



NEWS RELEASE

City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services
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Marine Mammals and Birds Stranded on Beaches Expected to Increase LA Animal Services Warns: Leash Your Dogs!

Los Angeles – Marine mammal stranded on beaches are expected to increase over the next 3 to 4 months. One sensitive location for migratory sea birds and marine mammal strandings is the North Channel area in Venice/Marina Del Rey.

Lifeguards have reported as many as 50 free roaming dogs at any one time in this area. Free roaming dogs pose a significant risk to the health and safety of these animals. **All Angelenos are reminded they must comply with the City's Leash Law. LA Animal Services is increasing patrols in the Venice Beach area and will cite leash law violators.**

Recently a reported hypothermic seal attempting to beach at the North Channel area was forced to retreat into the ocean by over 20 free roaming dogs. Rescue efforts were thwarted by citizens who allow their dogs to run free in violation of the leash law.

Two years ago, dogs prevented a domoic sea lion from beaching, chasing her into the water each time she tried. The animal ultimately drowned. Domoic causes seizures and disorientation, if a sea lion is not allowed to beach, it will most likely drown.

Marine Animal Rescue has rescued 49 marine mammals so far in 2008, with 7 marine mammals and 6 sea birds rescued just this past weekend.

The majority of the birds rescued are Oiled Grebe's. Grebe's hips are placed so far back on their body that they cannot move well on land and become easy targets for playful or aggressive dogs. Harbor Seals and Elephant Seals cannot climb well which explains why these animals are seldom seen on the rocks; they need the beach.

Dogs are susceptible to diseases (Leptospirosis or Brucellosis) when they come in contact with Sea Lions. Sea Lions have been known to inflict fatal bites to dogs.

For 20 years, Marine Animal Rescue volunteers, working in concert with LA Animal Services, has come to the aid of entangled or beached whales, dolphins, seals, sea lions and sea birds along the California coast. Marine Animal Rescue volunteers have rescued thousands of marine animals. For more information on this organization visit: <http://www.whalerescueteam.org/>.

**For more information or assistance call LA Animal Services at
1-888-452LA-PET1/1-888-452-7381**

(TTY Hearing impaired: 877-875-8205) or visit the website at www.LAAnimalServices.com.

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