

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2009

San Francisco
San Jose
Bay Area



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**UNUSUALLY HIGH WINDS BLAMED FOR RECENT
SEA BIRD STRANDINGS AND NESTING FAILURE**

A notable spike in patients has local marine bird rescuers puzzled. In the last two days, International Bird Rescue Research Center has received 13 stranded marine birds, mostly Brandt's cormorants. Eleven more of the snake-necked birds are expected to arrive from San Jose this afternoon.

Another oddity is that many were found in Bay Area parking lots and on roads when they should be found on beaches or jetties.

For these specialists in aquatic bird rehabilitation, a higher than normal number of patients always signifies a greater problem, as was the case this winter with the scores of ailing pelicans.

While it is premature to say exactly why so many of these birds are falling ill, Jay Holcomb, director of the aquatic bird facility believes the recent high winds may have contributed to the strandings.

This speculation that unusual weather or climate change may be impacting sea birds is supported by recent word from Farallon researchers that the Brandt's cormorants have not started nesting, as they should. The atypical winds, choppy seas, and sparse zooplankton may be the reason.

Last year the island reported the smallest breeding population of Brandt's with the lowest reproductive success in twenty years. Researchers hope this is not the sign of another colony failure.

The birds in convalescence are being treated for superficial wounds and are doing well. The rescue organization is asking for help from the public in reporting birds that appear injured or stranded and donations to help cover the cost of their care. For rescues people are urged to call the California wildlife hotline at 866-WILD-911 for the nearest rescuer.

PRESS INVITED: Friday April 17 10:00-12:00 4369 Cordelia Road, Fairfield 94534