



White-Tailed Deer



Female deer often leave their offspring alone during daylight hours. The fawn lies perfectly still and blends into the surroundings until the mother returns in the evening. Often the fawn may be seen in the same spot for several days until the mother decides to lead the fawn to a new hiding place. A fawn resting quietly does not need to be rescued by humans.

*In accordance with state law, **Ohio Wildlife Center is not permitted to admit deer for rehabilitation.** Please read below for their best chance for survival.*

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) are found in all 88 Ohio counties and thrive in many different habitats. In late spring, female deer give birth to fawns; twins and triplets are common if high quality food sources are available. Fawns rest and stay hidden for up to a month after birth where mothers frequently visit to nurse. Newborn deer have spotted coats to help them hide from predators.

People often mistake fawns to be orphaned because the mother typically leaves them alone in daytime, feeding the young as-needed. Staying in a location separate from the fawn helps both animals hide more effectively.

Is this deer an orphan?

Remember, female deer often leave their offspring alone during the day. **Healthy fawns can be seen alone in the same spot for several days.** Action is not required for healthy, quiet fawns.

A fawn that is crying, walking around or walking up to people, shows signs of injury, or is covered by flies is a fawn in distress and is probably orphaned. **Never give a fawn cow's milk, or formulas intended for human infants, puppies, kittens, etc.,** as these products can cause gastric distress and diarrhea. Please leave a message for our hotline volunteer so they can contact you directly to discuss options to help get the fawn reunited with either its' mother or another doe.

Has the deer been hit by a car?

If a deer is hit on the road and cannot get up, call the State of Ohio Division of Wildlife officer for your county at 1-800-WILDLIFE, or your local sheriff's office. If the deer is able to get up and hobble on three legs, there is a good chance that the deer will recover from its injuries. Many three-legged deer survive and lead fairly normal lives in Ohio due to the absence of major predators. Never approach or attempt to transport an injured adult deer as it can present a dangerous kicking hazard.



Deer Leg Injuries

Ohio Wildlife Center's hotline often receives calls from concerned residents who see deer with mild to severe leg injuries. Here are some tips:

- ✓ Keep an eye on the deer and if she is obviously struggling, losing weight or getting sick, call a Division of Wildlife officer or sheriff to assist with the situation. Otherwise, the leg will either heal as best as it can or fall off completely and the deer will adapt.
- ✓ **Nature does do its best to heal them.** Wild animals have amazing, innate anesthetic abilities. The initial few days can be painful, but the body will release its own anesthetic in high amounts to control pain and simultaneously shunts blood away from the damaged limb (if healing is not going to be an option) so that the limb can die quickly and fall off.
- ✓ This process allows for the quickest means of healing with the least risk for infection. The animal adapts to its use of only 3 limbs during this process.
- ✓ **Winter is the best time for successful healing,** (though we have seen them do fine in summer too!) as the cold helps reduce swelling and there are no flies to infest wounds.

Take a look at the photos below of deer that healed on their own and were able to adapt on three legs.



Hours of Operation

Our wildlife hospital is located at 2661 Billingsley Road, Columbus, 43235. We are open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Ohio Wildlife Center is not a government agency; we are a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and we rely on individual donations. We would greatly appreciate a monetary donation to help with animal care.

Thank you for caring about Ohio's wildlife!