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### **SEA LIFE PARK HAWAII ASKS COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE DURING SHEARWATER FLEDGLING SEASON**

WAIMĀNALO, O'AHU, HAWAII (Dec. 11, 2014) – In Hawai'i, December brings big surf, cooler temperatures and stronger breezes. While it's a pleasant change for most people, it's a dangerous time for the new flock of shearwater fledglings. Sea Life Park is asking the community keep their eyes out for baby seabirds that may have been injured by the winter weather patterns.

"We luckily haven't had the numbers of distressed birds being brought in this year as in the past," said Jeff Pawloski, curator at Sea Life Park. "However, we still want people to be on the look out for them. Fledging birds become disoriented while flying at night by street and other exterior lighting, they begin to tire and could land far from their nesting area."

If the bird is a hatchling (freshly hatched, no feathers) or a nestling (fuzzy, few feathers) and shows no signs of injuries, it is best for the bird to be left alone as it will probably return to its nest. The bird may not have been abandoned by its mother and she may be nearby.

A fledgling (with most of its feathers, frequently hops on the ground) is often seen on the ground near bushes or tall grass. It leaves the nest as part of the weaning process or may hop out to test its wings. Usually, the mother remains in the area, feeding and watching over it. If you see the mother, it's best to leave the bird alone.

However, if you do not see the mother, the bird has apparent injuries such as a bent wing, or is in an unsafe situation (i.e. possibly attacked by a cat or dog), follow these temporary care instructions:

- Pick it up from behind, wrapping a cloth around its back and wings.
- Find a medium/large-sized box and place a folded towel at the bottom.
- Ensure there are holes in the box big enough for airflow.
- Place the bird in the box and keep in a dark, quiet place.
- Keep the bird warm.
- Please don't feed or leave a dish of water for the bird.
- Leave the bird alone; don't handle or bother it and always keep children and pets away.

On O'ahu, injured seabirds can be taken to the Seabird Rehabilitation Facility at Sea Life Park. The facility is equipped to receive injured birds 24/7. Anyone dropping off an injured bird is asked to provide information on where the bird was found as requested by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **About Sea Life Park Hawai'i**

Sea Life Park Hawai'i is not only a fascinating visitor attraction, it is a repository of knowledge, a refuge and a habitat for some of Hawai'i's most important and beloved sea creatures. The park is open daily from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission is \$29.99 for adults and \$19.99 for children ages 3-12. Kama'aina rates are available. For information, visit the Park's website at [www.sealifeparkhawaii.com](http://www.sealifeparkhawaii.com) or call (808) 259-2500.

Sea Life Park is a member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums and is owned and operated by Palace Entertainment.

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