



First Aid for Birds:

When coming across a wild bird, always observe it from a distance to determine if intervention is necessary. If there is obvious injury such as a drooping wing, a hanging leg or an area of bleeding and especially if it is unresponsive to the threat of an approaching human, then it is likely to need attention.

Approach these birds quietly and calmly ensuring that you do not endanger yourself or the bird in the process. Young birds that are fledged and can hop away usually have their parents nearby and are best left alone but may be placed up in a nearby tree or shrub.

Use a towel or sheet to cover the birds head and enclose their wings to prevent flapping (this also helps with seabirds to limit damage to their waterproofed feathers). Gently, but firmly pick them up holding their wings against their bodies. With hawks, owls and tuis be careful of their sharp claws as they can grip very tightly. With herons, gannets and gulls very be wary of their powerful beaks which have an incredible reach.

Place the bird in a box that doesn't allow for too much movement and has holes in for ventilation with leaves, newspaper or an old towel lining the bottom. Keep handling to a minimum to help reduce stress.

Put the box in a warm (not hot), dark and quiet place, away from cats and dogs and give ARRC or DOC a call to determine the next best step.

For birds that have flown into a window, been found at the side of the road, or been attacked by a cat, that have no obvious injuries then keep in a warm dark box in a quiet place overnight and if ok the next morning then release.

When transporting birds in a vehicle be sure to have the radio/tape **off** and close car doors quietly.

If there is a delay to getting the bird to a rehabilitation facility then additional care such as rehydrating the bird or strapping of its wing might be necessary.

A drop of emergency essence or rescue remedy placed on the bird's skin is usually a useful aid in helping to minimize stress.