

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **International Bird Rescue Research Center**

### **NEWS CONTACTS**

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## **LONGLINE METHOD OF FISHING NEAR SHORE IN SANTA CRUZ INJURES SCORES OF PELICANS**

International Bird Rescue Research Center (Fairfield) admitted 9 pelicans from Santa Cruz yesterday, August 4th. Each one was suffering injuries from entanglement in fishing line and hooks. While it is not surprising for the marine and aquatic bird specialists to receive large numbers of pelicans in a day, especially this time of year, the oddity is that these casualties of fishing had come from one area, Santa Cruz.

They have seen this before. Back in 2002, International Bird Rescue received 200 young pelicans from Santa Cruz within a one-month period. They found that fishermen off Santa Cruz Pier, at the wharf, were targeting schooling anchovies using what's called a longline – one strand of fishing line with multiple hooks. As the fishermen reel in their wriggling fish, pelicans, mostly young, inexperienced birds, grab the prey and become snared in the line. The lines often break or they are cut. The pelicans fly off trailing line and often with imbedded hooks. In 2002 state agencies closed the wharf temporarily until the bait-fish moved on.

Yesterday, rescuers confirmed sightings of this type of fishing going on off the cement ship at Seacliff Beach in Capitola and off of the Santa Cruz Pier. Dead pelicans were washing up snared in line, and a number of still flighted birds were spotted entangled and in need of help.

Today, rescuers will return to the area to try and catch the injured animals. Help is expected from the California Department of Fish & Game and US Fish & Wildlife Services in dealing with this matter.

Citizens are being asked to report sightings to local rescuers – they can find contact information through a toll-free wildlife hotline for California 866-WILD-911 or by calling rescue coordinator Rebecca Dmytryk, 831-869-6241.