

We created this fact sheet to answer questions that are frequently asked of us. Important contact information and County wildlife and animal rescue resources are included as well. **Quick tip:** Print and post this guide for easy reference or go green and share your e-mail address with us at info@fawnrescue.org.

Q: What is a Black-tailed fawn?

A: A fawn is a newborn, or baby deer under one year of age. A black-tailed fawn belongs to the antlered family of hoofed mammals native to coastal California and Sonoma County. "Black-tailed" means the fawn has distinct tail markings, whereby the upper side and tip of the tail is black, while the underside is white.



Q: What does a Black-tailed fawn look like?

A: At birth, a fawn is fully furred, averages twelve inches in length and can weigh anywhere from 4-6 pounds. It will be reddish-brown all over with a series of white spots in rows running down its back. At 3-4 months of age, the fawn's white spots will disappear and its fur will fade to a grayish, thicker coat.

NOTE: Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County specializes in, and is only licensed to rescue, rehabilitate and release fawns with white spots (approximately 4 months of age or younger).

Q: At what age is a fawn, or deer "mature"?

A: At one year of age, the fawn is considered to be a yearling, not yet fully mature. Females, or does don't reach full maturity until 3-3.5 years of age. Male fawns will reach full maturity as a buck, at roughly 5-6 years of age.

**Fawn
Fact
Sheet**

**Frequently
Asked Questions**

**Facts
about
fawns**

Fawns are wild animals. They are extremely sensitive, highly anxious creatures and should be left alone, away from domestic animals, and humans.

Fawns should have a natural fear of humans, like any other predator.

Fawns are not pets. They should not be fawn-napped, held in captivity, or domesticated.

Calling to, touching, handling or transporting a fawn triggers stress, which can be harmful, cause injury, or sadly, be life threatening.

As fawns mature, they can be dangerous and cause serious injury to humans if startled or captured.

Never feed a fawn anything other than water. Baby formula, cow's milk, feed store mixes, pet store domestic animal formulas or soy products can cause scouring, dehydration and death.

Q: What does a fawn sound like when it cries?

A: Depending on how much the fawn feels it is in danger; its cry will increase in volume relative to the threat. The cry could be quiet and rhythmic if it is merely looking for its herd, or loud and continuous, almost eerily human, if it is being pursued by a predator. Consistent and rhythmic crying however, is an indication that the fawn is in distress or has been away from its mother for too long a time.





Q: What if I find a fawn and it looks abandoned?

A: It is understandable that people mistakenly assume that a fawn found alone has been abandoned. Please know that there is a high probability the fawn is not abandoned.

Since a newborn fawn is too fragile and weak to cover great distances, a doe will leave it where she feels it will be safe, and then she will go forage for nourishment to make milk. Does can leave their fawn for hours at a time. However, they will always come back to feed, clean, safely move, then leave their fawn again.

With the proliferation of deer in suburban areas, sometimes fawns are “hidden” right in our own yards, on or near roadways, sometimes in highly populated areas. But, if the fawn is calmly and quietly lying down, curled up as though resting, upright on its sternum, head erect or is flattened on the ground with eyes open – don’t fret! This is a fawn’s camouflage position. **If the fawn looks well, is alert, leave it alone.** Remember that the fawn’s mother is nearby and the fawn is OK.

WHAT TO DO:

Leave the fawn alone. A mother cannot retrieve her fawn if you linger in the area. If the mother does not return for several hours, or the fawn is found at predatory times of the day (sunrise/sunset), call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County for assistance.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do NOT approach, touch, pick-up, handle, feed, transport or “fawn-nap” the fawn. If you’ve already handled the fawn, promptly return it to where you found it (if it is safe to do so) and leave the area. The mother will not return to her fawn until you are gone. Mothers will accept their babies even if humans have touched it.

Something to note: Often times people report that a fawn’s legs are broken, simply because they are splayed out from under them. Again, don’t fret. It is highly unlikely the legs are broken, as fawns have been taught to hide their bodies, and do so in contorted ways.

Q: What if I find a fawn I believe to be orphaned?

A: First, we ask that you reference the question and answer above, as often times the terms “abandoned” or “orphaned” can easily be confused. There are tell-tail indicators however, that a fawn is orphaned. For instance, if an injured or deceased doe is found near the fawn (i.e. hit by a car, attacked or ill), this may have been the fawn’s mother, thus the fawn is orphaned. Similarly, if you find that a fawn has been left for more than 12 hours, has accumulated fecal matter on its backside, exhibits no flight response, or if it is alone during predatory hours (sunrise/sunset), the fawn would need immediate aid.

