

# Living With Wildlife in Nevada



Urban Wildlife

## Nevada's Diverse Wildlife

Nevada has a diverse landscape that ranges from towering mountains to low-lying arid deserts. An abundance of wildlife as unique and diverse as the state itself is found within Nevada's borders. These include: mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

This diversity provides remarkable wildlife viewing opportunities. In Nevada you can see sage grouse conducting their annual mating rituals, called strutting, each spring, or sandhill cranes on their spring and fall migrations. You can see mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk and herds of pronghorn antelope. And on your journeys around the state, you may spot the state bird: mountain bluebird, state reptile: desert tortoise, state fish: Lahontan cutthroat trout or even the state mammal: desert bighorn sheep.



## Keep Wildlife Wild

Wild animals are meant to be wild. They are not like domestic animals that have been raised to be pets or livestock. The best thing we can do to help wildlife is to keep them wild. Here's how:

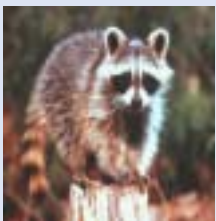
### KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

If you find a baby animal, such as a sparrow, dove, rabbit or deer, **leave it alone**. Its parents know where it is and probably placed it there. Removing the baby animal takes it away from the care that is being provided by its parents. **Animal parents are always better at taking care of their young than humans.**



### WILDLIFE CAN FIND ITS OWN FOOD

Feeding wildlife, such as deer, coyotes, bears and raccoons, is unhealthy for animals and removes their natural fear of humans and can make them dependant upon us for their survival, which is never a good thing for a wild animal. It also exposes them to diseases and injury from domestic animals and automobiles and it may



be a nuisance to your neighbors. Wild animals pose a threat to pets such as cats and dogs and have been known to bite or even attack humans who are feeding them. **Feeding wildlife is dangerous to wildlife, domestic animals and to humans.** Eliminate food sources such as pet food and unsecured garbage cans.

## Bird Feeders



Bird feeders can be an enjoyable way of viewing birds and it can be done without creating a nuisance. The Nevada Department of Wildlife has produced a brochure, *Backyard Birds*, which gives tips on bird and hummingbird feeding. Contact your nearest NDOW office for a copy of the brochure.

## I Found a Baby Bird

You may see a baby bird on the ground that has fallen from its nest or has been intentionally ejected by its parents or siblings. Nature produces excess animals in order to ensure the survival of the species. This is how nature balances its books. If you should see a baby bird on the ground, here is what the experts suggest:



**Return the baby bird safely to its nest, if possible.** Do not place yourself in danger by climbing to high or dangerous places. The often-told story that birds will not take care of their young after being handled by a human is not true. They will take care of their young after being touched by humans.

**If the nest cannot be found, leave the bird where it is.** Keep cats and dogs away from the area. The parents know where the bird is and they will attempt to take care of it. As difficult as it may be, **it's always best to leave the parenting to the parents.**

If a bird or other animal has obvious injuries, you may wish to contact the Nevada Department of Wildlife office that is nearest to you.

## A Note About Pigeons

Pigeons are not classified as wildlife as they are an unprotected species. Many people consider the non-native birds to be a nuisance. Oftentimes, they are raised by pigeon breeders who produce them for racing competitions and to exhibit at fairs and other shows. Breeders sometimes place bands on pigeon legs for their own purposes so there is little chance that the owner can be found from the band's number. Pigeons often carry lice and other parasites.



## There's a Duck in my Pool

In the spring, waterfowl such as ducks and geese lay eggs and raise their young, and may attempt to do so in yards with shrubbery



near open water, such as swimming pools and ponds. While it may be enjoyable to watch ducks in yards and pools, this enjoyment can quickly turn to displeasure as ducks foul or dirty pools and become a nuisance. If you see waterfowl frequenting your property in the spring, you can assume that they may be attempting to build a nest. If so, here are some things you may wish to do:

**Wild ducks and geese are well adapted to fending for themselves.** Feeding will only attract more waterfowl and will encourage them to stay. Birds are wild animals and they know how to find food without your help. **Human foods, such as bread and popcorn, do not provide them with types of nutrition they need** and may actually be harmful.

