

When balloons fly, seabirds die.

You can be part of the solution.
Blow bubbles instead of balloons
at outdoor events.



Blow bubbles not balloons.

At your next outdoor event, promise to use wildlife-friendly alternatives, such as bubbles, instead of balloons and help save seabirds.

When we think of marking a special occasion we often think of using balloons. However, balloons and their attachments (including ribbon and balloon clips) can harm wildlife.

When balloons are used outdoors, there is a chance they could end up in oceans and waterways harming seabirds, such as the Flesh-footed Shearwater, through ingestion and entanglement.

Balloons can be fun. But they don't belong outside.



A Flesh-footed Shearwater chick

Case Study:

On the remote Lord Howe Island, off Australia's east coast, Flesh-footed Shearwaters are currently in decline due to mistakenly ingesting rubbish that has found its way into our oceans. In many cases, adult birds are feeding their chicks this rubbish thinking it is food. Baby birds are often found underweight and starving; without urgent intervention they could die before ever leaving the nest.

A 2014 survey found 100% of Flesh-footed Shearwater chicks had ingested rubbish. Throughout many years of study on Lord Howe Island, balloons and their attachments continue to be one of the most identifiable items found in these birds¹.



An adult Shearwater



Plastic items commonly found inside Shearwaters



Balloon clips are removed from an adult Shearwater.

Measuring our impact.

With help from our partners at Lord Howe Island and Phillip Island Nature Parks, we will monitor the prevalence of balloons and their attachments on beaches and in the ocean over time.

Annual sampling of the stomach contents of shearwater chicks will also be undertaken at these two sites with the hope of seeing a reduction in the amount of balloon waste present.



More information
zoo.org.au/balloons
takeaction@zoo.org.au

Program Partners
Phillips Island Nature Parks
University of South Australia
Lord Howe Island Museum

¹Studies on Lord Howe Island have shown 79% of Flesh-footed Shearwater chicks contained plastic debris in 2005-2007; rising to 100% in 2010, and has now been averaging around 90% since 2011 (Lavers, Bon and Hutton, 2014).
Photos by Ian Hutton.