WHAT TO DO:

If you believe a fawn to be orphaned, call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately. Fawns require trained handling, care and a highly specific type of, and consistency of nourishment to stay alive. So, if the mother is no longer present, the fawn will need proper care.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do NOT try to “rescue” or feed an orphaned fawn. If it is in fact orphaned, it will be stressed and nervous, so trying to intervene without the proper training will only cause the fawn undue stress.



Q: What if a fawn is lying on its side, kicking or crying?

A: If you find a fawn in a compromised position - lying on its side, its head is thrown back, or it is kicking or crying, it may be injured, ill or in severe pain and is in need of immediate rescue and medical assistance.

WHAT TO DO:

If you can approach the fawn slowly and quietly, check to see if the fawn is bleeding, drooling, has any abscesses or painful growths, if it is licking an area of its body profusely, or if anything is visibly broken. Note everything you see and call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately. If it is safe to do so, lay a light towel or blanket over the fawn’s eyes only, as this may help calm the fawn until we arrive on scene.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do NOT try to move or comfort the fawn by petting, talking to or holding it. This does NOT comfort the fawn. Human voices, the human touch and odor only add to its stress and will cause additional harm.

Q: What if I see a fawn with physical ailments? (i.e. abscesses, growths, excessive hair loss, infections around the nose, mouth or eyes, raw flesh around the neck, is disoriented, running in circles, grinding teeth or has a stretched neck)

A: Fawns are wild animals and will inevitably suffer from any number of diseases or infections. Some of the most common ailments people report are abscesses, or abnormal growths, warts. These are not fatal. Warts are dark gray and hang from the animal, like a fig or larger and look terrible. An abscess is similarly disconcerting to see, often caused by an infected puncture wound and sometimes grows to the size of an orange, or larger. But they will eventually break and heal.



If you do however, find a fawn with noticeable infections around its nose, mouth or eyes; raw flesh around its neck; excessive hair loss; is running in circles or disoriented; is grinding its teeth or stretching its neck in pain, the fawn is ill, injured and in need of prompt medical aid.

WHAT TO DO:

Leave the fawn alone and call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately. Share the fawn's location and description of its ailment(s) so we may have the appropriate medical and transport supplies on hand. Fawns carry and transmit a whole host of diseases, parasites and bacterial contagions, so protect yourself and keep a thoughtful distance from it.

WHAT NOT DO TO:

Do not approach the fawn or try to administer any medical treatment or try to hold or calm it, as this will cause more harm than good. Do not try to "rescue" the fawn and take it to a veterinarian. Veterinarians do not accept fawns. Instead, call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County for immediate assistance.

Q: What if I see a fawn on, or dangerously close to the side of a road?

A: If a fawn is seen on or beside a road, call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County for assistance. If it can be done safely, slowly approach the fawn, pick it up and quickly place it about 20 feet from the road and leave the area.

Q: What if a fawn or deer running on or along a road or busy highway?

A: If you see a fawn or deer running alongside or on a busy road or highway in Sonoma County, note its location, the direction it was headed and contact the appropriate Sonoma County Animal Services Department. (See CONTACT INFORMATION section).

Q: What if I accidentally hit a fawn while driving?

A: If you hit ANY animal, safely STOP to see if it is injured or dead. If it is an adult deer, check for orphaned fawns nearby.

WHAT TO DO:

If you hit a fawn or find any orphaned fawn(s) as a result of a doe's injury or death, note the location and call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately. If you can stay with the injured or deceased fawn, please do so until we arrive. If you have any flares in your car, or road diversion markers, place them around you, your car and the fawn.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Don't try to pick the fawn up. Leave the transport or removal of the animal to the trained experts and designated City Animal Service department. Fawns, deer are wild animals and can cause injury to humans if handled incorrectly. Do not risk being bitten, kicked or cut by its hoof.



Q: What if I hit or find a sick, injured, dead adult deer?

A: If you hit or find an adult deer that is ill, injured or deceased, please contact the appropriate Sonoma County Animal Services Department. (See CONTACT INFORMATION section). There are only a handful of special circumstances whereby we may be able to assist. Remember, mature deer are physically unpredictable and hard to handle. They also risk capture myopathy, a deadly stress-induced condition.

Q: What if I find a fawn that is caught? (i.e. in a fence, swimming pool, gated yard or vineyard, etc.)

A: It is not uncommon that fawns and deer get physically caught or find themselves in precarious positions with enclosures or obstructions. Common calls are fawns wedged in fences, trapped in a gated yard, vineyard, swimming pool or some other trench or obstacle.



WHAT TO DO:

If a fawn is trapped in a fenced yard, open the gate, put a container of water and chopped apples that have a strong aroma on the outside of the gate about ten feet away to lure the fawn out. Leave the premises and let the fawn find its way out gradually, usually after dark. If a fawn is physically wedged, submerged, struggling, call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately for assistance.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do not chase, or try to scare the fawn away. Do not approach the compromised fawn quickly, frantically or raise your voice in any way. Fawns are high anxiety creatures and can suffer life-threatening consequences when startled, or in stressful situations. They have been known to back themselves into its enclosure, breaking their neck or legs in panic.



