

# Help... I Found A Baby Squirrel!

In our area of Western New York we can typically encounter 3 main species of squirrel. They are the Gray squirrel, the Red squirrel, and the Eastern flying squirrel. These are considered arboreal (tree) squirrels. They have 2 litters per season with about 3-5 babies per litter.



Thanks to Pam Spragins and the volunteers at [Squirrel-rehab.org](http://Squirrel-rehab.org) for providing the following information:

"A newborn squirrel is born pink and hairless. Within the first week, the skin appears to turn gray, which is the fur beginning to develop under the skin. Usually the first hair is their whiskers. The ears will open the third week of life. Their eyes open at about 5 weeks old. Other species of squirrel may vary from this. The mother begins to wean her babies between 6-7 weeks of age, but will continue to nurse them until they are 10-12 weeks old. At this time, they are pretty much on their own and will return to the nest for safety and to sleep.



Squirrel nests are not only damaged by bad weather, but can also be damaged by other adult squirrels. Male squirrels will on occasion kill their own babies if they are given a chance. During this struggle, the babies may fall out of the nest. If the mother

survives the attack, she will try to retrieve her babies and carry them back to the nest ... if it is still intact. If the nest is not intact, she usually has a backup nest that she can carry them to. A mother squirrel will not take back a baby that has gotten cold. You can warm the baby in your hands or hold it close to your body and when it gets warm, you can place it at the base of the tree and leave the area, but try to keep watch from a

distance for about an hour or so. If the weather is cold, place the baby or babies in a box with some toweling and a hot water bottle, or an extension cord with a heating pad. The mother does not object to her babies smelling like humans, but she will not take them back if they are cold. Keep all children or pets away from the area to allow the mother ample time to come and retrieve her babies. She will pick them up in her mouth and carry them back to the nest even if they look too large for her to carry. Usually, when she hears her babies crying she will come and get them. If you wait until just before dark and she has not come to get them, it is time for you to step in and take over for her.



Baby Flying Squirrel (approximately 1 week old)

**NOTE:** when searching for downed baby squirrels, never assume that there are only 1 or 2 babies, look around well, as they will crawl under leaves to hide. Step carefully and look under everything. Always try to reunite the young with their natural mother if possible. Only when the mother squirrel is known to be dead, or has truly rejected the young, should humans attempt to take over."

If you need additional rescue information, see the [General Guidance](#) section of this web site or visit our friends at [Squirrel-rehab.org](http://Squirrel-rehab.org).