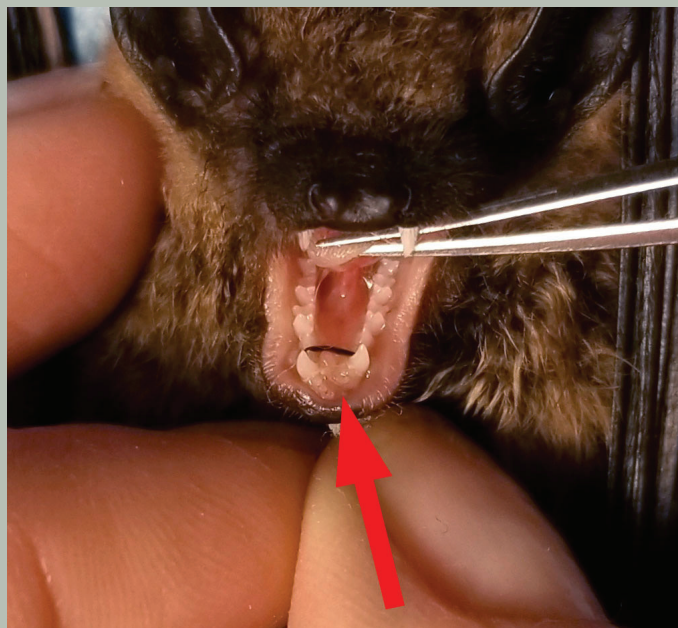


All In a Day's Work: Tough Cases in 2019

Running a wildlife rehabilitation center means that you never know what each hour is going to bring—every phone call or email may totally change the course of the day. You have to get very good at thinking on your feet, mental and physical juggling, and keeping any "OMG, HOW THE HECK AM I GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS???" thoughts well in control. This year a few tough cases also ignited a lot of creative thinking to get patients better and back to the skies.

When **Jawbone the Big brown bat** arrived during the winter he looked in decent shape, probably just a bat who got stuck outside in the cold. When he was settled in, I got ready to feed him his first meal, and he dug in ravenously, but something was strange. His tiny jaw was all over the place and the food was going everywhere. This little guy had a broken lower jaw. How do you fix that? Thanks to Dr. Brian Collins who suggested using the same technique that veterinarians use for pets—but instead of a wire, I used a thin suture to sew Jawbone's mandible back in place. He was given a soft diet, plus pain medication. Within two months he was back on solid food and a member of the Clean Plate Club. He was released this spring. Go, Jawbone!

Moosewood the Big brown bat arrived with an awful looking broken wing, possibly hit by a car. The first thing I did was to remind myself: "Don't freak out! THINK." The break was fresh and was not



Jawbone's surgery was a success. It was a great day when I saw his plate totally empty! Arrow points to the break.

NB: Bats should always be handled with gloves, but this was such a tiny surgery that full dexterity was required! Jawbone was under anesthesia and fast asleep when this photo was taken.



Before: Luckily, the break was in the middle of the radius (forearm bone).



After: 3 months later it was almost impossible to tell the wing had been injured.



A body wrap kept the wrist and elbow from rotating.



The radius pinned with a thin, sterile needle.

on a joint, but midway along the bone: this was fixable.

After cleaning and stabilizing the wing, I waited for a few days to make sure he was in good shape and no longer in shock. Thanks to Dr. Bridget Barry and Cornerstone Veterinary Hospital for letting me use their X-ray and getting me very long, thin, sterile syringes that could be used to pin such a small bone (arrow points to the pin in the X-ray image). He was given antibiotics, pain and anti-inflammatory medication, and put in a body wrap for almost two months. I was thrilled that the bone healed so well. He is still undergoing physical therapy to get his wing strong enough for release.