



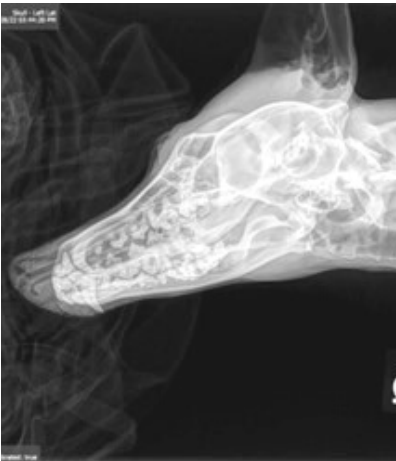
# California Wildlife Center

## Patient of the Week

### January 27, 2023



Wildlife Technicians providing wound care



One of many radiographs helping to rule out fractures



Coyote in outdoor enclosure

## An Adult Coyote's Road to Recovery

Coyotes are a common sight throughout urban, suburban, and rural areas in Southern California. Before Europeans started to alter the North American landscape in the 1700's, their historical range was restricted to prairies and deserts. As people expanded across the continent, so did coyotes.

Humans paved the way for coyotes to increase their range in two main ways. People simultaneously killed off their natural predators (bears, wolves, and cougars) and provided plentiful food by inadvertently supporting invasive rodent populations. Non-native rats and mice thrive around humans since we often unintentionally provide them with all of the food, water, and shelter they need to flourish. Coyotes have taken advantage of this abundant food source and lack of predators, and can now be found throughout most of the continent.

In rural areas coyotes tend to hunt both during the day and at night. In urban and suburban areas, they tend to follow a more nocturnal schedule but can still occasionally be seen during the day. Coyotes are one of the few wildlife species who have increased their population size over the last few hundred years. It is estimated that there are currently between 250,000 to 750,000 individual coyotes living within the state of California.

With coyotes residing so close to people, it is no surprise that we sometimes receive calls about a coyote being injured due to human impact. This was the case for one particular patient who was admitted to CWC after being hit by a car. The adult female coyote was brought to a Los Angeles Animal Care Center after being found on the road in Pacoima. She was then transported to CWC by one of our transport volunteers.

Upon examination, hospital staff noticed that the patient had a myriad of issues. Most notably the coyote had severe weakness, was unable to stand, and had multiple deep lacerations along all limbs and above her left eye. Wound care, pain medication, and antibiotics were immediately administered. Radiographs (x-rays) were taken to rule out any fractures. Although this patient was clearly in pain and experienced various trauma from the ordeal, she did not have any broken bones.



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Within a few days the coyote began to show marked improvement. She started to sit upright and maneuver around her small enclosure. She also began to eat and drink on her own, which was a good sign that the pain medication was working. After 11 days of daily wound care and treatments, the patient was ready for an outdoor enclosure. It is critical that adult coyotes are moved to an outdoor enclosure as soon as possible, since they quickly become destructive when confined in unnatural settings (like indoor cages).

Once outside the coyote began to slowly build up her strength and continued to improve. Staff set up special cameras to observe the patient from afar, since she would quickly hide whenever people were nearby. At first, she was unstable when exploring her enclosure, but staff has seen her become stronger each week. All of her wounds have now completely healed, and she is no longer experiencing any deficits. After two months of care the coyote is almost ready for release. We work closely with National and State Parks as well as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to ensure that the selected release site is safe for both the patient and for the humans who live nearby. Coyotes are never released in suburban neighborhoods or near established communities.

If you find an injured coyote, we recommend that you contact CWC or your local Animal Care Center. Coyotes can be aggressive when threatened and should only be handled by trained professionals. You can do even more to help wildlife by donating at [cawildlife.org](http://cawildlife.org)!