Click here to view one of our pelican release videos.

INTERNATIONAL BIRD RESCUE

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

INTERNATIONAL BIRDRESCUE
YEAR OF THE BIRD

We dream of a world
in which every person, every day,
takes action to protect
the natural home of wildlife and ourselves.

I was first introduced to International Bird Rescue in 1978 during my Coast Guard training about pollution response, and years later had the privilege of working directly with the late Jay Holcomb and others within the organization. I helped arrange for joint Coast Guard and Bird Rescue training in the Pribilof Island of Alaska, in which Bird Rescue conducted Bird Capture and Stabilization training for the local population and the Coast Guard trained for initial response to an oil spill. It was such a great experience for all of us involved.

A few years later as the Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinator, I personally witnessed International Bird Rescue in spill response mode during the grounding of the ship Selendang Ayu on Unalaska Island, Alaska, which impacted wildlife as a result of the vessel breaking in two and spilling heavy bunker oil. Bird Rescue responded to the spill, searching the waters and shorelines for oiled birds.

After a 33-year Coast Guard career, I continued to work with Bird Rescue when I became the President and General Manager for Alaska Clean Seas (ACS), a not-for-profit oil spill cleanup cooperative on the North Slope of Alaska. ACS was a client of Bird Rescue who provided wildlife response and wildlife response training to our member organizations. During my six-year tenure, our Spill Response Team on the North Slope benefitted from annual bird capture and bird stabilization trainings led by Bird Rescue.

When I retired from the workforce I told Jay Holcomb that, if I was to do anything in my retirement years, it would be to help Bird Rescue. I had such great experiences with them and saw the wonderful work they do in training and during a spill. I also believe in their mission – to inspire people to act toward balance with the natural world by rescuing waterbirds in crisis.

They remembered what I said, because I got a very memorable phone call immediately after I retired. Since joining the Board of Directors I have seen firsthand the important work done day-in and day-out by the employees and volunteers at our two rehabilitation centers to counter the human impacts to the birds that come into care. I am proud to be associated with Bird Rescue: pioneers in research into oiled wildlife and the unique needs of aquatic birds.

As a supporter, you affirm the dedication and sacrifice of the employees and volunteers who work tirelessly keeping our mission front and center. I thank you. This report is provided as a look back on some of the accomplishments made possible by your support.

Ron Morris
Chair, International Bird Rescue Board of Directors

Cover image: N74 was photographed in Carmel River Lagoon by Bonnie Burgess. This hatch-year bird crash-landed in Long Beach and came into care on June 19, 2017 via Long Beach Animal Care Services. The bird was rather thin and had thorns in its feet. Over the course of 54 days, this young Brown Pelican healed from its wounds and nearly doubled in weight. N74 was released by Pelican Partners Wendy and Connor on August 12, 2017 in San Pedro, California.

INTERNATIONAL BIRDRESCUE
YEAR OF THE BIRD

MISSION

To inspire people to act
toward balance
with the natural world
by rescuing waterbirds in crisis.

VISION

We dream of a world
in which every person, every day,
takes action to protect
the natural home of wildlife
and ourselves.

ORGANIZATION STORY

In 1971 after 800,000 gallons of crude oil spilled into the bay, concerned individuals led by a registered nurse named Alice Berkner jumped into action, bringing International Bird Rescue to life. We have always had to pave a road where there is none. Staff and volunteers work with tenacity alongside clients, partners, and the public to find solutions. Today, we research best practices at our crisis response hospitals in California and Alaska and share them worldwide.

Join us at www.birdrescue.org.

This much is abundantly clear: waterbirds are in crisis and International Bird Rescue is uniquely positioned to help by providing direct care and by inspiring people to take action.

The opportunity to rethink our messaging over the past year was a tipping point in our evolution. While staying committed to our core work, we want to update our messaging in a way that truly reflects the spirit of the incredible donors, volunteers, and staff who make a difference in this organization. We challenged ourselves to represent not only what we do, but to embody the spirit behind why we do what we do. I am personally very proud to share with you a new mission and vision.

The shift to a broader mission statement allows us room to grow and clarifies what we do now. Our new vision motivates people to action and has been a pivot point for an immediate internal shift.

We wanted to tell compelling, inspiring stories and acknowledge the magic of the courageous actions that started Bird Rescue and keep it going today; stories that are both a nod of gratitude to our past, and a path forward to the future.

On a personal note, I am moved emotionally every time I share our new messaging with the public. It feels authentic and I believe it captures what makes us unique. Most importantly, it opens doors to inspire more people and motivates everyday actions (big and small) that make a difference to wildlife. I am proud of the work we do and it has been personally fulfilling to capture it in words. It has been incredible to witness our team embracing this new focus. I look forward to making an even greater impact on wildlife in the years ahead as we inspire a broader audience to take action.

Thank you for taking this journey with us.

JD Bergeron
Executive Director, International Bird Rescue

RESPONSE IN ACTION

Top image: Staff and volunteers cleaning a pelican after the Refugio Spill, 2015

Image above: Close up of a pelican wash, Refugio Spill 2015
Photos by International Bird Rescue

Oil has a severe and damaging effect on a bird's feathers. The natural properties of the bird's plumage, which allow it to serve both as waterproofing and insulation, are hampered. This affects the bird's behavior as well. In an attempt to clean itself, it focuses exclusively on preening, even ignoring its own hunger or threats from predators — behaviors which make the bird vulnerable to secondary health problems such as severe weight loss, anemia, and dehydration. We have learned a lot over the decades working with birds in environmental disasters, but none more important than exactly HOW oil hurts (and will eventually kill) birds.

