

## Very Toxic Algal Bloom in Monterey Bay, USA: Seafloor Littered with Dead Fish

By [ENENews](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Environment](#)

[KSBW](#), May 29, 2015 (emphasis added): *Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: Mass die-off could happen* - "We are beginning with continuing coverage of that algae bloom in the Monterey Bay. Scientists say they're seeing the highest levels of red tide in more than a decade, and they're **worried it will have grave impacts on marine life...** [It] spreads **all up and down the West Coast**. Researchers in Santa Cruz have already **recorded a mass die-off of anchovies** and they expected more species could follow."

[KSBW](#), May 29, 2015: Scientists with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary are **predicting a mass die-off** on the Central Coast... **Up and down the West Coast**, a large algal bloom of Pseudo-nitzschia is **growing rapidly**.

[Chris Scholin, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute \(MBARI\)](#), May 28, 2015: *Very Toxic Algal Bloom in Monterey Bay* — I wanted to let you know we have been following a very big bloom of Pseudo-nitzschia over the past couple of weeks here in the bay, and the amount of associated domoic acid is **really extraordinary...** Yesterday I noticed **anchovies washing upon** the beach in front of MBARI **as far as I could see**. There's also **lines of fish scales (anchovy?) marking the high tide line...** One of the staff went snorkeling off the beach here, and saw **the seafloor littered with anchovies...** keep an eye out for seizing sealions, sick birds, maybe sick otters... **We think this is a very large event...** Don't eat shellfish or forage fish from MB — very nasty right now!!!

[KSBW](#), May 29, 2015: "New tonight... researchers say a large algae bloom **has taken over the Monterey Bay**"... *Jim Birch, MBARI*: "We're seeing these really high domoic acid levels in both locations, which is **very, very unusual**"... "Scientists with MBARI say the toxins from the algae bloom are going to have a **chain reaction on marine animals**, and they've **already seen more dead seabirds** on Central Coast beaches... It has started to really grow in the last few days.

[KSBW](#), May 29, 2015: Raphael Kudela, a researcher at [UCSC] said the bloom... is being found **from Washington to Santa Barbara... reports of dead seabirds are already coming in**.

[Monterey Herald](#), May 28, 2015: A mysterious neurotoxin... returned with a vengeance... "**This is an unusual one,**" said Raphael Kudela... "We haven't seen a bloom this big in 15 years..."... why the toxin periodically blooms in Monterey Bay is still **a marine mystery...** scientists are getting closer to pinning down the reason for the blooms, with human impacts among the range of possibilities... Domoic acid is also suspected in a **recent spate of bird deaths**.

[UC Santa Cruz](#), June 2, 2015: The toxin was first detected in early May, and by the end of the month researchers had detected **some of the highest concentrations of domoic acid ever observed** in Monterey Bay. "It's a pretty massive bloom. The domoic acid levels are extremely high right now... the event is occurring as far north as Washington state. So it appears this will be **one of the most toxic and spatially largest events** we've had in at least a decade," said Raphael Kudela, [UCSC] professor of ocean sciences.

[MBARI](#), Jun 1, 2015: Researchers measured some of the **highest concentrations of harmful algae and their toxin ever observed** in Monterey Bay... During a normal [bloom] 1,000 nanograms per liter would be considered high... [It's] reached 10 to 30 times this level. On May 27, 2015, very high levels... were found in dead anchovies... The researchers do not know if the anchovies died because of domoic acid poisoning.

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