



I found a baby squirrel ...



Every year, the Wildlife Center of Virginia fields hundreds of calls from the public about baby squirrels. Gray squirrels nest twice a year - in late winter and summer. They commonly have litters of three or four pups. Babies' eyes open at four weeks. Babies may begin exploring outside the nest by six weeks and are weaned by ten weeks.

A baby squirrel has the best chance of survival when it's cared for by its mother. If you find a baby squirrel, use the following chart to guide your choice of intervention.

Remember to wear sturdy gloves any time you handle wildlife. Do not give food or water to injured or orphaned wildlife.

START HERE

Do any of the following apply to the squirrel?

- It is bleeding, has an open wound, or has a broken bone.
- It's been in a cat's or dog's mouth.
- It's covered in fly eggs [look like small grains of rice].
- It's cold, wet, or crying nonstop.

NO

If the squirrel is uninjured, the next step is to identify its age to determine if intervention is needed.

YES

The squirrel is likely injured or orphaned. Take it to the nearest permitted wildlife rehabilitator.

This is a JUVENILE squirrel. You do not need to intervene.

Even at the young age of 10 to 12 weeks, the squirrel is independent.

If the squirrel is approaching humans or pets, try to scare it by making loud noises when it comes near.

Does the squirrel ...

- have a fluffed-out tail?
- have a body longer than 6" (not including tail)?
- approach humans or pets?

YES

Congratulations! You helped reunite a baby with its mother.

Thanks for your help!

YES

Has the mother returned to care for her baby?

NO

Observe the baby for the next six to eight hours of daylight. Reheat the rice every two hours.

This is an INFANT squirrel. You will need to guide the baby back to its mother.

NO

ONE.

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 box).

Do NOT give the baby food or water.

TWO.

Return the squirrel to its 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.

THREE.

If the baby's eyes are OPEN, place the baby on the tree trunk to encourage it to climb. If it does not climb, attach the open container to the tree.

If the baby's eyes are CLOSED, attach the open container to the tree.*

* For ideas and more detailed information, visit: <http://wildlifecenter.org/re-nesting-baby-squirrels>