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The Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County

Restoring wings to the wild



Have you ever seen a Long-eared Owl?

This little guy is a Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*). It came to us for rehabilitation from our friends at [Wasson Memorial Veterinary Clinic](#), in Lake County, with a broken humerus (wing). Wasson vets performed surgery to pin the wing. Once in our care, we started a medication protocol to prevent infection. In birds of prey, oxygen actually flows through the humerus bone, so when this bone is fractured, it can result in respiratory infections.

This particular owl proved to be a rambunctious patient which resulted in a prolonged healing period. But after about six weeks, the break did successfully heal. That's the good news.

The bad news is that it also broke almost every one of its flight feathers. If we were going to be able to successfully release this bird, we needed to find some replacement feathers – and sooner rather than later.

As the bird healed, we gradually advanced it to larger and larger accommodations to reduce the possibility of its doing any further damage. But we still needed to track down new feathers in order to undertake a process called 'imping', where we actually implant new feathers into the shaft where a broken feather had been. How cool is that?



Fortunately, [The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota](#) answered our call for help and sent us a full set of feathers. After ensuring that this little guy could successfully hunt (with live prey testing), we proceeded with the imping. Just look at this beautiful threat pose – with all flight feathers perfectly aligned for flight.

After 109 days in our care, this Long-eared Owl was successfully released in Kelseyville. Take a look at this thermal image [video of the release!](#)

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OPEN HOUSE

Come see our resident raptors at our monthly open house

May 5th, 2018
from 10am - 1pm

3430 Chanate Road
Santa Rosa, CA, 95404

Visit our [Website](#) for more details

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