

North Okanagan residents told to leave fawns alone

Conservation officers are urging residents not to approach fawns, even if they appear abandoned.

Morning Star File Photo

By Roger Knox - Vernon Morning Star

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They're cute, cuddly and fuzzy.

But fawns found abandoned in nature are problems as house pets, and problems for anybody who takes what they think is an abandoned baby deer home with them.

"Anyone who thinks they can raise a fawn on their own, the success rate is low," said conservation officer Sgt. Josh Lockwood.

"It's also a violation. Picking up and possessing live wildlife is a violation and you could be facing some court action or a \$345 fine."

It's the time of year when officers start to get calls about fawns.

Lockwood said, typically, a mother will leave the babies for 24 hours to go feed and get food for the babies. They often don't come back because there's the likelihood they've been hit by a vehicle.

And besides not picking up the fawns, people should simply leave them alone.

"The mother could be close by and they will become mothers from hell," said Lockwood. "They are aggressive towards the protection of their young."

It's also the time of year where Lockwood's office starts to receive calls about bears.

He said those calls have been increasing over the last two weeks.

"It's the usual, 'there's a bear in my garbage, on the deck in the barbecue or in the dog food,'" said Lockwood.

"This is a good time to remove bird feeders because they can hang around if they get into the feeders. If they get into the



garbage, they'll become habituated and we'll have little choice but to euthanize them because they become a threat to the public."

Lockwood said people should put their garbage out for collection only on collection day and not before. This is especially true if a person lives around a school.

"We don't want problems with bears and kids walking to and from schools," he said.

Lockwood's office received a 911 call Saturday about a cougar sighting at Coldstream Elementary.

He investigated with a volunteer who had a cougar-tracking dog, and the pair came up empty.

"There was no indication, no tracks, nothing, that indicated there was a cougar," said Lockwood. "The dog found nothing as well."

They did find a blond-coloured black bear and scared it out of the neighbouring park.

Lockwood said there has been one instance this year where bears had to be destroyed near Armstrong.

In that case, a mother bear was found dead at the bottom of a tree. There's no indication that she died of natural causes or fell from the tree. Two cubs were spotted near the top of the tree, a great distance from the ground.

They had been there for about five or six days and were greatly emaciated, so conservation officers put down the cubs.

Source: <http://www.vernonmorningstar.com/news/157339595.html>