

HUMMINGBIRD RESCUE & EMERGENCY CARE

Have you found an injured, abandoned, or orphaned hummingbird? This guide will help you take immediate steps to stabilize the bird before transporting it to a licensed rehabilitation facility.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

A licensed rehabber should be contacted if a hummingbird is:

- Attacked by animals (cats, dogs, hawks, crows, mites, ants, etc.).
- Grounded and unable to fly.
- Fallen from a nest or if the nest has been destroyed.
- Orphaned or abandoned (nestlings).
- Cold, burned, or exposed to harsh weather.
- Visibly injured or bleeding.
- Sick from dirty feeders or has sticky substances on its feathers.
- Stunned from a window strike and may have internal injuries.



TRANSPORTING AN INJURED HUMMINGBIRD TO A REHABBER

1. Prepare a container – Use a small box with a secure lid. Line the bottom with crumpled tissues, soft t-shirt material, or a tea towel. (*Avoid looped fabrics, as tiny talons can get caught.*)
2. Ensure ventilation – Punch small air holes in the lid.
3. Place the bird inside – Gently secure the lid and move the box to a quiet, enclosed space like a bathroom.
4. Provide warmth – Fill a plastic bottle with very warm water, wrap it in a towel, and place it in the box, ensuring it won't roll toward the bird. (*This acts as a makeshift incubator.*)
5. Call a licensed rehabber immediately – They will provide further instructions, which may include additional warming or feeding before transport.

IF YOU DISCOVER ORPHANED OR ABANDONED NESTLINGS

Hummingbird mothers make quick visits to the nest, so don't assume the chicks are abandoned too soon. Observe the nest closely for at least an hour. If the mother does not return to feed them, or if the babies are constantly crying and stretching their necks, contact a licensed rehabber.

- Do not feed the chicks or remove them from the nest unless specifically instructed by a rehabber.
- If advised, create a temporary nest using an egg carton or a paper cup trimmed to 1 inch (1") in height. Line it with leaf litter for cushioning.



Preparing for Transport (if requested):

1. Keep the nestlings warm – Place the makeshift nest inside a small box with a lid.
2. Add a heat source – Fill a plastic bottle with very warm water, wrap it in a towel, and secure it in the box, ensuring it won't roll toward the nest.
3. Stabilize the nest – Use soft materials to prevent tipping inside the box.
4. Provide ventilation – Punch small air holes in the lid and secure it.

IF A HUMMINGBIRD GETS TRAPPED INDOORS

Hummingbirds instinctively fly toward the highest and brightest points in a room, such as ledges, ceiling fans, or skylights. To safely guide them out:

1. Turn off all lights and open every window and door.
2. Hang a feeder near an exit to attract the bird toward the opening.
3. Use a red towel – Wrap it around the bristles of a broom and hold it near the bird. If it perches, walk slowly toward the exit before gently cradling it in your hands.



If the bird refuses to move or begins flying erratically, it will quickly exhaust itself. A weak, starving hummingbird may collapse and risk injury.

- If this happens, carefully move the bird to a warm, enclosed space and contact a licensed rehabber immediately for guidance.

EMERGENCY FEEDINGS

Homemade and commercial nectars do not provide long-term nutrition, but in emergency situations, you can offer temporary nourishment:

1. Prepare nectar – Mix 1 tablespoon of simple granulated sugar with 4 tablespoons of room-temperature clean water that you would drink.
2. Use a cotton swab – Saturate a Q-tip with nectar and place the moistened tip against the bird's beak. (*Be careful not to get its feathers wet.*)
3. Observe closely – Is the bird opening its beak? Lapping up nectar with its tongue? Share these details with the rehabber.



🚨 **IMPORTANT:** Only attempt feeding once the bird has been warmed for 15-30 minutes and is alert.

FINDING A LICENSED HUMMINGBIRD REHAB FACILITY

Hummingbirds, including their nests and eggs, are protected by state and federal laws. It is illegal to capture, keep, or care for them without a permit. All injured or distressed hummingbirds must be transferred to a licensed wildlife rehabilitation facility.

To find a rehabber in your area:

- [🔗 Animal Help Now - Emergency Resource](#)
- [🔗 International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council](#)
- [🔗 Wildlife Rehabilitators Public List](#)



SAN DIEGO, ORANGE COUNTY AND LA COUNTY RESOURCES & CONTACTS

- 📍 San Diego - SDHS- Project Wildlife: 619) 299-7012
- 📍 Orange County - Wetlands and Wildlife Care Center: 714 454 7707
- 📍 Los Angeles - Hummingbird Rescue: 310-804-3715