



Wild Times

Winter 2019

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

CWC Medical Care Saves Gray Fox

By Dr. Stephany Lewis, DVM

California Wildlife Center received an approximately 6-month-old male Gray Fox early in the morning on October 8th of this year. He was found the night before by a good Samaritan, lying non-responsive on Mulholland Highway in Calabasas. Based on his exam and diagnostic findings, the Fox appeared to have been struck by a vehicle shortly before being discovered. When he presented to us, he was stuporous, unable to stand, move, lift his head, or look around, and was non-responsive to any stimuli. He had an elevated heart rate, and he had abnormal lung sounds when his chest was listened to with a stethoscope. There was also a fresh wound over his left elbow. Full-body radiographs (x-rays) and an abdominal and chest ultrasound were taken. While he luckily had no broken bones, his chest showed evidence of trauma, as he had a mild pneumothorax, or collapsed lung, and evidence of bruising within his lungs. A full blood panel was run and did not show any major abnormalities.

Three diagnostics were also run to test the Fox for canine distemper. Canine distemper is particularly common in Gray Foxes, and can cause a variety of neurological signs, such as the ones displayed by our patient. It can also infect other wildlife, such as Coyotes, Skunks, and Raccoons, as well as domestic dogs. It is nearly always fatal, but vaccines developed for domestic dogs help prevent the disease. Luckily this Fox did not have canine distemper, and all his neurological signs could be contributable to traumatic brain injury, which while preferable to distemper, still came with a guarded prognosis.

The Gray Fox patient received intensive care for the first few days of hospitalization. First, an intravenous catheter was placed, and through it he received a drug called mannitol, which is a diuretic that helps reduce swelling in the brain in cases of head trauma, followed by intravenous fluids to help maintain blood pressure and reduce the fluid lost from the mannitol. He was also maintained in an oxygen cage, with his head elevated to help minimize pressure within the brain. Pain medication was given, and his wound was cleaned and bandaged. His temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, EKG, and a small blood panel were all monitored daily. He required other extensive nursing care as well, such as passive range of motion exercises, assisted feedings, and daily bandage changes, but our technical staff more than rose to the challenge and provided excellent care to this special patient.

The Fox's neurological status improved daily! Within three days he was standing and walking, though other neurological signs began to show, such as a tendency to only circle to the right, and he did not display an appropriate fear of humans. However, all these abnormal signs were completely resolved in less than two weeks, and two weeks after admission he was stable enough to undergo surgery to repair the wound over his elbow. His surgical procedure was without any complications, and he recovered well from anesthesia.

The following week after his surgery, the Fox moved to an outside enclosure, and seemed very happy to do so! His sutures have been removed, and after one month in care he was released! Since Gray Foxes have a very small home range, he was returned to the location he was found. Success stories like this are why we do what we do here at CWC, and we love to share them!



Fox in oxygen cage
Photo by Cambria Wells



Gray Fox with bandage on his elbow
Photo by Cambria Wells



The patient in his outside enclosure
Photo by Stephany Lewis

Inside: Orphan Care Baby Firsts, Gifts for the Animal Lovers on Your List!, Volunteering at California Wildlife Center & more

www.cawildlife.org

An Orphan Care Baby Book

Cambria Wells, Wildlife Technician

There's nothing quite like seeing your baby experience the world for the first time. We are privileged at CWC in the Orphan Care Unit to get to work with a wide range of species and to see all their firsts. A few, this year, were especially touching.



Opossum joeys eating their mush bowl
Photo by Cambria Wells

First solid food: This year's earliest litter of Virginia Opossums entered our facility too young to be out of their mother's pouch. After weeks of careful care, they were finally old enough to be offered something more substantial than formula... and immediately made a mess of themselves! Staff and volunteers adapted by giving them supervised time with their food dish, breaks in the day that we quickly dubbed "mush bowl parties," followed by a sponge bath.



Acorn Woodpeckers peeking out of their nest box
Photo by Cambria Wells

First steps: The Acorn Woodpeckers rescued from a fallen tree branch this summer were happy to stay in their nest box upon intake, but soon enough, their excitement for food led them to lean out the entryway to the box. One morning, that lean turned into a jump, and we caught a nestling's first "branching" out into the world!



Ash-throated Flycatchers in OCU
Photo by Heather Patrice Brown

First of their species: When workers brought down an electric pole in Santa Clarita this July, the crew heard crying from within an old woodpecker cavity inside. With the help of the wildlife biologist onsite, they extracted young Ash-throated Flycatchers from their disrupted nest and brought them to be raised in the Orphan Care Unit. These are the first of this species of bird ever to be raised at our facility.



Squirrels napping together
Photo by Samantha Orzech

First friends: Many babies come into our care alone, displaced from their whole family. These animals are almost always placed with foster siblings; for certain highly social species like Eastern Fox Squirrels and American Crows, these friends are believed to be critical to their survival post-release. When released in a group, young animals have more eyes to find food and watch for predators. Volunteers and staff find these relationships to be touching glimpses into the lives of the animals we work with.

We are grateful to all CWC supporters for making these precious moments possible, and especially to our dedicated Orphan Care Unit volunteers for giving up their summers to help orphaned and injured wildlife.

