I Found a Baby Skunk. What Should I Do?

**IMPORTANT:**
- It is a **myth** that if you touch a baby wild animal the parents will reject them – *this is simply not true.*
- Not all wild babies need help!
- Each year, we receive dozens of baby skunks who are mistakenly taken from their parents.

**Before seeking help, ask these questions:**

- **Is he healthy and unharmed?** Signs of sickness or injury may include discharge from the eyes or nose, wobbliness, lethargy, or seizures. Injury can occur if he was caught by a larger animal.
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

- **Is his mother still around?** Babies will remain in the burrows until they are 5 to 8 weeks old. Once they reach this stage, they follow their mother out of the den and begin to learn how to care for themselves. However, mother is never far from her babies. If you see a baby alone and out of the burrow for several hours, with no mother in sight, it is likely he is orphaned. HOWEVER, young skunks can be very adventurous and will leave the den while mother is sleeping, often during daylight hours. This DOES NOT necessarily mean they are ill or orphaned.
  - **NO**
  - **YES**

- **He needs help. Bring him to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Do not give food or water.**

- **Please leave him be.** A baby's best chance for survival is with his mother.
  - **YES**

**Did you know that skunks often issue warning signs before they spray their musky odor?** They will raise their tails, stomp their feet, and lurch their backs to try to scare you away.

Skunks begin having their babies in the month of May, and they will stay with their mother at least until autumn.

*Note: It is **illegal** for an unlicensed individual to possess a wild animal for more than 24 hours.

**Handling of any wild animal, of any age, is never a good idea.** If you must handle an injured or orphaned wild animal, ONLY do so when wearing protective gloves. Though nocturnal, mother skunks will often forage during the day. Before assuming she is sick, check her behavior first. Is she digging in the dirt or eating food that has been left out? Those are both signs of a healthy, hungry mother skunk, who should be left alone.

Please call our hotline if you have any questions or find a baby skunk.
(830) 336-2725