



Manitoba Conservation is reminding the public not to pick up or disturb any young wild animals thought to be abandoned, as they are probably not orphaned.

Many young wild animals are unnecessarily picked up by well intentioned people and turned in to natural resource officers or wildlife rehabilitators for treatment and rearing.

These animals usually do not need help. Many animal parents leave their young alone during the day, sometimes for long periods. The parent is usually nearby and quite aware of the young. Seeing a young animal on its own does not necessarily mean it's orphaned.

If you are concerned a young animal has been abandoned:

Observe the situation for several hours from a distance using binoculars.

Do not remain too close to the young animal as the parents may become afraid to return to the area.

Do not attempt to capture the animal or bird as there is a risk of personal injury and it is also illegal to do so under the Manitoba Wildlife Act.

When people handle or move young animals, it increases the likelihood that parents may abandon them or be unable to find them. The best way to help is to leave the wildlife where it was found, disturb animals as little as possible and allow adults to care for their young.

The young animals most frequently thought to be orphaned are nestling birds, deer fawns, bear cubs, squirrels, rabbits, raccoons and skunks.

People should be aware there are many serious health risks associated with handling wild animals including distemper, rabies, parasites and mange. Raccoon roundworm, for example, can cause blindness and death if contracted by people, especially children.

As well, safety issues are important as wild animals are prone to biting humans and possibly attacking household pets.

Unless the remains of the mother are near the young wild animal, it is best to leave the young animal or bird where it was found. If a genuine orphaned animal is found, contact the nearest Manitoba Conservation office or the Manitoba Wildlife Rehabilitation Organization at 204 883 2122.