

Wildlife Babies Video

Every year well intentioned people take in young animals that appear to be sick, abandoned, or orphaned. It's surprising what some will pick up, everything from baby bears to deer and antelope fawns, prairie dogs and even racoon youngsters.

It is not all that unusual however, to find a newborn animal without an adult nearby. Deer, elk and other animals often leave their young while they go off to feed. Surprisingly, newborns of all types have defense mechanisms to stay safe.

(Sound Clip: District Wildlife Manager Paul Foutz)

All young wildlife have instinctual characteristics to protect them from predators and protect them while their parents are away from the nest or den. Those things include camouflage, maybe a lack of scent, the ability to hide very well, and they'll stay pretty close to those nests and dens to protect themselves from predators.

(End Clip)

The adults may avoid returning to the area as long as humans are present. So if you want to keep an eye on young wildlife, do so at a distance.

While a very small percentage of young animals are truly in trouble, it does happen. Abandoned, sick or injured animals are routinely turned over to licensed wildlife rehabilitators. It's these people who are trained to use methods that will give the animals the best chance of surviving once they are returned to the wild. But it is always best to let baby animals learn survival skills from their parents.

It is illegal in Colorado to possess just about all species of native wildlife. You can be ticketed, and the animal taken away. However, if you truly believe an animal needs help contact the nearest Division of Wildlife office.

With the Division of Wildlife, Jeff Butler, News Four