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# FURST AID FOR WILDLIFE



I wear a few different hats



# Thinking about first aid a little differently



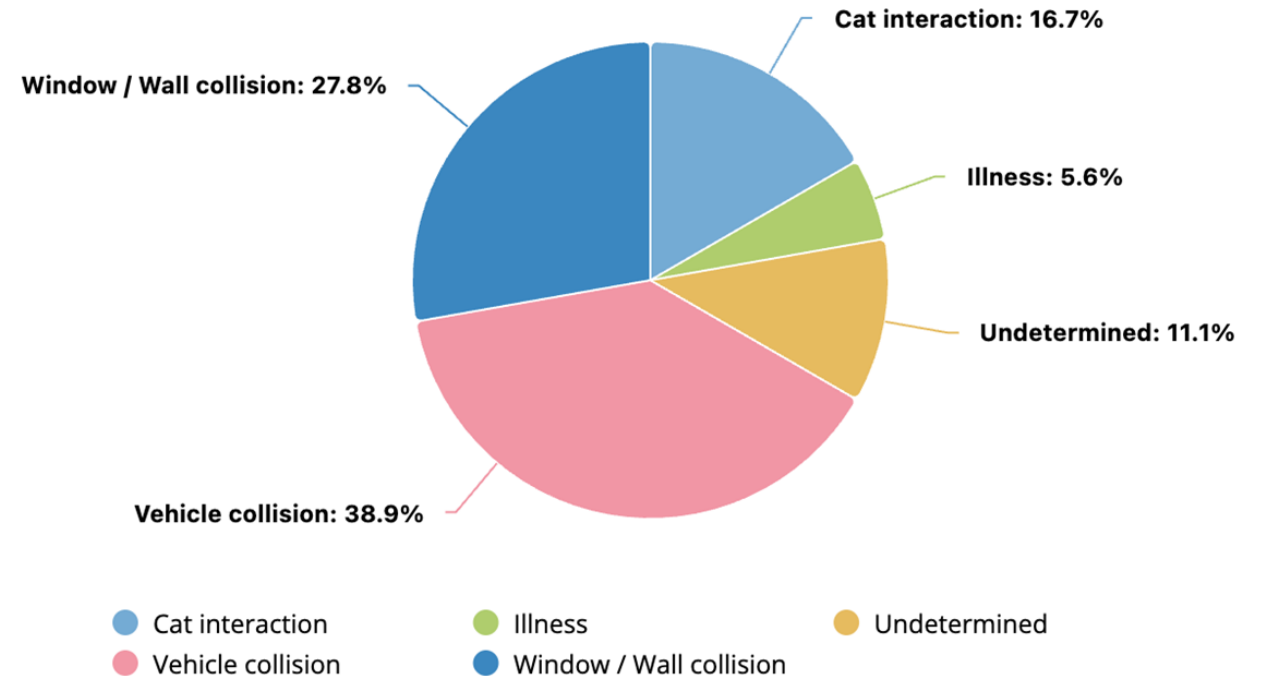
# What do they have in common?



# Basics of wildlife rehabilitation

- Licensed rehabilitators care for sick and injured native wildlife
  - Human intervention for human disruption!
- Collaboration with state and US Fish and Wildlife
  - Rules about what can be treated and under what circumstances
  - Disease management

Most Frequent Circumstances of Admission



# Basics of wildlife rehabilitation

- Licensed individual(s)
- Take an exam
  - Biosecurity
  - Species identification
  - Needs in care
  - Nursing
- Veterinary care
  - Full or part-time facility vet
  - Collaboration with local clinics
- Goal is release!



# Legal and ethical considerations for the public

- Only hold wildlife long enough to transfer to rehabilitation facility or veterinary clinic
- **Illegal to keep native wildlife as pets**
- Not in the best interests of the animal
  - Will it have others of its species to interact with?
  - Flight?
  - Seasonal needs? Aggression? Nutritional needs? What happens when it bites someone? What happens when you go on vacation? Can it get veterinary care? Smelly? Destructive? Plus a million other questions we won't dive into!

# Approach to injured wildlife

# The size-up: details to pay attention to



# Does it need help?

- What is it?
- Where is it?
  - Details!
- Is it clearly injured or ill?
- If in doubt
  - Secure the location (contain pets, etc.)
  - Call!



