

International Bird Rescue

NEWSLETTER

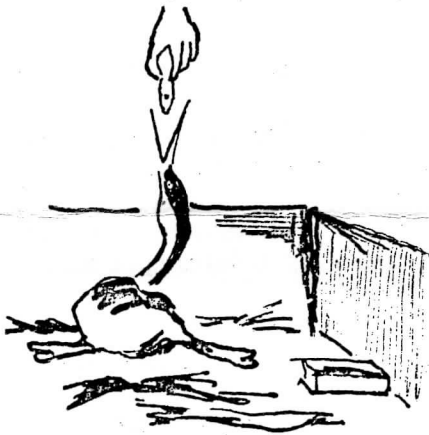
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18 January 1973

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API MEETS THE BIRD PEOPLE

Keith Hay, the Conservation Director of the American Petroleum Institute, visited our Bird Center in February and complimented us on our facilities and accomplishments. Dr. Harris conversed with him at length about our operations and need for funds. Unfortunately, less than 2% of the research funds allocated by the conservation division of API are devoted to oiled birds. Perhaps a few letters to the American Petroleum Institute might go a long way toward rectifying this situation. After all, more than a few of us believe that the oil companies should shoulder the responsibility for rehabilitating oiled birds and support research vital to such efforts.

Mr. Keith G. Hay may be reached at:
The American Petroleum Institute
1801 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

OAKLAND OIL SPILL

Dateline: 19 January 1973

Telephone conversation with Coast Guard. OILED BIRDS! A cup of hot tea. Calendar says it's the second anniversary of the last big mess in the San Francisco Bay. More hot tea. April Fletcher calls. She's been trying to call Bill Clark of the Department of Fish & Game. I attempt to call Josh Lichterman (author of an oil spill response plan) but he is neither at home nor at his office. April calls back. Norm McIntosh calls to report extent of oil slick and involvement of birds. A volunteer calls. She wants to help pick up birds. Time for a bite of breakfast as I sit at the telephone. I call Alice Berkner so that she will be ready to move wherever needed. I've been awake 23 minutes and no word from Fish & Game. Phone rings. It's Bill Clark. Fish & Game wants all live oiled birds trucked 50 miles from Government Island (in the estuary between Alameda and Oakland) up to Yountville in Napa County. The State has an oiled bird facility in Yountville. Could Fish & Game use our help in preparing birds for the journey? "Yes. Also send someone to Yountville." Dick Sander and Mal Raff to Government Island and Alice to Yountville. All equipped with needles, syringes, medications, numbered leg bands for birds, and standardized forms for recording information about each bird. Somewhere sandwiched in the above flurry were conversations with Dr. James Harris, Dr. Ron Duncan, Mal Raff, Dick Sander, Josh Lichterman, John Baker, and a second report by Norm McIntosh. April has difficulty calling me by phone so she acts in that style which is hers alone and gets Ma Bell to immediately install another line at the Bird Center so she can call without getting a busy signal.

Dear David and Alice --

You were Excellent! I am so happy you could come to my class and share your slide presentation and thoughts. I believe most learning takes place people-to-people. Thanks for your help.

Cynthia A. Husted
English-Drama Dept.
Oakland High School

Dear People of the Center,

Enclosed find a small contribution to help in the beautiful work you are doing; in these disturbing times it is the greatest pleasure to read of what great work you are doing---

All good wishes

Freda Kappner

Dear Bird Rescuers,

Thank you for your good work.

Sarah Erratt

(We solicit comments from our readers. What would you like to see in your Newsletter?)

VISITORS TO THE CENTER
JANUARY & FEBRUARY

R.G. Clawson of E.P.A. (Environmental Protection Agency)

Jack Downs of Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

D.A. Clanton of California Department of Fish and Game

Larry Colvin of The Oceanic Society

Keith Hay of API (American Petroleum Institute)

Bill and Ruth Marshak for a mortorcycle! The "Bird Works" now has transportation for the many errands needed to keep it going.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Covell for the floor lamp and delicious homemade preserves.

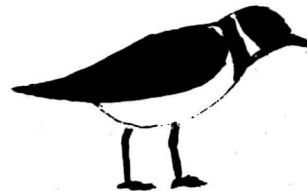
Mrs. C.R. Nicewonger for the book, "Oil Spill", a nice addition to the library.

Bob Wittig for the medications shelf.

Dr. J.W. Burke for the "Physician's Desk Reference", it's invaluable.

