



## **Seabird Protection Network Outreach/Education**

### **Phase I through V Summary**

The Seabird Protection Network Outreach/Education program launched in December of 2010 with its first Phase. During the first year the brochure, website, and Seabird Olympics outreach game, banner, and table top display were developed and field tested. The Outreach/Education Working Group was established and began to advise the program coordinator on an outreach action plan in response to results from the first monitoring updates.

Phase II saw the increase of outreach programs with the geographical area to target narrowed down to three key locations with the highest disturbance rates. Partnerships were formed with the City of Pismo Beach, City of Morro Bay, Port San Luis Harbor Department, and Morro Bay Harbor Department to make targeted outreach possible on partners' coastal frontage and to provide seabird awareness training to lifeguards, harbor patrol, and managers. Seabird SAFE waterproof kayak stickers were developed for targeted outreach to businesses that rent kayaks, electric boats, SUPs, etc... to be installed on their watercraft. The seabird outreach set-up including a branded canopy, tablecloths and tables was purchased for outreach events. Two SPN-CCNM interpretive panels were developed and fabricated. A key partnership was developed with the Central Coast Aquarium to provide ongoing outreach at their site, seabird exhibit development in their center, training and materials for their staff, and children's seabird programs during their summer camp. Annual outreach participation in the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival began. Coordination with BLM LE Officers supported the outreach programs during events and campground visits. PBCS staff presented at outreach events and supported and advised on outreach program development. A Seabird LE Partner brochure was created for the LE Lead.

Phase III saw the further targeting of outreach to specific geographical areas with a focus on Shell Beach, Montaña de Oro, and Estero Bluffs State Parks. The program coordinator began providing training for coastal interpreters who manage interpretive sites and volunteer programs along the entire California coast. The first Wildlife Awareness workshops were given in Morro Bay and Shell Beach to target businesses that put people on the water and to work together to make an action plan for decreasing wildlife disturbance. Many key actions were prioritized by the group and subsequently incorporated into the action plan for implementation. Outreach was provided during breeding seasons in key sites at Shell Beach, MdO, and Estero Bluffs to protect seabirds and educate visitors.

Phase IV brought a key partnership with Sea Otter Savvy. The two wildlife disturbance campaigns banded together to provide Wildlife Awareness Workshops for the San Luis Obispo county coastal partners and businesses. The first Wildlife Disturbance Symposium for ocean program managers



was planned and implemented. Out of the first symposium came more partnerships, and a commitment from many groups to launch a Respect Wildlife campaign. Two videos highlighting MPAs (funded by the RLFF through the MPA Collaborative) and seabird SAFE viewing were produced for Visitor TV that show in hotel rooms throughout the county as well as in the airport. The SPN Outreach team began participating in the Morro Bay Harbor Festival reaching a high number of visitors with Seabird SAFE viewing tips. Citizen science volunteers and outreach volunteers were recruited during the festival. A seabird exhibit with Seabird SAFE viewing guidelines was developed and installed in the Coastal Discovery Center in Hearst San Simeon State Park. Seasonal seabird exhibits were created and displayed in the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History. The Seabird SAFE campaign was featured in an exhibit at the California MidState Fair in the California State Parks 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary exhibits reaching thousands of fair-goers.

Phase V saw the expansion of the program grow into a kayak and land-based volunteer program in Morro Bay. The 25 volunteers called the SeaLife Stewards were successful in preventing disturbance of seabirds, sea otters, sea lions and harbor seals in Morro Bay. They also conducted citizen science documenting disturbance. The program was funded in part by a grant from the Morro Bay National Estuary Program that funded the majority of the new equipment. Partnerships were strengthened and seabird SAFE messaging was reinforced with Morro Bay Harbor Department, US Coast Guard, California Department of Fish and Wildlife who helped train the volunteers and supported them while on the water. The volunteers also participated in special events in the region. The second Wildlife Disturbance Symposium was planned, held, and facilitated. Seabird outreach began at Piedras Blancas Light Station during special events and tours. Coordination with the SLO County CBID created a flyer that is in a majority of hotels in the county that has wildlife viewing tips for land-based and on the water viewing. A partnership was started with Shell Beach Elementary School.