



California Wildlife Center

Patient of the Week

July 3, 2026

Patient of the Week - Grounded for Rehabilitation

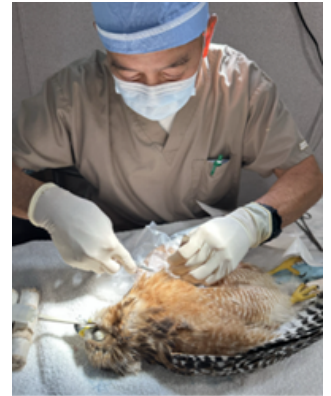
A Red-shouldered Hawk was found grounded in Tarzana by a rescuer and was brought into CWC for medical care. Radiographs revealed that the hawk had been shot with a BB pellet, resulting in a left ulnar fracture. This hawk is luckily under the medical care of our hospital staff, which includes our veterinarian, Dr. Duane Tom.

Dr. Tom examined the pellet entry wound and evaluated the X-rays. He found a severe open fracture of the left ulnar, with the bone broken into multiple pieces. Bullet or pellet wounds create a very contaminated open wound that needs to be cleaned thoroughly to ensure infection doesn't set in. The wound was cleaned and damaged feathers and dead tissue were removed.

The wound was closed with stitches and covered with an antibiotic dressing. The treatment plan is to continue pain medication and antibiotics, monitor the incision as it heals, and perform gentle physical therapy once a week to maintain wing mobility, an essential ability for any bird patient.

Avian patients heal quickly, and our medical team predicts that in about 4 weeks the patient will be ready to move to an outdoor aviary for further conditioning and recovery before entering the wild again.

Red-shouldered Hawks are essential creatures to our ecosystem and deserve a spot in our neighborhoods, just as all wild animals do. Please refrain from violent animal deterrents, as it injures an innocent animal and impacts the food chain. If you need tips on safely deterring wildlife, please check out our frequently asked questions.



Dr. Tom surgically closing wound.



Red-shouldered Hawk in ICU.