



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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[Photos and b-roll available here](#)

**SBWCN Releases 10 Brown Pelicans Rescued During May Crisis**

*Birds make a full recovery after arriving emaciated and dehydrated*

(Wednesday, June 15, 2022) Santa Barbara, CA – Over the weekend, Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network (SBWCN) released two groups of brown pelicans that were rescued during the May pelican crisis. After more than three weeks of receiving treatment, these 10 patients made a full recovery and were healthy enough to rejoin the wild population. These birds were just some of the hundreds rescued along the California coast after being found emaciated, hypothermic, and dehydrated. The first five pelicans were released on Friday, June 10 at Butterfly Beach in Montecito. The second group of five was released on Saturday, June 11 at Goleta Beach.

In the last month, more than 270 brown pelicans have been rescued and delivered to SBWCN's Wildlife Hospital. Most of these pelicans were found to be emaciated, dehydrated, and hypothermic, and a few arrived with additional injuries. Many more wildlife rehabilitation centers along the California coast have been experiencing the same influx of brown pelicans.

The SBWCN team has been treating these birds by providing fluids, food, medication, warmth, and supportive care. The team has also been working with other nearby wildlife centers to transport some of these birds and assist in their rehabilitation. In order to qualify for release, the animal care team looks for a few important benchmarks, including the pelican's body condition, feather quality, and mentation.

“Seeing these pelicans get a second chance out in the wild makes all the hard work worthwhile,” said Ariana Katovich, SBWCN's Executive Director. “Our team has dedicated incredible time and effort over the last month, and we couldn't have done it without the support of our community. We're hopeful that many more of these pelicans will join this group and make a full recovery.”

While the number of new pelican rescues has slowed down recently, SBWCN still has about 60 pelicans in care at their Goleta facility. Many of these birds are responding well to treatment and are residing in the outdoor pools and aviaries. There are still a handful of pelicans that are in need of more intensive care inside of the Wildlife Hospital.

At this time, the exact cause of this widespread event is still unconfirmed. While there is no evidence of disease or unusual parasites, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife is continuing to investigate the cause.

The public can support SBWCN during this time by making a donation to support the purchase of medications, fluids, food, and additional supplies. Donations can be made online: [www.sbwcn.org/donate](http://www.sbwcn.org/donate)

To report a sick or injured animal in Santa Barbara or Ventura County, citizens should call the SBWCN Helpline: (805) 681-1080

### **About Brown Pelicans**

Brown pelicans are large seabirds that range anywhere from 8–10 pounds with a wingspan between 6.5–7.5 feet. They are common residents of the southern coasts of the United States, with ranges extending down to South America. They are known for plunge-diving into the ocean to catch their food – one of only two pelican species to do so. These social birds can be found congregating in large flocks almost year round. Populations reached dangerously low numbers in the 1960s due to pollution from the pesticide DDT, and the species was listed as endangered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1972. Thanks to DDT regulations and conservation recovery efforts, the brown pelican has since been removed from the endangered species list.

### **About Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network**

Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network (SBWCN) is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1988. For over 30 years, SBWCN has served to rescue, rehabilitate, and return to the wild sick, injured, orphaned, and oil-impaired animals in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties and to educate the public about living in harmony with wildlife. SBWCN takes care of more than 4,000 patients per year, including small mammals, seabirds, songbirds, raptors, and herptiles. The SBWCN Helpline is available everyday from 9 AM–5 PM for animal emergencies and wildlife advice: (805) 681-1080. Donations in support of this work can be made at [www.sbwcn.org/donate](http://www.sbwcn.org/donate).

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