

# What to do if you find a baby bird

A couple of handy things to go through to work out what your next steps should be

## Is the bird independent or still reliant on parental care?



Precocial is the term used to describe babies that are able to more or less take care of themselves. These birds will rarely need human intervention unless obviously injured or unwell. Often if these chicks are still receiving some care from a parent, they may not be able to be seen so their absence is no cause for concern. Examples of these birds include plovers, ducklings, and brush turkeys.



Altricial babies are usually less well developed and rely heavily on help from parents until they have grown enough feathers to keep themselves warm and leave the nest. If it is very young and without many adult feathers it will likely need some help. A fledgling will look like more like a adult with most of their feathers. These birds probably have L plates on with flying and can be left alone as parents are likely not far off and keeping a watchful eye.

## Should I be worried?

Probably not! It is very **normal to see young birds out and about**, especially in the summer months.

There are some reasons why you might need to intervene, however. These include if the **chick is obviously injured, has been attacked by another animal, is not moving or you have noticed them in the same place for a long time** with no evidence of the parents at all. Very young altricial birds may also need help if they fall from the nest, or if you find one or both of the parents dead or missing,

## Things you can do to help

A baby bird that fell from a nest you cannot reach or see may benefit from a new home! You can make one from a bucket or container fairly easily. All that you need to do is create some holes for drainage and place leaf litter in the bottom, as well as some sticks that allow entry for the parents. Hang the bucket close to where you think the nest may be, in the shade, and monitor to determine if the parents return or not.

If you need to handle the bird it is best to be very gentle. An old towel washed without scented products and softeners is best.

You should **call an experienced wildlife carer ASAP** if you believe the bird requires treatment. The bird may be placed in a box lined with another such towel, shredded newspaper, or leaf litter. It is likely best if you use a towel that it is not one you intend on using again! Don't forget to ensure the box has a number of holes punched in the side so they can breathe. You should avoid giving the bird any food or water, especially if the animal may be suffering from shock. Keep it somewhere **warm, quiet, and away from other animals.**



WIRES are available to assist with wildlife and the Rescue Office may be contacted on **1300 094 737**

Sydney Wildlife are also available for wildlife care in Sydney metropolitan area and may be contacted on **02 9413 4300**

If neither are available please take the animal to the nearest veterinary clinic

Further info:  
[www.sydneywildlife.org.au](http://www.sydneywildlife.org.au)  
[www.wires.org.au](http://www.wires.org.au)  
[wildcare.org.au](http://wildcare.org.au)