



11) An Introduction into Attracting Birds to your Garden

CASUALTIES:

Should you find a fledgling bird (i.e. a bird fully feathered and learning to fly), if it is uninjured and not in imminent danger, **leave it alone**, move well away out of sight to allow the parents to attend to it. They will be watching!

However, it will need help if the bird is injured, or a bare baby. Sometimes chicks do fall out of the nest and parent birds can not pick their off spring up and return them to the nest. Take extreme care if this is required to be done.

Any birds that have been caught by a cat may not appear to be injured, however they often have internal injuries and should be taken into care immediately. All wild birds are afforded legal protection under the "*Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*". Therefore keeping one, especially if injured, is unlawful. They must be seen by a vet in the same way a domestic pet should.

Initially keep any casualty somewhere warm, dry and in the dark to keep stress to a minimum (i.e. in a shoe box or similar). More harm than good can be done by trying to force feed a casualty. A bird's airway is at the back of its tongue and by forcing food or water into its beak; you may inadvertently cause a restriction to its breathing.

For birds to be successfully rehabilitated back into the wild, it is important that they are not kept alone. A flock animal like birds will be stressed, and may become used to humans. They are far happier with other birds of their own kind to bond with. The *South Essex Wildlife Hospital*, a voluntary charity, usually has plenty of birds in their care for company. They can be contacted on 01375 893893, or by e-mail – www.southessexwildlife.org

Here are some more useful contact numbers in case you should find a casualty or encounter a wildlife emergency:-

Ringed Birds – BTO, giving the ring number / details:	01842 750050
Swan and Wildfowl Rescue – Sue Morgan:	01621 868479
Birds of Prey – Kim MacDonald: 01245 225378 or Rescue:	01206 549886
Ringed Pigeons – Royal Pigeon Racing Association:	01452 713529
Badgers – North East Essex Badger Protection Group:	07751 572175
Bats – John Dodson:	01245 224408
Bird / Animal trapping and / or Shooting – Police:	0300 333 4444