

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND AN ORPHANED ANIMAL



Spot the  
mouse!

Whilst you are waiting for the young animal to be collected by a rescue centre, you can do the following :

- Keep the animal warm— Put the animal in to a box with a blanket / towel and leave it in a quiet, warm room. A heat pad on a low heat placed under the box on one side is ideal
- DO NOT try and force feed the animal any fluids / food— Feeding a young mammal or bird can be difficult and dangerous if you do not know what you are doing, keeping the baby warm will be enough until help arrives



**East Sussex Wildlife Rescue and  
Ambulance Service**

**24 Hour Rescue Line: 07815078234**

**For non emergency information or  
advice call: 01825 873003**

**Or email: tre-  
vor@eastsussexwras.org.uk**

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## Orphaned Animals



**Information on when to  
intervene and what to do if  
you find one!**

# WHEN TO INTERVENE



## Mammals

Orphaned animals are a common occurrence in rescue centres throughout spring and summer. It is not unusual for many animals to leave their babies for short or even extended periods of time, so always consult a rescue centre for advice before handling or moving a young animal.

Young mammals will usually be well covered and silent to avoid attracting predators. If you find a baby mammal out in the open and making a lot of noise, then it is likely that it is in distress and has been abandoned and will need rearing by a rescue centre.

Any baby mammals which are ill or injured will also need to be rescued and may need medication. Victims of cat attacks will need immediate treatment as cats carry a huge amount of bacteria in their mouths, meaning even the smallest injury could be fatal without antibiotics.

## Birds

Baby birds can be categorised in to 3 stages of development:

- **Hatchlings:** These are completely featherless and are usually pushed out the nest or taken by predators.



- **Nestlings:** These are partially feathered (usually still bald under the wings) and are much more vocal and so commonly the victims of predator attacks.



**Contact a rescue centre for advice if you suspect that you have found a hatchling or a nestling as sometimes it may be possible to return it to its nest and avoid hand rearing which is always very difficult!**

- **Fledglings:** These are fully feathered and can hop around and flutter but are not yet able to fly ...  
**DO NOT TOUCH!!!**



Fledging is an important stage of development where the young bird will remain on the ground for anything ranging from 1-10 days (depending on the species) whilst they build up the strength in their wings to fly.

Fledglings must be left alone as their parents will still be feeding and caring for them - although much less often at this stage. If you are worried for a fledglings safety, place it in an area of cover nearby or in to an open cardboard box which can be hung from a tree or washing line. The parents will still be able to access their baby but it is out of reach of danger.



If a nest or den is ever disturbed, the best thing to do is to return it to how you found it and monitor. The parents should return to care for the young as normal or may decide to move the young to another site. If you suspect that the nest has been abandoned, contact your local rescue centre for help.