



How to Safely Contain a Songbird

1. Our first priority is your safety! Most small songbirds do not possess the ability to significantly hurt you. Some larger birds such as cardinals, blue jays or crows can cause some pain with their bite.
2. Gather your equipment. We suggest the following:
 - Gardening gloves
 - A pillowcase or other lightweight cloth big enough to fit over the bird.
 - A secure transport container large enough to easily fit the bird. A small cardboard box is ideal for most small birds.
 1. Line the container with a layer of ravel-free, non-slip, absorbent material.

Note: If using fabric make sure it does not have loops (ravels) or loose string, especially for woodpeckers which have barbed tongues that can get caught in these materials easily.
 2. Be sure there are adequate ventilation holes in the container.
 3. Avoid wire cages as these can cause damage to the bird's feathers.
3. Put on your gloves. Take note of the location you have found the bird – this information will be helpful at the time of release.
4. Slowly approach the bird with your pillowcase held out in front of you. Approach the bird from the back if possible. Avoid sudden movements and loud noises that will frighten the bird. When you are near enough to the bird, place the pillowcase over the top of the bird to completely cover it.
5. Reach in over the bird's back, and gently fold the wings into its body with your gloved hands over the outside of the pillowcase.
6. Gently pick up the bird and place it into the transport container. You can leave the pillowcase in the box with the bird if there are no ravels or loose strings.
7. Place the container in a quiet, dark environment until transport. If the container does not have solid sides, cover the entire container with lightweight sheet or blanket to restrict the visual stimuli for the bird.
8. Do not feed the bird. Most injured birds are dehydrated, and often emaciated, and feeding them before their condition is stabilized can result in their death.
9. If you don't already have an appointment, please call Dane County Humane Society's Wildlife Center right away at 608-287-3235. The law allows a member of the public 24 hours to transport the bird to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, but the sooner the bird receives care the better its chances of successful treatment.
10. During transport to the wildlife center, please keep the car quiet by leaving the radio off and keeping voices low. For more information about safely transporting wildlife once contained, please click [HERE](#).

