



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### Interior Offers Reward For Information On Pelican Mutilators

The director of the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Robert Jantzen, today said he deplored the inhumane mutilation of brown pelicans in Southern California which has been widely reported in the news media recently. He said his department is offering a \$5,000 reward to anyone who provides information leading to the conviction of the perpetrators.

Within the last few days, more than a dozen brown pelicans, an endangered species, have been found near San Clemente with their upper beaks deliberately cut off. Some birds have already washed ashore dead. The condition will lead to certain starvation in the wild because they are unable to catch anchovies--their primary food.

Attempts are being made to capture the affected birds and possibly fit them with artificial bills. A special task force has been established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to investigate these incidents.

Calling the action "sadistic and macabre," Jantzen noted that the birds are only now making an encouraging recovery from the reproductive failures of the 1960's which are due to DDT. The species was placed on the endangered list in 1970.

Violations of the Endangered Species Act are punishable by maximum fines of \$10,000 for civil violations and \$20,000 for criminal violations with jail sentences ranging up to one year.

Anyone having information on these acts should contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement agents or wardens from the California Department of Fish and Game.

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