

Storms 'slaughter' kills over 21,000 birds on French coast

February 26 2014



A wave crashes against the breakwater of Lomener in Ploemeur, western France on February 5, 2014 as Brittany and the Atlantic coasts were facing winds of 100 kilometres an hour

More than 21,000 sea birds have died since the end of January on France's Atlantic coast due to storms in the worst "slaughter" in a century, the national Bird Protection League (LPO) said Wednesday.

A total of 21,341 dead [birds](#) had been counted up to February 24 on the

southwestern Basque coast and in Brittany in northwestern France, a statement said.

The worst affected species were the Atlantic Puffin, the Common Murre or Common Guillemot and the Razorbill, it said.

Nearly 2,800 were housed in bird protection shelters in these areas, the LPO said, adding that this was a provisional toll and the final numbers could be much higher.

It said the count had been carried out over three weekends and involved more than 500 volunteers.

The birds basically died of starvation, LPO's Nicolas Gendre told AFP, adding that the "storms had forced the birds to areas that are less rich in food".

He said the last such toll only occurred in 1900. Gendre said that the birds used up more energy to survive and seek food during storms.

Although most of the bird deaths were caused by the weather conditions, the LPO said there had also been some caused by pollution as a result of cargo ships taking advantage of the inclement conditions to dump [noxious gases](#) at sea.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Storms 'slaughter' kills over 21,000 birds on French coast (2014, February 26) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-02-storms-slaughter-birds-french-coast.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.