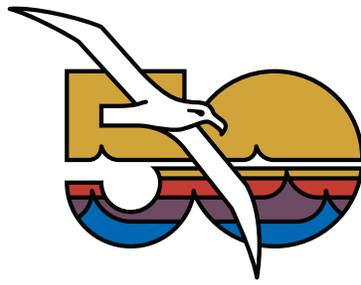


# The Aviary

JULY 2021



INTERNATIONAL  
BIRD RESCUE

- SINCE 1971 -

## 50 YEARS OF BIRD RELEASES

A Publication of International Bird Rescue



# Merganser Magic

Every spring and summer, Bird Rescue raises hundreds of orphaned baby birds. This year was no different, we have already had an influx of over 350 ducklings and goslings in care at our two California wildlife centers. Some species are more demanding to raise than others, and Common Merganser ducklings are among the most difficult. In May, four of these ducklings were brought to our San Francisco Bay-Delta wildlife center for us to raise. The clutch of ducklings had been found all alone on a busy road and would now rely on our team to fill the role that their parents would have played in the wild.

While they are without a doubt some of the cutest babies we see in care, they have dietary needs that come with a hefty price tag. In the wild, Common Mergansers dive for fish as their main diet during much of the year. Young birds that we raise must be equipped with those hunting skills in order to survive post-release. To help them hone those critical skills, we feed Merganser chicks live minnows. This gives them the chance to dive and pursue prey just as they would in the wild.

Each young merganser requires several hundred dollars' worth of minnows before they are grown. In addition to their special diets, these growing



chicks require regular check-ups to make sure they are progressing as they should. These orphaned Common Mergansers can be quite a handful, but it is well worth all the effort when we get to see them rush back into the wild once they are ready.

When they arrived at our clinic, each duckling weighed just over 40 grams. Now, over a month later, they have quintupled in size! Without a mother to care for them, these feisty little ducklings will need to remain in our care for several more months, swimming and diving for food in their specialized enclosure as they grow.

Your support helps ensure that these mergansers, and hundreds of other chicks like them, get the best of care, and a second chance at life in the wild.



## DONOR PROFILE Dave Weeshoff

Like all good hero stories, the journey of Dave Weeshoff from mainframe computers to bird champion began with a single step. His passion for birds began in late 2004, shortly after his retirement from IBM, when he read an article in the LA Times about an oil spill, and the team of responders who were rehabilitating oiled birds. "I knew nothing about birds," Dave says with a laugh.

"Couldn't have told you how many wings they have." But the article piqued his interest, and he took that first step of contacting International Bird Rescue.

From there, four hours volunteering each week became a full day. One full day became two full days. And before long, Dave was leading the volunteer orientations for new volunteers, and representing Bird Rescue at public events. Step by step he became more immersed, more active with Bird Rescue, and more passionate about wild birds. Serving on the Board of Directors, and as chair of the board for three years, Dave has helped shape Bird Rescue into the organization it is today.

"After you've held a pelican, and felt its heartbeat, you can't help but care about wild

# 50 Years of Rescuing Birds

**Dear friend and supporter,**

Throughout this year, International Bird Rescue is celebrating our 50th Anniversary. What began back in 1971 as a response to an oil spill crisis has grown to be a vibrant organization with robust programs in emergency preparedness, veterinary care, research, education, outreach, and training. Bird Rescue is a team of innovators, constantly seeking new solutions to the challenges faced by wild waterbirds today.

When I reflect on Bird Rescue's half century of service to wild birds, I think about the countless bird releases that have happened through the years and how that affects populations today. This year alone, nearly 4,000 birds will be cared for and returned to the wild from our wildlife rehabilitation centers. The impact of this work, multiplied over 50 years, has



been immense – more than 125,000 birds returned to health, and released to the wild to live, reproduce, and populate generations that follow them.

There are few things more gratifying than seeing a bird that came into one of our wildlife

rehabilitation centers weak and injured, take flight on wings that are strong, clean, and healthy. Every release is a truly inspirational moment to witness.

I want to assure you, it is your support and partnership that makes each of these wonderful moments happen. The wild birds in our care don't have owners or insurance plans to pay for their veterinary care. Instead, they are the responsibility of all of us. **By helping to provide the hands-on care they need, you are ensuring that thousands of wild birds each year get a second chance at life.**

As we celebrate our landmark anniversary, we are also celebrating you! Without you, this work simply could not continue.

I am humbled by the outpouring of support during our 50th year. Thank you to each and every one of you who supports Bird Rescue's mission in big and small ways. Our donors and partners made it possible for us to grow and thrive over the past half century. With your continued support, we will keep giving second chances to waterbirds in a changing world for the next 50 years.

With gratitude,

JD Bergeron  
CEO, International Bird Rescue

birds. And when you care about wild birds, you care about where they live." This mindset has led Dave to broad community engagement on habitat preservation, clean water, land use issues, ocean pollution, and other issues related to water birds.

Throughout the years, Dave has been a generous donor to Bird Rescue. Most recently, after a spate of break-ins at our Los Angeles wildlife center, Dave stepped forward to fund needed security improvements. With his support, the center has installed a new wireless network with robust video camera system to help provide protection for the birds. Center Manager Kylie Clatterbuck noted, "Dave's generosity is helping to keep our animals safer and more secure. Our patients are vulnerable, and it is important that we do all we can to protect

them. We are so grateful to him for helping us do that."

Dave's retirement travels have now taken him around the globe, photographing pelagic birds, and using these photographs in frequent public presentations. In pursuit of the Ivory Gull found only in the high northern arctic waters, he discovered the joy of photographing polar bears, harp seals, walruses, and whales as well.

He uses his photography to inspire care and concern for wild creatures. "I want my photographs to answer the question, Why should I care? I want people to be inspired to take what actions they can to keep the oceans clean and safe for these amazing animals."

Thank you, Dave, for being one of our many Bird Heroes!

## IBR UPCOMING EVENTS

### Virtual Open House

July 12 - 23



**Yes We Peli-Can**  
**Virtual 5K**  
September 4 - 12



Find out more at  
[www.birdrescue.org](http://www.birdrescue.org)



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# The Aviary

JULY 2021



**Over \$310,000 raised!**

Thank you to all who made the Groovy Gathering a tremendous success! Especially our sponsors:



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## North to Alaska!

In addition to our two year-round facilities in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area, Bird Rescue also maintains the Alaska Wildlife Response Center (AWRC) located in Anchorage, Alaska. The AWRC stands ready to answer the need and receive oiled wildlife within hours of notification of a spill. Designed to care for all species of native Alaskan birds, as well as small terrestrial and aquatic mammals (other than sea otters), response time in the event of an emergency is cut to a minimum. The 4,800 square foot center has cleaning facilities, a critical care unit, clinical laboratory, and cages and pools in place ready to go. International Bird Rescue not only makes the AWRC available for wildlife emergencies of any kind, but also maintains a stockpile of supplies that can be used in emergency events.

Bird Rescue recently strengthened our presence in Alaska with the hire of Matt Melton, our new Alaska Regional Representative and Director of Business Development and Partnerships. Matt is a lifelong Alaskan with 23 years' experience in emergency management, environmental services, and oil and gas industries. He will help build relationships with partners in the energy industry, continuing Bird Rescue's legacy as a trusted leader in wildlife response and management. We are confident that Matt's work will result in deeper relationships, better emergency preparedness, stronger mitigation of impacts on wildlife, and improved outcomes for wild birds. We welcome Matt and look forward to his contributions to our mission.

