



The Bird Rescue Center
of Sonoma County

Burrowing Owl



This Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) was found stuck in a barbed wire fence in the evening of October 8th between Bodega and Jenner. Our friends at California State Parks found and helped to get this little owl to Bird Rescue.



With our newly acquired surgical equipment, he was able to 'go under' for cleaning up and repairing the left wing that was damaged by the wire.



Plucked and cleaned, this is the total area that needed to be closed. Our veterinarian, Dr. Rupiper, from [East Petaluma Animal Hospital](#) was able to assess whether there was any

damaged muscle or tendons and reattach the area. With just a small scrap to use!

Usually it takes at least a little while for birds to perk up in the Oxygen Chamber, but it was mere minutes for this feisty little dude. This makes sense since they live in burrows underground and can actually tolerate higher levels of Carbon Dioxide. 99% Oxygen was probably like a double espresso shot :)



Bruising was going down around the area and daily wing wraps to help protect it were being discarded, but you can see a slight difference in pupil size. We'll need to take a visit to our ophthalmologist, Dr. Burwell [Eye Care for Animals - Santa Rosa, CA](#)



It was around this time that we had to evacuate Bird Rescue due to the recent fires in Santa Rosa. This little stinker went to [Native Songbird Care & Conservation](#) for a week until we knew we were standing and cleared the building. We hope he didn't cause them too much trouble!



After we recovered, we tried to make him feel more at home with a burrow. We think he liked it.



Things were coming along nicely! You can barely see the stitch in there, but we did have to start daily wing stretches so that it didn't tighten up. We were comfortable moving him outside and made a little more believable burrow.

The wing was healed, but the major flight muscles were a little... flabby. So, it was to time to increase exercise in our largest aviaries that are usually reserved for crows in the summer. After just a few days, the difference was stunning and we worked to figure out where this little owl needed to be returned.



Of course, right before release date he fought with the aviary ceiling. You should see the other guy... Luckily his nosebleed healed fine too! Little stinker.

We weren't positive about releasing the owl into another known Burrowing Owl community and hadn't received word that there were burrows or a flock present at the location where he was found. We were able to find out that another organization had a similar experience and ended up releasing back to the location where the owl was found and a year later the bird was tracked in Utah through banding programs!



Here's the starting injury and ending injury site, completely healed.

We felt comfortable releasing our little guy back to the area between Occidental, Jenner, and Bodega Bay since the others turned up across the country. Maybe this one was just eastbound.

Shortly after a month from arrival, he went back out screaming, flying, and diving into a burrow.



Don't Forget What's Coming Up On Nov 28th

#GIVING TUESDAY

Giving Tuesday is a global movement that encourages like-minded people to show their support for organisations that they value.

Open House

We invite you to come by the Center on **December 2nd** from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, to meet these incredible birds and our dedicated volunteers.



Donate



Thank you for your continued support!
The Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County
www.birdrescuecenter.org

#SONOMACOUNTYSTRONG