This year, Orphan Care supported a total of 1052 patients! Our impact, by the numbers:

Squirrels: 175	Northern Mockingbirds: 85	Cliff Swallows: 47	Common Ravens: 30
Mourning Doves: 138	Virginia Opossums: 80	Hummingbirds: 141	And MANY assorted species of
Band-tailed Pigeons: 21	House Finches: 90	American Crows: 66	songbirds!

As the unit closes for the winter, we look forward to resting from the busy season and getting ready for next year, but of course, the rest of California Wildlife Center is here year-round for wildlife of all ages.

Gifts for the Animal Lovers on Your List!

Animal Sponsorship

Support the care of your, or their, favorite animals! Choose from eight different species with sponsorships starting as low as \$50. You may also add a plush replica of the sponsored species for an additional cost. Your gift recipient will receive:

- Certificate of Sponsorship with the recipient's name
- Full-color photo of the animal
- Species fact sheet

Sponsor an Animal today at cawildlife.org/ways-to-support-us/sponsor-an-animal/



Bobcats are one of eight species you can sponsor
Photo by Jennifer Brent

Tribute Donations

Support wildlife in memory or honor of your loved one by making a tax-deductible donation in their name to California Wildlife Center. Your recipient will receive a letter informing them of your generous gift!

Shop to Help Wildlife!



Help wildlife like this Long-Eared Owl with your holiday shopping
Photo by Cambria Wells

Amazon Smile

Did you know that Amazon will donate a percentage of your qualifying purchase to the charity of your choice? Visit smile.amazon.com/ch/95-4580790 to support California Wildlife Center. You can help wildlife just by holiday shopping!

Ralphs Community Reward

Ralphs Grocery will donate a portion of the proceeds from your purchase to California Wildlife Center! If you already have a Ralphs Rewards Card, log in to www.ralphs.com. Click on 'Create Account' and follow the easy steps. Click on Community Rewards – Enroll and search for California Wildlife Center.

Support Wildlife This Holiday Season

Make a Cash Contribution

Your tax-deductible donation provides direct support for the sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife in CWC's care. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, these donations are critical to providing the treatment these animals need to return to the wild. Donate today at cawildlife.org.

Become a Conservation Circle Member

If you would like to get a closer look at the work being done at CWC and are willing to go that next step for wildlife, consider joining the Conservation Circle. Members receive exclusive invitations to witness first-hand the care our wild patients receive. Join today at cawildlife.org/ways-to-support-us/conservation-circle/

Employer Donation Matching

Double the impact of your contribution! Many employers match employee contributions to organizations like California Wildlife Center. Ask your HR representative if your company has a matching gift program. They can contact CWC at heather@cawildlife.org

Donate an Item from our Amazon Wish List

Search for "California Wildlife Center" under Wish Lists on Amazon.com. The items on our list will help us in our care of our wild patients. Like a registry, these items can be purchased and shipped directly to CWC!

Gift Drive

Collect items from our Wish List! We always need items like bleach, paper towels, and pillowcases. Your donation is tax-deductible! This is a great project for scouts, schools, and community groups.

To see the complete wish list, visit cawildlife.org/ways-to-support-us/our-wish-list/

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Volunteering at California Wildlife Center

By Kristilee Kodis, Volunteer and Outreach Manager

Volunteering at California Wildlife Center is a great way to contribute to the welfare of native wildlife. When you donate your time, you are afforded the opportunity to work with wild animals in a unique setting. Our 200+ volunteers do it all—from caring for the animals to assisting us with outreach events and helping us fundraise. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to gain the understanding, ability, and skills needed to care for the animals at our facility.



A CWC volunteer feeding a Squirrel
Photo by Cambria Wells

To become a volunteer at CWC, you must attend a Basic Orientation and make a six-month minimum time commitment. During those six months, you are required to provide one, four-hour shift per week of volunteer commitment. CWC wants to make sure that we have consistency, skill development, and experience in our volunteers.

There are three main areas in which to volunteer:

Volunteers can spend their time working in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), which takes care of critical patients often injured as a result of negative interactions with humans. In the ICU, volunteers work hands-on with a wide variety of species, including Crows, Hawks, Owls, Songbirds, Opossums, and Rabbits. Along with animal care, the ICU volunteers take care of the diet preparation for the patients at the facility. Volunteers will be taught how to feed our patients and clean enclosures at various stages of rehabilitation. ICU is open 365 days a year.

Volunteering in the Orphan Care Unit (OCU), allows you to care for the orphaned baby wildlife brought to us by the public. In OCU, volunteers work hands-on with a wide variety of babies, including Songbirds, Swallows, Opossums, Woodpeckers, Doves, Pigeons, and Squirrels. Volunteers will be taught how to syringe feed, tube feed, and hand-feed the babies in our care. The OCU season starts in the Spring and ends in the Fall.

In Marine Mammals (MM), you have the unique opportunity to be part of one of the only organizations in Southern California to offer marine animal response. MM volunteers assist with the rescue of sick, injured, and entangled California Sea Lions and Northern Elephant Seals in Malibu. They also work in our rehabilitation enclosures to help these young animals in preparation for release. The in-house MM rehabilitation season starts in January and runs through July. Rescues occur year-round.

To become a volunteer, go onto our website at <https://cawildlife.org/> and select the "get involved" tab. Orientations are held on an as-needed basis and occur throughout the year.

www.cawildlife.org