This is why we do the work, saving birds from devastating outcomes is our imperative. Effective response for oiled wildlife demands a depth and breadth of experience because each spill situation is unique. With nearly five decades in the field, International Bird Rescue's response team offers valuable expertise for environmental emergencies. Our industry and governmental relationships have earned us the credibility, trust and respect needed to effectively collaborate in developing contingency plans that reflect real risk and realistic response for oiled wildlife.

Bringing 47 years of experience to complex emergencies, International Bird Rescue has responded to over 225 oil spills around the world.

Learn more about our oil spill response history: www.bird-rescue.org/our-work/oil-spill-response-and-preparedness.aspx

Top Image: Mystery Goo bird, January 2015

Image: Mystery Goo bird, washed and ready for release
Photos by Cheryl Reynolds

MYSTERY GOO

Bird Rescue faced a sizeable challenge in January 2015, when hundreds of birds were found coated with an unknown substance in the San Francisco Bay. The sticky, odorless goo resembled rubber cement; nothing that we had dealt with before. The substance was quickly determined not to be petroleum-based so state agencies that manage oil spills were not activated. With no responsible party identified and no state funding the question was: "Who would rescue these birds and pay for their care?"

Despite multiple levels of uncertainty and risk, Bird Rescue took immediate action. By the end of the first day 85 surf scoters were under our care. Standard cleaning protocols did not work on the "mystery goo," which left our staff to do what we've done best since our beginnings: create a solution where there was none. We discovered that a baking soda and vinegar pre-wash followed by standard washing protocols proved successful and saved lives.

Within a few days over 300 birds arrived at our San Francisco Bay-Delta wildlife center. The cost to Bird Rescue was over $150,000. We will always be grateful for the donors who responded generously with their time and money, to help the mystery goo birds. A senate bill was soon introduced by two California state senators to provide response funding for non-petroleum spills. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, in collaboration with government laboratories, would eventually categorize mystery goo as a "polymerized oil, most similar to vegetable oil." Its origin remains a mystery.

OUR ALASKA CENTER
POISED FOR ACTION

In addition to International Bird Rescue's wildlife rehabilitation hospitals in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles, we also maintain a turnkey facility in Anchorage called the Alaska Wildlife Response Center (AWRC).

The AWRC came into existence as a result of regulatory changes following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. The federal Oil Protection Act of 1990 (OPA90) as well as state ordinances were written to ensure any future spills will be met with the appropriate preparedness and response plan. The U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation established a mandate that in the event of an oil spill the facility must be available to take as many as 250 birds in for care within a 72-hour period. Funding for the center is provided in part by our Alaskan partners, including Alaska Clean Seas, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, Alaska Chadux, CISPRI, SEAPRO and other corporate and public contributions, for whom we provide annual training to oil company personnel on wildlife response procedures and support during emergency drills.

While this newly-renovated rehabilitation center is intended for large-scale spill crises, it can also be activated to handle a few oiled birds at a time. For example, in 2017 the AWRC was activated to care for a small number of young cackling geese after they were found floating in a pool of oil in what was thought to be a secured area. The successful rehabilitation of these contaminated goslings is a small but powerful example of how Bird Rescue's systems, in partnership with the oil companies, are achieving successful results. Oiled birds do not survive without the actions of trained workers on the ground who know how to stabilize them and arrange their transfer to the AWRC. Today, there are 150 on-call spill resource technicians in Alaska who provide constant coverage on the North Slope. All of the technicians have been trained by Bird Rescue staff.

Image above: Bird Rescue's newly renovated AWRC Facility, 2017
Photo by International Bird Rescue

GLOBAL RESPONSE PARTNERS

The GOWRS (Global Oiled Wildlife Response System) Project Partners include:

AIUKÁ
Brazil

FOCUS WILDLIFE INTERNATIONAL
USA & Canada

INTERNATIONAL BIRD RESCUE
USA

OILED WILDLIFE CARE NETWORK, WILDLIFE HEALTH CENTER
UC Davis, USA

PRO BIRD
Germany

RSPCA
UK

SANCCOB
South Africa

SEA ALARM FOUNDATION
Belgium (Project Coordinator)

TRI-STATE BIRD RESCUE & RESEARCH INC.
USA

WILDBASE
Massey University, New Zealand

WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRE
Belgium

PREPARNESS TRAININGS

BETWEEN 2015 - 2017 BIRD RESCUE MANAGED OR ATTENDED:

13 major preparedness trainings including:

Oiled Wildlife First Responder Training
Prudhoe Bay, AK

Alyeska Pipeline
Kodiak Training, AK

BP Mobile Wildlife Resources Training
Azerbaijan

9 major international oil spill drill collaborations including:

OWCN Full Deployment Drill
Feather River, CA

Clean Rivers Drill
Elma, WA

GOWRS Full Deployment Drill
Malaysia

16 major conferences hosted or attended including:

