



Summer 2017

Wild Times

Dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of Southern California's sick, injured and orphaned wildlife

Garbage Impacts All Kinds of Animals

By Heather Patrice Brown, Development Coordinator

In April, California Wildlife Center was surprised to receive a skunk with a plastic cup stuck over his head. Volunteer Jaana Shellock first noticed the skunk and with guidance from CWC staff, was able to capture it. CWC supporter Rick Gunderson was kind enough to drive it to CWC for treatment. Dr. Duane Tom, California Wildlife Center's Director of Animal Care, restrained the skunk and cut the cup off his head. Luckily, the cup had not caused any additional injuries, and the skunk was able to be released to where it had been found that same day.

This skunk was very lucky someone noticed him and was able to bring him to CWC for help. Unfortunately, CWC staff routinely sees wildlife that have been injured or impacted by garbage. While most of these animals tend to be marine mammals, land animals are affected too. Animals investigate food trash and get entangled in or ingest the paper or plastic. It is important to be conscientious about how garbage is disposed of and make sure trash cans are securely closed so that we can peacefully coexist with our wild neighbors.

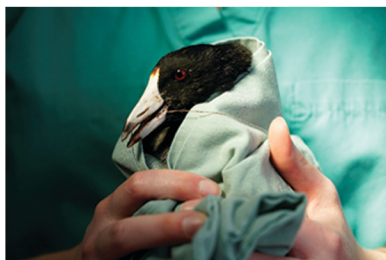


Photo by Jaana Shellock

This poor skunk had a plastic cup on his head that CWC staff was able to remove

American Coot Receives Surgery After Swallowing Fish Hook

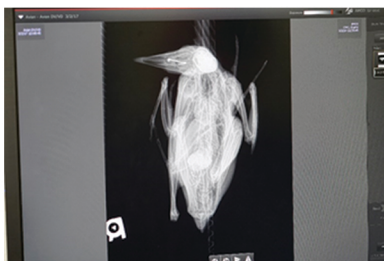
Photos by Jamie Leilani Pelayo, CWC Volunteer



On March 2, 2017, an American Coot with a fishing hook stuck in his throat arrived at California Wildlife Center from Lake Balboa Park. Coots are also known as mud hens and live near water.



Anesthesia was given before surgery.



X-rays revealed the location of the hook inside the coot's throat, impeding his ability to eat or drink.



Dr. Duane Tom, DVM, Director of Animal Care, very carefully and successfully removed the hook from the Coot's mouth. The Coot recovered from surgery and within a day was stable enough to be transferred to our partners at International Bird Rescue for his rehabilitation.

Inside: Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic, Love is Owl You Need, The Marine Mammal Department Plans for Big Changes & more!

The Marine Mammal Department Plans for Big Changes

By Michael Remski, Marine Mammal Program Manager

Looking ahead to our "off season," (when there are few rescue calls and no animals are held on site) there are some exciting renovations planned for our marine mammal enclosure. Since 2013, the existing structure has performed very well over its lifespan, allowing for five successful seasons of marine mammal rehabilitation. 183 patients (90 sea lions and 93 elephant seals) have called this enclosure their home for at least a short period of time. And although that may not seem like very many animals, consider the fact that that equates to over nine tons of animals residing on a structure originally built to stand for only a single season.

We have asked a lot of our platform style enclosure, and although it has served us well, it is time to retire it, and start from scratch. Construction will take place as soon as our last patient leaves our doors for their ocean home sometime in late July of this year.



