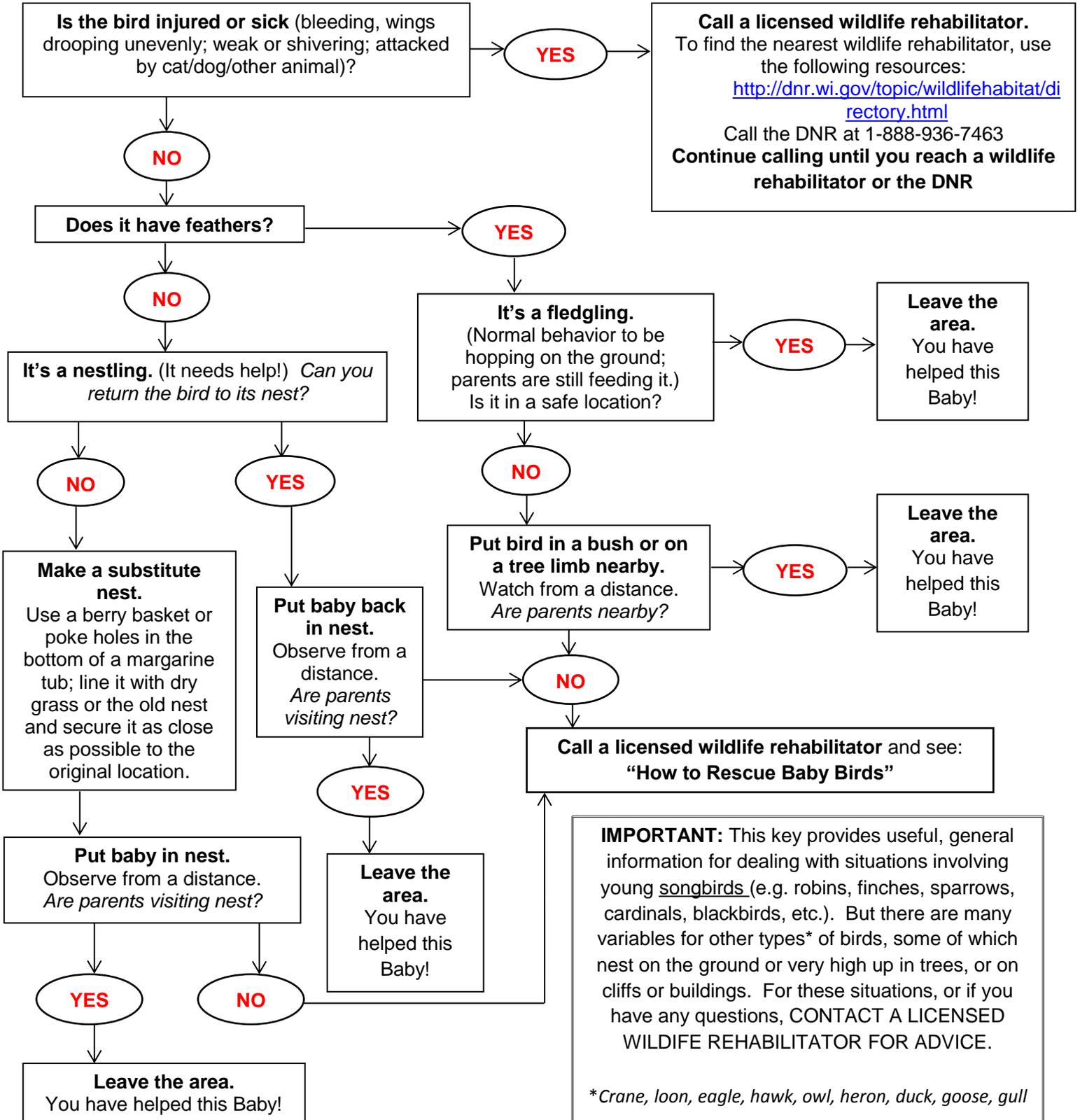


I Found a Baby Bird: Now What?

Always Remember:

A baby bird's best chance for survival is with its parents!

So before touching, "S.O.A.R.": Stop, Observe, Ask a Rehabilitator



How to Rescue Baby Birds

Only adults should rescue baby birds. Children should be taught that if they find a baby bird, they should NOT touch it, but should immediately tell an adult.

For your own safety, before rescuing adult birds, seek guidance from a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or the DNR.

- 1. Contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.**
- 2. Prepare a container.** Place a clean, soft cloth without loose strings or loops on the bottom of a cardboard box or pet carrier with a lid. A shoe-box is about the right size for most baby songbirds, but if you're rescuing a larger bird, a larger box or a pet-carrier might be needed. If the container you've chosen doesn't have air holes, poke several small holes in each side and the top using the sharp end of a pencil or pen. For smaller birds, you can use a paper bag with air holes poked in the sides.
- 3. Protect yourself.** Wear gloves. Most baby birds are harmless, but some birds, like herons, may jab with their beaks; young hawks or owls may try to grab you with their sharp talons (claws) or slap you with their wings to protect themselves. And birds commonly have parasites (mites, lice, ticks) and may carry diseases transmissible to people.
- 4. Gently pick up the bird and put it in the prepared container.**
- 5. Warm the bird if it feels cool to the touch.** Put one half of the container on a heating pad set on "low". This will let the baby crawl (if it is old enough and strong enough) to the unheated end of the container if it gets too warm. After a few minutes, carefully feel under the bird with your hand to see if the heat is getting through to the bird, and if so, that it is not too warm. Or fill a zip-top plastic bag, plastic soft drink container with a screw lid, or a rubber glove with hot water; wrap the warming container with a cloth without loose strings and put it under or next to the bird. Make sure the container doesn't leak, or the bird will get wet and even more chilled. If using a heating pad, check periodically to make sure the bird doesn't get too warm and that the heating pad has not turned off automatically.
- 6. Close the top of the box and tape it shut,** or if using a bag, roll the top of the paper bag closed.
- 7. Note the exact location where you found the bird.** This will be very important if you or the rehabilitator is going to try to put the bird back in its nest.
- 8. Keep the bird in a warm, dark, quiet place.**
Don't give it food or water unless you are directed to do so by a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.
Leave the bird alone; don't needlessly handle or bother it.
Keep children and pets away! Don't let them touch or handle the bird.
Keep the bird in a container; don't let it loose in your house or car.
- 9. Wash your hands after contact with the bird or its body fluids or feces. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available.** After transferring to a wildlife rehabilitator, wash and disinfect* or discard anything the bird was in contact with — towel, jacket, blanket, pet carrier — to prevent the spread of diseases and/or parasites to you or your pets.
- 10. Get the bird to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.** Read Recommendations for Transporting Wildlife: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/documents/transport.pdf>

It's against the law to keep wild birds if you don't have proper licenses or permits, even if you plan to release them! (Note: by law you have up to 24 hours in which to get the bird to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and for the sake of the bird, do so without delay.)

For more information go to: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/orphan.html>

*General guidelines for soiled laundry: wipe or rinse away as much soiling as possible. Then, using hottest water practical and laundry detergent wash soiled item(s) separate from other clothing or items. Rinse with plain water and then soak item(s) in a solution of 1 part household bleach to 10 parts plain water for 20 minutes. Then rinse with plain water and let dry.

*General guidelines for soiled pet carriers: wipe or rinse away as much soiling as possible. Then either wash with a disinfecting cleaner in hot water, or with dishwashing liquid in water, followed by a fresh water rinse. After rinsing, if you haven't used a disinfecting cleaner, apply or soak the carrier in a solution of 1 part household bleach to 10 parts plain water for 20 minutes. Then rinse and let air dry.