



Alaska Seabird Die-off

Partners seek information on sick or dead birds

What's Happening?

Historically, seabird die-offs have occurred occasionally; however, large die-off events have occurred annually in Alaska since 2015, and birds examined were determined to have died due to starvation.

Beginning in May 2019, reports of dead murres and puffins were received from the northern Bering and Chukchi seas.

Since late June 2019, we continue to receive reports of an on-going die-off of shearwaters from the Bristol Bay region, including Togiak, Naknek, Egegik, Pilot Point and Port Heiden.

What's Being Done?

The USFWS is coordinating with federal, state, tribal partners, as well as community members to collect reports and document these mortality events. With help from Alaska Sea Grant, Local Environmental Observation (LEO) Network, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, and the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (COASST), we are tracking the number of birds involved, geographic area affected, and duration of the die-off event.

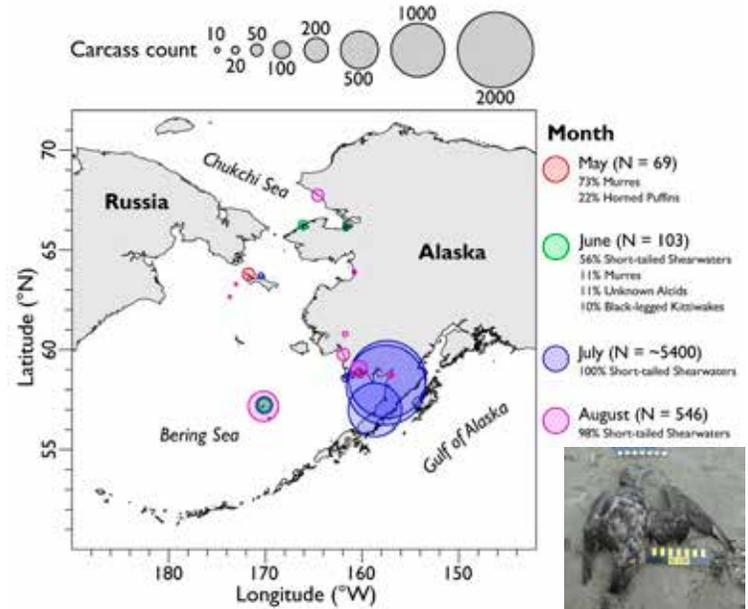
Seabird carcasses from Shishmaref, Naknek, Pilot Point and Port Heiden were collected and sent to the USGS National Wildlife Health Center for examination and testing. Initial results indicate starvation as the cause of death. Tissues sampled during examination will be analyzed for harmful algal bloom toxins and those results will be shared as they become available.

What Can I Do?

Report observations of sick or dead birds to regional partners:

- **North Slope:** Taqulik Hepa (907) 852-0350
- **Northwest Arctic:** Cyrus Harris (907) 442-7914
- **Bering Strait Region:** Brandon Ahmasuk (907) 443-4265 or Gay Sheffield (907) 434-1149
- **Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta:** Jennifer Hooper (907) 543-7470
- **Bristol Bay:** Gayla Hoseth (907) 842-6252
- **Pribilof Islands:** Lauren Divine (907) 891-3031
- **Unalaska:** Melissa Good (907) 581-1876
- **Aleutians:** Karen Pletnikoff (907) 222-4286

Or report by phone or email to the USFWS:
1-866-527-3358 or AK_MBM@FWS.GOV



Information to report includes:

- Location, Time & Date observed
- Size of area observed (e.g. length of beach)
- Type & number of birds (count or estimate)
- Photos of sick/dead birds
- Video of unusual behavior (approachable, drooping wings)

Participate in monitoring efforts on your local beaches:

COASST provides training. Visit www.coasst.org.



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