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Intervention Policy

The opportunity to be immersed in the lives of wild creatures makes it easy to become emotionally invested in their well-being. This connection is one of the most powerful things about wildlife cameras, but it also makes them difficult to watch sometimes.

At the Owl Research Institute (ORI), our approach to research and monitoring, including situations that occur on camera, aims to reveal and document how natural processes unfold. These are wild animals and we've made a conscious decision to keep ourselves out their lives as much as possible. While immediate intervention might sometimes seem like the appropriate response, it's important to remember that we often don't have the right answer. There are countless instances of human intervention which have not solved the problem at hand, and in fact, created a whole host of other unintended consequences.

At ORI, we have a non-intervention policy. The exception, however, are situations caused by humans. We have, for example, removed fishing line from the beak of an Osprey chick. A chick that is not thriving, however, would not warrant intervention of any kind.

Decisions involving a bird in distress often need to be made quickly, with the information at hand. Sometimes it isn't entirely clear what is going on and gray areas exist. We do the best we can. And like you, we want to see the birds thrive. But, as researchers and cam watchers, our role is not to influence the natural interactions between species and their environments. It is to learn, enjoy, document, and promote the conservation of these animals and their ecosystems.

Even when it's hard.

Thank you for your interest,

The Owl Research Institute

Celebrating 30 years!