

**MONROE POLICE DEPARTMENT
ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT**



WHITETAIL DEER

The Gestation takes about 200 days; so most fawns are born in June. When the doe is about to give birth, she leaves the other deer in the doe group and goes off alone. Her first birth is usually a single fawn; in successive years she usually gives birth to twins and occasionally triplets.

For the first month of their lives, the fawns remain hidden among vegetation and rarely move more than 30 feet from their birthplace. Their greatest protection at this time is their ability to lie still and remain unseen by predators. The mother usually feeds nearby and then returns at intervals so that the fawns can nurse. The young may nibble greens at 2-3 weeks of age; weaned at 4 months of age and independent at one year.

Deer parents stay away from the nest area from dawn to dusk to avoid attracting predators. Unless you know for a fact that the mother is dead, leave the nest site alone. **If you found a fawn and it is sitting quietly, leave it alone.** If it is frantic and bleating, then please call for advice. An officer will normally be dispatched to the location to determine if the animal is in danger and must be removed from the site and transported to a licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator. Avoid handling the fawn. However, if you have handled them, rub them with grass or soil to reduce your scent, and then return the fawn to where you found it.

After the first month the fawns travel with their mother, and they may move together to areas where there is abundant food, good cover, and possibly relief from insects. These areas are often at the edge of a stream or lake, allowing the deer to eat water plants and go into the water. In August and September the doe and fawn are likely to rejoin the doe group.

By the following spring, the new fawns are classified as yearlings. During the summer, when their mother is raising new fawns, the yearlings go off and feed on their own but remain in the vicinity of their mother. In the fall they will rejoin their mother and spend another winter with her. The following spring they will leave her – the males will join buck groups and the females will become a part of a doe group.

Home range: 1 to 2 square miles. Based upon recent studies the home range for urban deer is much smaller and may be only 800 yards from where they are born.

What To Do If You Find a Fawn

If a fawn is **obviously ill, lying on its side, kicking, crying** – Leave it alone- Do Not attempt to move the animal it may cause more injury to fractured (broken) bones. A light cloth placed over the animal's head will sometimes calm it. **Keep it away from pets and all human activity. Petting the fawn, talking to it, holding it, does not comfort it.** This is a wild animal. Human voices, odor and touch only add to the stress and will cause additional harm besides the illness or injury. **When a fawn seems calm it may be in shock.** If the weather is cold, a blanket may be placed over its body to keep it from

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becoming chilled. In hot weather a cool location, out of drafts, is all that is needed. **DO NOT FEED THE FAWN ANYTHING.** Baby formula, cow's milk, feed store mixes, pet store domestic animal formulas, soy products – will cause scouring, dehydration and death.

CALL the local Animal Control, Police or State Department of Environmental Protection (DEEP) at once for help.

If an **uninjured** fawn is seen on the road or beside the road, **DO NOT PUT IT IN YOUR CAR.** If the animal can be moved safely, place it off the road about 20 feet and leave the area. The fawn would not be there if the doe were not nearby. You will not see her. She will return for the fawn as soon as the human disturbance is gone. A doe **WILL** accept it even though humans have touched it, *but she cannot retrieve her fawn if you linger in the area.*

What To Do If You Have a Fawn At Home

If a fawn is seen lying upright, eyes wide open, but flattened to the ground, do not touch it. This is a fawn's camouflage position. It blends with its surroundings. When it is picked up it will hold its legs tight against its body with its head forward. Its legs are not broken. Sometimes the fawn allows its body to become limp and dangle in your hands. Put it down, walk away and leave it alone. This fawn is too small to follow the doe for the long distance she must travel to find enough food to make milk for her baby. The milk is very rich and will sustain the fawn for the many hours it spends alone. The doe will return only when there are no humans nearby. Do not sit and wait for her to return. If you have removed the fawn from its resting spot take it back at once and walk away. The doe will be searching for her fawn, she will accept it and care for it much better than any human can. Humans cannot teach the fawn the skills it will need to survive in the wild. Humans do not have the correct diet to properly nourish a wild animal. **LEAVE IT ALONE.** Allow it to retain its wildness and natural fear of humans. This is the greatest gift we can give it. Wild animals do not make good pets. They are genetically programmed to be wild. As they mature they become dangerous and can inflict serious injuries on humans.

Do not feed it.

The law against raising wild animals without a permit was made for the good of the animals and not to deprive us of having them as pets. Your decision will be one of life or death for this wild fawn.

REMEMBER THIS!

- It is against the law to keep wildlife in your possession.

If you do see a wild baby by itself in the woods or field...

- Leave it alone. Do not go near. Do not touch it, although its mother **WILL** accept it back even though it has been touched by humans.
- Its mother has gone for food. She will return to care for it much better than we can.
- Do not feed it. Wild animals eat various kinds of food. They can live only on food that is natural for their species. Never give them cow's milk.

If any mammal, reptile or bird is injured, ill, or orphaned...

- Call a wildlife expert. They will come to rescue and care for it.
- It is better not to touch it. It may cause injury to you.

We are here to help. Please call

Office - 203-452-3760 or 24/7 Communications 203-261-3622