



## SEA BIRDS

GULLS AND TERNS, CORMORANTS,  
GANNETS, LOONS, MARINECKS

### KEY FACTS

Sea Birds nest in colonies and usually return to the same colony site every year.

- Clutch size is 1-3 eggs depending on the species.
- Incubation is between 22 and 26 days.
- Young chicks stay in the nest for about 2 weeks. Both parents feed the chicks.
- Parents stay around the fledgling for protection and the young usually stay with the parents for 6 months.

Hérons and Egrets also live near the water, both fresh and salt water. They will fish in marshes, rivers, and wetlands.



Wildlife Rehabilitators' Association of Massachusetts

## NESTS

All seabirds must be onshore to nest. Many seabirds live in colonies in close proximity to each other. It is unusual to see a baby alone without parents and it likely needs to be rescued.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A SEABIRD

#### If the bird is acting weak and you determine it needs help:

- Keep your face away from the bird.
- Throw a towel or clothing over the bird, then grasp bill with one hand, enough to keep it closed but not tightly.
- With your other hand, scoop the bird up, holding the wings close to your body.
- Place the bird in a box large enough for the bird with adequate air holes. If a box is not available, wrap the bird in a towel or clothing.

#### If the bird is healthy but has a fishing line attached:

- If he is in the water, slowly reel in the bird, scooping him up with a fishing net.
- Throw a towel or clothing over the bird, then grasp bill with one hand gently but firmly.
- With the other hand restrain his wings against his body.
- Unwind the fishing line, checking to see if any mono-filament line remains and has cut into the bird.
- **If the fishing line has caused an injury, bring it to a wildlife rehabilitator.**
- If the bird has no obvious injury and is not showing signs of distress, release the bird in the same area in which you found it.

#### If the bird is hooked or has swallowed a hook, **DO NOT** try to remove the hook.

- Follow the steps above to get the bird into a container.
- Call a wildlife rehabilitator or a Wildlife Care Center

**Cormorants, loons and some other sea birds can only take off on water. If you find one of these birds grounded in a parking lot, road or on a beach, it most likely needs help. Please follow steps above to get bird in a container. Call a wildlife rehabilitator or Wildlife Care Center.**

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/find-a-wildlife-rehabilitator>