

# PAWS & CLAWS

## Giving wild things a chance

Ottawa-Carleton  
Wildlife Centre - [www.wildlifeinfo.ca](http://www.wildlifeinfo.ca)

The four tiny newborn raccoons, with eyes still closed and little fur, were growing very cold and hungry. They would not survive much longer. Their mother had been gone for many hours. A block away, the mother raccoon was frantically trying to escape a so-called 'humane' trap. The homeowner was preparing to take the trapped raccoon to a forest miles away.

This sad story is repeated hundreds of times during the spring and summer birthing season. It leaves thousands of baby animals to die a slow and painful death and homeowners taking an action without realizing the very inhumane outcome for the animals.

You see, female animals come closer to our properties each spring, seeking out covered shelter in eaves, chimneys, garden sheds and under steps as a safe spot to have their young, away from predators, when their newborn babies are most vulnerable. Those leaf nests or dreys that squirrels occupy high up in trees, for example, would offer little protection against the elements or predators while the trees are still bare.

Every year people unwittingly barricade an animal's access to find it frantically chewing to get back in to its young, or having trapped and relocated an adult mother, to find the abandoned babies having fallen between the walls, requiring expensive dry-wall removal. Even if the young are rescued, the homeowner is left most often with orphans to be euthanized, causing a lot of emotional distress for the family. Even those companies that say they offer a humane service can give you no guarantee they won't end up creating orphans.



If you see a wild animal around your property at this time of the year, you can safely assume it is a female with babies nearby. So please do not barricade her access or trap and relocate her. Remember, it is a very TEMPORARY situation. Once the babies are weaned, the family will move back to a more natural area.

**In Your Garden:** Before taking down a tree or removing branches, check to make sure there aren't leaf nests or cavities that would be home to babies that would be too young to escape.

If you find a nest of baby squirrels or raccoons when cleaning out a shed or garage, put it back intact exactly as you've found it and give the mother a few days to relocate her young.

A nest of baby rabbits in your garden should also be left alone as the mother only returns during the night or at dusk to feed her young.

If your barbecue hasn't been used for a while, check it out thoroughly before lighting as red squirrels and mice will sometimes have a nest of babies under the grill.

Fresh new shoots on ornamental shrubs attract groundhogs and rabbits when their natural vegetation is still not plentiful. Use plastic garden mesh to protect plants and discourage wildlife from the habit of coming to your garden. There are also a number of taste and smell deterrents noted on the website to help you keep wildlife away from flower and vegetable gardens.

The Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre's website helps more than 8,000 homeowners each year with advice on proper animal-proofing techniques to prevent wildlife from denning on their property along with deterrents to keep them out of the garden, resolving problems in a humane, cost-efficient and permanent way.

Research all your options before taking any action. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to wildlife concerns. Take advantage of the free and experienced advice and keep the website address [www.wildlifeinfo.ca](http://www.wildlifeinfo.ca) handy for wildlife questions throughout the year.

## Pet Adoptions



#2851 HORTON D/S/H Neutered Male  
4 years



#3677 FRANKLIN D/M/H Neutered Male  
1 year



#3675 JASPER D/S/H Neutered Male  
3 years



### PET OF THE WEEK #3003 MADISON

Madison was brought to the shelter in March 2008, she has been here for over two years and really deserves a home of her own. She is a quiet cat, that enjoys being petted, she is affectionate and friendly. Madison tolerates other cats but really prefers her own space, she is independent and curious.

She is an indoor only cat. Madison is five years old, she is spayed, vaccinated, dewormed and microchipped. Madison is a wonderful cat and would make a great companion for a quiet home.

**Arnprior Humane Society 613-623-0916**

Please note: Arnprior Humane Society has many other companion animals available for adoption. Featured animals are adopted quickly!  
To learn more about adopting an animal from the Arnprior Humane Society  
Website: [www.arnpriorhumanesociety.ca](http://www.arnpriorhumanesociety.ca)  
Email: [district.spea@bellnet.ca](mailto:district.spea@bellnet.ca) • Telephone: 613-623-0916