

# Common Misconceptions About Fawns:

## What **YOU** need to know.

Each spring, MassWildlife receives reports from well-intentioned people who want to **help** a fawn that they found alone and thought was “orphaned”. However, it’s completely **NORMAL** for fawns to be left alone by their mother. It is the best thing the mother can do to protect her fawn. She is likely nearby watching you, but you probably won’t see her. The best thing **YOU** can do to **help** a fawn is to leave it alone. Enjoy the experience of nature, take a picture, but leave it there.



“The fawn is very still and appears unresponsive.”

**It’s normal.** Fawns view humans as predators and will drop their head and freeze to not be detected. They don’t typically get up and run until they are older.

“The fawn is crying.”

**It’s normal.** Fawns bleat (vocalize) in a way that sounds like crying if they are disturbed or are trying to locate their mother. The mother will also vocalize with the fawn, but may not feel comfortable approaching the fawn if people are nearby.

“I found a fawn in my yard, what should I do?”

**It’s normal.** Fawns are commonly found bedded in brushy areas with vegetative cover or even in some grassy areas (e.g., even in suburban areas close to homes or near roadways). Their mother felt this was a safe place for the fawn. However, sometimes a fawn that has been disturbed may wander into a dangerous area or an area where the mother may not feel comfortable going (e.g., onto a road, near people, into a garage, etc.). Only if a fawn is in real danger should you interfere by moving the fawn to nearby forested or shrubby area where there is thick cover. Then leave quickly, so the fawn does not follow, and don’t linger. The mother will not come if you are nearby.

“The fawn is always alone, I never see the mother.”

**It’s normal.** Young fawns will remain bedded, alone for most of the day and night. The mother will return several times during the day and night to nurse, but limits her time with the fawn to reduce predation risk. However, she will not approach the fawn if people are nearby.

“The fawn appears skinny and weak.”

**It’s normal.** All fawns appear skinny, but it’s not an indication that they are abandoned or starving. If disturbed, they may also look like they are weak or having trouble walking. Never feed a fawn; their stomachs are sensitive and the food or milk you give them can be very harmful.