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# WILDLIFE ALMANAC



SPRING-SUMMER 2003



## Welcome to the Wildlife Almanac

Dear Citizens of the Great State of Nevada,

One of the most valuable assets of our great state is its extensive and diverse wildlife. From the smallest frog in a high mountain lake to the largest bull elk bugling in a piñon-juniper forest, Nevada's wildlife is important to us all. Wildlife adds to the beauty of the Nevada landscape. Whether you're a bird-watcher, hiker, fisherman, or hunter, your outdoors experience is incomplete without wildlife. The Division of Wildlife is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of that wildlife, and your outdoor recreational experiences.

The Division is a user-funded state agency with statutory responsibility for conservation of Nevada's wildlife. We are under the umbrella of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Programs of the Division address the needs of big game such as deer, antelope, elk, bighorn sheep and mountain goats. Fish species include warm water bass, catfish and sunfish and coldwater trout, as well as those less remembered sculpins, chubs and suckers. Wardens travel the hills to enforce wildlife laws and to just help folks out. Our Conservation Education staff works diligently to keep you informed through radio and television programs, pamphlets and brochures, the Internet and published mediums such as this *Almanac* you are reading right now. Our Diversity folks

are dedicated to conservation of those less-visible species such as lizards and bats, not to forget hawks, eagles and songbirds. Frogs, snails, mussels, and crayfish all have a place in the ecosystem, and we keep an eye on them too! Last, and most importantly, is our involvement in preserving and enhancing habitats for all these critters. That's part of our job too!

Your Division of Wildlife is a small agency of 200 dedicated professionals, but we can't do it all alone. We depend upon you for financial support through hunting and fishing license fees and excise taxes on sporting equipment. Our Annual Report on pages 10-11 explain our revenues and expenditures for 2002. The Division also has a Volunteer Program to enlist your help on wildlife projects throughout the state. Volunteers collect valuable native seeds, survey sage grouse, help to capture and transplant antelope, spawn fish and enter data in a computer among other things. Probably the most important thing you can do for wildlife is to appreciate it and support it. Speak up for wildlife in land use planning and legislative processes. Most importantly though, enjoy it with respect.

I hope this special edition of the Nevada Wildlife Almanac not only helps you plan to enjoy your wildlife resources, but gives you an idea of how you might help your Division of Wildlife protect it. We are trying a new distribution method to reduce mailing costs. This publication is paid for by anglers, hunters, boaters and members of the general public. It costs about .16 per copy to print and distribute. I look forward to seeing you in the hills.

Sincerely,

Terry R. Crawford  
Administrator,  
Nevada Division of Wildlife

## Keep "Wild" in Wildlife

By Geoff Schneider

Most of us love wildlife and want to protect the animals that we see in our yards and in the wild areas of Nevada. But what we may not realize is that our good intentions may, in some cases, actually result in harming the wildlife that we love and want to protect.

Carl Lackey, a biologist with the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), has witnessed countless cases where people's desire to help wildlife has actually harmed the animals they simply wanted to help or protect. Most often these cases involve people's desire to feed animals or pick up birds and other animals they believe are injured or abandoned.

Lackey said that people who find a baby bird in their yard or baby animal in the wild should leave it alone. "Don't assume that it is in distress and needs your help. The parents know where it is and are very likely taking care of it. If you remove it, you may be taking it away from its parents," he said.

Baby sparrows and other birds that are found on the ground should be left alone. If a nest is visible, the bird may be returned to the nest, if it can be done safely. Don't believe the myth that adult birds won't take care of their young after being handled by humans. Birds have a poor sense of smell, so it's unlikely that they can even detect human scent.

It's also important to remember that nature often produces excesses, so it's natural for some wildlife to not survive long enough to become adults.

Over the years, people who have mistakenly believed that they were helping

wildlife have brought baby mountain lions, antelope, deer and other wildlife to NDOW offices. In virtually all of these instances, the people unintentionally took the babies away from their parents.

"It's difficult to turn our backs on baby animals, but it's almost always the best thing to do," Lackey said. "Very seldom are they as bad off as people think. These animals are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves."

Feeding wildlife can, in many instances, prove to be harmful as well, according to Lackey. For instance, residents feed deer around Carson City, Verdi and southwest Reno. What people often don't realize is that mountain lions are attracted to these areas because they see congregations of deer as an available food source.

The Division of Wildlife receives numerous telephone calls each year from residents who are concerned about coyotes that they see in residential areas, particularly in the rapidly growing Las Vegas area. These animals, which are native to the state, actually reside in and around the urban areas. If you see one in an urban area, you can be sure that it is being fed or is eating pet food, or is finding food in unsecured garbage cans. Information about Nevada's urban coyotes can be obtained online at [www.ndow.org](http://www.ndow.org).

While most Nevadans enjoy viewing wildlife and are interested in their

wild being, we have to remember that they are wild animals and are capable of taking care of themselves. They need to remain wild. The best way to do this is by letting them be wild.



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