International Oil Spill Conference *(IOSC), AK*

Effects of Oil on Wildlife Conference *(EOW), AK*

Clean Gulf Conference
Elma, WA

Clean Pacific Conference
Portland, Oregon

LOOKING AHEAD

SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE WITH THE WORLD

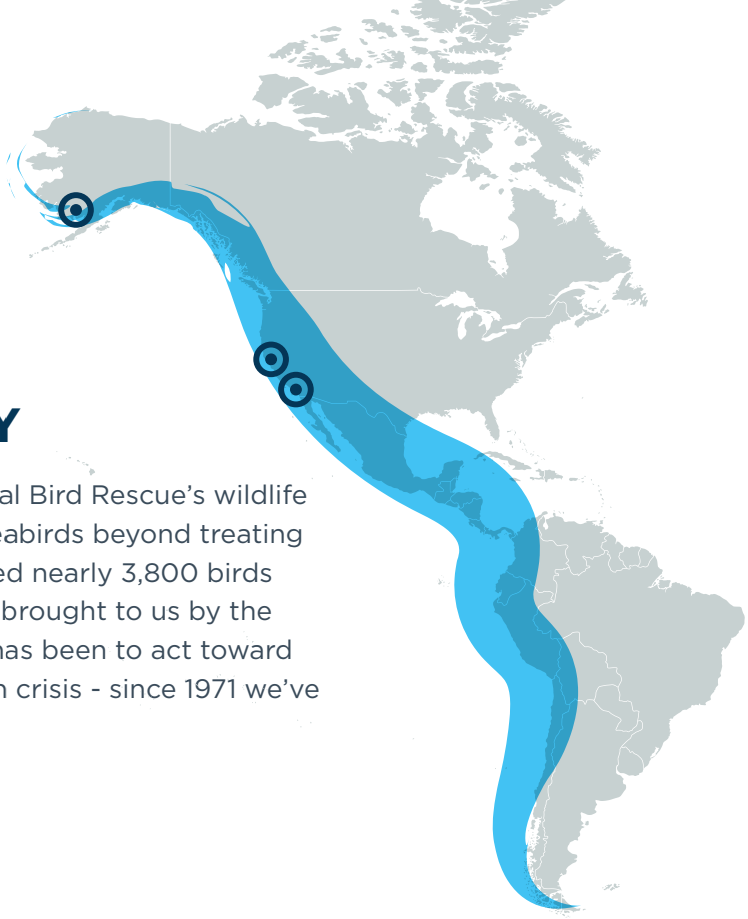
The demands around oil spill response continue to change over time. While there may be fewer major spills now than in the past, the need to prepare for accidents is as critical as ever. Where wildlife is concerned, the expertise and resources that Bird Rescue provide have never been more important.

Bird Rescue provides a variety of training for all levels, from volunteers to professionals. Our interactive training events aim to meet each client's specific needs, including risks, available resources, response priorities, and geographic and cultural differences in a way that will build skills and understanding. Bird Rescue's trainers are response team members with passion and real-world experience and are popular speakers at conferences, trainings and seminars in the U.S. and abroad. Topics covered in these presentations include all areas of oiled wildlife preparedness and response from planning and management to field operations and oiled wildlife rehabilitation. Our participation in a variety of conferences and symposiums provides an opportunity to share knowledge as well as to learn from the experiences of others.

We will continue to work tirelessly to improve wildlife response capacity on a global scale. Given that many spills occur in regions of the world least equipped to effectively care for oiled wildlife, a unified network of responders is needed in the event of an emergency. Building upon our existing international partnerships to increase our capacity and that of our partners is the most effective way to reach this common goal.

Image: Little Blue Pengins after being washed, Rena Spill 2011 Photo by International Bird Rescue

REHABILITATION:
RESCUING WATERBIRDS IN CRISIS



International Bird Rescue Centers

Pacific Flyway

TAKING ACTION EVERY DAY

Our work doesn't stop when headlines fade. International Bird Rescue's wildlife clinics are open year-round to provide critical care to seabirds beyond treating oiled wildlife. In 2017 alone, rehabilitation teams admitted nearly 3,800 birds between our three clinic locations. These patients were brought to us by the general public and affiliated wildlife groups. Our focus has been to act toward balance with the natural world by rescuing waterbirds in crisis - since 1971 we've admitted over 100,000 birds and the count continues.

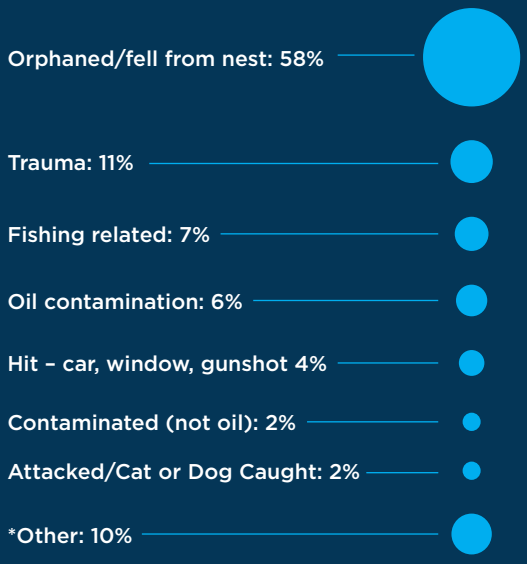
WATERBIRDS AND A CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

The Pacific Flyway is a major north-south thruway for migratory birds traveling anywhere between Alaska and Patagonia. Many of these animals are indicator species, meaning that the changes in their patterns or habits may be signals for a change in the environment. Many experts believe that critical hardships faced by pelicans, murres, and loons could be related to environmental shifts caused by warming oceans, pollution, collapsing fish stocks, and harmful algal blooms. Our work is closely connected to these dynamics. Seabirds provide a constant indication of the status of many important fish populations, including sardines and anchovies — both key links in the oceanic food chain.

