

## Habitat Loss

This field was formerly occupied by ground hogs and deer. Survivors of such onslaughts are squeezed into smaller and smaller spaces.



Lawn mowers represent nest destruction on a widespread scale. Rabbit nests are commonly mowed over and babies injured or killed. Volunteers learn to test disrupted nests to determine if babies are still being fed by mother, or if they have been orphaned.



## Orphaned or Not?

Unfortunately it was too late to determine if these rabbits were truly orphaned. Eastern cottontails are highly stressed in captivity and many do not survive rehabilitation.

Volunteers will learn to recognize true orphans from those young animals still being cared for by their parents. Constant observation of a nest is critical to making this determination and arriving at the right intervention.

### Participating animal shelters, 2009:

Animal Welfare League of Arlington  
Animal Welfare League of Alexandria  
Prince Georges Animal Services

## WILDLIFE AID BRIGADE®,

### LLC

Wildlife Rehabilitators, Animal Shelters and Volunteers  
working to preserve wild families



Join a unique effort to assist  
wildlife in the field, prevent  
orphaning, and resolve human-  
caused disruption of wild homes.

[www.wildlifeaidbrigade.org](http://www.wildlifeaidbrigade.org)

V O L U N T E E R



# A network of wildlife rehabilitators, animal shelters and volunteers helping wildlife.

Wildlife Aid Brigade®, LLC, was formed in Maryland in 2007 to reduce and prevent wild animal families from being disrupted and separated by human activity and misinformation. Each spring and summer, birds and mammals prepare to raise their young by building nests and excavating dens. Due to ever-increasing habitat destruction especially in highly developed areas, their choices of nesting and denning locations are fewer and fewer.

Separation of young from parents frequently occurs out of the public's lack of knowledge about basic wildlife cycles as well as destruction of nests and dens when suburbanites, mow their lawns, etc. Citizens most often call their local animal shelter when a nest or den with young is destroyed.

Shelters have done their best to keep up with demand, but do not have the funding or training to humanely handle many wildlife situations.

Wildlife Aid Brigade is the safety net between animal shelters, the public and wildlife in need of assistance.



*Baby gray squirrels, approximately one week old, orphaned when their tree and nest were cut down.*

## THE SOLUTION:

Wildlife Aid Brigade trains volunteers and interns to respond to wildlife calls directly from participating shelters. The volunteer, equipped with tools and materials provided by the shelter, performs the following tasks:

- assesses the situation, •decides if the animal's life is in danger, •provides first aid when necessary, •renests baby birds and mammals when possible, and • transports the animal to the shelter if needed for rehabilitation.

The volunteer also educates the caller about the species' natural history, addresses any public health concerns, and reduces fear and myths the caller may be harboring.

## THE CHALLENGES:

Helping wildlife in the field can be exciting and rewarding...it can also be frustrating and challenging. Each case is slightly different and, though training will prepare you for many situations, it cannot prepare you for all. Experience is the best teacher, along with the animals themselves. Some of the challenges

include: finding the actual location, finding the actual animal in need, and determining species. Patience is the most useful characteristic for volunteers, along with ability to improvise.

## THE REQUIREMENTS:

Volunteers are required to supply their own cell phones and their own cars. Volunteers must be 18 years or older. Physical prerequisites include ability to stoop, stand for long periods, crawl and climb. Ability to cope with exposure to all weather elements for extended periods is also required. An unwavering commitment to the welfare of wildlife is expected.

## THE REWARDS:

Keeping a wild family together by reuniting babies with parents, and saving the lives of injured, orphaned or sick animals by getting them to rehabilitators produces a feeling which is hard to describe. You will experience it each time you build an artificial nest and witness parents resume care of their young in the wild, or when you provide emergency care and save a life.

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