



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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International Bird Rescue will be accommodating news crews throughout the day at the San Francisco Bay center: 4369 Cordelia Road, Fairfield CA 94534.

Updated photos can be found [here](#). (Photo credit: Cheryl Reynolds, International Bird Rescue)

Mystery Substance's Toll on Bay Area Seabirds Rises Sharply

International Bird Rescue's San Francisco Bay center receives 179 contaminated birds

Twenty seabirds have died at the Fairfield facility, though rescue workers finding success in multifaceted wash procedure to save animals in care; members of the public can report sightings of beached birds through [online form](#)

FAIRFIELD, CA (January 19, 2015) — The total number of seabirds found on East Bay shores covered in an unidentified sticky substance rose sharply Sunday evening to 179, 25 of which have died, International Bird Rescue's San Francisco Bay center reported Monday morning.

Three search-and-collection teams have found a significant number of seabirds affected by the substance near Bay Farm Island Shoreline Trail in Alameda, in addition to shoreline areas in San Leandro and Hayward.

“Our team anticipates washing between 40 and 60 seabirds on Monday, and we expect many more to be transported to our center,” said International Bird Rescue interim executive director Barbara Callahan.

“The good news is that we have modified our wash protocol and it appears to be working on healthier birds,” Callahan said. “However, some of the birds that have recently arrived are in much poorer condition, likely because they’ve had this substance on their feathers for several days now.”

International Bird Rescue has now set up [an online form for public reports](#) of beached birds suspected to be covered in the substance. Members of the public are not advised to collect birds at this time, given the unknown nature of the substance.

Officials are investigating whether the substance could be polyisobutylene, or PIB, which is sticky, odorless, largely colorless, and killed thousands of seabirds in the U.K. in 2013. “While on its face, this substance seems very similar to reports from the U.K. two years ago, we won’t know definitively until lab tests are completed,” Callahan said.

Surf Scoters, Buffleheads and Horned Grebes continue to be the most commonly affected species.

Because no responsible party for the incident has been identified, International Bird Rescue is currently paying for all costs associated with the event and is seeking the support of the public to care for these birds. Contributions can be made at birdrescue.org.

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Horned Grebe intake after being rescued on East Bay shoreline with mystery goo.



Horned Grebe in wash at IBR's San Francisco Bay Center to remove mystery goo

[Full resolution images online](http://ow.ly/HAhtj) : <http://ow.ly/HAhtj>

Please photo credit: Cheryl Reynolds, International Bird Rescue