The step between pens makes moving animals difficult for staff and hard on the animals. Photo by Jennifer Brent

Although we will not be able to increase our overall footprint, we will be able to make some major improvements over the existing layout. First and foremost, an enclosed hallway will be incorporated. This will allow a safer way to enter and exit each pen, as well as provide a corridor for moving animals between pens or to and from the transport vehicles. A loading dock will be incorporated into the enclosure to facilitate moving animals on and off trucks during intakes and releases. Large, heavy deliveries can also make use of this loading dock. All three pens within the enclosure will be on one level and have easy transition areas from one to the other, rather than having small barriers in between that get in the way of rolling carts or low profile animals (specifically elephant seals). Lastly, the entire enclosure will be on a steeper grade to accommodate better drainage, the floor topcoat will be a smooth PVC material, and the number of drains will be increased. We are in the process of securing funding to off-set the costs of this necessary project.

As I look ahead, I cannot even attempt to predict what next year will bring to the shores of Malibu. But whatever 2018 should bring our way, CWC will be ready. With our improved enclosure, amazing volunteers, and dedicated staff, I have no doubt it will be another great and successful year.

My First Day Volunteering at CWC

By Cindy Tansin, Volunteer

As a volunteer, my secret motivation for working at CWC was for the thrill of getting an up close sneak peek at wildlife that I would normally only get to admire from afar – if I was lucky. I volunteered to answer phones, because that's what was needed. A small thing, yet obviously important.

My Day One couldn't have been more exciting and wonderful. Phones weren't particularly busy that day, so after my initial lesson on phone and intake protocols, I was introduced to Eva, another volunteer, to help with kitchen duties. Eva was on her way to the upper enclosures. She handed me some food dishes and showed me how she changed out the cages. Much to my surprise, she asked if I wanted to do the next one, and I jumped at the opportunity.

Upon entering the bird's world (don't ask me which species), I tiptoed in as it stood by watching warily, changed out the food and water, and I was pumped! Back at the kitchen, Eva began training me on how to prep the next day's meals. It was fascinating. They had very specific recipes for more species than I could have ever named. In between chopping, plating and labeling, I fielded phone calls.

I learned how to re-nest baby squirrels, how to deal with a crying young coyote who couldn't find his way out of a construction area, and how to handle a crow with a broken wing. All in all, it was a very thrilling day for someone who signed on only expecting to answer phones.

I thought Day One couldn't have been more exciting until I experienced Day Two. I came in on my second day with a spring in my step ready to report to duty. On this morning I got to work primarily in ICU. I was immediately shown how to feed a baby hummingbird and tasked with strict instructions to do timed feedings every 20 minutes throughout my shift. Then I was asked to feed an injured squirrel, which didn't go so well. I got more food on his feet than in his mouth. I cleaned and restocked a hawk's cage while he was being treated and checked. I held some form of large bird in a towel while he was tube fed. Throughout the morning I prepped meals. The phone rang regularly with calls from good-hearted citizens asking for advice on a variety of situations. It was heartwarming how much they cared and how willing they were to help.

I learned two overriding lessons in my first two days. 1) Get a picture from callers. Being able to accurately identify the animal is the #1 starting point. 2) I love this place. I love what they do. I love the spirit and the people who work here. And there's never a dull moment.

I am a humble phone answerer who is so happy to do all kinds of "mundane"/exciting side duties to help the cause. We are blessed to share our planet with these creatures. We are obligated to respect and care for them and their habitat so they can thrive and fulfill our lives with their presence. I can't wait for day three!

Support CWC at Our Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic!

Do you care about California's native wildlife, but you aren't sure how you can help?

Join California Wildlife Center on Saturday, June 24th at our Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic! The event will be held at Malibu Bluffs Park, 24250 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu from 11:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

You are invited to join our family and share the wonder of wildlife with yours! The picnic supports California Wildlife Center's fully-equipped wildlife hospital for emergency care, medical treatment, and rehabilitation for sick, injured, and orphaned California native animals.

Tickets are limited, so purchase yours today at cawildlife.org
Tickets are \$75 for adults, \$25 for children ages 3-18, and children ages 2 and under are free.

