



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Public contact, Information Center: (888) 248-6866
Media contact, Tristanna Bickford: (505) 476-8027
tristanna.bickford@state.nm.us

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Public reminded to leave young wildlife alone

SANTA FE – Spring is the time of year when most wildlife babies are born. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish reminds the public to leave alone any deer or antelope fawns, elk calves, bear cubs or other wild animals they may find.

Most young-of-the-year wildlife people discover are simply hiding while awaiting their parents' return from foraging nearby.

Removing these young animals can cost them their lives, Orrin Duvuvuei, Department deer biologist, warned. "For about a week after birth, young wildlife exhibit hiding behaviors to avoid detection and increase their chance for survival. You might think it has been abandoned, but in reality, the mother is typically a few hundred yards away," Duvuvuei said. "In most cases, the best thing to do is just leave it alone and quietly leave the area."

Returning a young wild animal to its natural environment after being carried off by a human can be very difficult and may not work in many cases, Duvuvuei said.

If you see young wildlife, please follow these guidelines:

- Do not approach. Its mother is likely close by and aware that you are in the area.
- Leave the area quickly and quietly.
- Observe the animal from a safe distance, but don't linger in the area or touch the animal.
- If you think the animal has been abandoned, mark the location using a GPS if possible and [contact the local Department of Game and Fish office.](#)

Here are several resources to learn more about young wildlife and for more information about living with wildlife in New Mexico:

- [Encountering newborn deer fawns](#)
- [Feeding wildlife puts you and others at risk](#)
- [Living with large predators in New Mexico](#)
- [Department's publication page](#)

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