



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Health Department Reminds Vermonters to Enjoy Wildlife ... from a Distance

For Immediate Release: June 21, 2011

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**BURLINGTON** – The Vermont Department of Health is reminding Vermonters to enjoy wildlife from a distance, and never touch or handle wild animals – even those that appear to be hurt or orphaned.

The best thing to do to rescue an animal is call the rabies hotline at 1.800.4RABIES, a state game warden, a veterinarian or an authorized animal rehabilitator who can care for the animal and nurse it back to health before releasing it back into the wild.

If you try to rescue an animal and you have direct contact with its saliva or blood, you could be exposed to diseases such as rabies. Simply by touching an animal, you could pick up a parasite such as roundworm.

“A caring person will want to rescue an animal, and this is the time of year when veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators receive the most calls about wildlife,” said Robert Johnson, state public health veterinarian.

“If you absolutely have to move an animal out of harm’s way, take precautions to avoid touching it,” said Johnson. “Use gloves and tools: a shovel, box, blanket, floor mat or something similar. Do not trap and relocate, handle, feed or water the animal.”

More guidance on contact with wildlife can be found at the Health Department website: [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov). A list of game wardens in Vermont and contact information is listed at:

[http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/laws\\_contactwarden.cfm](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/laws_contactwarden.cfm)

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