



## Fifteen Simple Things You Can Do To Avoid Harming Wildlife

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1. Prevent your pet cats and dogs from attacking and/or "playing with" wildlife. Don't allow them to run without supervision and raise your cats as indoor pets.
2. Alert birds to large expanses of glass in your home, such as patio doors or picture windows by hanging streamers, putting bird silhouettes on the glass surface, or allow the glass to be a little bit dirty. Reducing the reflection should cut down on the number of birds who collide, often fatally, with windows and doors.
3. Educate children to respect and care for all wild creatures and their habitats. Children need to learn that wild animals are not playthings and should be allowed to go about their lives unmolested. Children should also be told not to destroy nests, burrows, and other wildlife homes.
4. Pickup litter and refuse that could harm wildlife, including six-pack connectors, monofilament fishing line, lead weights, plastic bags, and watch batteries (If consumed by waterfowl the latter can cause mercury poisoning).
5. Be alert when driving, especially near wildlife refuges and in rural areas, to avoid hitting or running over wild creatures. Animals do not recognize the danger from an oncoming vehicle. Please stop to move any turtles away from the roadside or shoulder of the road.
6. As a general rule, leave infant wildlife alone, since they are not always truly orphaned. A parent may be nearby or will return soon. Watch for at least 2 hours to be sure that they are in need of help before you remove them from the nest area. If you find young birds on the ground, attempt to return them to the nest. It's a myth that a mother bird will reject its young if touched by a human.
7. Place caps over all chimneys and vents on your roof to prevent birds, ducks, and raccoons from taking up residence and becoming a nuisance or getting trapped. Keep food inside and pet doors locked at night or it's like putting out the welcome mat for opossums and raccoons.
8. Do not leave fishing line or hooks unattended or lying about outdoors. Try to retrieve and kite string left on the ground or entangled in trees.
9. Before mowing your lawn or rototilling your garden, walk through the area first to make sure no rabbits or ground-nesting birds are in harm's way. Remember, it only takes a couple of weeks for these babies to grow and leave the nest. Be tolerant and give them the time they need.
10. Check trees to make sure there are no active nests or residents of cavities before cutting them down. This is more easily accomplished in the fall. Even better, avoid cutting down dead trees if they pose no safety hazard, since they provide homes for a wide variety of wildlife.
11. Use non-toxic products on your lawn and garden.
12. Motor oil should not be left in oil pans unattended. Birds often fall into these pans and few survive. Use non-toxic antifreeze.
13. Clean and disinfect birdfeeders regularly, as well as raking the ground under the feeders to prevent the spread of disease.
14. Do not attempt to raise or keep wildlife yourself. Not only is it illegal, but wild creatures do not make good pets and captivity poses a constant stress to them. Young wild animals raised without contact with their own species fail to develop survival skills and fear of humans, virtually eliminating their chances of survival in the wild.