



## Storm season and the impact on native birds

It's storm season again and it's at this time of year we begin to check our homes to see if they are storm proof but unfortunately some of the bird's homes aren't.

During spring many birds have mated and young fledglings or their nest often fall out of trees during wild storms. Would you know what to do? The age old myth "Don't touch the chick because the mother bird will reject it" is simply not true.

However, many people don't realise that taking the chick away is not the best practice either. This well intentioned kidnapping means that a young fledgling loses it's parents who are responsible for teaching the baby bird survival skills such as how to fly, what food to eat and where to find food. But there are some things you can do to help a fledgling's chance of survival.

Michael Wilson, a wildlife carer from Wildcare Australia Inc., recently gave members of Springfield Lakes Nature Care a very informative and hands on workshop about how to help a baby bird.

In most cases, if the bird has feathers and is starting to look like its parents, it may have recently left the nest and is learning to fly. You can place the bird back onto a branch of a nearby bush until the parents return as they might just be out foraging for food.

Other chicks like plovers, brush turkeys or ducks are born with soft down and occasionally get separated from their parents, so the best thing you can do is place them under a bush or shrub and keep an eye on them until their parents return. If you manage

to do this successfully, the bird has a far a greater chance of survival as the bird's parents maybe still around.

Sometimes a nest is badly destroyed from the storm and there is nothing to put the bird into. In that case, you can make a baby bird bucket, by simply drilling four large holes in the bottom of a plastic bucket. Then place some of the destroyed nest or a layer of leaves and grass in the bottom. Next, place a long stick on an angle into the bucket ensuring that the stick is poking out of the bucket, so that the parents can get in and out of the buckets. You can then hang the bucket with the chick safely inside, on a tree branch at head height close to where it was found. Try to position the bucket in a leafy tree away from direct sunlight and predators. If you are satisfied that the chick has been reunited with its parents, then there's no need to look after the chick.

You may need to intervene when the bird has little or no feathers and is unable to be returned to a nest, especially if you notice the bird is injured or is cold and lethargic or you notice dead parents nearby. If the young bird is at risk of attack from predators such as cats or other birds are attacking it or you believe that the chick is injured, then take the bird to get medical attention.

Currently there is a large gap of wildlife volunteers in our region. Wildcare Australia is always looking for volunteer wildlife carers and if you think this could be you why not contact them. Alternatively, SLNC is considering running a workshop in the future. Please contact us if you'd be interested in attending this type of workshop or if you wish to be a member of our group, membership is free. Send an email to [info@springfieldlakesnaturecare.org.au](mailto:info@springfieldlakesnaturecare.org.au) or you can follow us on [www.facebook.com/SpringfieldLakesNatureCare](http://www.facebook.com/SpringfieldLakesNatureCare). Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, please contact us if you'd like to attend.

