



**The best chance of survival for baby bunnies is with their mother in the wild. Do not remove them from the nest before trying these options or speaking with an NWR staff member to determine whether they have truly been abandoned.**

If you find babies outside of the nest, return uninjured babies to their nests or dens (if they are warm). Next, leave the area and wait for the mother to return. A mother will not return to the nest if humans are present. You must leave the area for a reunification to be possible.

If the mother does not return within 24hrs, contact NWR.

## Our Mission

To rehabilitate native Nebraska wildlife and migratory birds for return to the wild; to preserve and restore native habitats; to educate youth and adults about the importance of wildlife and ecosystems by engaging them in projects and activities that contribute to the well-being of our natural environment and inspire them to take action to protect it; & to support others engaged in similar projects and activities.

## Our Vision

To create a community in which wildlife and natural habitats are valued and protected and in which youth are educated and inspired to become leaders in environmental conservation and the sciences.



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# RESCUE GUIDE: COTTONTAIL RABBITS





# Protecting Bunny Nests Found in Your Backyard

The female cottontail rabbit can make her nest anywhere. She spends all day and night grazing nearby and feeds her young twice a day for about 5 minutes each time. If you have a nest in your yard, please leave it alone! Babies are weaned and on their own in 2 or 3 weeks. Please work around them during this period. If you need to mow, or if a dog or cat is bothering the nest, covering the nest with a pet carrier or laundry basket is a great option.



Place the top of a small pet carrier over the nest and stabilize it using bricks, rocks or something heavy. This will keep predators from the nest, but still allow the mother to slip underneath to feed them.

## Are they really abandoned?

If you think a nest of bunnies has been abandoned or the mother is dead, make an "X" or tic-tac-toe pattern out of grass or dental floss and lay it across the nest.



Leave the nest alone for 24 hours. Do not approach the nest, and do not stand anywhere in the yard, even from a distance. The mother will not come when you are there or if you are making frequent visits to the nest.

If after 24 hours the grass or floss has been moved, the mother has been there to feed her young. If it has not, gently collect the bunnies into a towel-lined box, and call us at **(402) 234-2473**.



Cut a hole in a laundry basket and place it over the nest, stabilizing it with bricks, rocks or something heavy.



Make sure the hole is big enough for the mother to slip through but small enough to keep predators out.