2017 PATIENT ADMISSIONS

Geese and Dabbling Ducks: 1,091
Diving Ducks: 77
Rails: 75
Loons: 226
Grebes: 246
Tubenoses: 18
Cormorants: 148
Pelicans: 102
Herons and Egrets: 890
Shorebirds: 48
Gulls and Terns: 441
Auks: 192
Non-aquatic: 194
Total admissions for 2017: 3,748

2017 KNOWN INJURY CAUSES



*Other includes disease, harmful algal bloom, frostbite, poor feather condition, removed from hazardous area, starvation

Far left: Loons treated for domoic acid toxicity in 2017
Photo by Katrina Plummer

Left: Baby American Bitterns admitted for care
Photo by Cheryl Reynolds

DOMOIC ACID TOXICITY

Environmental factors played a large role in April 2017 when we admitted scores of loons which were found beached on the Santa Barbara coast. Loons are particularly challenging to treat. They are easily stressed when out of their normal pelagic (deep water) environment and are susceptible to the onset of secondary problems while in care.

Scientists referenced domoic acid — a toxin produced by marine algae blooms which can cause lethargy, seizures, and possible death — as the likely culprit in this crisis. The event also affected a broad spectrum of other marine animals including sea lions. The exact trigger of severe domoic acid occurrences are not fully understood. However, we remain a partner of leading researchers in expanding existing knowledge regarding care of affected animals.

BIRDS AND THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Many of the bird species we work with are increasingly commonplace in urban areas. Egrets nesting on traffic medians, heron rookeries perched on trees at industrial ports, mother ducks crossing eight-lane freeways with clutches in tow: the urban environment is an unforgiving place for many aquatic bird species and their young. Each spring we triage and raise more than 1,000 baby birds found by well-meaning people in urban or suburban communities.

THE IMPACT OF FISHING LINE AND FISH HOOKS

Even the more elusive and remote ocean-dwelling birds are experiencing more frequent interface with human activity. Seabirds are increasingly admitted to our care due to entanglement in discarded fishing gear, fish hooks and monofilament fishing line—all of which can cause life-threatening injuries. As the patient chart on the previous page suggests, about 7% of all birds admitted have sustained injury from fishing hooks, line and gear.

Image: Full size photo of a fish hook ingested by a Western Gull which was successfully surgically removed

Image: Fishing gear successfully removed from a Brown Pelican patient, including 3 hooks, a bobble, a lead weight and some elastic.
Photos by International Bird Rescue

Image left: Brown Pelican release in 2017

Image top right: Pelican in care

Image bottom right: Blue and silver bands staged for use
Photos by Cheryl Reynolds

SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST: PELICANS

California Brown Pelicans have also faced myriad challenges in recent years despite their removal from the Endangered Species List in 2009. They often travel great distances in search of food, landing in some of America's largest cities. Most recently pelicans have been admitted to our clinics from downtown San Francisco and driveways in neighborhoods in Southern California, to name a few. In 2017 we admitted 102 pelicans for reasons often connected to the impacts of urban environments.

TO REPORT A BLUE BANDED PELICAN SIGHTING:
https://www.bird-rescue.org/our-work/research-and-education/banding-program.aspx

Top image: E17 sighting in December, 2015; Photo by Bart Selby

Image: Rehabilitated pelican E17 nesting in Mexico
Photo by Emmanuel Miramontes, GECI A.C.

GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION

Our history with a Brown Pelican banded as "E17" began in 2010 when he arrived at our San Francisco Bay-Delta wildlife center with his flight feathers clipped making him incapable of flying. Due to the nature of his condition, human cruelty was suspected. After the bird was stabilized, he was transferred to our Southern California wildlife center for a long stay that allowed him plenty of time to grow new flight feathers and to regain his ability to fly.

Before being released back to the wild, he was banded E17 as part of Bird Rescue's Blue Banded Pelican Program. Established in 2009, this program allows for tracking of rehabilitated pelicans by placing a bright blue band on one of their legs, with an identifying letter/number combination in large print. As compared to smaller metal USGS bands, blue bands can be spotted by birders and other members of the public and reported on a central web site. This information provides invaluable feedback about the long-term success of our rehabilitation efforts.

Seven years after E17's release to the wild, he was spotted off the coast of Baja California, Mexico. During the summer of 2017 he was sitting on a nest on San Jerónimo Island, caring for recently-hatched offspring, more than 300 miles from his release point in San Pedro, California. For everyone at Bird Rescue, confirmation of an injured animal returning to the active breeding population is the very best of all possible results.

