



WHAT DO I DO IF

I found a baby squirrel?

YES

Is the squirrel visibly injured?

Is the baby bleeding, or does it have any obvious broken bones or wounds? Are there any fly eggs (they look like tiny grains of rice) or live maggots? Is the baby cold or wet?

NO

YES

Is the squirrel a juvenile?

Juveniles are fully furred, have bushy tails, and a body that is longer than 6 inches (not including the tail).

NO

YES

Is it in immediate danger?

Watch for threats from traffic, unattended pets, feral cats, and people.

NO

Leave it alone.

Squirrels are independent at 10-12 weeks old, and in most cases when you find a juvenile squirrel, you do not need to intervene.

Is the squirrel an infant?

Infant squirrels may have a short, thin coat or no fur yet. They have a thin tail (not bushy) and their eyes may be closed or may have just opened. Their best chance for survival is to be reunited with their mother.

YES

Can you find the nest?

NO

Carefully return the squirrel to its nest.

See the back of this card for detailed steps on how to properly re-nest a baby squirrel.

YES

Did the mother return for the squirrel?

NO

Leave the area.

Congratulations for making a difference! Learn more ways to help squirrels at citywildlife.org.

Contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Or try a state wildlife agency or veterinarian. Keep the squirrel in a warm, dark, quiet place without food and water.

How to re-nest an infant squirrel:

- 1. Warm the squirrel.** Place uncooked rice or bird seed in a sock and warm in the microwave for 20 - 30 seconds. Wrap the sock in a soft towel and place it with the baby in an open container (e.g., a tissue box or wicker basket). Do not give the baby food or water.
- 2. Locate the mother squirrel's nesting tree.** This should be a tree in the immediate area where the squirrel was found. If you don't know which tree the squirrel's nest is in, or if the nest was destroyed, then choose a tree closest to where the squirrel was found. Squirrel nests can either be in tree cavities, or in "dreys" (the big balls of dried leaves at the tops of trees). Playing audio of baby squirrel sounds can help you determine if the mother is in the area.
- 3. Return the infant to the tree.** Place the container with the sock, towel, and the baby squirrel at the base of the tree. If possible, leave audio of baby squirrel sounds playing nearby the box to help the mother find her baby. Keep children, dogs, and cats out of the area.
- 4. Check for the mother's return.** If possible, observe the baby squirrel box from a distance for the next six to eight hours of daylight. Reheat the rice/birdseed bag every two hours to keep the infant warm.



Infant



Juvenile

A baby squirrel has the best chance of survival when it is cared for by its mother. Before intervening, we want to make sure the squirrel really needs our help. Keep in mind that young squirrels found on the ground may be completely healthy. They are not orphans and may simply need help reuniting with their mothers.

If the juvenile squirrel is approaching humans or pets, it could be a sign that it is hungry or sick and should be brought to a rehabilitator. Always wear thick gloves (like gardening gloves) when attempting to handle a juvenile squirrel as they can bite.

If you're unsure whether an animal needs help, **City Wildlife is available daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.** at 202-882-1000. Adding pictures in an email is helpful for our staff to identify the animal and its particular needs. For assistance outside the District of Columbia, visit Animal Help Now (www.AHNow.org) and click on the "Wildlife Emergency" button to find a local rehabber.



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