

California condors dying of lead poisoning

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Scientists say California condors are ingesting deadly levels of lead by feasting on the carcasses of animals killed by hunters.

Biologists say they've seen a condor drop out of the sky dead from lead poisoning and have recorded blood lead concentrations 40 times the level considered toxic in humans, The Los Angeles Times reported Friday. The biologists say secondhand lead from bullets is the most persistent threat to the re-establishment of California condors in the wild.

A bill passed this summer by the California Legislature would ban lead ammunition in condor habitats, although it is unclear if Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will sign it, the newspaper said.

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