

# Baby birds learning to fly throughout Tahoe

By Cheryl Millham

Fledglings are falling out of trees like rain from a cloud. The early nesting is over and the birds are about 6 weeks old.



Fledglings can't learn to fly in the nest. They have to come to the ground first. All of the body feathers are in place, but they have very short tails. Some fledglings are very smart and learn to fly in one day. However, for some it takes three days and even up to a week.

The parents will protect them (as much as they can) and feed them – while they are on the ground. “Our” responsibility is to let them stay with their family. Keep your dogs and cats away and under control.

Also, educate our children about the ways of wild birds.

If birds fledge in your yard, pick them up and set it outside of your fenced area. The mom and dad will find them and continue to care for them.

Remember, it is a false old wives tale that says, “If you touch a baby bird, the mom won't take care of it!” The fact is birds cannot smell. The only bird which has the ability to smell is the turkey vulture.

## More calls

I received another call from a man who wanted me to come and get a bear and take it out into the forest.

Well, for everyone's information, the city of South Lake Tahoe is the only incorporated city within a national forest in all

of the United States. So, we live in a very special place.

Lake Tahoe is a beautiful place and the early settlers decided to build houses. They put in roads and then more people moved in. Within a short time a small community was born. The wildlife that lived here (past tense), just moved over. Then the killing started. Humans were not happy in sharing their new home with the wildlife. And, it has not stopped.

It seems that whenever someone is inconvenienced by wildlife, their first thought is to have it killed or moved.

When Tom and I managed the boat marina at Camp Richardson (1976-82), one of the owners of a sailboat, who grew up in South Lake Tahoe, told us he remembered going to a government office and picking up some grain that was tinted red. It was poisoned grain to kill squirrels. People were complaining about too many squirrels, so – what do they do? – start killing them.

More and more people moved to Tahoe with more cats, more dogs, more houses and more roads. The wildlife just learned how to co-exist with humans. I'll bet the wildlife wishes (or wished) the humans would learn how to co-exist with them. Either that or move back to where they came from.

So, remember – before there were houses, roads, dogs, cats and humans, the wildlife called Tahoe home.

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