



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

April 3, 2026

Patient of the Week - The Hop Towards Recovery



Kangaroo Rat patient.

A California Kangaroo Rat was brought into CWC after being hit by a car. The patient presented with blood around the nose and an eye injury. Staff noted that the animal appeared sluggish, mentally dull, and was experiencing some respiratory distress. Our veterinarian suspects that blunt force trauma caused sinus bleeding and the resulting neurological symptoms.

The care protocol for this patient includes anti-inflammatories and strict cage rest. Due to a low appetite, the medical team has supplemented their diet of mealworms and seeds with formula administered via syringe.

One of the most unique features of kangaroo rats is their ability to survive without drinking water. They typically inhabit very arid, hot environments where water is scarce. This species has adapted to meet its hydration needs through their diet, which consists primarily of seeds and some small insects. During digestion, they are able to convert fats from ingested seeds into metabolic water. Additionally, their kidneys can concentrate urine to minimize water loss. Kangaroo rats are also strictly nocturnal, staying underground during the hottest parts of the day, another strategy for conserving fluids.

If this species' fluid intake habits weren't fascinating enough, kangaroo rats are also named for their impressive jumping ability. Their large hind legs and long tails allow them to travel distances of up to 9 feet in a single hop!

The prognosis for the Kangaroo Rat remains guarded. Staff continue to provide supportive care, nutrition, and medication. While the animal appears brighter and alert, there is still a long road ahead before they are ready for release.



Patients are provided with enrichment.