

## Baby Animals

If you find a baby mammal alone in your yard during the spring and summer, you have not necessarily found an orphaned animal. Deer and rabbits often leave their young by themselves during the day, and raccoons are closely supervised by their mothers. To tell if a baby animal needs help, first observe it for several hours to see if the parents return. If an animal is bleeding or shivering or has an obvious injury, contact Animal Control.



Young rabbits are on their own in the wild by 3 weeks of age and no longer require a mother's care. Mother rabbits feed at dusk and dawn. You are not likely to ever see the mother.

Squirrels open their eyes at 4 weeks of age and are out of the nest after 6 weeks. Squirrels whose tails are fully fluffed out like a bottle brush are already on their own and do not need human intervention.

*Many apparent wild orphans may be waiting for their parents' return or may already be on their own.*



Baby birds who fall out of trees can be re-nested. It's a myth that their parents will reject those a person has touched. It is normal for fledglings to be on the ground and unable to fly. One or more parent will feed them during the fledgling process. Any fully feathered baby bird found on the ground, seemingly unable to fly, is probably just a fledgling.

Wildlife Response is a local organization providing foster and rehabilitative care for wildlife. Contact number is (757)543-7000.

There are brochures available online providing information on wildlife management, programs, and initiatives. Please visit any one of the following websites for more information on wildlife:

[www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife) (VA Department of Game & Inland Fisheries)

[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu) (VA Cooperative Extension Virginia Tech)

[www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) (Humane Society of the United States)

For more information on other animal related complaints or to speak to an officer call  
(757) 727-6111  
General information dial 3-1-1 or  
(757) 727-8311

# Hampton ANIMAL CONTROL

***Keeping the "Wild"  
In Wildlife***



## Living with Wildlife

Hampton Animal Control does not loan traps to citizens for the purpose of capturing wildlife. Current state law prohibits relocating any wildlife (raccoons, opossum, and squirrels). Animal Control hopes to educate the public on the best ways to handle area-wide urban wildlife problems and to discourage individuals from live trapping and relocating wildlife.



However, injured wildlife will continue to be picked up by Animal Control and taken to a veterinarian for euthanasia or placement with a wildlife rehabilitator.

Recognizing that citizens may still be faced with urban wildlife situations, there are a host of humane, effective, and simple measures to prevent and to resolve conflicts with wildlife that visit your property. Many problems arise from a lack of understanding of the natural behaviors of wild animals, and many more will resolve themselves without any intervention.

The following steps are offered:

First, identify the animals involved: find out the extent, duration, likelihood of recurrence, and whether young animals are present. Evicting and excluding them with environmentally sound approaches — using repellents, removing attractants, and modifying inviting habitats — and changing problematic human behavior are effective strategies. Also, rinse food packaging, crush or cut up plastic containers, and firmly secure covers on all garbage and recycling containers.



Some of the simplest measures people can take to solve common nuisance wildlife problems are provided below.

Raccoons and opossums have become very adaptable to human surroundings. Close up all openings under and in your dwelling. These animals look for places to den. Opossums are transient, staying only 2-3 days in an area before moving on. Opossums look for dense shrubs to hide under, so be sure to thin out underbrush. Do not leave pet food outside overnight. Encourage neighbors to do the same. Remove woodpiles or other materials raccoons can den in or under. Also, cut back overhanging tree branches to reduce access to the roof. Chimney caps keep raccoons and squirrels

out of the chimney. Reflective tape, lights, or noise may offer a temporary solution.

Squirrels offer a challenge for removal. If they frequent your bird feeders, try spraying your birdfeed with cayenne pepper. Birds have no sense of taste, but as a mammal, squirrels do. Squirrel-proof feeders are also sold in birding specialty stores. Squirrels do not like safflower seeds. For squirrels in the attic, make sure any entry point is plugged with wire mesh or metal sheeting. Placing a radio with loud music in the attic may help them leave. Just be sure no young have been left behind.

If you are having problems with deer eating gardens or landscaping plants, plant things deer don't like to eat, such as juniper or other thorny plants. The single best method is to build a 5-8' fence around your garden. Loud noises and hazing work sometimes, but deer can become accustomed to these activities. Commercial pepper or sulfur-based products are available to make the plants unpalatable.



More information is available at [www.wildneighbors.org](http://www.wildneighbors.org).