

## CAYMAN WILDLIFE RESCUE

### MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: March 4, 2010  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Don't Be a Bird Napper! Observe the baby bird before you help it**

Now that it is spring, Cayman Wildlife Rescue is receiving many calls on baby birds, Project Manager Alison Corbett commented "It is very important that the public take a moment to observe baby birds before assuming they need to be rescued." Concerned members of the public are encouraged to first identify whether the bird is injured, as fallen nestlings and fledglings often are attacked by cats and dogs. If the bird is injured Cayman Wildlife Rescue should be contacted at 917-BIRD as the bird will require emergency veterinary care. If the bird is not injured, but is unable to fly it must next be determined to be either a nestling or a fledgling.

Nestings are bare or covered in downy feathers. When you have found a nestling on the ground, look for a nest nearby. If there is a nest, the bird can be gently placed back inside the nest and then it should be monitored at a safe distance for the parents to return. Birds do not have a developed sense of smell, Corbett adds "There is no truth in the old wives tale that a bird will reject their young if you handle them – in fact most birds have a very poor sense of smell." If there is not a nest or the nest is destroyed, one can be fabricated out of a basket or plastic container drilled with drainage holes. CWR has a tall ladder to assist with restoring fallen nests and nestlings, the public can call 917-BIRD (2473) for help with this effort. Once nestlings have been restored, the nest should be monitored for up to 3 hrs for the parents return and people are reminded to never offer a wild animal food or liquids unless instructed. Great care should also be taken at this time of year when pruning trees, shrubs and palm trees so as to not disturb nesting birds.

When the found baby bird is a fledgling, meaning it is a baby bird learning to fly; it will most likely not need to be rescued. These young will be alert and hopping around on the ground as they learn flying skills. Their parents will be nearby, offering them food while they are on the ground. Corbett adds "if you find a baby bird, well feathered, hopping on the ground the best thing a person can do is watch from a safe distance. If you have a cat or dog bring it inside and watch for the parents to return." If the bird is not in a safe area, it is best to move it to a shrub nearby and continue to monitor. Often fledglings become victim to cats and dogs, if they are injured they will need emergency veterinary care and Cayman Wildlife Rescue should be notified immediately. "We strongly encourage responsible pet ownership, cats and dogs should not be allowed to roam freely for their own safety and also for the safety of our wildlife. One of the most common reasons we see animals come in for care is due to being attacked by cats or dogs."

Cayman Wildlife Rescue's Hotline 917-BIRD (2473) is operated 24/7 to provide support for wildlife in trouble, when a baby bird is found CWR should be contacted for further instruction. Members of the public should not attempt to care for a baby bird, as they require special diets and have demanding feeding schedules. CWR should be notified when a baby bird is deemed abandoned so an experienced Wildlife Rehabber can resume its care.

#### **About Cayman Wildlife Rescue**

Cayman Wildlife Rescue is a programme of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands. This project is staffed entirely by volunteers with other full time jobs, and is financed by donations from the public. If you would like to help by donating funds or volunteering time, please contact Alison Corbett at [caymanwildliferescue@gmail.com](mailto:caymanwildliferescue@gmail.com). [www.caymanwildliferescue.org](http://www.caymanwildliferescue.org)

If you come across a wild animal that needs rescue, call the LIME sponsored emergency hotline, 917-BIRD. For your own safety and that of the animal, members of the public are requested to not attempt to rescue or care for the animal themselves – rather call the hotline and trained volunteers will attend to the animal.

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS**

For more information please contact:

Alison Corbett – 926-6474 (Cayman Wildlife Rescue Project Manager).