



What to do if you find an orphaned or injured Raptor.

A raptor is a bird of prey such as a hawk, owl, eagle, osprey or falcon. Commonly found raptor species in East Tennessee are: great horned owl, red-tailed hawk, red shouldered hawk, broad-winged hawk, American kestrel, turkey vulture and black vulture. Other less common birds of prey are the osprey, bald eagle and peregrine falcon.

What to do with this Raptor??

Below you will find some of the more common situations where you might encounter raptors which need your help.

- 1) Caught in a barbed wire - cover the head to calm the bird, cut the wire, and follow the steps listed under how to handle an injured raptor.
- 2) Car Trauma (window collision, impact trauma) - Approach with caution, being mindful of both your safety and the safety of the bird; remember that a bird with a fractured wing can still run; follow steps listed below on how to handle an injured raptor.
- 3) Fledgling - Baby owls leave the nest before attaining the ability to fly; they sit on branches and the parents continue to feed them; sometimes they fall to the ground; before interfering, sit the baby on a tree branch and observe whether it can perch; if it perches, leave it alone- the parents will take care of it; if it cannot perch, call a rehabilitator and follow the instructions under how to handle and injured raptor.

Baby hawks should not be out of their nest before they can fly; if you find a fuzzy hawk on the ground, follow the steps under how to handle an injured raptor.

If none of the above seem to apply to you, yet you still have concerns about a bird's health or safety, call a wildlife rehabilitator and follow their instructions carefully and exactly.

How to Handle and Injured Raptor

- 1) First and foremost, always be mindful of your own safety. All raptors, including babies have sharp beaks and talons and can inflict injury.

- 2) Never give food or water without first consulting a wildlife rehabilitator.
- 3) Find a lightweight item such as a towel, blanket or jacket large enough to cover the bird.
- 4) If possible approach the bird from behind. Cover and quickly restrain, being careful of the beak and talons.
- 5) When the bird calms down, carefully fold the wings against the body.
- 6) Place in a well-ventilated cardboard box slightly larger than the bird
- 7) Note the geographic location where the bird was found. This information will be helpful when the bird is ready for release.
- 8) Call a wildlife rehabilitator immediately for help.

Other ways you can help wildlife

-dead and hollow trees should never be cut in the spring and summer due to the many cavity nesting species in our region.

-put up a nest box or birdhouse; screech owls and kestrels readily use man made nest boxes

-report illegal activities which might harm our native species to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

-create habitat for all wildlife in your own backyard

-join an environmental or conservation organization in your area

Did You Know??

Red-tailed hawks are found throughout the United States because of their adaptability to various habitats.

All birds of prey have keen vision which is at least eight times better than that of a human.

Predators such as raptors serve a vital role in our ecosystem, keeping prey populations in check by eliminating the weak or excess.

Turkey vultures have the most well- developed sense of smell among the birds of prey.

Owls can hunt in total darkness due to their extraordinary sense of hearing.

Razor-sharp beaks and talons are the characteristics that identify raptors.

Soaring raptors use air thermals to conserve energy and travel great distances.

Source: TN Wildlife Resource Agency

PHONE NUMBERS

TN Wildlife Resource Agency 1-800-332-0900

Wildlife Rehabilitation- It is against state and federal law to keep wild animals. Wildlife Rehabilitators are licensed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to care for animals until such time they can be released back into the wild. No one without a license should keep any wild animal captive. Wild animals require special diets and care, and pose hidden dangers such as the risk of disease to people. Wildlife Rehabilitators attend workshops sponsored by national organizations such as the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association or the International Wildlife Rehabilitators Council to further their knowledge. Most Rehabilitators are unpaid volunteers.