BIRD RESCUE AFFECTED BY THE 2017 NORTH BAY FIRES

The Atlas Fire, one of a series of wildfires that swept through Northern California in October 2017, required an International Bird Rescue first: evacuation of people and birds. Because of the poor air quality and the potential of mandatory evacuations, our employees and volunteers conducted exit examinations, prepared packages of medication and food for each bird, completed paperwork, and arranged transport to partner centers WildCare (San Rafael), Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (San Mateo), The SPCA for Monterey County (Monterey), and the Pacific Wildlife Care (San Luis Obispo).

This response by Bird Rescue's staff and volunteers during this time is particularly noteworthy because many of them were personally affected by loss or damage of property, yet they continued working throughout the emergency. Bird Rescue is fortunate and thankful to have such dedicated people working on behalf of birds. Thanks, too, to our partner agencies for taking in our patients in our time of need.

Image: Volunteer Mark Johnston helping to evacuate all birds during the Napa fires in 2017
Photo by Russ Curtis

LOOKING AHEAD

Bird Rescue is looking forward to fully implementing technological advancements in wildlife care. As one of these advancements, both of our centers are fully launching RaptorMed, our customized online patient record database. RaptorMed allows us to be greener and to share our findings with the public and partner organizations, increasing our transparency and our ability to collaborate worldwide.

RaptorMed also provides us with a newly expanded capability for in-depth patient analysis that will help us make superior decisions and continually improve our quality of care. This is especially important for species with unique needs that present challenges in care--such as Brown Pelicans, which have adverse reactions to specific medications, and Western Grebes, which have sensitive digestive systems.

Thanks to all of our transferring partners who constantly work beside us to save waterbirds!

Northern California: WildCare, Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA, Lindsay Wildlife Experience, Wildlife Care Association of Sacramento, Napa Wildlife Rescue, Bird Rescue Center of Sonoma County, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue, Oakland Zoo, SPCA for Monterey County, Native Animal Rescue, Gold Country Wildlife Rescue, Suisun Wildlife Rescue Center, Berkeley Humane Society, Berkeley Animal Care Services, Solano Sherriff Animal Control, Native Songbird Care and Conservation, Sulphur Creek Nature Center.

Southern California: Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, California Wildlife Center, Marine Animal Rescue, Pasadena Humane Society, El Dorado Nature Center, Manhattan Beach AC, Redondo Beach AC, Santa Monica AC, South Bay Wildlife Rehab, and Long Beach Animal Care Services.

Image: Los Angeles Center Manager Kylie Clatterbuck teaching wildlife rehabilitators about keel cushions Photo by Angie Trumbo

PAVING NEW ROADS THROUGH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

INVENTING A BETTER KEEL CUSHION

Caring for oiled pelagic and diving birds comes with many unique challenges, including preventing patients from developing keel lesions: potentially life-threatening pressure sores similar to bed sores in humans.

Throughout our history, Bird Rescue team members have worked to find innovative methods to combat this issue. In the early 90s, we developed a specialized protective wrap using rolled up towels, tape, and Vetrap. While this technique was effective, the solution was wasteful and inefficient, requiring significant staff time and utilizing expensive disposable materials.

That's when staff member Julie Skoglund used her tenacity and creativity to find a better answer. She teamed up with her mother to combine their respective skills in animal rehabilitation and sewing to design a reusable wrap. Their innovative prototype, made from pool noodles, Velcro, and soft flannel, was the model for the keel cushions we use today. An additional version was also developed specifically for Western and Clark's Grebes, designed to provide more stability for their unique body shapes.

Both of these designs are used extensively at Bird Rescue facilities and by the Oiled Wildlife Care Network for oil spill response in California and can be deployed with us around the world. Innovation never stops at Bird Rescue - further advancements are in the works, such as a waterproof neoprene design meant to prevent the cushion from slipping. Stay tuned!

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

Blue-banded Brown Pelicans

Injury-Specific Brown Pelican Post-Release Survival

Blood Parasites in Common Murres

Steatitis in Herons and Egrets

Metabolic Bone Disease in Herons and Egrets

Prevalence, Incidence, and Characterization of Dermal Lesions in Diving Birds Undergoing Rehabilitation

Chronic Domoic Acid Exposure-Induced Brain Lesions in Loons

RESEARCH PROJECTS NEAR PUBLICATION

Post-Release Survival of Oiled and Non-Oiled Aquatic Birds Banded 1997-2011.

Pharmacokinetics of Meloxicam in Brown Pelicans.

Effects of Keel Cushions on the Behavior of Western Grebes Entering Rehabilitation.

PUBLISHED STUDIES

Effects of added lipids on digestibility and nitrogen balance in oiled Common Murres (Uria aalge) and *Western Grebes (Aechmophorus occidentalis) fed four formulations of a critical care diet*. (2017)

Surgical repair of keel lesions and lacerations in aquatic birds. (2016)

Tissue component and organ mass changes associated with declines in body mass in three seabird species received for rehabilitation in California. (2015)

Identification of a novel papillomavirus in a Northern Fulmar (Fulmarus glacialis) with viral production in cartilage. (2015)

A gyrovirus infecting a sea bird. Archives of Virology. (2015)

FINDING SOLUTIONS - FIXATORS

Our medical staff must often improvise solutions for the sometimes-complicated problems of our patients. These situations frequently arise when it comes to fractured pelican bills, like the patient pictured below. The bones that make up a pelican's lower mandible are unique in that they are rigid across one plane and flexible across the other to facilitate the way they fish for dinner. This presents a challenge when it comes to mending lower bill fractures; the bone must remain stable to heal effectively but must maintain enough flexibility for the pelican to still feed. Any apparatus used to set the bone also needs to be placed in a way that prevents the patient from removing it – wild animals can be very uncooperative patients!