Oregon Department  
of Fish & Wildlife

← [ARTICLES](#) | April 7, 2026

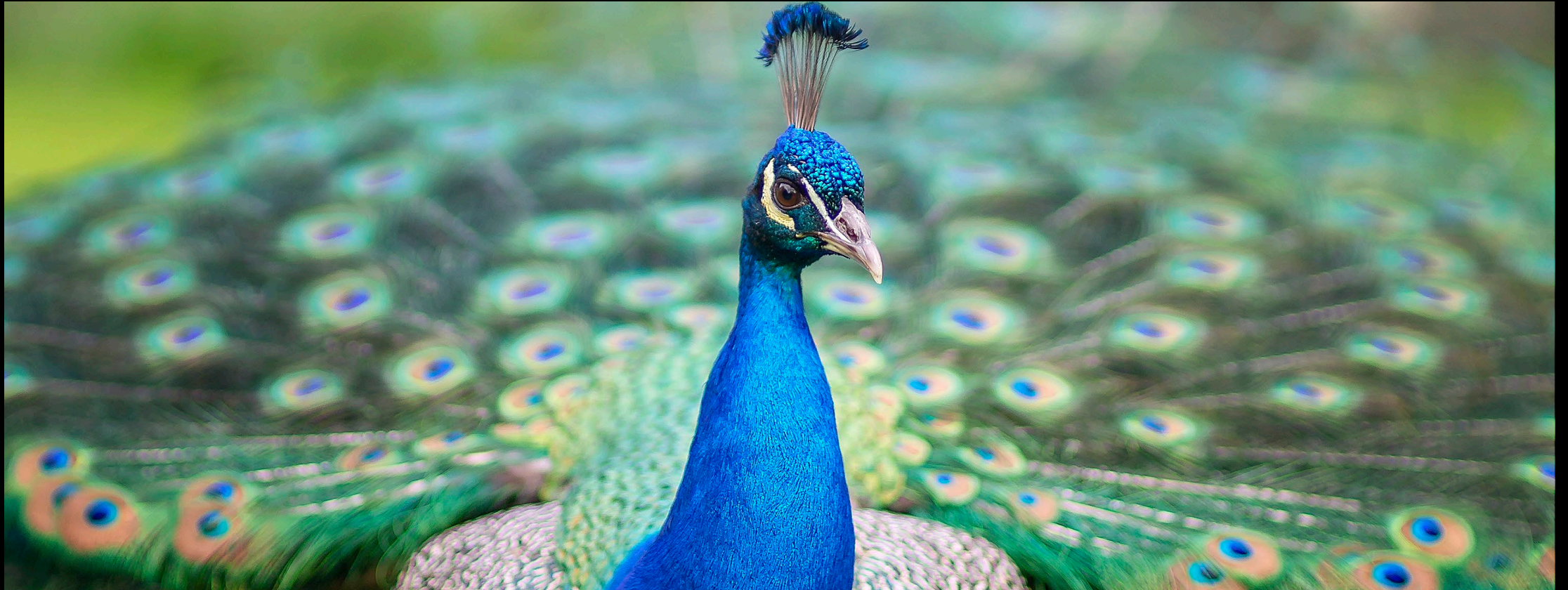
## Leave young wildlife in the wild



Young animals are rarely orphaned, so leave them where you find them. Chances are good mom is nearby, just waiting for you to leave before she returns to her baby. Leaving young wildlife where they are is the right thing to do, picking it up and taking it home is illegal.

[LIVING WITH WILDLIFE](#) ➤

# Feral domestics or exotics



# Kidnapping



# Nestling vs. fledgling

## **Nestling**

- Skin or fluff
- Wing feathers may look like tubes (still growing)
- Minimal walking
- Will need intervention
  - Renest vs. rehab

## **Fledgling**

- Feathers with some fluff
- Hop, walk, or flutter
- May not be able to fly yet
- Likely right where it needs to be!

Once you've decided it needs  
help how do you provide it?

# Call the pros!



# Who do you call?

- Know ahead of time
  - Look it up
  - Save in your phone
- Homework for today!



# Safety first!

- Bites and scratches happen- respect the sharp bits!
- Minimize direct contact
- Small birds and very young animals
  - Scoop up carefully
  - Towels, pillowcases to make it dark and remove scary visual input
- Medium size birds and small mammals
  - Consider guiding into containment rather than picking up
- Large animals- secure the scene but call for backup!