Don't miss:

Food and Beverages by: Barone's Pizzeria, Beachy Cream Organic Ice Cream, Better Bean, Follow Your Heart, GoGo squeeZ, Health Nut, Organic Candy Factory, Pedalers Fork Calabasas, Plata Taqueria & Cantina, Popped Fresh Gourmet Popcorn, Smile Sweets Made in Love, Sprouts Farmers Market, Surf Sweets, Tavern 1 Grill & Tap House, Trader Joe's, Zevia All Natural Soda, Zuma Valley

Entertainment by: Jimmy H, Comedy Magician; Jordan Hook Music; Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chumash Elder/ Tribal Chair of the Barbareno/Ventureno

Games and Activities include: Wildlife Rescue and Care Demonstrations, Malibu Monarch Project, Bean-Bag Toss Tournament, Face Painting, Crafts, Wildlife Trivia Wheel

This event is sponsored by: **PAUL MITCHELL**

Gluck Building Company, LT Generators, The Stark Family, Urban Sports LA, Waste Management

For more information, visit cawildlife.org or call (310) 458-9453

What's the New Event?

The Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic continues the tradition of the now-retired The Wild Brunch to provide an opportunity for our supporters to socialize and interact with California Wildlife Center staff. The result is this smaller, more family-friendly event. We chose the beautiful Malibu Bluffs Park as our venue because of its easy access and gorgeous view of the Pacific Ocean. Along with the great food and amazing entertainment, we want to return to our roots and celebrate what we do every day at CWC. Guests will be able to speak with staff as well as watch and participate in demonstrations of the rescue and care we provide our patients.

The Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic will be our only major event in 2017. Look for a spectacular 20th anniversary celebration in 2018!

We are very excited about this new event, and we hope that you are, too. Our supporters are our family and we want to honor your commitment to wildlife at the Feathers, Flippers, and Fur Family Picnic. See you on Saturday, June 24th!

Heather Patrice Brown, Development Coordinator



Volunteers Continue Their Animal Education at CWC

By Alyssa Schlange, Volunteer Manager

Each year CWC volunteers are required to have two hours of continuing education as a part of our Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Fish and Wildlife. In 2017, we began to offer a wider variety of exciting topics for our volunteers to learn about. This year we have offered courses on Avian Neurology, Neo-natal mammals, Bats, and Domoic Acid in California Sea Lions. Not only do these lectures help us meet our permit requirements, but they give us a wonderful opportunity to engage our volunteers on topics that are of interest.



CWC Home Care Volunteer Glenn Ellis discusses neo-natal mammal care. Photo by Alyssa Schlange

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With CWC, Love is Owl You Need

By Melissa Hartman, Administrative Assistant

Throughout recorded history and across many cultures, the allure of owls is enduring. Few other birds have inspired so many conflicting beliefs. Owls have been both venerated and feared, considered wise by many, thought to be obtuse by others, associated with witchcraft, medicine, the weather, and even believed to foreshadow birth and death.

Owls brought to the California Wildlife Center include Barn Owls, Burrowing Owls, and the California Great Horned Owl, which is by far the most common of our owl patients seen! So far this year, we have treated 31 of these distinctive-looking birds, also known as *Bubo Virginianus*, with their large ear tufts. Some people call this a "Cat Owl," "Winged Tiger," or "Tigers of the Air" because of their ears.

"Whoville" is the name we give to our outdoor Owl Aviary. Owls stay and are rehabilitated until they can be transferred and released. From Whoville there issues a large repertoire of sounds--deep hoots to shrill shrieks! This year, we took in our first owlet in February, testament that the great horned owl is one of the earliest nesting birds in North America, often laying eggs weeks or even months before other raptorial birds. This species is strictly monogamous and solitary except for nesting.

What should you do if you find an owlet that has fallen from the nest and is clearly abandoned, or an injured adult owl? Baby raptors will need immediate care from a licensed rehabilitator. Get a box and follow the instructions on the CWC website's medical emergency tab. Do not offer any food or water.



Photo by Kim Barker

CWC has helped 31 Great Horned Owls so far this year.