



Simple Things You Can do to Avoid Harming Wildlife

Since most people try to avoid causing accidental harm to other living things we have put together a list of things to do - or not to do - to help wildlife. The list is in no particular order of importance, but if everyone followed these simple suggestions unintended harm to wildlife would be dramatically reduced.

Alert birds to large expanses of glass in your home such as patio doors or picture windows, by hanging streamers, putting bird silhouettes on the glass surface, or allow the glass to be a little bit dirty. Reducing the reflection should cut down on the number of birds who collide, often fatally, with windows and doors.

Educate children to respect and care for all wild creatures and their habitats. Children need to learn that wild animals are not playthings and should be allowed to go about their lives unmolested. Children should also be told not to destroy nests, burrows and other wildlife homes.

Pick up litter and refuse that could harm wildlife, including six-pack connectors (after cutting each circle to reduce the risk of entanglement), monofilament fishing line, and watch batteries (if consumed by waterfowl they can cause mercury poisoning).

When unwary young birds are learning to feed on the ground in the spring and summer keep your outdoor cats inside. It only takes a few days for young wild birds to learn how to feed and by keeping your cat inside for that period you will save many young birds from becoming victims.

Be alert when driving, especially near wildlife refuges and in rural areas, to avoid hitting or running over wild creatures. Wild animals do not recognize the danger from an oncoming vehicle. And please stop and move any turtles away from the roadway or shoulder of the road.

Fear is an important survival instinct but it can kill. If you find an injured animal keep the area around the animal as quiet as possible while you contact a rehabilitation agency or the nearest office of the Department of Fish & Game.

Control your pets and keep them from disturbing and/or attacking wildlife. Don't allow dogs to run without supervision and raise your cats as indoor pets. Many injured wild animals and birds are brought to clinics each year with terrible wounds from dog and cat attacks.

As a general rule, leave infant wildlife alone since they are not always truly orphaned. A parent may be nearby or will return soon. Be sure they are in need of help before you remove them from the nest area. If you find young birds on the ground, attempt to return them to the nest.

Place caps over all chimneys and vents on your roof to prevent birds, ducks and raccoons from taking up residence and becoming a nuisance or getting trapped.

Do not leave fishing line or fish hooks unattended or lying about outdoors. Try to retrieve any kite string left on the ground or entangled in trees.

"...dedicated to wildlife management based on science, common sense, reasoned conservation practices and time proven management principles..."

For people who live in rural areas, deer alert whistles (sold in auto parts stores) help to reduce car/deer collisions. They stick onto fenders or bumpers with an adhesive backing and air blowing through the whistle creates a highly effective deer-alarming sound.

Hawks, bears, falcons, cougars and similar wild animals are predators – do not attempt to “save” their prey. It is nature’s way that predators work hard to earn a meal. Interference with the consumption of a hard earned meal is detrimental to the survival of predator species.

Before mowing your lawn or rototilling your garden, walk through the area first to make sure no rabbits or ground-nesting birds are in harms way. Remember, it only takes a couple weeks for these babies to grow and leave the nest. Be tolerant and give them the time they need.

Never leave children unattended in areas inhabited by cougar or bear. Bear and cougar are dangerous predator species that will see an unattended child as potential, easy prey. Preventing attacks on humans is an important aspect of living with these sometime dangerous predators.

Do not handle dead animals. If you find a dead animal leave it alone. Always contact the authorities to report animals that have been hit by vehicles so they can be properly handled. Many animals carry dangerous pathogens and the risk to you and your family is just too high.

Locate your bird feeders and baths in areas where birds can easily see the surrounding area to prevent pet and feral cats from using feeders and baths as ambush points.

Garbage attracts unwanted nuisance wildlife such as raccoons, rats and mice, crows and similar species. Spoiled garbage can kill wildlife. Keep your garbage in well sealed containers.

Check trees to make sure there are no active nests or residents of cavities before cutting them down. Even better, avoid cutting down dead trees if they pose no safety hazard, since they provide homes for a wide variety of wildlife.

Use non-toxic products on your lawn and garden.

Motor oil should not be left in oil pans. Birds often fall into these pans and few survive.

Do not attempt to raise or keep wildlife yourself. It is illegal and wild creatures do not make good pets since captivity poses a constant stress to them. Young wild animals raised without contact with their own species fail to develop survival skills and a healthy fear of humans thereby virtually eliminating their chances of survival in the wild.

Do not allow antifreeze to accumulate to the point that pets and wild animals will be attracted. This product can be deadly. Clean up spills immediately and dispose of residues properly.

When providing watering and bathing sources for wild birds, place a stone or other resting materials in the water area to provide life saving support.

Do not set out food for bear, moose, cougar and coyote in particular since once these species come to depend upon human-provided food they become extremely aggressive if the food source “goes away.” If these species become too dependent upon food from humans they lose their natural foraging instincts and that places their survival in the wild at risk.

Disturbing the aerie of an eagle, osprey or any hawk species, for any reason, is never a good idea. Such actions are expressly illegal since all birds of prey are protected by Federal and State laws. In addition, if there are chicks in the nest you may be attacked as the mother defends her chicks or the parents may abandon their young.

Practice common sense, it goes a long way to preventing unintended harm to wild animals.

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