To combat these challenges, our veterinarian utilizes techniques from standard veterinary medicine while also drawing from her background in art and physiology. Dr. Duerr evaluates each case and creates a custom device made to meet each patient's needs. The pins hold the bone in place while the fixator device holds the pins in place, with no need for bulky bandaging or casts. The customizability of this technique allows it to be used for a wide range of bill and other fractures.

Images above: American White Pelican "before and after" application of an external fixator to repair a bill fracture
Photo by International Bird Rescue

Image above: Staff Veterinarian Dr. Rebecca Duerr, Operations Manager Julie Skoglund and Volunteer Karen Howarth with a Snowy Egret; Photo by International Bird Rescue

USING DATA FOR LEARNING

Bird Rescue is involved in a variety of research projects geared toward improving rehabilitation techniques and increasing knowledge about aquatic birds. One current project tackles the question: is rehabilitating oiled birds worthwhile? We are taking an in-depth look at 15 years of historical data from both oiled and non-oiled rehabilitated birds and their post-release survival. During that time period, 23,061 leg bands were applied to 19,083 non-oiled and 3,998 oiled birds of 123 aquatic avian species. Of these, 1,739 non-petroleum oiled birds and 196 formerly oiled birds were re-sighted.

This project will help us learn how both oiled and non-oiled birds fare after release, and results will identify which species do well and which species need additional focus. It will also provide guidance in deciding when birds are ready to release, as release criteria have changed over the years.

Preliminary findings show that a variety of seabirds including Brown Pelicans, Common Murres, and Western Gulls are being spotted up to 15 years post-release and there is no survival difference between oiled birds and birds rehabilitated for other reasons. These initial results help validate the difficult work we do and inspire us to continuously strive to improve.

RESEARCH: HCBF INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

International Bird Rescue has a long history of partnering with other nonprofits to meet our goals. One of our most successful team efforts has paired Bird Rescue with the Harbor Community Benefit Foundation of San Pedro, CA (www.hcbf.org), an organization which assesses, protects, and improves various aspects of life in the harbor communities affected by activities at the Port of Los Angeles.

Thanks to grant funding from HCBF, between 2014 to 2017 we hosted 16 talented high school and undergraduate research interns. Each intern completed a guided research project and produced a scientific poster and public presentation on their project. Talia Baddour, a 2015 high school intern, won several awards for her work investigating Broken Feather Patches, a malady which affects species such as Loons and Common Murres. Connor Mathews, a student from the Wildlife Conservation and Ecology Department at the University of Nevada, Reno, compiled data from our Blue-Banded Pelican project, poring over records from over 1,200 Brown Pelicans that had been released from 2009 to 2015. His work provided a wealth of information regarding the pelicans Bird Rescue rehabilitated and released during that time, which gave us a valuable window into the results of our work.

The success of this internship program illustrates the benefits of local partnerships and is a perfect way to support our goal of sharing our knowledge with the next generation of wildlife rehabilitation and response enthusiasts and to encourage stewardship of wildlife into the future.

Image left: HCBF intern Talia Baddour wins 1st place for research completed at Bird Rescue

Image above: Pelican release at the San Pedro Harbor
Photo by International Bird Rescue

2017: PORT WILDLIFE IMPACT MITIGATION STUDY

This year, International Bird Rescue is building on several years of success in its partnership with the Harbor Community Benefit Foundation by focusing the program on a Port Wildlife Impact Mitigation Study. The idea behind the study is that aquatic birds act as a barometer for the overall health of an ecosystem, and the Port of Los Angeles is not only a port—it is also habitat for thousands of migratory birds year-round. The study has three focuses: investigation of historic and current impacts of Port of Los Angeles activities on marine life in general and aquatic birds in particular, to provide training and education to Port staff and businesses regarding best practices for managing human/wildlife interactions, and to share our findings with residents of San Pedro and Wilmington at a public presentation.

Ultimately, it is expected that these efforts will reduce the Port's impacts on marine life, including a decrease in avian mortality, and generally improve human-wildlife interactions.

INSPIRING CHANGE

RAISING AWARENESS

Bird Rescue activates our new mission and vision at the SF Bay-Delta Open House where volunteer Magda Barron raises awareness about the lifespan of plastics and the hazards of ocean trash for seabirds. We are committed to educating the public about environmental changes and the impacts on birds.

Image above: Volunteer Magda Barron raises awareness about the hazards of ocean trash
Photo by Anna Beauchemin

Image upper right: Hungry baby Black-crowned Night Herons; Photo by Cheryl Reynolds

BIRD RESCUE PARTNERS WITH GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON AND OAKLAND ZOO

2017 marked the second consecutive year of teaming up with our like-minded friends at the Oakland Zoo and Golden Gate Audubon Society to aid young Black-crowned Night-Herons and Snowy Egrets that have fallen from their nests onto the streets of downtown Oakland.

