



## UNTAMED S2E7: Wildlife Rehabilitation

### Classroom Activity

*This classroom activity is designed to be used as a resource that inspires conversation, critical thinking, and promotes a “big picture” understanding of topics covered in each episode. Questions may be answered individually, or out loud in a group setting. Key terms and vocabulary that will help educators and students engage in discussion include:*

***[Wild animals vs. domesticated vs. habituated, rehabilitation, permit]***

*Group Size: 4-6 students per group*

*Materials Needed: Dilemma cards*

*Time: 20-30 minutes*

*Instructions:*

This activity is designed to help students understand that when they encounter a baby animal in the wild, the personal decisions and actions they take can have a large impact on that baby's chance of survival. While contacting the nearest permitted wildlife rehabilitator is always the best thing to do first, how someone interacts with wildlife is crucial for increasing the odds of survival.

Before the activity, print copies of the dilemma sheets (pg. 3-5). Each student group should have a copy of all three dilemmas. Sheets should be printed single-sided, and folded on the horizontal line so that the dilemma is on the front, and possible solutions are on the back.

Once students are divided into groups, distribute the three dilemma sheets to each group. Designate a student to be the leader for each group, and have them quietly read the first dilemma out loud. Encourage groups to talk among themselves for about five minutes, and collectively choose what action they believe is best to take. Once all groups have decided, have group leaders share their answer with the class. Repeat this process for the remaining two dilemmas.

To conclude the activity, lead a discussion with the classroom about what they've learned from the activity, focusing on the importance of keeping wild animals wild, contacting permitted rehabilitators, and keeping themselves safe while interacting with wild animals.

# Oh, Deer!

You and your family are visiting a nearby park with lots of open space, trees, and grassy fields. You see a fawn (a baby deer) curled up on the ground all alone close to where you're playing. It's the afternoon, and the weather is warm and sunny. The fawn doesn't look to be hurt, and it's not making any noise, but you don't see any other deer in the area. What should you do?

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1. Make as much noise as you can to scare the fawn away. It's not safe for it to be around people or cars.
2. Calmly approach the fawn and try to catch it. It's probably orphaned, hungry, and scared. It needs to be rescued right away.
3. Ignore the fawn. It doesn't look hurt, and you've seen deer around the park before. Its mother might have left the fawn there on purpose, but she'll be back.

# When Cats Attack!

You're walking through your neighborhood on a cool spring morning when all of a sudden you hear a bird calling out very angrily from the bushes. You peek around the bush and see your neighbor's pet cat with a baby bird in its mouth. Two other baby birds are lying dead on the ground nearby. You see the birds' nest with one chick still alive sitting in it, but the parent has flown away. What should you do?

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1. Take the baby bird home with you, and look after it for a few days. You can let it go in your backyard once you're sure the cat isn't around.
2. Run home and ask your parents to call a permitted wildlife rehabilitator. You're not sure what to do, but they'll know what's best for the baby bird.
3. Knock on your neighbor's door and tell him about what happened. It's sad what happened to the babies, but cats eat birds all the time and it can't be helped.

# Raccoon Roommates!

It's time for spring cleaning, and your job is to clean out the fireplace. As you're working, you hear scratching noises coming from the chimney. You shine a flashlight up into the dark, and see a family of raccoons looking back at you - a mother and her babies. What should you do?

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1. Leave them alone for now. When the babies are old enough, they'll leave the chimney and go out on their own. Afterwards, you'll put a cover on top of the chimney so they don't come back next year.
2. It would be dangerous to use your bare hands to get them out, so you light a small fire, hoping the smoke will make them leave.
3. The best way to lure them out is with food. You make several ham sandwiches and leave them at the bottom of the fireplace, ready to trap the raccoons when they least expect it.