



10 WAYS TO BE A GOOD WILDLIFE NEIGHBOR

**Every day, small human actions have life-or-death consequences for wild animals.
The good news? Small changes can save lives.**

1. Apply decorative window clings to prevent bird strikes

Thousands of people contact wildlife rehabilitators each year after a bird hits a window, and for many of those birds, it's too late. Window clings or decals help birds recognize glass as a barrier and can significantly reduce collisions. Each window and glass door at Second Chance Wildlife Center's facility have these decals and many visitors are surprised at how subtle – and effective – they are.

2. Don't use lead-based fishing or hunting equipment

Bald Eagles, other raptors, and waterfowl are frequently treated for lead poisoning after ingesting fish or animals containing lead or by swallowing improperly discarded lead fishing tackle. Switching to non-lead alternatives helps protect wildlife and ecosystems. Some states have banned them.

3. Never use glue traps for pest control

Wildlife rehabilitators regularly receive unintended victims of glue traps, including songbirds, reptiles, and small mammals. The animals suffer greatly and removing an animal safely requires significant time and expertise.

4. Check trees for nests before trimming - and check your lawn before mowing

Before trimming trees or shrubs, look for active bird or squirrel nests (most common March through October in our area). When mowing, take a quick scan of the lawn. Rabbits and turtles hide in grass and can easily be injured by equipment.

5. Avoid rodent poison

Rodenticides don't just kill rodents. Owls, hawks, foxes, pets and other predators are often poisoned after eating contaminated prey. These toxins move through the food chain and can cause slow, painful deaths for wildlife.

6. Remember: Wild animals are not pets

Wild animals should never be poached from the wild, raised, or rehabilitated at home. Wildlife rehabilitators are licensed and trained to provide the proper diet, housing, and medical care needed to prepare animals for release back into the wild.

7. Plant a native wildflower garden

Native plants provide food and habitat for pollinators, birds, and other wildlife. Even a small native garden can support butterflies, bees, and other beneficial species that local ecosystems depend on.

8. Keep pets leashed or indoors

Free-roaming cats and dogs injure and kill billions of wild animals in the U.S. each year. Keeping pets supervised protects wildlife and helps keep pets safe too.

9. Drive carefully, especially at dawn and dusk

Many animals are most active when visibility is lowest. Slowing down in wildlife-heavy areas and staying alert can help prevent collisions that injure both animals and drivers. Electric cars are mostly silent, giving no warnings to wildlife.

10. Support your local wildlife rehabilitators

Facilities like Second Chance Wildlife Center in Clarksburg, MD provide a licensed service benefiting wildlife and the community and rely on donations to operate. Resources like www.SCWC.org also provide guidance on identifying injured wildlife, what to do if you find an animal that needs help, and who to contact. Do not rely on the internet and try to be a rehabber at home. Despite good intentions, it often has negative outcomes for the animal and the person. Most importantly, keeping wild animals at your home in Maryland without a valid permit is illegal.