

Puppy Tortured and Dumped in Mazunte “*Pueblo Magico*”: A Call to Action for Animal Welfare on Oaxaca's Coast

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Mazunte, Oaxaca — On the morning of December 11, 2024, a two-month-old male puppy – later named Bruno – was discovered in an arroyo in Mazunte, a *pueblo mágico* on the Oaxaca coast, by two tourists. The puppy, still alive and crying in pain, had multiple knife-inflicted wounds filled with maggots. Despite emergency veterinary care, the puppy succumbed to his injuries later that night.



Puppy, Bruno, laid to rest after succumbing to injuries caused by being cut intentionally with a knife in a potential “sadistic experiment”.

Veterinarians confirmed that the injuries were deliberately inflicted, describing them as part of a sadistic experiment conducted while the puppy was alive. Claudia Mamet, founder of the local animal rescue organization Dogs of Puerto Angel, facilitated the puppy’s treatment but lamented that it was too late to save him.

“This is not an isolated incident,” Claudia said. “Sadistic crimes against animals have been recurring on the Oaxaca coast.”

A Pattern of Cruelty and Neglect

This tragedy is part of a troubling trend in the region. In September, a dog named Pirate was found buried alive in San Pedro Pochutla, his legs and muzzle tied. In December 2022, in the neighboring town of Zipolite, a dog named Morena was intentionally burned alive during a dispute between neighbors. These are just the most egregious examples among countless cases of animal neglect and abuse, ranging from starvation and beatings to intentional poisonings, particularly ahead of tourist high seasons.



The dog who was left for a week with a severely broken leg outside the Municipality Building of Santa Maria Tonameca. Authorities did nothing.

Claudia highlighted a recent case from Santa Maria Tonameca, near Mazunte. A dog with a severely broken leg lay outside the Municipality Palace Building for a week without receiving help. “Even the president and staff from the Municipality walked past and did nothing,” Claudia said. “This reflects a deeply troubling indifference from both authorities and the community.”

Urgent Need for Change



The first peaceful march in 2022 in Playa Zipolite to protest against the indifference of authorities towards animal cruelty in the region.

Oaxaca's first animal protection law, passed in November 2024, recognizes animals as sentient beings and outlines measures to prevent cruelty. It mandates spay-and-neuter campaigns and incorporates responsible pet ownership into school curricula. However, activists like Claudia argue that enforcement is lacking.

"For years, I've urged the local government to educate the public about animal welfare, but nothing has been done," Claudia said. Her organization has sterilized over 5,000 animals since 2021, but overpopulation persists due to irresponsible pet ownership and the absence of penalties.

Claudia calls on the Fiscalía General de Oaxaca to open an investigation into the puppy's case and enforce accountability. She also urges the Minister of Tourism, Saymi Pineda Velasco, to address animal welfare as part of the region's strategy to attract tourists.

"Tourists don't want to see starving, abused animals. Cleaner, safer communities start with humane population control and education," Claudia said.

A Path Forward

Claudia believes the solution lies in consciousness-raising campaigns targeting schools and communities. "Without education, cruelty will continue," she said. "It's terrifying how little compassion some people show for sentient beings here."

The recent torture and death of the Mazunte puppy have reignited the call for urgent action. Activists and citizens demand enforcement of the new animal protection law and a cultural shift toward empathy and accountability.

As the coastal towns of Oaxaca grow in popularity, the responsibility to protect all its inhabitants—human and animal alike—becomes more critical than ever.