Last year, 130 Black-crowned Night-Heron nests were identified in Oakland, making it the largest rookery for the species in the Bay Area. Trained volunteers and staff from our partner organizations checked the streets in the vicinity of the nests daily for fallen or injured birds. When found, Oakland Zoo staff retrieved injured birds, provided any necessary intermediary treatment, and transported them to Bird Rescue's San Francisco Bay-Delta wildlife center for long-term care and eventual release.

Bird Rescue is anticipating more activity of this type as the boundaries of urban environments continue to grow into pre-existing habitats and ecosystems. While some animals are able to adapt to populated areas more easily than others, the expanded contact between humans and wildlife carries with it the potential for conflict. By continuing to act on behalf of the animals, Bird Rescue hopes to help grow a culture of mutual respect and humane treatment for all animals.

In Oakland, the partnership of our three organizations has been fruitful because each group brings its own knowledge and expertise to act on the common goal of saving birds. It's a great example of people teaming up to help wild animals succeed in increasingly urban environments.

OPENING OUR DOORS

National Geographic photographer, author and conservationist Joel Sartore honored Bird Rescue by joining us to speak at the Los Angeles Open House in 2016. Sartore and hundreds of our supporters helped us to celebrate our legacy of rescuing and rehabilitating marine wildlife.

2015 EFFECTS OF OIL ON WILDLIFE CONFERENCE

International Bird Rescue joined with its Brazilian partner Aiuká to host the 2015 Effects of Oil on Wildlife (EOW) Conference in Alaska. The event, held in May, was planned to mark the 25th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. EOW is the only global conference which focuses on the planning, response, rehabilitation, and research related to oil spills and their impacts on wildlife.

Top Image: Photo by Carlos Delgado/AP Images

Image upper right: Scores of California Gulls enter our wildlife hospitals each year for care
Photo by Cheryl Reynolds

Image bottom right: Photo by Angie Trumbo

INSPIRING OTHERS TO TAKE ACTION

International Bird Rescue would not be able to accomplish all it does without members of the public who take action on behalf of injured birds! One example is Dana Chapman, her sons Bryan and Toby, and family friend Warren, who saw a California Gull struck by two cars near the Oakland Airport. They acted immediately, taking the bird to our colleagues at the Lindsay Wildlife Experience, who transferred it to us. After almost six weeks of care, including surgery, float therapy, and lots of checkups from clinic and volunteer staff, it was released back into the wild. Thanks to Dana and her family for getting involved! There's no better way to show the next generation that their actions can make a difference.

EDUCATING THE FUTURE

Bird Rescue is committed to educating and inspiring future generations. Our San Pedro wildlife center is set up to host children and adult groups throughout the year. We also open our doors at our SF Bay-Delta wildlife center each autumn for the general public to learn about waterbirds and celebrate Bird Rescue in the community.

VOLUNTEERS TAKE ACTION

In 2017 we called upon 251 volunteers. They responded by donating 25,824 hours!

Our volunteers have an extraordinary impact on our work – without them we could not attain the successes we do on behalf of birds. Sometimes Bird Rescue faces big challenges, and our tribe of volunteers are always there for whatever comes up next: oil spills, environmental events, seasonal peaks during spring, even this year's 2017 Napa Fire and evacuation. They think less about what they can get from the experience and focus on all that they can contribute – their love of birds and nature is clear and their dedication is inspiring!

In memory of Lela Nishizaki, who spent so many hours lovingly caring for the birds and making sure they had a clean pool in which to recover. We miss you dearly.

Top image: Volunteer Diane Carter during pelican release exam; Photo by Angie Trumbo

Image above: Photo by International Bird Rescue

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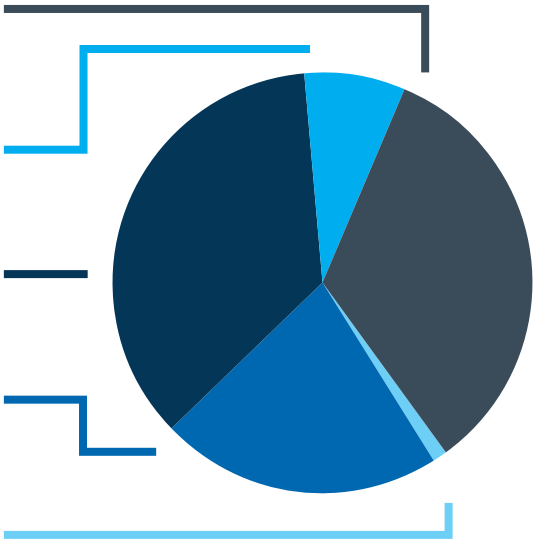
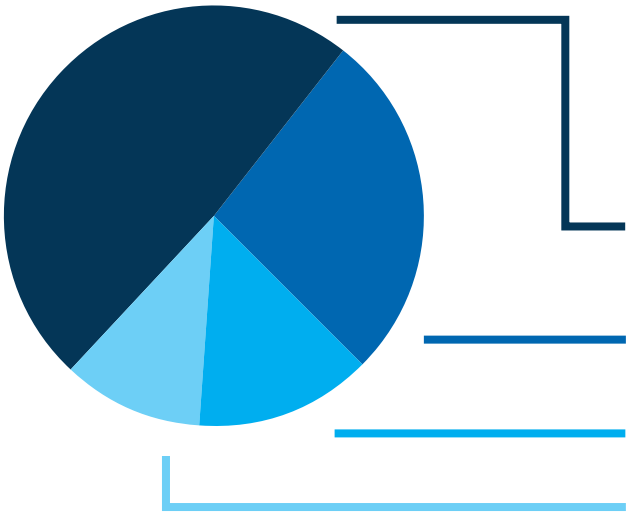
Years of Volunteer Service
+ = 5+ years
⸸ = 10+ years
♦ = 15+ years

