

**ANIMALS AS LITTER VICTIMS AT THE
GERMAN NORTH SEA COAST**

G. J. Vauk and Eckart Schrey
North German Academy for Nature Conservation
Norddeutsche Naturschutzakademie
Hof Mohr, D-3043 Schneverdingen
Federal Republic of Germany

ABSTRACT

Over a distance of 65 km at 12 beaches of the German North Sea coast, 64 entangled vertebrates belonging to 14 species (mainly gulls, gannets, guillemots) were found dead from August 1983 to April 1988.

On the island of Helgoland, furthermore, 53 living seabirds belonging to 11 species (most gannets) were observed as entangled with remains of ships' litter. In at least 46 cases, plastic material was involved, so that the chance of survival of the animals must be rated as very low.

The numbers quoted must be considered as minimums, since not all animals affected or entangled with litter reached the shore or were found there. Also those animals which died as a result of litter ingestion are not listed.