



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

July 24, 2026

Patient of the Week - Blue Pink Makes his Way Home

This season, we're excited to highlight one of our Northern Elephant Seal pup success stories: Blue Pink! Named for the non-toxic blue and pink marking placed on his head for identification, Blue Pink is one of the many pups we are grateful to have released this season.

Blue Pink was spotted by a resident on Broad Beach. He was underweight and, most notably, had a long stingray barb embedded in the left side of his mouth. Our team successfully rescued him and brought him back to CWC.



Elephant seal pup with stingray barb in mouth.

Elephant seals are born and, after about a month of nursing, are left to survive on their own. They rely exclusively on their instincts, which can be difficult for a young pup forced to navigate an ocean environment that isn't always kind. By the time our Marine Mammal Rescue Team is alerted to a pup in need of help, they are usually struggling to survive and, in many cases, starving.

Young Northern Elephant Seals must learn through trial and error when first venturing out on their own, and it isn't uncommon for inexperienced pups to encounter challenges while learning what to eat. When staff first tube-fed this pup—a necessary nutritional intervention that is typical for emaciated pups when they first arrive—they found he had ingested crab which can be detrimental to their digestive tract. The stingray barb and the crab remnants were likely the result of his early attempts to find food on his own.



Patient in care.

The stingray barb was safely removed by staff, and the pup was promptly placed on antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, and was monitored closely by our Marine Mammal team.

After a week in care, Blue Pink began eating fish on his own. Within two weeks, he was bottom feeding in the pool. His strong appetite and growing interest in the pools were encouraging signs for our team. After gaining a healthy 60 pounds and reaching appropriate developmental milestones, our team determined that Blue Pink was ready for release. After about two months at CWC, Blue Pink was successfully released at Nicolas Canyon Beach in Malibu.



Blue Pink released in Malibu.