

CROW Case of the Week: Eastern Spotted Skunk
by Brian Johnson



There's really never any telling who is going to come in the front door at CROW with what type of problem, and on October 1 CROW received another case that could be classified as an oddity. This time the patient was a 330-gram Eastern Spotted Skunk who had apparently gotten stuck inside a Gatorade bottle. "The bottle had been cut away and she had a ring around her neck that looked like a plastic bonnet," said Dr. Amber McNamara.

The creature was in otherwise good shape, though she had some swelling around her hip area, likely a result of trying to scrape the lid off her neck with her feet. It must have been frustrating trying to get the thing off. Dr. Stephanie French examined her and decided to see if she could slide it off. She greased the skunk's neck with mineral oil, and in moments pulled the Gatorade ring free.

It was a little bit of déjà vu for French, who in October of 2007 had rescued an Eastern Spotted Skunk from a dumpster in Koreshan State Campground, one hour south of Sanibel in Estero; the skunk had slipped into the dumpster, eaten a meal, and then gotten stuck when trying to exit through a small hole. In that case French had to use a sedative to calm the frantic animal and eventually pop him through to daylight. Removing the Gatorade ring turned out to be easy, but the skunk, though cooperative, sprayed in the clinic. "It's potent!" said Dr. Amber McNamara. They moved the skunk to the outdoor aviary upstairs. "Most of the upstairs of the old hospital is empty," said McNamara. "She did great up there. She had no lameness and looked good. We fed her a mixture of cat chow, scrambled eggs, and mice. She also received anti-inflammatory treatment for her swelling."



Cat Turner took her back to Lehigh Acres on October 5. "She didn't spray the whole way out there, but at the release site, just as she was let go, she sprayed in the carrier"

CROW staff is moving into the new hospital. The majority of the mammal and reptile patients have transitioned to the new building, and the first bank of cages was taken over into the ICU area on Friday, October 2. More cages have been moved this past week. The new hospital will also have additional new cages, including a very large walk-in cage to accommodate birds such as White Pelicans and Great Blue Herons.

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