



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

March 6, 2026

Wax on, Waxwing!



Cedar Waxwing patient at intake.

A Cedar Waxwing was recently admitted from El Sereno. The patient was found grounded and unable to hop or fly. Upon examination, our team noted significant bruising along the keel, or breastbone. This type of injury may suggest the patient was a victim of a window strike.

After the initial examination was conducted, the team gave the patient fluids, anti-inflammatories and placed the bird on strict cage rest to allow time for healing.

Cedar Waxwings are migratory birds with a big appetite for fruit. They typically migrate in flocks searching for available ripe berries. They expand their diets in the summer to include insects as a secondary source of nutrition. Their fruit-heavy diet can sometimes lead to them eating copious amounts of overripe and fermented berries, which can cause intoxication and sometimes death. At CWC, we often see Cedar Waxwings in the winter and spring months, as they move to the warmer climate of Los Angeles in search of ripe berry-laden trees and bushes. This species is very social and is typically seen foraging and even sharing berries within their flock.

After a few days in care, staff noticed the patient was steadily losing weight, likely due to the stress of captivity. Our team reassessed the patient's flight abilities and determined they could safely be moved to an outdoor aviary, hopefully reducing stress and creating a more familiar environment. Since being moved outdoors, the patient's appetite has improved and they appear to be progressing well. This Cedar Waxwing will need a few more weeks to fully regain their strength, but we are hopeful they will be ready to rejoin the flock very soon.