# Special considerations

- Large or dangerous animals
  - Birds of prey- Talons and beak
  - Herons- Face is a spear and they are not afraid to use it!
  - Racoons- Bitey and agile
  - Deer- Can kick or strike
  - Others! Discretion is the better part of valor!
- Bats as rabies vectors



# Safe containment

- Stable
- Appropriate size
- Sturdy
- Clean
- “Nested” containers
- Often improvised
  - Consider “emergency” planning



# Quiet



- Conversation
- Music
- Equipment
- Appliances

# Warm and dry

## Options

- Warm water bottle.
- Heated dry rice in clean sock or sack.
- Hand warmers.

## Where?

- Under half container.
- Able to move on/off as needed.
- Consider having outside the container to prevent overheating or spilling contents

# Dark

- Opaque container
- Towel, small blanket, or throw over a transparent container
  - Also handy for picking up small wildlife
- Turn off any unnecessary lights



# Minimize interaction

- Contact is not comforting!
- Don't hold, carry, or pet wildlife
- Freeze response is fear not tameness
- Resist the urge to keep checking them
- Extreme stress can induce shock

# No food or water

**Two Babies, Same Developmental Stage**

Left side: Raised by trained, permitted rehabbers at SWVAWC

This patient is larger, bright-eyed, active, warm, and fuzzy! He has received age-appropriate care.



Right side: Fed kitten milk for a **week** by the finders...

This patient is smaller, weak, emaciated, dehydrated, cold, & losing muscle mass. This patient did not survive. They suffered *more and for longer* than if they had been left alone in the wild for nature to take its course.

The finders **tried their best...** But was that the best choice for this baby?

**DON'T FEED ME!**



**Baby birds often die from incorrect feeding by well-meaning people trying to help.**

Facebook posts by For Fox Sake Wildlife Rescue (above) and Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center (left)

# No medications or dressing wounds



# Timely transportation



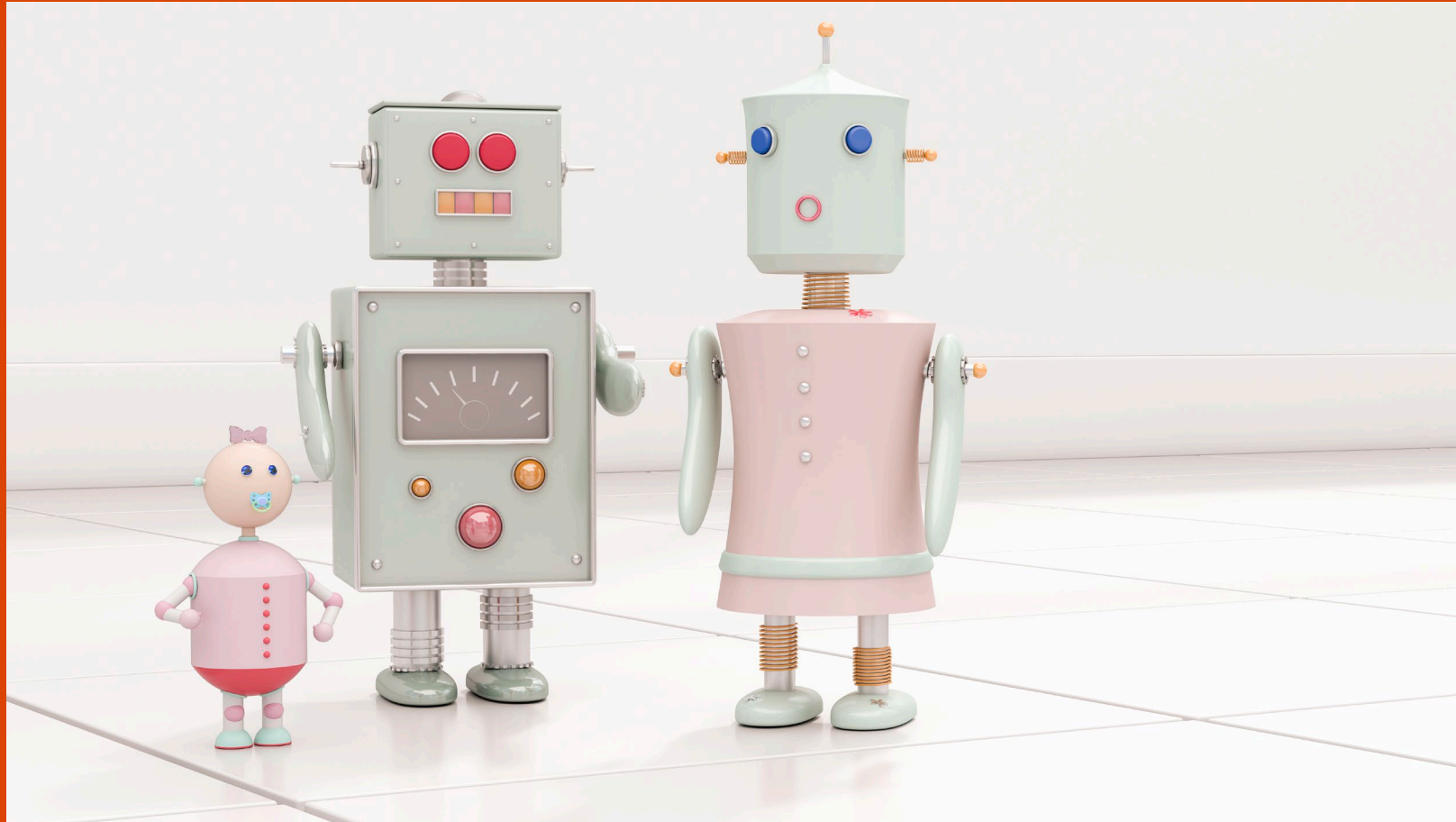
# Myth 1: Animals won't take back babies that humans have touched



