

Wildlife Dying After Oil Slick Hits New England Coast



WILDLIFE MERCY MISSION

—Boston Record-American photo

Corpsman Rush to Aid

One of America's most beautiful pieces of land was recently hit by a huge glob of floating crude oil that seriously damaged beaches and wild life. Cape Cod, a slender finger of land on the Massachusetts coast, was struck by the oil slick on April 16. The oil is believed to have come from a sunken World War II freighter.

Since the WELLFLEET (Massachusetts) center is located only a few hundred yards from the ocean on Cape Cod, Corpsmen were among the first to discover the disaster.

As emergency plans were being laid out by State officials, Wellfleet Corpsmen decided to do something immediately about the hundreds of helpless sea birds caught in the mess. The birds were completely

covered with oil and unable to fly.

Under the direction of park rangers and Audubon Society officials, the Corpsmen combed 28 miles of beach during the first three days. When they came upon a living bird, it was carefully carried back to the center's laundry room, washed and dried and placed under shelter for recovery.

For most of the 568 birds collected, the ordeal was just too much. All but 40 have died since being found. Since every bird would probably have died without help, Corpsmen feel that even this small number of survivors made the effort worthwhile. Rescue work will continue until all stricken birds in the area have been located and helped.