cannot reach one, read rescue information on the back of this sheet.

Healers of the Wild, Shannon K. Jacobs. Johnson Books, 2003.

How to Rescue Baby Birds

(Only adults should rescue baby birds. Before rescuing adult birds, seek guidance from a wildlife rehabilitator.)

1. **Prepare a container.** Place a clean, soft cloth with no strings or loops on the bottom of a cardboard box or cat/dog carrier with a lid. If it doesn't have air holes, make some. For smaller birds, you can use a paper sack with air holes.
2. **Protect yourself.** Wear gloves, if possible. Some birds may stab with their beaks, slice with their *talons* (claws) or slap with their wings to protect themselves, even if sick; birds commonly have parasites (fleas, lice, ticks) and carry diseases.
3. **Cover the bird with a light sheet or towel.**
4. **Gently pick up the bird and put it in the prepared container.**
5. **Warm the bird if it's cold out or if the bird is chilled.** Put one end of the bird's container on a heating pad set on low. Or fill a zip-top plastic bag, plastic soft drink container with a screw lid, or a rubber glove with hot water; wrap the warm container with cloth, and put next to the bird. Make sure the container doesn't leak, or the bird will get wet and chilled.
6. **Tape the box shut or roll the top of the paper bag closed.**
7. **Note exactly where you found the bird.** This will be very important for release.
8. **Keep the bird in a warm, dark, quiet place.**
   Don't give the bird food or water.
   Leave the bird alone; don't handle or bother it.
   Keep children and pets away.
9. **Contact a wildlife rehabilitator, state wildlife agency, or wildlife veterinarian as soon as possible.**
   Don't keep the bird at your home longer than necessary.
   Keep the bird in a container; don't let it loose in your house or car.
10. **Wash your hands after contact with the bird.**
    Wash anything the bird was in contact with — towel, jacket, blanket, pet carrier, to prevent spread of diseases and/or parasites to you or your pets.
11. **Get the bird to a wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.**

> **It's against the law in most states to keep wild animals if you don't have permits, even if you plan to release them.**