

GRAY SQUIRRELS

Some reasons for baby squirrels to be found by humans

- Baby fell out of tree
- Nest fell out of tree
- Nest was dismantled by rain or winds and fell out of tree
- Tree was cut down by tree trimmers
- Bird (such as a crow or hawk) took babies out of nest
- Mother has died

Determine whether the baby should come to a rehabilitator

<http://www.ncwildlife.org/Injured-Wildlife>



If a person finds a young squirrel, we do not assume that the squirrel needs the care of a rehabilitator unless they have one or more of the following conditions:

- Obvious broken skin from bird, cat, or dog bites
- Contact with a cat's mouth
- Swollen bump on head (head injury from falling)
- Tilted head, walking in circles (possible head injury from falling)
- Bruises on body especially on abdomen (can only be seen if baby does not yet have fur)
- Bloody nose (possible head injury, clogged breathing passages)
- Difficulty breathing (possibly pneumonia, rib or nasal fracture).
- Broken limb, dragging back legs
- They are very thin and dehydrated. Newborn squirrels, or "pinkies", naturally are quite wrinkled, so it is difficult to determine if they are dehydrated.
- Infant or even juvenile squirrels can be tested for dehydration if the caller pinches the skin on the back of the neck, pulls it up, and lets it go again. This is called "Tenting the Skin". If the skin readily snaps back to the body, the baby probably is not severely dehydrated. But if the skin stays up in the "pinched" position, even after skin is let go, it most likely is already orphaned and has not been nursed for some time.
- They have maggots, off-white fly eggs under the fur (often very hard to see), lots of fleas or ants on their body. Look for white rice-shaped forms in the nose, mouth, ears, groin, or any place on the body that may have a sore, bite, or other open wound. Maggots will hatch from eggs that an adult fly deposited. A mother squirrel would have licked the eggs off before they ever hatched, so the presence of eggs or maggots usually indicates that the baby is orphaned. **Maggots must be dealt with immediately by a rehabilitator.** They can enter the body very quickly and damage the lungs, heart, and brain.
- They are juveniles. 4-6 week-old squirrels will readily come up to humans or try to climb up a human's leg, desperate for food and looking for help. Unfortunately they will come up to dogs and cats too. A young squirrel doing this is most likely orphaned and should be brought to a rehabilitator immediately.

Possible Reuniting Mother and Baby

If the babies are warm, plump and moving around then **call a rehabber for instructions** on how to help the mother squirrel find her babies. The babies must be kept warm continuously. The mother will not accept cold babies. Important: If more than one baby is found there is an excellent chance of reuniting but if only one baby is found the mother will probably not come back and a rehabilitator should be contacted.

