

Raising Wildlife at Home and Wildlife as Pets

*But I Love this Animal
or
But I Want to Raise it
or
It would be a great experience for the children
(and other excuses)
Please, Please Please..... do not think about keeping this wild creature.*

Wildlife Diseases and Parasites

Wild animals often carry parasites and diseases that can infect you, your children and your pets. Handling wild babies enough to provide the care that they need can be extremely dangerous. Rabies and raccoon roundworm are just two examples of life threatening conditions carried by wildlife.

Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus that attacks the central nervous system of warm blooded animals. Rabies contracted through a bite wound from an infected animal in the last stage of the disease, but can also be transmitted if brain tissue of an infected animal comes in contact with mucous membranes such as the mouth and eyes. Handling any animal continuously can expose you to this deadly virus.

In most species, the time from infection to onset of symptoms is two to twelve weeks, but some animals and people have the virus for up to a year. The virus is only present in the last stage of the disease and symptoms usually appear within ten to fourteen days. The last stage is always fatal.

Baylisascaris (*Bay-liss-ass-kuh-ris*) (**Raccoon Roundworm**) can cause skin irritations and eye and brain damage in humans and domestic pets (such as dogs and cats) resulting in blindness and even death.

Wildlife Rehabilitators treat the animals for parasites such as **Baylisascaris**, aiding in the animals overall health. They are also trained to recognize and treat diseases that can harm humans and are vaccinated against the rabies virus.



attacks the central nervous system. Rabies is most commonly transmitted in the last stage of the disease when the saliva or brain tissue of an infected animal comes in contact with an open cut or mucous membranes such as the mouth and eyes. Handling any animal

continuously can expose you to this deadly virus. In most species, the time from infection to onset of symptoms is two to twelve weeks, but some animals and people have the virus for up to a year. The virus is only present in the last stage of the disease and symptoms usually appear within ten to fourteen days. The last stage is always fatal.



Tame Wildlife

Wildlife raised around or with domestic animals and humans will lose their natural fear of other pets and people.

Wild animals raised alone become "imprinted" on humans. They will not recognize their own kind and will never breed. They are never quite wild and never quite tame, being caught in a limbo that offers nothing

except frustration, rejection and confusion.

When a wild animal escapes, its "tame" behavior is often feared as rabies and the animal is destroyed.

Because **Wildlife Rehabilitators** get large numbers of animals, we can keep them together, helping them to grow up wild.



The Laws

All wildlife animals are protected under state or federal laws or both. In most states, it is illegal to possess a wild animal - even if you are trying to help it.

Death

The constant stress of captivity will weaken the animal's immune system, resulting in disease and often death. If you want to teach your children about wildlife by caring for those baby bunnies or that nest of birds, most likely the only lesson they will learn is about suffering and death.





**Wild animals need special experienced care.
They require specific needs for nutrition,
medical attention and housing.**



When you are tempted to take home a wild animal for a pet, ask yourself these questions:

- Is what I am doing legal?
- Am I willing to risk the health, and possibly the life, of myself and my family?
- Am I properly trained in the care of this species of animal?
- Can I obtain veterinary care for this animal? (*Veterinarians will not treat illegal wildlife*)
- Am I willing to risk killing the animal because I may not truly know how to care for it?
- Am I willing to change my lifestyle to conform to the animal's natural and unalterable behavior?

**If you cannot truthfully answer "yes" to each question,
do not attempt to keep a wild animal as a pet.
Call a Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator NOW!!!**

Your Rehabilitator