



Wildlife entangled in rubbish, fishing line and hooks

Entanglement of birds and wildlife in discarded fishing lines, plastic bags and rubbish is unfortunately an all too common occurrence. Hundreds of such predicaments are reported to us each year.

It's not always easy to help an animal that has been caught in plastic or fishing line. Often, they are wary or skittish and will try to elude you. Birds can be dangerous to handle - their razor sharp beaks, spurs or claws can do serious damage. They may still be capable of flying or swimming off, so are difficult to catch. The rescue process often requires a coordinated approach by a group of dedicated volunteers and can be ongoing over several weeks.

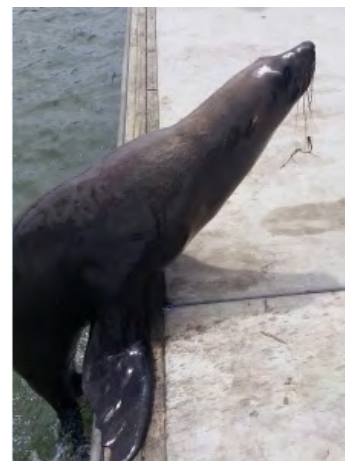
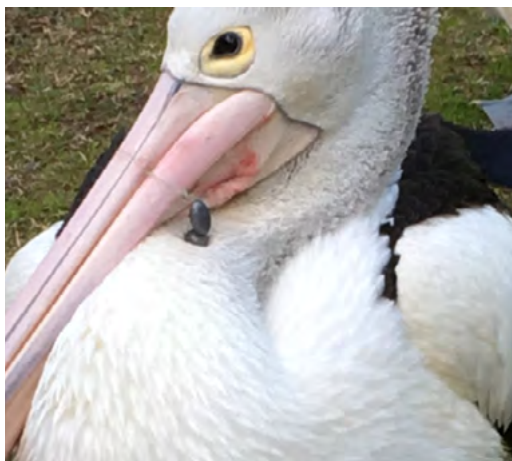
The best thing to do is to take a photo of the animal and its location and give us a call. Keep an eye on the animal until a rescuer arrives, and avoid approaching too closely so as not to frighten it off.

How you can help

- **Bin discarded fishing lines, hooks and nets**

It is common for hooks to become caught in a bird's mouth or throat which can lead to infections and abscesses, and a slow painful death. Other marine life can also be affected.

We have seen birds' feet entangled in fishing line, severely restricting their mobility so they become easy prey for other animals. This can also impede their ability to feed successfully. If a bird becomes snared on vegetation and trapped to a bank it will lose mobility and could potentially drown.



We hope that by increasing your understanding and awareness of our beautiful wildlife, you feel empowered to deal with wildlife situations confidently in an informed, safe and appropriate manner. For support at any time, please call our emergency response service for advice on **03 8400 7300** or report the details on our website: www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au.



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- **Cut open any closed loops or rings before disposal**

Plastic drink rings, can holders and elastic bands can easily get caught around beaks, necks and legs. Even the handles of plastic shopping bags and grocery bags can be a threat to wildlife.



- **Wash out cans and pinch them shut**

Rinse out all food remnants from cans and containers to avoid attracting hungry creatures, then crush or pinch shut the opening before disposal so animals can't get trapped inside or be injured by sharp edges.

- **Tie plastic bags tightly**

Animals can ingest or suffocate inside plastic bags, so tie them tightly before disposal in recycling bins. Better still, replace plastic with reusable cloth shopping bags instead.

- **Stop using balloons**

Cut up and dispose of balloons responsibly. Released balloons will eventually end up in the oceans where they will be ingested by marine life.

- **Avoid plastics and microplastics**

Avoid using plastic utensils and takeaway cups and containers. Carelessly discarded items can choke or injure wildlife.

Craft glitter and microbeads (found in some cosmetics and skincare) don't biodegrade and end up in the food chain. Look for natural or biodegradable alternatives instead.

- **Don't litter!**

All rubbish dropped in the street will eventually wash down a stormwater drain and end up in our oceans or waterways. Reduce, reuse or recycle as much waste as possible and always dispose of the rest responsibly.

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