

PRESS RELEASE

Wildlife Hospital contact: Melanie Piazza, 415.453.1000, ext.14
melanie@wildcarebayarea.org

Media contact: Alison Hermance, 415.453.1000, ext.24
alison@wildcarebayarea.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spring Is Here! Don't Trim That Tree!

Wild babies of many species are at risk



Spring may feel like the proper time to neaten up your garden and prune your trees, but be careful—wild animals are probably using those branches as a nursery!

Every day WildCare's Wildlife Hospital admits wild patients orphaned by tree trimming and other gardening. The tiny Western Gray Squirrel in this photo, and his siblings, plummeted to the ground when the tree holding their nest was cut down. These babies were brought to the Wildlife Hospital two days later, so were dehydrated and very much in need of care. Fortunately, they are recovering in Foster Care at WildCare, and their prognosis is guarded but good.

In the weeks ahead, WildCare's Birdroom will also fill up with orphaned baby songbirds, many of which will have lost their homes and their parents' care when their nests were cut from branches.

WildCare asks you to procrastinate when it comes to non-emergency tree work! Wait until resident animals have raised their broods, or even better, until nesting season is over in the fall.

Arborist Jim Cairnes of Small World Tree Company in San Anselmo says "pruning trees in autumn is actually better for the health of the trees, as autumn is when they are entering their dormant phase." He notes that, while it is sometimes necessary to do tree work in the spring and summer months, "thoroughly checking trees for nests and baby wildlife should always be the priority."

If a tree (or a shrub or a hedge) has an active nest, it will be just a matter of weeks, before those babies have grown up and left the nest. Disturbing the active nest of a protected bird species is illegal (most Bay Area species are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty), but once babies have fledged and left the nest, trimming and pruning is possible.

WildCare's Director of Animal Care, Melanie Piazza says, "WildCare takes excellent care of our orphaned baby patients, but there is no question that it is best for them to remain in the care of their wild parents."

Before cutting a tree, take a careful look to see if there are wild families already living there, and always call WildCare's 24-hour Living with Wildlife Hotline at 415-456-SAVE (7283) if you think there might be wildlife at risk.

Learn more at www.wildcarebayarea.org/trimtrees.

These baby squirrels and other orphaned baby wildlife are available for photos and video at WildCare.

##END##