# Myth 2: Birds won't visit a nest has been moved (or a new nest)



# Myth 3: Humans make good foster parents



# Scenario 1- Window strike



# Scenario 2- Caught by cat



# Scenario 3- Hit by car eagle



# Scenario 4- Goslings!



# Scenario 5- Glue trap



OK, no Oregon fruit bats...



**“Do the best  
you can until  
you know  
better. Then  
when you  
know better,  
do better.”**

Maya Angelou

**Forbes**<sup>INDIA</sup>

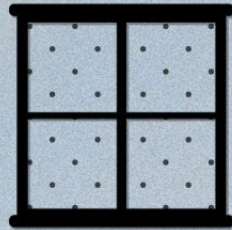
# BIRD COLLISION PREVENTION

Over 1 billion birds are killed in glass collisions in the U.S annually.

PREVENTING COLLISIONS IS INEXPENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE.  
WWW.STOPBIRDCOLLISIONS.ORG

## TREAT GLASS BY DAY

- **Apply Bird-Safe Window Treatments** – Use deterrents with a 2" x 2" pattern to break up reflections. Window screens or netting can also be highly effective.
- **Reposition Bird Feeders and Baths** – Place feeders and baths either within 3 feet of windows (to reduce the speed of potential collisions) or more than 30 feet away to minimize risk.
- **Encourage Bird-Safe Building Practices** – Advocate for bird-safe glass and building designs in your community. Support legislation, talk to local businesses, and promote solutions.



# Things YOU can do!

- Reduce hazards
  - Window modifications to prevent collisions
  - Be thoughtful about feeders and nest box placement
  - Keep cats indoors
  - Prune and limb trees outside of nesting season
  - Don't use glue traps

# Things YOU can do!

- Bird feeder and bird bath hygiene
- Clean seed feeders about every 2 weeks
  - Remove old or moldy seed
  - Very hot water or dilute (1:10) bleach solution
  - Rinse thoroughly and dry before refilling
  - Remove feeders for at least two weeks if you see sick birds
- Or bird-friendly landscaping
  - Plants with flowers or seeds that attract wildlife
  - Native ones are already adapted to climate and may need little care!

# Things YOU can do!

- Keep a car kit
  - Safe container
  - Towels or similar
  - Warming supplies
  - Emergency phone numbers
- Remember to take detailed information about where the animal was found!
  - Take pictures
  - Small notebook in the kit



# Support your local wildlife centers!



Donate!

FOUND AN ANIMAL?

ABOUT

VISIT

WILDLIFE RESCUE

GET INVOLVED

SUPPORT US



*Dyami, Bald Eagle Ambassador*

## Our Mission:

To protect and celebrate Oregon's native wildlife.

30K

120+

INJURED AND ORPHANED WILDLIFE SERVED SINCE  
1989

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS POWERING OUR MISSION

# Resources

- Wildlife Rehabilitation Organizations
  - International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council
    - <https://theiwrc.org/>
  - National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
    - <https://www.nwrawildlife.org/>
- Wild bird information
  - All About Birds (Cornell Lab)
    - <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/>
  - Bird Collision Prevention Alliance
    - <https://www.stopbirdcollisions.org/>
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
  - <https://www.fws.gov/>
  - State F&W
    - Oregon:  
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/>

