



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

November 10th, 2023

Coyote

In late October, Santa Barbara County Animal Services discovered a coyote that was not moving and laying on an overpass. As they were rescuing the animal, they noticed that the rear limbs were immobile. The rescuers contacted us to coordinate a transfer for the injured coyote as we are the only rehab center in the area that rehabilitates the species.



Our current patient.

During the initial intake examination, our Wildlife Technicians discovered the coyote was an extremely emaciated and severely dehydrated adult male. He had a very quiet demeanor, abrasions along all limbs, scabs, dirt in both eyes, and missing patches of fur all over his body. Our staff checked his vitals, cleaned the fresh abrasions, and moved him to a quiet space in our intensive care unit to keep him calm before a more thorough examination could be performed. We suspect that he was hit by a car based on the injuries.

When we receive calls about an injured coyote, it's not unusual to discover that the injuries are due to human impact, often that they have been hit by a car or suffering from rodenticide poisoning. During the current patient's examination, the technicians found newer and older abrasions on his body that raised suspicion that he'd been hit by a vehicle not only once, but twice during his life. X-Rays were taken and found that all bones were intact. Following the radiographs, our staff further cleaned his wounds and administered antibiotics and pain medication.

Over the next few days our patient showed much improvement. He was able to lift his head, showed greater response while caring for his wounds,

and attentive to his surroundings of movement and sound. Additionally, his appetite is excellent, and our technicians monitor his intake daily, as this is a sign of recovery.

After a week in our care, we moved him to an outdoor enclosure and he was able to sit up, stand on all fours, and walk around without any limping or stiffness. It is important that our adult coyote patients are moved to outdoor enclosures as soon as possible to keep them in their natural settings. They can become destructive if kept indoors for too long, especially as their health improves as they may become anxious. Our staff set up cameras in the enclosure for observation and have noticed only normal behaviors as he has started to heal, such as scratching at his chin and tending to his tail. The video also showed that he has been active in his enclosure each night, which is a great sign. He is continuing to heal every day, and



Coyote in indoor enclosure.



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we expect him to make a full recovery. Once he is well enough, he will be returned to Santa Barbara County for release.

Watch for coyotes on the road when driving your vehicle. If you find an injured coyote, please contact us or your local Animal Care Center. Please note that coyotes can be aggressive when they are threatened and should only be handled by trained professionals. You can do even more to help wildlife by donating to cawildlife.org!