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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High Numbers of Beached Birds Showing Up Along the Southern California Coast

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Urgent Help Needed to Help Care for Stricken Seabirds

A large number of beached sick and emaciated seabirds rescued along Santa Barbara's coastline are flooding into International Bird Rescue's Los Angeles wildlife center. More than 40 birds, especially Red-throated and Pacific Loons have arrived into care at the center located in San Pedro.



Currently the exact cause of these stranded birds is unknown. However, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife is investigating this as a possible Domoic Acid event. Domoic Acid is a naturally occurring toxin caused by a marine algal bloom. Seabirds and other

marine animals that eat infected fish and crustaceans with this neurotoxin, can exhibit sluggishness and brain seizures, and even death. [More on Domoic Acid](#)

“The old saying about the ‘Canary in the coal mine’ is real! Birds are very sensitive indicators of environmental change,” said JD Bergeron, Executive Director of International Bird Rescue. “Now, we’re seeing ‘Loons on the shoreline’ and it is up to people to figure out what’s going wrong.”

In the meantime, this unusual seabird stranding is taxing Bird Rescue’s resources. They are asking for the public’s help to care for these sick seabirds. Treatment of each bird can cost upwards of \$25 to \$45 per day, depending on the medications and specific care each bird requires. You can donate online: <https://www.bird-rescue.org/get-involved/donate>

Loons are one of the more challenging families of birds that we treat. They are high stress, strictly pelagic (deep water), and are susceptible to the onset of secondary problems while in care. Some of the loons currently in care are also suffering from neurological issues and need to have special medications to calm mild seizure-like behaviors.

“For loons, the hardest part is getting them floating on water as quickly as possible under the careful eye of experienced staff,” said Kylie Clatterbuck, Center Manager for Bird Rescue’s Los Angeles wildlife center. “Gearing up for a large group of animals requires preparation, supreme organization, and knowledge of the species with which you are working.”

The Santa Barbara Channel is also a busy spot for Loons and other migrating birds moving northward to summer breeding locations.

Thanks to our partners at [Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network](#) who are coordinating the rescue and transport of these sickened birds. More info: <http://www.sbwcn.org>

What to do if you spot a beached bird

If possible, contact your local wildlife rehab group or animal control agency. If you feel comfortable to rescue it yourself, **please follow these TEMPORARY care instructions:**

- Find a medium/large-sized box and place a folded towel at the bottom.
- Ensure there are holes in the box big enough for airflow.

- Place the bird in the box and keep in a dark, quiet place.
- Keep the bird warm.
- Please don't feed the bird.
- Leave the bird alone; don't handle or bother it and always keep children and pets away.

About International Bird Rescue: International Bird Rescue (“Bird Rescue”) has been helping seabirds and other aquatic birds around the world since 1971. Our team of specialists operates two year-round aquatic bird rehabilitation centers in California, which care for more than 5,000 birds every year. Bird Rescue is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to mitigating human impact on sea and water birds.

Learn more at <https://bird-rescue.org/>

[International Bird Rescue - Los Angeles Center](#)

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