

Fledglings

Fledglings are young birds that easily identified by their lack of tail feathers or the presence of a short, stubby tail. They tend to hop out of their nests into nearby bushes, trees, and even the ground. They're able to flutter just enough to reach low branches or shrubs to escape from danger. They often fall right out of the nest in their efforts to fly, and end up being 'rescued' by well meaning but mistaken humans. The parents are likely to be nearby, keeping an eye on it.



Short, stubby tail.

If you find a fledgling in a dangerous area (such as a yard frequented by dogs and cats, or near a road), move it out of harms' way. If you can find the nest within safe reach, replace the bird. Don't worry about its parents rejecting it; birds have no real sense of smell and won't reject their babies. If you can't find a nest, relocate the fledgling someplace nearby but safe, like a hedge. Its parents should be able to find it.

If you see a fledgling that is injured, you may intervene. Call your local wildlife rehabilitator right away. Birds are complicated, fragile creatures, and if an injured fledgling doesn't get the proper care soon, it may never be able to fly or live in the wild. Fledglings need to be fed every $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for 12-14 hours. You need to identify the bird in order to determine what it eats; different species have different dietary needs.

Do not give an injured fledgling bread or milk! Birds aren't mammals, and they shouldn't be given milk. Bread doesn't have any of the protein or vitamins that growing birds need. Birds need to be taken to a rehabilitator, who can put them on a proper diet, tend to their injuries and teach them how to go back to living in the wild.