



California Wildlife Center

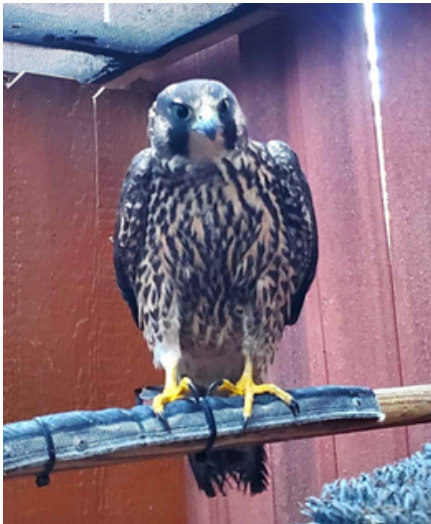
Patient of the Week

December 1st, 2023

Peregrine Falcon



Juvenile Female Peregrine Falcon in outdoor enclosure



The dark feathers around her eyes help reduce glare in bright light conditions.

It is relatively uncommon for us to receive Peregrine Falcons for rehabilitation at CWC, and we have only had four of these incredible birds so far this year.

On November 9th, we received a juvenile female Peregrine Falcon that was brought to us from the West Valley Animal Control Center with abrasions near the base of her beak, a mildly bloody nostril, inflammation and bruising on her left wing and some feather damage. Our staff also observed a popping sensation at the elbow during examination. They carefully splinted the injured wing in a figure-eight wrap, treated with medications, and moved her into a warm enclosure in our ICU.

The current proliferation of the Peregrine Falcon is a conservation success story. The population was found to be endangered after World War II due to the presence of DDT, which was widely used for insect control. The toxic chemical in the pesticide resulted in the decrease of calcium in eggs, making them thin and fragile. Once there was a ban put on these toxic pesticides, the species was able to repopulate around the world and is no longer endangered. They can now be found on every continent except Antarctica and can adapt to almost any climate. It is uncommon for them to reside in Southern California year-round, but we do see them during migration from the colder climates.

This species is known to be one of the fastest birds in the world and can fly up to 200 miles per hour. They fly very high in order to take deep dives and strike their prey. They even attack in mid-air, knocking smaller birds to the ground before swooping in. Peregrines feed on a wide variety of birds and a few small mammals. They nest in open country near water where they find their prey.

After the wing was wrapped and on the second day in care, our technician noticed that the splint wrap was loose over the elbow, which was likely due to reduced swelling. With less inflammation they were able to see some small lacerations in the area. The wing was still drooping from the elbow, and while our technician concluded there was no fracture, the patient exhibited signs of pain, so staff replaced the splint to help the elbow heal. Our wildlife technicians monitored the patient daily and changed the wing wrap every three days. While her appetite was initially poor, by her third day in care, she was bright, alert,



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

December 1st, 2023

responsive, and had eaten most of the food provided. As our team continued to monitor the healing process on her wing during re-wraps, the elbow continued to improve and became stable, and the lacerations healed.

After two weeks in care, the wrap was removed one last time and there was no evident drooping. She jumped with ease onto a ladder in her enclosure and was eventually moved to an outdoor aviary where she is currently residing until her release back into the wild.

If you find a bird in the wild and unsure if assistance is needed, please call California Wildlife Center (310-458-9453) or your local rescue center and we will advise the best steps to take. You can do even more to help our local wildlife by donating at cawildlife.org.