

CROW Case of the Week: Southern Flying Squirrel
by Brian Johnson



On December 8 Cape Coral resident Jody Smith found a tiny, 14-gram Southern Flying Squirrel curled up in a ball in her yard. "I'm not sure how she saw her -- she was the size of a walnut," said Dr. Amber McNamara.

The little girl was about four weeks old. "Her hydration deficit was six percent, so she was probably without her mother for 24-36 hours," said McNamara. "She was cold and would not have survived

on her own much longer. It's a good reminder that there are still babies out there, even in December."

The baby's fur was somewhat matted, as though a dog had picked her up and then placed her down, said Dr. Amber; however, there were no puncture wounds. CROW staff placed her in an incubator in the Reptarium to quickly raise her temperature. They fed her Rebound, a chicken-flavored broth loaded with electrolytes. She drank a full milliliter, a large amount for a girl her size. Over the next few days CROW gradually introduced her to milk, and she added four grams of body weight in the next 3 days. "She was a good little eater from the get-go," said Dr. Amber.

With the nutrition and a cozy environment, her eyes soon opened. "She is doing really well, and her instincts are spot on," added Dr. Amber. She spends most of her day sleeping in the towels and hiding in a little box.. At night she comes out to eat and roams around her cage. She dines on milk, fruits and vegetables, soaked monkey biscuits and dry kitten chow.

One week after her arrival, another baby Flying Squirrel, a roughly two-week old boy, arrived at the clinic. This was a surprise, as only about 5% of the squirrels CROW receives each year are Flying Squirrels. "That was pretty exciting -- they will be able to grow up together," said Dr. Amber. They are snug for the holidays, and hopefully soon will be able to be placed together.

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