

PETS & WILDLIFE factsheet

- In North America, domestic cats kill **hundreds of millions** of wild birds and mammals each year.
- Cats hunt and kill wildlife whether they are well-fed or not.
- Bells do not prevent cats from catching and killing prey.
- Most birds that are caught by a cat will not survive. Even birds which appear to escape usually succumb to internal injuries, stress, or infection.
- Each year wildlife rehabilitation centres treat injuries caused by domestic dogs. Dogs have been known to maul and seriously injure many species of animals, from deer to seal pups and squirrels.
- Retriever breeds, following their instincts, sometimes "kidnap" young animals by carrying them to their owners. Without knowing where the animals came from, these babies cannot be returned to their parents and effectively become orphans.
- Domestic rabbits can breed with wild rabbits. Because domestic hybrids are not equipped for life in the wild, their chance of survival is compromised.

How can I help wildlife affected by pets?

Wildlife rehabilitation centres like Wild ARC care for animals that are injured or orphaned. We rely on donations to support our work. Here are some examples of the costs of caring for some common animals:

Animal	Cost of Care
Robin	\$50 per week
Heron	\$100 per week
Deer fawn	\$200 per week

An injured or orphaned animal's best chance for success is to be cared for by a wildlife rehabilitation centre. Your donation will help us care for wild animals in need.

We can have happy pets and keep nature in balance by being responsible pet guardians. We can keep our pets and wildlife safe and healthy.



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PETS & WILDLIFE



Keeping pets
and wildlife
safe and healthy

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- Keep your cat indoors; there are too many hazards that can injure them and shorten their lives.
- If you have an outdoor cat, keep it away from bird feeders.
- Keep your cat inside at night when it is most likely to hunt. This will also help keep your cat safe from nocturnal predators.
- Keep your dog leashed in areas where you may encounter wildlife.
- Respect leash regulations in any parks where you take your dog.
- Spay or neuter your pet, especially if your pet is allowed to roam.
- Provide your pet with plenty of stimulation and exercise.

WHAT YOU SHOULDN'T DO

- Don't allow your dog to chase or injure wildlife, or to roam unsupervised.
- Don't let your cat outside, except in an enclosed area or on a leash and harness.
- Don't abandon a pet you can't care for. If you can't find it a caring home, contact a shelter for help.

Watch out for wild babies!

Spring and summer are busy times for wildlife care centres. It's the time of year when many animals and birds are building nests and raising their babies. It is critical to be vigilant about your pets in order to prevent injury to these wildlife families. Baby animals – especially those in ground nests like ducklings and rabbits – are extremely vulnerable, and the death or injury of an adult can leave its babies orphaned.

If your pet brings you a baby animal, it has likely found a nest and will return to it if not supervised. Please keep your pet inside or away from the area to prevent injury to other babies in the nest.

Call a wildlife rehabilitator if:

- Your pet injures an animal;
- Your pet has killed a parent and the babies need care;

In addition to caring for the animal, a wildlife rehabilitator may be able to inform you of any diseases your pet may have been exposed to.

**On Southern Vancouver Island
call Wild ARC: (250) 478-9453**

Keeping your indoor cat happy

If your cat is used to the outdoors, you may worry that he or she will be bored or develop behaviour problems indoors. Here are some ways to make the transition easier:

- Provide your cat a view of the outdoors, such as a window shelf, or a screened porch or other safe enclosure.
- Try taking your cat for leash walks.
- Give your cat a stimulating indoor environment, with areas to climb, scratch, and play.
- If your cat enjoys "grazing" outdoors, try planting a container garden with cat-friendly greens like oat grass, alfalfa, or catnip.
- Plan for the transition. Get your indoor environment ready ahead of time. Lavish your cat with extra attention and playtime, and praise your pet for using scratching posts and indoor play areas.
- Consider adopting a playmate for your cat. In addition to providing companionship for your pet, you can give a home to an animal in need.

