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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RARE SEABIRD BROUGHT TO WILD CARE, IN WAKE OF HURRICANE JOSE

*Eastham, MA. September 26, 2017.* Hurricane Jose has left dozens of battered seabirds in its wake on Cape Cod. including a rare tropical seabird, a Masked Booby that was rescued by Wild Care, Inc., a wildlife rehabilitation hospital located in Eastham.

“We received a call today about an injured bird at LeCount’s Hollow in Wellfleet. We arranged for volunteer Claudia Rothman to go out and rescue the bird, which was identified as a “gannet” over the phone. Much to our surprise, the bird was not a gannet, but instead was a species of booby (a tropical relative of the Northern Gannet), states Stephanie Ellis, Wild Care’s Executive Director. “We immediately examined the bird to assess its condition. The bird is very thin, weak and is experiencing respiratory discomfort likely due to a fungal infection. The bird’s condition is grave, but we are providing supportive care and keeping it comfortable at this time.”

Stephanie immediately contacted Mark Faherty, Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary’s Science Coordinator to alert him of this special patient. Mark confirmed the bird’s identification as a “Masked Booby”, and stated there has been “a single Massachusetts record, from a boat at the continental shelf, 100 miles south of Nantucket in 2015.”

So, what is it exactly that makes this bird so special? This species is a rare visitor to our shorelines. The Masked Booby breeds throughout the world’s tropical oceans and islands and is most commonly sighted along the Gulf of Mexico, with breeding attempts on the Dry Tortugas, Fl. and the Hawaiian Islands. It is otherwise not commonly seen in North America. (For species-related info, please contact Mark Faherty, Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Science Coordinator. Cell 774-288-9465.)

The booby is not the only bird washed up from Hurricane Jose. Wild Care currently has several shearwaters, gannets, and a cormorant in their care. Donations to help with rescue and care are needed and welcomed.

https://www.wildcarecapecod.org/donate-today/

Due to the critical condition of this bird, and the unknown outcome, Wild Care kindly requests that the public refrain from visiting and calling for updates. “Wild Care is not open to the public, and stabilization of this bird is critical at this time,” states Ellis. “Please refer to our Facebook page for regular updates at: “WildCareCapeCod”. It is our hope that beachgoers will be on the lookout for other injured or stranded seabirds. If you find a bird in distress, please call our Wildlife Helpline at 508-240-2255.”

**ABOUT**

WILD CARE’s wildlife rehabilitators treat birds, mammals and reptiles brought to the center, with the goal of releasing them back into the wild when they are capable of independent survival. Through public education, WILD CARE works to prevent wildlife casualties and works to engage the community in conservation through volunteerism. Since our founding WILD CARE has accepted over 25,000 wild creatures, representing over 275 species of native birds, mammals and reptiles. If you encounter injured, orphaned or ill wildlife please call the WILD CARE of Cape Cod helpline at 508-240-2255. Visit WILD CARE’s website at [www.wildcarecapecod.org](http://www.wildcarecapecod.org) to make a donation.

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