



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2025

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Suspected Animal Cruelty Case: Brown Pelican Found in Marina Del Rey With Slashed Pouch

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Marina Del Rey, CA – A Brown Pelican suffering from a severe pouch injury – suspected to be caused by human actions – was admitted to International Bird Rescue on Saturday, December 13, 2025.

The adult female pelican has since undergone an intensive, three-hour surgery involving hundreds of stitches to repair a deep tear in her pouch that extended to the back of her neck, penetrating into the feathered skin behind her pouch on both sides. There were also two small horizontal cuts into the back of her throat. She is now resting comfortably and is expected to fully recover after about a month in care.

According to Dr. Rebecca Duerr, Senior Director of Research and Veterinary Science, the wounds appeared to be three to four days old, leaving the bird emaciated and unable to feed.

“If the bird is promptly rescued, these wounds are potentially fixable, but the pain and suffering the bird experiences is horrendous,” Dr. Duerr said. “The characteristics of the wound make it



appear to me that it was maliciously-caused. Fishing gear injuries and ingestion of inappropriate foods do not cause injuries like this – we see those injuries on a daily basis and this is different.”

Pelicans are protected under state and federal law, and harming or harassing them is illegal. Anyone who witnesses suspicious or harmful activity involving wildlife is urged to report it to the [CalTIP \(Californians Turn In Poachers & Polluters\)](https://www.caltip.org/) hotline 888-334-2258, the “CalTIP” app available in the App Store, or by texting “CALTIP”, followed by a space and the message, to 847411 (tip411).

Anyone who sees a bird in distress is encouraged to call Bird Rescue’s Bird Helpline at 866-SOS-BIRD (866-767-2473) or contact their local animal control.

Bird Rescue has had a history of successfully treating severe pouch injuries including [“Blue,” a pelican](#) rescued in San Pedro in 2024 and a [series of cases](#) found near Ventura Harbor in 2020.

Watch: [Understanding the difference between human vs not human caused pouch slashing](#) (video from 2020).

Bird Rescue is a non-profit wildlife organization that relies on public support to help fund the care of injured, sick and orphaned waterbirds. Donations are welcome at birdrescue.org/donate

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About International Bird Rescue

International Bird Rescue is a global conservation organization for birds in a changing world. Since 1971, Bird Rescue has responded to over 250 oil spills and other wildlife emergencies, caring for more than 160,000 birds on six continents. With crisis response centers in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Anchorage, the organization specializes in emergency preparedness and response, day-to-day aquatic bird care, professional training, and scientific research. Innovations are shared worldwide to inspire the next generation of wildlife specialists. Bird Rescue aims to give a voice to waterbirds through conservation, advocacy, and wildlife literacy that builds empathy and encourages action.

Bird Rescue’s Los Angeles Wildlife Center is located at 3601 S Gaffey St. San Pedro, CA 90731.

For more information, please visit birdrescue.org.