

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bird deaths a natural occurrence

Recent bad weather has increased the number of shearwaters being washed up along Victoria's coastline.

Rod Goring, Coastal Reserves Manager for the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC), said while the sight of the birds can be concerning, the deaths are a natural occurrence.

"The shearwater migration and the death of the birds is a natural phenomenon and GORCC is currently picking up birds where they have been washed up in large numbers," he said.

Also known as mutton birds, shearwaters travel from the Pacific Arctic regions to the south-eastern coast of Australia each year.

Stormy weather and strong winds make it difficult for birds to feed and if they are already in poor condition from the long migration this is enough to cause their death.

GORCC has identified large numbers of birds being washed up in some high recreational-use areas such as parts of the Lorne and Torquay foreshore.

"Our Coastal Reserves Team has removed a large number of birds at Lorne due to the prevailing winds pushing them toward the Surf Club. A large number has also been removed from the Torquay foreshore area," said Mr Goring.

The location of beach-washed birds depends on many factors. Last year the area between Portland and Apollo Bay experienced significant beach washing of shearwaters.

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For media enquiries please contact:

Jane Rowlands
Community Liaison Manager
Great Ocean Road Coast Committee
Ph: 5220 5055; Mob: 0427750628
Email: jane.r@gorcc.com.au
Website: www.gorcc.com.au

Caring for the coast and community

PO Box 53, Torquay, Vic 3228
Phone: 03 5220 5055 Fax: 03 5264 7763
Email: info@gorcc.com.au Web: www.gorcc.com.au

