

THE OIL SPILL

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Scientists and Volunteers help animals injured from the oil spill.

You are an animal trying to get oil off of you, struggling, trying to get unstuck but you can't. You are an animal involved in an oil spill.

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An oil spill happens when a tube that carries oil on land or in the ocean breaks or explodes. An oil spill happened on April 20, 2010, in the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico is the water at the south eastern corner of North America, and on the border of Mexico. Oil spread all over the ocean. No one knows exactly how much oil was spilled, but it was estimated to be 5,000 barrels a day. The BP company was responsible for the oil spill. The leak stopped on September 19, 2010. The tube was sealed, closed. 4,900,000 barrels of oil spilled. When an oil spill happens in the ocean, it's more difficult to clean up. The oil spill is over now, but lots of animals got very hurt. Birds couldn't fly, animals such as sea turtles couldn't move because oil spread on them, and scientists were worried about how big the clean up would be. Some animals died from the oil and some survived.

How were animals taken care of?

Scientists hired volunteers because they needed extra help with all of the things they needed to do to help out the animals. Volunteers had to be taught to take care of animals. The cleaning up process took at least 7 steps before animals went back to the wild. Volunteers had to find injured animals and then animals got physical exams. Animals were also warmed, fed, and given water. Animals were allowed to rest for 48 hours, and last, animals were bathed in a mixture of soap and hot water. One way sea turtles got help from scientists and volunteers is that they got oil off by using cotton balls. Many animals could go back to the wild, but it could take three days to several months for animals to get back to the wild, and their original, clean habitat.

