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42 Penguins Dead As Tasmania Continues To Struggle With Dog Attacks

By [JR Ventura](#)

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Forty-two little penguins were reported to have been “mauled to death” last Thursday as Tasmania continues to struggle with the sudden upsurge in dog attacks for the past year.

The recent fatalities brought the death toll of young penguins to more than 170 and the seventh attack on the animal's colonies in the north and north-west section of Tasmania in the past year.

[ABC News](#) echoed the dismay of Eric Woehler when the issue was unearthed and brought up.

“It's unbelievable that we're having this conversation yet again,” said Woehler, convenor of Birdlife Tasmania.

Woehler's disheartening statement couldn't come at a better time considering that Tasmania is facing what could be the downward spiral of their tourism industry.

“It just seems that we barely forget about one dog attack and then there's another one that happens almost straight away,” he added.

The state saw 58 deaths at the Lower Head Conservation Area in [October](#) and another 12 were discovered in a garbage bin last [June](#).

Sondra Roberts, treasurer of the Penguin Rehab and Release facility described the chicks to be fragile and that they “need intensive care.”

“They're struggling. They're little, they're vulnerable, they can't fly,” pointed Roberts after they “swung into action” after the recent attack and initiated a rescue operation.

The source said that the facility were able to rescue 10 chicks, but “one has since died.”

As part of their care, little penguins are kept in a dark room and on separate boxes.

Roberts and her colleagues have had “hectic” days as they continue to push the survival rates of the chicks.

At one point, a volunteer had to insert a tube down the penguin's throat to keep them fed, and the process has to “that every two hours and at the time she was doing that for 10 chicks.”

Despite their best efforts from installing fences and security cameras to even dog bans, Roberts still fears that the colony in Wynyard might not make it after “one of the local people” said that the colony that he's involved with only has around 20 penguins left.

University of Tasmania associate professor Chris Burridge shared the sentiments of Woehler and Roberts.

“We will certainly lose local colonies if there's no intervention to protect those colonies from access by predators.

“If we lose individual colonies, the existence of that species in Tasmania overall becomes more tenuous,” he said.