

**Wildlife Investigations Laboratory**



Wildlife Rehabilitation  
2007 Annual Report  
California Department of Fish and Game

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As a condition of the wildlife rehabilitation Memorandum of Understanding, permittees are required to provide an "End of the Year Annual Report" to notify the Department regarding the species, number and final disposition of animal received.

Wildlife rehabilitation facilities are required to submit a yearly report that includes reporting the disposition of animals handled in the following categories: Total number of species received, total number transferred, total number pending (still being evaluated), total number released, total number expired, and total number euthanized. The reports are sent to and kept by the state wildlife rehabilitation coordinator. This report summarizes the results of 2007 wildlife rehabilitation activities.

In the year 2007, one hundred and eight (108) permitted California wildlife rehabilitation facilities received 68,437 sick, injured or orphaned wild animals from the general public. As in previous years, the majority of wildlife species brought to facilities were birds. In 2007, a total of 51,167 birds were received, 16,993 mammals and 277 reptiles. Birds represent 74 percent of the animals received, mammals represent 24 percent and reptiles represent 2 percent of the animals received. See Table 1.

Species	Total	Percentage
Birds	51, 167	74%
Mammals	16,993	24%
Reptiles	273	2%

Table 1. Summary % of Types of Terrestrial Species Received (2007)

Four hundred and ten (410) different species were rehabilitated including 318 different types of bird species, 70 different types of mammal species and 22 different types of reptile species.

The most common mammal brought into rehabilitation facilities in 2007 was the non-native Virginia Opossum, *Didelphis virginiana* (6,437). The majority of the opossums turned in from the public were from urban areas around the SF Bay Area and the Los Angeles/ San Diego area. The most common bird turned into rehabilitation facilities was the Mallard Duck, *Anas platyrhynchos* (4,798). Other animals frequently turned into rehabilitation facilities include Mourning Doves, *Zenaida macroura* (3,320), House Sparrows, *Passer domesticus* (2,566), Raccoons, *Procyon lotor* (1400) and Western Gray Squirrels, *Sciurus griseus* (778).

Six hundred and sixty nine (669) animals classified as threatened or endangered species were turned into rehabilitation centers. These species included 29 Bald Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, 5 Willow Flycatcher, *Empidonax traillii*, 44 Swainson's Hawk, *Buteo swainsoni*, 2 Marbled Murrelet, *Brachyramphus marmoratus*, 7 Spotted Owl, *Strix occidentalis*, 7 Snowy Plover, *Charadrius*

*alexandrinus*, 7 Clapper Rail, *Rallus longirostris*, 12 Least Turn, *Sterna antillarum*, 62 Bank Swallows, *Riparia riparia*, 1 Yellow Billed Cuckoo, *Coccyzus americanus*, 491 Brown Pelican, *Pelicanus occidentalis*, and 2 Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, *Reithrodontomys raviventris*.

Desert Tortoises found by the public are considered non-releasable because they are most likely captive pets that escaped or were released. Captive tortoises are not releasable because of the potential of spreading disease back into the wild tortoise population. A total of 997 Desert Tortoises were turned into wildlife rehabilitation facilities. It must be noted that this data was not recorded in the total number of reptiles because these animals are not rehabilitated and do not go through the rehabilitation process; however the frequency of intake is notable. The California Turtle and Tortoise Club works in finding adoption homes for these animals and facilitates tracking of permits for tortoises. In past rehabilitation "End of the Year Reports" these animals may have been part of the total number of reptiles received, however, as mentioned above, these animals are not being rehabilitated therefore their numbers are recognized separately in this report and in future reports.

The data collected from "2007 End of the Year Reports" was totaled by each Department Region and reports are available for each Region. This will enable any person interested in wildlife rehabilitation data to see how the different Regions of California compare to with respect to species and numbers.

There has been a slight decline in the number of species received at rehabilitation facilities over the past 4 years. Public Education could be part of the reason the number of animals turned into rehab facilities is on the decline. Other factors could be the publicity from the media over the past four or five years about West Nile and Avian Influenza H5N1. The public may be more apprehensive to pick up sick or injured wildlife for the fear of contracting a zoonotic disease. The table below shows the total number of wildlife species received by rehabilitation facilities since the Department started compiling the data in 2004. (Numbers are approximate.)

Year	Total Number Animals Received
2004	83,000
2005	75,696
2006	69,153
2007	68,437

Table 2. Previous Year End totals compared to 2007 Totals

Six orphaned bear cubs were found by the public and turned into the Department in 2007. Five of the bear cubs were sent to Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care. Two of the cubs came from Yosemite National Park and were released back into the Park by federal biologist. One cub was found in Kern County and released back

into Kern County. Two cubs were released in Christmas Valley, El Dorado County. One female bear cub found orphaned in Auburn was cared for at the Region 2 animal pens. This cub was released at Sagehen Creek Field Station on January 2, 2008. The cub was ear tagged with a radio transmitter and two telemetry flights were used to track the cub. The first telemetry flight on July 21, 2008, located the cub approximately two miles northwest of the release site. The second telemetry flight on October 28, 2008, failed to receive a signal in the area. The telemetry flight consisted of a 10 mile transect around the release site and did not pick up another signal. All cubs were released into man-made winter dens in February 2008.