



**MALVERN  
VET  
HOSPITAL**



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## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND INJURED/BABY WILDLIFE**

If you discover injured or orphaned wildlife, here are the best steps to take:

- 1** YOUR safety first! Please ensure you are not stepping into danger to rescue this creature.
- 2** For all types of wildlife, call **Wildlife Victoria 1300 094 535**. They can direct you to your nearest volunteer wildlife carer or vet. You can also call **Malvern Vet Hospital (03) 9509 7611** and speak with our staff for further instructions.
- 3** Use a thick blanket, towel or something similar to gently scoop up the animal. Please be aware that wildlife ARE NOT TAME, and may bite or scratch when frightened or in pain.
- 4** Transfer it into a secure box or pet carrie. Wildlife will often initially be in shock, so place them in a quiet dark place to help them calm down.
- 5** NEVER give human food (including milk) to wildlife as it is often poisonous to them.
- 6** On extremely hot days, dehydration is a common cause of death in wildlife. It is NOT advisable to force water or other liquids into the throats of wildlife. Always call for professional help or advice **before** attempting to give anything orally to wildlife. You can help your local wildlife by placing water bowls or containers filled with fresh cool water in your yard/garden during the peak of Summer.

**BABY POSSUMS:** Baby possums cannot generate their own body heat, so it is VERY important to immediately offer a constant heat source similar to your body temperature or a few degrees higher. Failure to do so can be fatal. Babies need special wildlife formula, regular feeds and have particular toileting needs that the mother would usually give, so it is best to get it to a wildlife carer or vet ASAP.

**ADULT POSSUMS:** Adult possums are nocturnal, so to find one out in the open in daylight usually means illness or injury. Carefully wrap it in a towel and take it to your nearest vet.

**BABY BIRDS:** If you have found a baby bird, it may be a fledgling, newly out of his nest. They take 2-3 days to build their strength and will hide in bushes near the nest during this period. The parents will be nearby, watching closely. In this case, it is best the place the fledgling back into or near the nest. A mother bird WILL take back a baby bird handled by humans. If the fledgling is on your property and you have a cat, keep it indoors for 3 days. If the baby bird has a medical condition, the mother may reject him and throw him from the nest.

PLEASE NOTE: Although baby possums and other wildlife are very cute and appear to be friendly, they are still wild animals who have the possibility of causing injury or carrying disease. They CANNOT be kept as pets. They have specific needs that, if not met immediately, can result in sudden death.

**IT IS AN OFFENSE TO KEEP NATIVE PROTECTED WILDLIFE AS PETS.**