



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR PETS AGAINST RABIES

- **Do not feed wild animals. You may be putting your family in danger.**
- **Warn your children to stay away from wild or stray animals.**
- **Do not keep wildlife as pets. It is against the law.**
- **Do not trap and transport wild animals to a new location. It's illegal and you could be spreading diseases.**
- **Take measures to discourage wild animals from taking up residence in your home or on your property.** For example, cover up potential entrances, such as uncapped chimneys, loose shingles, and openings in attics, roofs and eaves. You may want to contact a professional for advice.

If You Care . . . Leave Them There!

- **Young Wildlife Belong in the Wild**

Every year, many people upset the lives of young wildlife when they only mean to help. They take fledgling songbirds, young rabbits or other animals from the wild in a mistaken attempt to save them.

Why It Happens

The arrival of spring and summer also means the arrival of newborn and just-hatched wildlife. These young soon venture into the world on shaky legs or fragile wings. While most are learning survival from one or both parents, some normally receive little or no parental care. Often, wild animal parents stay away from their young when people are near. For all of these young animals, the perils of survival are a natural part of life in the wild. Some will not survive. However, young wildlife that learn well and are the most fit usually live the longest.

It's not unusual to see a young robin crouched on the lawn or a young rabbit in the flower garden, both apparently motherless. Or, to find a fawn lying by itself. **Often, well meaning individuals step in to help. This is when problems arise; when we assume that young wildlife we find alone are abandoned, helpless and need saving. In nearly all cases, this is a mistake.**

These well-meant acts of kindness tend to have the opposite result. Most people quickly find that they do not really know how to care for young wildlife, and many of the animals that are "rescued" soon die despite their best efforts.

Even if they do survive in our care, these young wild animals have missed the natural experiences that teach them to fend for themselves. When these wild animals are released back into the wild it is difficult for

them to function as they should (for example, their ability to find natural foods is impaired) and they have a reduced ability to survive.

DO NOT consider young wildlife as possible pets. This is illegal and is bad for the animal. Furthermore wild animals do not make good pets; they are not well suited for life in captivity and they may carry diseases that can be given to people. Resist the temptation to take them out of the wild.

Remember wildlife - especially animals like **raccoons, skunks or bats are the most common carriers of the rabies virus.**

For more information contact the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department at 386-2325.