



California condors.

Zoo

Story courtesy LA Zoo; Photos by Tad Motoyama, LA Zoo

Condors on the Mend

LA Zoo treats record high 21 California condors for lead toxicity in October.

The Gottlieb Animal Health and Conservation Center at the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens bustled in October with the admittance of 21 California condors, a record high brought in by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for lead treatment.

"We're extremely alarmed at the high number of condors coming in during this hunting season," said Dr. Curtis Eng, Chief Veterinarian and Manager, California Condor Program at the Los Angeles Zoo. "Normally when the birds are brought in they appear perfectly healthy, and when we test their blood we find high levels of lead. As a result, they need treatment. In addition to the high number of birds, what is even more alarming lately is a few of the birds brought in this time have been sickened by the lead, which is unusual. These birds have been coming in at a low body weight, not eating at all, and showing signs of crop stasis, when the

stomach stops moving food. That's scary to see so many clinically sick birds."

Due to the risk of lead exposure to California condors being so great, the wildlife biologists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trap these endangered birds twice a year for routine lead blood testing, typically once in June and once at the end of the hunting season in November or December. If positive, typically the birds are brought in to the Zoo by the wildlife biologists for intensive treatment. The Los Angeles Zoo oversees the medical treatment for all of the condors in the state of California. Upon arrival, the birds receive a thorough physical examination, radiographs to determine if any metal particles are within the bird, blood drawn to assess organ function of the animal, and then the animal is treated for lead toxicity. Most birds respond quickly to the treatment, being released within 3 weeks.

Some take much longer, but overall the prognosis is very good when they do not show signs of illness.

On Oct. 11, Gov. Jerry Brown signed historic legislation into law that makes California the first state to require hunters to use non-lead ammunition, to be phased in by 2019. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service believe this to be a step in the right direction toward preserving these rare and beautiful birds.

In the meantime, the Los Angeles Zoo will continue its support of the California Condor Recovery Program, a conservation group. The Zoo and the California Condor Recovery Program have been working

together since the 1980s.

About the Los Angeles Zoo

The Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens is in Griffith Park at the junction of the Ventura (134) and Golden State (5) free-ways. Admission is \$18 for adults and \$13 for children ages 2 to 12. The Zoo is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. For information, call (323) 644-4200 or visit the L.A. Zoo Web site at www.lazoo.org.



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LAFACE

Help the Typhoon Victims

Filipino Employees Association asks for your help in assisting Philippines disaster.



The Los Angeles Filipino Association of City Employees (LAFACE) is asking Club Members to help support relief efforts in response to Typhoon Haiyan, reportedly the largest typhoon ever to hit land. Winds of up to 195 miles per hour and gusting to 225 mph, hit the Filipino island of Leyte, Nov. 7. At press time, the typhoon is estimated to have killed more than 1,800 and displaced hundreds of thousands. Most of those who survived are living in dire circumstances. The number of dead is expected to rise substantially.

Those wishing to assist the relief efforts may visit these relief organizations recommended by LAFACE:

- Filipino Red Cross: www.redcross.org.ph/
- Philippines Government Relief: www.dswd.gov.ph/
- Philippines National Disaster Council: www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/

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