

HELP FOR HUMMINGBIRDS

These are emergency instructions, and only valid for 24 hours. Hummingbirds are extremely fragile. Please call Walden's Puddle immediately at (615) 559-9453 and leave a message with our animal care hotline.

Help for **Baby** Hummingbirds **Without Injuries**

Check out this blog post to [see what a baby hummingbird looks like.](#)

If you find an uninjured baby hummingbird, look directly up and see if you can locate the nest. Then, make every effort to place it back in the nest. The parents will not abandon the baby if you have touched it or the nest.



Baby hummingbirds secure themselves by weaving their toes around the nest fabric. Their hold is so secure that you can accidentally dismember them if you pull them too hard. **If the baby is gripping something with its toes be careful not to rip its legs off.**

If the nest cannot be located or if it is too high:

- Fasten a tiny basket lined with dried grass in the tree as far up as possible.
 - Place the nestling in the basket and watch diligently from a distance to see if a parent comes to feed it. Do not put the baby back if it is storming; wait until the weather clears.
 - If the parents do not return within 2 hours, or before it gets dark, you will need to bring the baby inside and call Walden's Puddle immediately at (615) 559-9453 and leave a message.
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Help for Injured Baby Hummingbirds

If you find an injured baby hummingbird (usually on the ground), lift it — **along with the material it is sitting on** — and place it on crumpled tissue in a shoebox with holes in the lid. Never attempt to remove baby hummingbirds from their nest. Baby hummingbirds secure themselves by weaving their toes around the nest fabric. Their hold is so secure that you can accidentally dismember them if you lift them from their nest.

- Always use tissue or paper towels, **not cloth**. The bird's feet may become entangled. **Do not put the bird in a wire cage.**
- Close the shoebox lid and keep the bird in a warm, quiet place.
- If you have a heating pad, turn it on low and place the box on **top**.
- Warmth is critical. You can offer alternate heat sources, like a microwaved bottle of water in a sock or towel. Be careful not to burn the bird — think warm, not hot.
- Call Walden's Puddle immediately at (615) 559-9453 and leave a message.

If the baby does not have feathers:

- Do not attempt to give a newborn hummingbird food or water.
- Call Walden's Puddle immediately at (615) 559-9453 and leave a message.

If the baby has feathers:

- If the baby opens its mouth readily to feed, you can offer sugar water for up to 24 hours.
- Do not attempt to offer food until the bird is warm. A cold animal cannot digest food.
- Do not feed sugar water or commercial hummingbird nectar for more than 24 hours. This can lead to crippling deformities.

How to prepare sugar water:

- Prepare a sugar water solution by mixing 1 teaspoon of sugar (not honey or artificial sweeteners) with 4 teaspoons of water.
 - With an eyedropper or syringe gently guide the bird's beak into the tip of the dropper or syringe.
 - Do not squeeze the dropper — you can kill the bird. If the bird is eating his tongue can be seen moving and bubbles will be seen in the liquid.
 - If the bird gasps, or bubbles are seen at the side of the mouth, **stop**. Let the bird calm down then try again.
 - Offer sugar water every thirty minutes until help can be reached.
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Help for **Injured Adult** Hummingbirds



You can tell a hummingbird is an adult if it has a beak longer than three-quarters of an inch. It may also have bright color on the head or neck. The bird will have visible tail feathers (unless it had a tail injury).

- Place the animal in a warm shoebox as described above.
- Call Walden's Puddle immediately at (615) 559-9453 and leave a message.
- If the bird opens its mouths readily to feed, you can offer sugar water for up to 24 hours. See sugar water preparation and feeding instructions described above.
- Do not attempt to offer food until the bird is warm. A cold animal cannot digest food. If the bird's eyes are closed and/or the feathers are puffed and the bird looks like a cotton ball should be warmed up with a heating pad under the box on low.

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