



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

September 6, 2024

The Hooded Four-ioles

We have four Hooded Orioles at CWC, who our team has nicknamed the “four-ioles.” While they are being raised together, three were admitted together after being found orphaned in Pasadena and the fourth was admitted, then transferred to us, by Pacific Wildlife Care in Morro Bay, after reportedly being caught by a dog. When nestlings or fledglings are admitted, staff make every effort to place like species together so that they can learn and socialize with each other. Hooded Orioles are a communal species so socialization is especially important during their rehabilitation. To foster appropriate development and prepare our wildlife for a successful reentry to their natural habitat, CWC makes every effort to provide patients with a similar experience to what they would have in nature.

The species gets its name from their vibrant orange coloring on the top of their head that looks like a “hood.” The fledglings we have in care have not yet reached maturity but once they do, any males of the group will be evident with their bright orange heads and black beak and accents. This species is also known as “palm-leaf orioles” because their nests are often found in palm trees and tucked away in palm fronds. They have impressive weaving skills and construct hanging nests that sometimes resemble a woven basket.

The Hooded Oriole’s preference for palm trees and hummingbird feeders makes them a frequent guest to Southern Californian homes. In addition to sugar water, they are enthusiastic about citrus and insects. They like to search the undersides of leaves for a variety of insects. While in care at CWC, their diets always contain citrus, usually oranges but sometimes grapefruit or lemon! Some believe this species is drawn to the color orange, which perhaps gives them their affinity for the sweet fruit. When citrus is not available, we have given our patients jelly, which they lap up with equal enthusiasm.

The three fledglings that were admitted together progressed well through the NICU with no outstanding concerns. The fourth patient was treated prior to being transferred to us and has since made a full recovery. Once the orioles were flighted, they were moved to the aviary where they currently reside and will stay for about a week. They will be released as a group near the Pasadena area, where the majority of the flock was found.



Patients provided enrichment to practice foraging.



Hooded Orioles strengthening their flight muscles in preparation for release.



Patient perching in outdoor aviary.