



# California Wildlife Center

## Patient of the Week

### December 29th, 2023

## Highlights from 2023

Each week we send an email sharing highlights from CWC. Below are summaries of the three most popular Patients of the Week messages of 2023. If you have been moved by any of our patient's stories throughout the year, please consider giving a tax-deductible donation to help us continue rehabilitating native wildlife in 2024.



Orphaned squirrels sleeping.

### 1. The Squirrels Are Coming

On March 3rd we shared how early Spring is a busy time of year at California Wildlife Center. This is when we start to see an influx of orphaned squirrels. If an orphaned squirrel is a neonate (eyes closed, furless) or infant (eyes open, velvety fur), they are directed to our homecare facility where they will receive a significant amount of hands-on care. These squirrels are fed specific formulas up to six times a day. Once the squirrels reach a certain weight, they are transferred to our Calabasas facility where they will be closely monitored in our NICU department. Each Spring we admit dozens of squirrels who are placed in groups of about six, where they will stay together as a family unit through their release.

This year we received hundreds of orphaned baby squirrels, and they spent approximately two months in our care before being released.



Patient at intake.

### 2. Allen's Hummingbird

On September 22nd we featured a male Allen's Hummingbird that was found on the ground in Beverly Hills, dehydrated, quiet, and unable to fly. Established males are territorial so the younger birds can have a harder time finding enough food. Hummingbirds consume 50 percent of their body weight every day to maintain a normal body condition. Their health can decline quickly if they are unable to get enough food, and our technicians suspect this is what happened to this Allen's Hummingbird. After a couple of days being hand-fed, the hummingbird's appetite improved, and he started flying around his indoor enclosure. After four days in

care, our technicians felt he was ready for a test flight in an outdoor enclosure. This patient immediately flew around the aviary multiple times before landing and vocalizing with another bird in the enclosure.

After a couple of weeks in our care, the hummingbird was released back into the wild.



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Snowy Owl on rooftop, photo by Los Angeles Animal Services SMART Team

### 3. Unusual Winter Visitor

Our third most popular article this year was sent in early February about an arctic Snowy Owl. This species is normally only found in the far north of Alaska, Canada, and Eurasia. It was a great surprise when reports of an arctic Snowy Owl came in from San Pedro near the Port of Los Angeles, in November 2022. The owl was positively identified when they were spotted again in December, this time in the town of Cypress, Orange County. Snowy Owls are closely related to Great Horned Owls, but have white plumage peppered with brown flecks. This owl was suspected to be a female based upon plumage and size (males tend to be whiter and smaller). Admirers noticed that the owl would regularly arrive on a rooftop around dawn, and then depart before sunset. The last day she was spotted was January 16th at dusk when she flew off the rooftop she frequented.

We are hopeful that this incredible creature found her way back to her home in the North.