FINANCIAL HEALTH

2017 Operating Support and Revenue

Earned Revenue: Contracts and Retainers for preparedness and other revenue	34%
Earned Revenue: Billable Services from oil spill response and response contingency services	8%
Contributed Revenue: Organizational support from corporate partners, foundations, and government grants	36%
Contributed Revenue: Financial support from individuals	22%
Other income	<1%
Total Operating Support and Revenue	**100%**





2017 Operating Expenses

Animal care and wildlife center facilities management	49%
Oil spill response and preparedness programs	27%
Administration	14%
Fundraising and marketing	11%
Total Operating Expenses	**100%**

Increased investment in fundraising and marketing in 2017 was a direct response to an improved global environment of fewer oil spills. Demand in 2017 for animal care and wildlife response services, combined with planned organizational investments in programs, necessitated the use of some organizational reserves which had fortunately been built up over many years. The creation of an additional Operational Reserve for Future Crisis Response in coming years will replenish cash reserves and ensure International Bird Rescue's ability to lead worldwide crisis response.

A complete copy of our audited financial statements can be obtained by contacting: info@bird-rescue.org

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Photo by Cheryl Reynolds

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Thank you to our founder Alice Berkner, for your vision, dedication and pioneering spirit!

"My attitude was not that of the stereotypical environmentalist of that time, but that of a consumer who accepted responsibility for what could result from petroleum consumption on an individual and even species level."

Remembering Jay Holcomb, Executive Director from 1986-2014

“I’ve devoted my career to wildlife rehabilitation. It’s an often unsung, crisis-based field, and the challenges in the work are many. But I can’t think of anything more rewarding I could have done with my life.”

HOW YOU CAN

SUPPORT BIRD RESCUE

SEABIRD CIRCLE OF MONTHLY DONORS

In our Seabird Circle program, you become a key partner in supporting our critical work in oil response, wildlife rehabilitation, research and education. Monthly giving is one of the best ways to support waterbirds in crisis.

GIVING CIRCLES

$1,000 - PELICAN PARTNERS have the chance to tour one of our California centers and help release one of our seabird patients back into the wild. Experience the once-in-a-lifetime honor of opening the cage at the release site as your partner bird takes its first steps into the open and soars away.

$5,000 – ALBATROSS ALLIANCE members are guardians of all birds in need by making a significant and life-saving gift. They will have the chance to tour on of our California centers and help release a mixed flock of bird patients back to their wild home.

$10,000 SHOEBILL SOCIETY MEMBERS are a select group of key supporters who help shape our expanding role in conservation and intervention. Members pledge to partner with us in building forward-thinking programs to some of the world's biggest wildlife challenges, such as marine debris and climate change.

BIRD RESCUE LEGACY SOCIETY honors those who have made a commitment to ensuring Bird Rescue's future for generations to come by remembering organizations in their estate plans. We are truly honored to make our legacy part of yours.

MATCHING GIFTS help boost the value of your donation through your company. Many employers sponsor matching gift programs that supplement their employees' donations to encourage charitable giving. Contact your Human Resources Department or click below for a list of participating companies: https://www.bird-rescue.org/get-involved/workplace-giving.aspx

DONOR ADVISED FUND (DAF) helps you plan and disburse your donations. If you use a DAF for your giving, consider adding International Bird Rescue to your portfolio.

VOLUNTEER support is critical to the care that we give our patients, whether working directly with the animals or supporting their care through answering phones, filing, cleaning, laundry, or construction. However you choose to help, you are assisting in the return of these amazing creatures back into the wild.

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Whatever the size of your organization or company, we'll work with you to tailor a custom package that maximizes your gift and excites your team. By supporting these animals in need, our partners reap innumerable benefits.

FOR GIVING CIRCLES, PLEASE GO TO: Bird-Rescue.org/Giving-Circles

FOR ANNUAL GIVING, PLEASE GO TO: Bird-Rescue.org/Get-Involved/Donate

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT BIRDS

@IntBirdRescue

YouTube
SavingSeabirds

SAY NO TO BALLOONS
They can get away and land in the ocean where birds mistake them for food

BECOME A RESCUER
If you see a seabird sitting on the shore with dogs and people nearby it likely needs help

TAKE PART IN A LOCAL BIRD COUNT
Become a citizen scientist and contribute to our knowledge about birds

CLEAN UP LITTER
Birds can become tangled in or ingest trash, with negative outcomes

SAY NO TO ONE-USE PLASTICS AND STRAWS
Use refillable containers. Decline straws, or bring your own reusable one.

TAKE A CHILD BIRDING
Spark a lifelong passion for the next generation of bird lovers!

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YEAR OF THE BIRD

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