Q: What if a fawn is injured due to a domestic pet, dog or wildlife altercation?

A: The most common injury or cause of death amongst fawns is a domestic dog altercation. If you find a fawn that has been injured or killed by a dog, other domestic pet, livestock animal or wild animal, try to remove the attacking animal away from the fawn and call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County immediately.

Q: If I've "rescued" a fawn, where do I take it? What if I took it home?

A: We know that people inherently want to help fawns in need. Unless they are properly trained to transport, handle or care for fawns, people can often cause more harm to the fawn than good. If you intend to "rescue" a fawn, call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County first for guidance. There is no physical location to take a "rescued" fawn if you pick it up. If you've already "rescued" a fawn and have taken it home, return it immediately to the location you found it and call us for assistance. A fawn must be returned within 48 hours as its mother still has milk to feed it and will be FRANTICALLY searching for her offspring.

Q: What if I kept or "rescued" a fawn, kept it for a pet, or know of someone who is/has?

A: It is **ILLEGAL** to capture or raise a wild animal as a pet. If someone is in possession of a wild animal like a fawn, contact Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County or the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife immediately. **Avoid massive monetary fines and possible jail time. Report the capture.**



To make a pet of any wild animal is to give it a death sentence. Illegally capturing and raising a fawn is no different than domesticating this complex animal and greatly reduces its chance of survival.

Deer are pack animals and as such will **NOT** accept a fawn or mature doe or buck that has been taken in by someone and raised as a pet. If a domesticated deer escapes or is released alone into the wild, it would not be able to cope. It would lack all survival skills such as knowing how to forage for food, or identify and escape predators. Unfortunately, it will often die of stress or loneliness before it dies of starvation.

WHAT TO DO:

If you, or someone you are aware of is in possession of and is raising a fawn, or deer, please contact Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County or the CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife immediately. Both entities will be discreet and will work with you and/or the person(s) in question to find a thoughtful solution.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do NOT deprive a fawn of its wildness. If you love wildlife, love it from afar. It is not yours to keep or domesticate.



IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

FAWN RESCUE OF SONOMA COUNTY

If you live in the County of Sonoma and require fawn emergency assistance, please call Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County

(707) 931-4550

www.fawnrescue.org | info@fawnrescue.org

We will do our best to make ourselves available to your call 24/7. If we miss your call, please leave a detailed message with the following information:

- 1) Your first and last name;
- 2) Your location (if you don't have a physical address, please specify things like the City you are in, neighborhood, any landmarks nearby, street names, closest intersection, what type and color car you are driving, what color house you are at, etc.);
- 3) Your call back number (landline or cell phone);
- 4) Description of emergency situation with fawn

If you are out of range or require after hours assistance, we will do everything we can to be in touch with you as soon as possible. Call (707) 931-4550 or email info@fawnrescue.org for the fastest response.

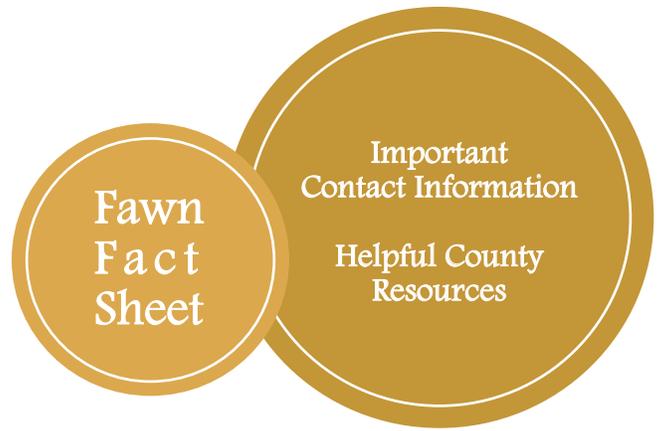
If you require non-emergency assistance, please e-mail us at info@fawnrescue.org or call (707) 931-4550 and specify your call is non-emergency, informational only, and we will return your e-mail or call after emergency situations have been addressed.

About Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County

Founded in 1989 by Marjorie Davis, Fawn Rescue is the only non-profit 501(c)(3) organization licensed to care for ill, injured or orphaned black-tailed fawns in Sonoma County. Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County's professionally licensed animal care volunteers are trained to handle, transport and rehabilitate fawns. During fawn season (April-September), the organization provides 24/7 support to County residents and a number of animal care and law enforcement agencies, park rangers and veterinarians. To date, Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County has fielded over 35,000 calls for assistance, rescued more than 3,000 fawns, raised 360, rehabilitated and successfully reunited nearly 1,800 back into the wild. To learn more, go to www.fawnrescue.org.

