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High-resolution photos of [bird](#) species to be cared for in this aviary [can be found here](#) courtesy International Bird Rescue.

State of California Funds New Aviary to Save Injured and Oiled Wildlife of the Bay Area

Pledged in memory of International Bird Rescue executive director Jay Holcomb, a six-figure contribution from the state's Oiled Wildlife Care Network and Office of Spill Prevention and Response will support construction of unique aviary for herons, egrets and [other aquatic bird](#) species harmed by human activity

State agencies join the International Fund for Animal Welfare and Dawn® in major support of project for Bay Area birds

Oiled Wildlife Care Network will match up to \$100,000 in additional contributions from the public

FAIRFIELD, CA (Sept. 24, 2014) — California state wildlife agencies have approved funding in the amount of \$100,000 to create a new aviary for wild birds in Northern California harmed by oil spills and other environmental problems, officials announced Wednesday.

The project will create a critically needed new aviary for egrets, herons, [shorebirds](#) and multiple species of waterfowl cared for year-round at the San Francisco Bay Oiled Wildlife Care and Education Center, located in Fairfield and operated by the nonprofit organization International Bird Rescue. Funding comes from the UC Davis Karen C. Drayer Wildlife Health Center's Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR).

Construction of the new \$175,000-\$200,000 structure is scheduled to begin in [spring](#) 2015.

The aviary will be built in memory of Jay Holcomb, a pioneer in the field of oiled wildlife care who served for decades as International Bird Rescue's executive director. Holcomb died on June 10 from kidney cancer at age 63.

"Jay Holcomb dedicated his life and career to helping birds in crisis, especially those

injured due to human activities such as oil spills,” said Dr. Michael Ziccardi, Oiled Wildlife Care Network director. “I can think of no better way to honor his memory than helping to build a world-class aviary at one of the premiere OWCN facilities in California.”

In addition to the initial \$100,000 contribution, [Dr. Ziccardi said that](#) his organization will also match private contributions for the project donated to the [Jay Holcomb Legacy Fund](#), established by International Bird Rescue in July, up to an additional \$100,000. [Tax-deductible contributions can be made online at \[birdrescue.org\]\(http://birdrescue.org\).](#)

The San Francisco Bay Oiled Wildlife Care and Education Center is the primary facility to treat birds and other animals affected by oil spills in Northern California. The 12,000-square-foot center can accommodate up to 1,000 birds, and features outdoor aviaries and pools for a wide variety of seabirds and other aquatic species. Oiled animals from the 2007 Cosco Busan spill in the San Francisco Bay were transported and rehabilitated at the center, which routinely cares for nearly 3,000 birds annually.

[“The Office of Spill Prevention and Response stands committed to ensuring the best achievable response to an oil spill, and this facility will provide injured wildlife with critical aid and rehabilitation,”](#) said OSPR administrator Thomas Cullen. [“California’s Oiled Wildlife Care Network is recognized throughout the world as a center of excellence in oiled wildlife care, and by helping to fund this project, we will maintain that excellence.”](#)

Both the [International Fund for Animal Welfare](#) and [Dawn®](#), a Procter & Gamble-owned dish soap brand widely known for its use in cleaning oiled birds, have also committed generous funding to the new aviary. [Dawn® is a longtime sponsor of International Bird Rescue, contributing both financially and through product donations.](#)

The new aviary will comprise 14 separate enclosures designed specifically for the unique needs of aquatic birds in a wildlife rehabilitation setting. Species to be cared for include Black-crowned Night Herons, wading birds commonly found in [local](#) urban areas. [This species was](#) the subject of extensive national news coverage this summer after a [rookery in Oakland was disturbed](#) by tree trimmers, causing a number of baby birds to fall from their nests. Five surviving chicks were raised by International Bird Rescue and released in June.

The project was originally conceived by Holcomb, Ziccardi and staff of both International Bird Rescue and UC Davis in 2000 as a planned expansion of the San Francisco Bay center after its initial construction. The current design [was](#) developed [in 2007](#) by architect Robert L. Shaw of Eugene, OR.

In July, local wildlife advocates and representatives of environmental groups from around the world paid tribute to Holcomb during a memorial event held at Fort Mason in San Francisco. Under his direction, International Bird Rescue grew into one of the world’s preeminent wildlife organizations, caring for animals affected by large-scale oil spills such as Exxon Valdez in 1989 and the Gulf Spill in 2010, where Holcomb and his team worked in four states to save pelicans, gannets and other birds harmed by the environmental disaster.

“An aviary that will care for thousands of injured birds each year is a moving and fitting tribute to Jay Holcomb,” said Barbara Callahan, International Bird Rescue interim executive director. “Jay’s dying wish was that his work continue full-steam.”

This funding will help us to accomplish that mission, and we're so thankful for the support of [all of our partners](#) in protecting California's precious wildlife."

Species to be cared for in the new aviary include:

Snowy Egrets	Caspian Terns
Great Egrets	Common Goldeneyes
Cattle Egrets	American Avocets
Great Blue Herons	Killdeer
Green Herons	Plovers
Black-crowned Night Herons	Black-necked Stilts
Herons	Whimbrels
American Coots	Mallard Ducks
Elegant Terns	Canada Geese

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About International Bird Rescue: *International Bird Rescue is a nonprofit organization that has been saving seabirds and other aquatic birds around the world since 1971. Our team of specialists operates two year-round aquatic bird rehabilitation centers in California, which care for more than 5,000 birds every year. Learn more at birdrescue.org*

About the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN): *The Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) is the world's only oiled wildlife response organization boasting more than 30 different Member Organizations comprising world-class aquaria, universities, scientific organizations and rehabilitation groups. Established in 1994 by the Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) in response to the Exxon Valdez in Alaska and the American Trader in Huntington Beach, the OWCN is administered by the UC Davis [Karen C. Drayer](#) Wildlife Health Center in the School of Veterinary Medicine. Learn more at vetmed.ucdavis.edu/owcn*

About the Office for Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR): *The Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) has the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's public trustee and custodial responsibilities for protecting, managing and restoring the State's fish, wildlife, and plants. It is one of the few State agencies in the nation that has both major pollution response authority and public trustee authority for wildlife and habitat. This mandate ensures that prevention, preparedness, restoration and response will provide the best protection for California's natural resources. Learn more at dfg.ca.gov/ospr*