**Preventing waterfowl from nesting in your yard is an act of kindness. Your yard is not good waterfowl habitat** and home owners frequently have the unpleasant experience of seeing ducklings die as a result of exposure to swimming pool chemicals or becoming trapped in the pool. Check under shrubs frequently to look for signs of nest building. Remove nests before ducks lay eggs. **Once eggs are laid, the nest must be left alone** until the eggs hatch and the chicks are mobile.

**Keep pools covered.** Use scare devices like loud horns or spray the birds with water to make them leave. Erect flapping flags or shiny metallic streamers around the pool to dissuade waterfowl.

## Urban Coyotes and Foxes

Coyotes, foxes and skunks are frequently observed in and around urban areas, such as Las Vegas, Henderson, Reno and Elko. In fact, these animals may actually reside within city limits. It is important that you **do not feed coyotes, foxes, skunks** or other wildlife. Feeding keeps them in your neighborhood. Work with your neighbors to eliminate food sources such as pet food and unsecured garbage cans.

Coyotes and foxes are of concern because they have been known to eat pets, such as housecats and dogs. They can also carry rabies and other diseases. Also, they have been known to bite people, often when people are feeding them.

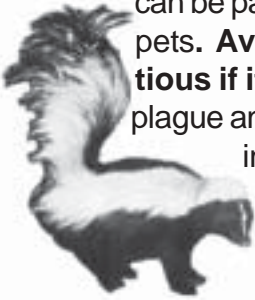
If you see a coyote or fox in an urban area, it's not necessary to report this to wildlife officials. However, officials should be notified immediately if an animal is threatening, appears to be sick or has bitten or attacked someone.

## Rabbits, Bats, Rodents, etc.

The rule of thumb is always the same when dealing with wildlife: **Show them respect, remember that they're wild animals and don't feed them.** If wildlife, such as rabbits, skunks, raccoons, ground squirrels or deer, cause problems in your yard, fencing may prevent damage or discourage them from entering. Contact your nearest NDOW office for information on this.



Keep in mind that, although rare, diseases can be passed from wildlife to humans and pets. **Avoid handling wildlife, and be particularly cautious if it is dead or showing signs of illness.** Rabies, plague and other diseases can result from handling or coming into contact with infected wildlife. Seek immediate medical attention if bitten by any wild animal or if you suspect that you, your children or pets have been exposed to any disease.



## Wildlife Management

Management of Nevada's wildlife is the responsibility of the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). Biologists, game wardens, wildlife educators and interpreters, workers at wildlife management areas and fish hatcheries as well as administrative personnel all work together to protect and conserve the wildlife that is found within the state.

NDOW works closely with various federal, state and local agencies as well as conservation groups to protect wildlife habitats and conserve the state's wildlife.

Concerns about wildlife, whether it's regarding the welfare of an animal you observe or have found, or about a poaching or other incident where wildlife may be harmed, should be directed to your nearest NDOW office. The offices are open weekdays, except state holidays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call Operation Game Thief at (800) 992-3030 to report a poaching or other wildlife law violation.

## Additional Information

Additional information about living with Nevada's wildlife is available on the Nevada Department of Wildlife's web site at [www.ndow.org](http://www.ndow.org). Specific tactics to prevent wildlife conflicts are provided on the web site.

### Department of Wildlife Offices

#### Headquarters/Western Region Office

1100 Valley Rd.  
Reno, NV 89512

#### Fallon Office

380 West 'B' St.  
Fallon, NV 89406

#### Ely Office

1218 N. Alpha St.  
Ely, NV 89301

#### Eastern Region Office

60 Youth Center Rd.  
Elko, NV 89801

#### Henderson Office

744 S. Racetrack Rd.  
Henderson, NV 89015

#### Southern Region Office

4747 Vegas Dr.  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

#### Winnemucca Office

815 E. Fourth St.  
Winnemucca, NV 89445

Visit our web site at [www.ndow.org](http://www.ndow.org)