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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Starving Seabirds Filling Local Wildlife Center**

“E-Murre-gency” declared as unprecedented numbers of Common Murres need extensive care; public donations sought

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**Fairfield, CA** – It’s another tough year for seabirds along the Northern California coast. From Brown Pelicans unexpectedly falling from the skies during graduations to polluted oceans and depleted fish stocks, this has been a challenging season for International Bird Rescue whose mission is to act toward balance with the natural world by rescuing waterbirds in crisis. This summer more hungry, exhausted young Common Murres are inundating its Northern California wildlife hospital.



Over 100 murres have been admitted into intensive care at the San Francisco Bay-Delta Wildlife Center in Fairfield. They are arriving starving, and many of them are chicks with contaminated feathers and need to be delicately washed. Though we are currently seeing an uptick in murres, we have seen an overall increase in patients. So far this year, we have treated 2,500 waterbirds at our two California wildlife centers.

Ever-increasing environmental challenges mean Bird Rescue is always responding to unexpected situations and struggling to absorb the costs. Giving these seabirds a second chance is expensive, and Bird Rescue is asking for public contributions to help pay for their care. Thanks to an anonymous donor who has generously donated \$50,000, donations will be matched here: <https://www.givinggrid.com/emurregency/>

Reports of starving seabirds is always a concern. An altered climate and changing ocean environments can affect birds as their usual fish stocks move farther from their breeding grounds. We encourage anyone who spots a sick or injured waterbird to call their local animal control or contact Bird Rescue directly at **707-207-0380**.

### **About Common Murres**

Murres (rhymes with “furs”) are dark two-toned birds. They are often confused with penguins. But unlike penguins, murres can fly in the air and underwater. Murre populations are known to have declined in many areas in recent years as the birds are vulnerable to effects of pollution and a frequent victim of oil spills. Murres breed on rocky cliffs along the northern coastal waters up to the Bering Sea. A large breeding colony is located on the Farallon Islands, 30 miles from San Francisco.



Three weeks following birth and before they can fly, young murres leave the nest with their fathers to learn how to forage for fish. At adulthood, they become superb divers—essentially “flying” through water by using their wings to propel themselves. They can dive more than 200 feet below the surface to forage.

Caring for these murres requires tremendous specialized care, including warm water pools, washes, constant feedings, waterproofing monitoring, as well as medications and vitamin supplements.

**About International Bird Rescue:** In 1971 after 800,000 gallons of crude oil spilled into the bay, concerned individuals led by a registered nurse named Alice Berkner jumped into action, bringing International Bird Rescue to life. We have always had to pave a road where there is none. Staff and volunteers work with tenacity alongside clients, partners, and the public to find solutions. Today, we research best practices at our crisis response hospitals in California and Alaska and share them worldwide. Our mission is to

inspire people to act toward balance with the natural world by rescuing waterbirds in crisis. We dream of a world in which every person, every day, takes action to protect the natural home of wildlife and ourselves.

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

**International Bird Rescue**

San Francisco Bay-Delta Wildlife Center

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([Google Map](#))

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