Support Fawn Rescue of Sonoma County

To lend your support via PayPal, visit <https://fawnrescue.org/donations/> or mail your donation, payable to Fawn Rescue to P.O. Box 1622, Sonoma, CA 95476. All donations are tax-deductible by the fullest extent of the law. Our Tax ID is: 68-0180811.



HELPFUL COUNTY WILDLIFE RESCUE RESOURCES

Mendocino Wildlife Association
without wildlife - there is no life



MENDOCINO WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION

Phone: 707.984.6363 | www.mendowildlife.com



NAPA WILDLIFE RESCUE

Phone: (707) 224-4295 | www.napawildliferescue.org



MARIN WILDLIFE RESCUE (WILDCARE)

Phone: 415-456-7283 | www.discoverwildcare.org



SUISUN MARSH
Natural History Association

SUISUN WILDLIFE CENTER

Phone: (707) 429-4295 | www.suisunwildlife.org



SONOMA COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES

Phone: (707) 565-7100 | www.sonomacounty.ca.gov



SONOMA COUNTY WILDLIFE RESCUE

Phone: (707) 526-9453 | www.scwildliferescue.org



The Bird Rescue Center
of Sonoma County

THE BIRD RESCUE CENTER OF SONOMA COUNTY

Phone: (707) 526-9453 | www.birdrescuecenter.org



California Department of
Fish and Wildlife

CA DEPT. OF FISH & WILDLIFE NAPA AND SONOMA COUNTIES

Local Dispatch: (916) 358-1312

Important
Contact Information

Helpful County
Resources

Fawn
Fact
Sheet

HELPFUL COUNTY RESOURCES

SONOMA COUNTY FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

Phone: (707) 565-2371 | www.sonomacounty.ca.gov

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS

Phone: (707) 565-2041 | www.parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov

SONOMA COUNTY DEAD ANIMAL REMOVAL

Unincorporated Sonoma County (domestic animals or wildlife): (707) 565-7100

State highways: (707) 762-6641

Cloverdale city limits: (707) 894-2521

Cotati city limits: (707) 792-4611

Healdsburg city limits: (707) 431-3346

Petaluma city limits: (707) 778-4396 or (707) 778-4397

Rohnert Park city limits: (707) 584-1582/(707) 584-2600 after hours

Santa Rosa city limits: (707) 543-3881/(707) 543-3805 after hours. For stray small domestic animals on private property: (707) 565-7100

Sebastopol city limits: (707) 829-4400

Windsor town limits: (707) 838-1009 for animals on public roadways only. Pets, livestock and wildlife on private property, Animal Abatement Services: (707) 228-2868 or Al Kuck Hauling (large animals): 707-328-7401

PROJECT COYOTE

Promote compassionate conservation and coexistence between people and wildlife through education, science and advocacy.

Phone: (415) 945-3232 | www.projectcoyote.org

FLAT BROKE FARM

Flat Broke Farms rescues, rehabilitates and rehomes unwanted, abandoned, abused, neglected or displaced farm animals in Marin, Sonoma and Napa counties.

Phone: (707) 849-6140 | www.flatbrokefarm.org

CHARLIE'S ACRES

Rescue farm animals who were abused or destined for the dinner table.

E-mail: info@charliesacres.org | www.charliesacres.org

GOATLANDIA

A farm animal sanctuary that rescues farm animals that would normally go to slaughter.

Phone: (707) 541-6216 | www.goatlandia.org

FORGET ME NOT FARM

A haven for children and animals to bond and break the cycle of abuse.

Phone: (707) 577-1913 | www.forgetmenotfarm.org

RANCHO COMPASION

Provide a forever home to rescued farmed animals

Phone: (415) 462-4264 | ranchocompasion.org

MUTTVILLE SENIOR DOG RESCUE

Giving older dogs a second chance at life.

Phone: (415) 272-4172 | www.muttville.org

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fighting the extinction process.

Phone: (510) 844-7100 | www.biologicaldiversity.org

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH - LIVING WITH LIONS

A community mountain lion conservation project in the Mayacamas Mountains of Sonoma and Napa Counties

Phone: (415) 868-9244 | www.egret.org

SAVE A BUNNY

Specialize in the treatment, healing and, when necessary, hospice of severely wounded, traumatized, abused and neglected rabbits facing imminent euthanasia.

Phone: (415) 388-2790 | www.saveabunny.org

JAMESON ANIMAL RESCUE RANCH

A no-kill rescue and sanctuary in the Napa Valley for homeless companion and farm animals.

Phone: (707) 927-3536

www.jamesonanimalrescueranch.org