



The Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County

Restoring wings to the wild

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Caring For A Northern Harrier

This rare admit to our facility arrived from Bodega Links Golf Course in Bodega Bay via a Good Samaritan who brought it all the way in after finding it on the ground, unable to fly. We found several injuries: a fracture of the right wrist with some fluid, a puncture on the underside of the wing, and an abscess around a trapped feather. We were able to resolve the abscess, but the fracture site was still not quite right. We performed a culture of the injury to see what else we could do which revealed the need for a specific antibiotic to be administered over an additional 30 days of treatment!



Without much previous experience with hospitalized Harriers, we were worried about the activity level of the bird and the potential damage to the fresh feathers growing in. Damaged feathers could require additional time in a rehabilitation setting and delay a critical release. Using a special padded box specifically created for high-stress raptors we were able to avoid any further feather damage until finally, after nearly a month from being brought in, it was safe to move our patient into an outdoor aviary.

It eventually graduated to our largest aviary where we supplied an increasing amount of enrichment as it became more and more active. After 2 months in the rehab hospital, we were nearing the end of the round of antibiotics. The fracture area was completely solid, and this 'Marsh Hawk' was letting us know it was ready for freedom. It passed the creanced flight evaluation, maneuvering tests, and even live prey testing.



On Labor Day weekend, Shift Supervisors Mario Balitbit and Taylour Stephens released this beautiful bird back to the wild!



Harrier Fun Facts

During the 2 months we cared for this bird, we learned a lot about harriers.

- They are one of the few diurnal birds that have a facial disk like an owl with the stiff facial feathers that direct sound to their off-set ears
- They have a nice, white rump patch to help identify them in flight
- They nest on the ground in dense clumps of vegetation and when the juveniles are ready to start exploring, they 'play hunt' by getting on low stumps and pouncing on inanimate objects around the nest before returning to the nest to be fed
- This species has been around since the Ice Age
- Male Harriers are polygamous and can have up to 5 mates

This year, we've had a lot of raptors that have required extended hospital stays before being able to be released. You can help cover the cost of their care, food and medication by making a [donation](#). We couldn't do the work we do without you!



Guess Who?

We recently received a welcome surprise – an anonymous donation of \$10,000! You may not realize that we rely 100% on generous donations like this – we don't get any subsidies or tax dollars whatsoever. We'd like to thank our anonymous benefactor – whoever and wherever you are!

This \$10,000 has already been put to use. It covered over 50% of what we've spent on food so far this year, but while it sounds like a large sum, it goes pretty fast when you're caring for over 3,000 birds each year.

Are you in a position to help us? We have some big challenges ahead with our relocation and need all the financial support we can get. Large or small, your donations make our work possible!

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OPEN HOUSE

October 6th, 2018
from 10am - 1pm

3430 Chanate Road,
Santa Rosa, Ca, 95404

[More Information](#)

We are open from 9am to 5pm, 7 days a week.

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The Bird Rescue Center | (707) 523-2473 | [Email](#) | [Website](#)

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