



SO YOU FOUND A...

# Baby Opossum

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## INTRODUCTION

Baby opossums found alone are generally orphaned, since they are normally always with the mother. If you find babies attached to a dead mother, bring the mother in. The babies may have to be surgically removed from the nipples (they don't let go until they are two months old).

Older babies will often abandon their dead mother when starvation sets in. They will make "keeking" hissing noises. They are tiny copies of adults and will probably be skinny and dehydrated. Look for a dead adult and other orphans in the immediate area before bringing the babies to Operation Wildlife. They begin riding on their mother's back at three months and will occasionally fall off and be left behind; they will need some help before they are ready to go off on their own.

Opossums are independent when they reach 9 inches long (not including the tail). Opossums at this age are usually no longer in a group and should not be walking around during the day. If the young opossum is this size and has no apparent injuries or illnesses, it is most likely fine.

## TRANSPORT

Hairless babies need a Zip-Lock baggie filled with warm (**NOT HOT**) water. A sock is a perfect "pouch" and should be placed on the warm baggie in a shoebox or other small container (do not place the babies directly on the zip lock baggie as they can be burned).

Larger babies can be placed on a non-terrycloth towel in a box of appropriate size. These opossums should be picked up by the tail. Make sure the box you put them in has a lid and that it is taped down! Otherwise you may find opossums roaming through your car.



"Pinkie" opossums (about two months old)



Baby opossums (about three months old)



Opossum at age of independence (about four months old)