Bob Carcot who is taking over the task of keeping track of subscriptions.

Very special thanks to Save San Francisco Bay Association, Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Josh Lichterman, and John Friedman for their generous monetary contributions.



It bears repeating that Bird Rescue is a completely volunteer organization. Those of us who spend up to twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week at the Center are not paid one cent. Every penny that comes into the Center is spent on bird food, building supplies, and vital operating costs such as telephone, water, electricity, office supplies, etc.

WE NEED:

A copy machine, someone to work on funding, someone to install heater ducts. The ducts are needed for a gas furnace that was donated to the Center. Gas heating would be much less expensive than the electric space heaters we are now using. It would benefit the birds and people alike here at the Center.

GOOD EGG AWARDS

TO:

All the kind people who take the time to bring us injured birds. We cannot afford an ambulance service ---- yet.

California State Department of Fish and Game and the United States Coast Guard for their splendid work in the Oakland Oil Spill.

The people who volunteered their time to help during the Spill.



ROTTEN EGG AWARD

TO:

The person(s) who turned the valve at Port Petroleum on January 18 (two years to the day of the San Francisco Oil Spill of 1971).



OAKLAND OIL SPILL (continued)

Ciled birds were taken to the Coast Fuard facility on Government Island where we medicated them and sent them on to Yountville. The Coast Guard was fantastic. we needed a building. we were given use of a building. we needed the building heated. Immediately there was an adequate heater in

operation. We needed gauze. It was delivered. More needles. delivered. Food. Delivered. Medical corpsmen offered their services. Other Coast Guard personnel were wading into the cold, oil-covered bay to fetch out birds. We simply could not imagine more enthusiastic cooperation than that provided by the Coast Guard.

About 175 birds were found dead in the Oakland Estuary. Approximately 300 live ciled birds were picked up and sent to be cleaned. Twenty of these were sent to our Bird Center in Berkeley and the balance were sent to Yountville. (See appendix for more detailed information.)

The situation at Yountville was rather peculiar. The facility was stocked with some supplies and several pens were constructed well in advance of this oil spill. Apparently this preparation was to insure proper treatment of birds and render volunteer citizen participation unnecessary. What happened? Volunteers were relied upon heavily just as it was two years ago following the San Francisco Oil Spill. This was due in part to our insisting that many of the birds be kept a month for investigative purposes regardless of their exterior appearance. As Fish & Game is not committed to basic research in this field, they originally planned to release all of the birds as soon as they looked all right. In cooperating with our wishes to keep many of the birds, they turned over to us all of the birds as well as the manpower, logistical, and monetary responsibilities!

The cleaning methods used at Yountville are much improved over methods used two years ago but are still far from entirely satisfactory. A solvent with relatively low toxicity was used as the cleaner. Serial baths of warm (about 100° F) solvent produced clean birds in about four minutes. The bird was then taken indoors to be dried and put in a pen that served as a drunk tank. Afterall,

the bird had become intoxicated by the slightly toxic solvent and had to be kept warm and protected until its body could detoxify itself. As soon as the bird acted sober, it was offered food and water. Most were given access to bathing water at this time.

Unfortunately, birds were dying during every part of the rehabilitation process. Several causes suggest themselves:

1) Ingestion of toxic polluting oil.

The oil that was spilled got onto and into the birds' plumage. Birds commonly respond to such a situation by attempting to preen the oil off their feathers and usually ingest some quantity in the process. Toxic effects of most oils include damage to the digestive tract, liver, and kidneys.

2) Thermal stress.

When the plumage of a bird becomes matted with oil, it is no longer able to keep out water. The bird very quickly becomes chilled and attempts to maintain its body temperature by metabolizing body food stores at a very high rate. However, rapid heat loss to the surrounding water continues and the bird quickly reaches a state of exhaustion.

3) Handling stress.

Capturing, handling, and in any way disturbing a bird's normal routine is stressful. Stress manifests itself in elevated heart rate, elevated blood pressure, elevated body temperature, and in a variety of more subtle physiological changes. A state of shock followed by death is a common result unless medical counter-measures are employed.

4) Toxicity of cleaning solvent.

Although the toxic effects of the cleaning solvent are fairly mild, they may become fatally significant when combined with the toxic effects of the polluting oil especially when the bird is stressed or exhausted.

5) Secondary infections.

Captive wild birds are susceptible to a number of diseases. When a bird's state of health is compromised by any or all of the above problems, its susceptibility is greater still.

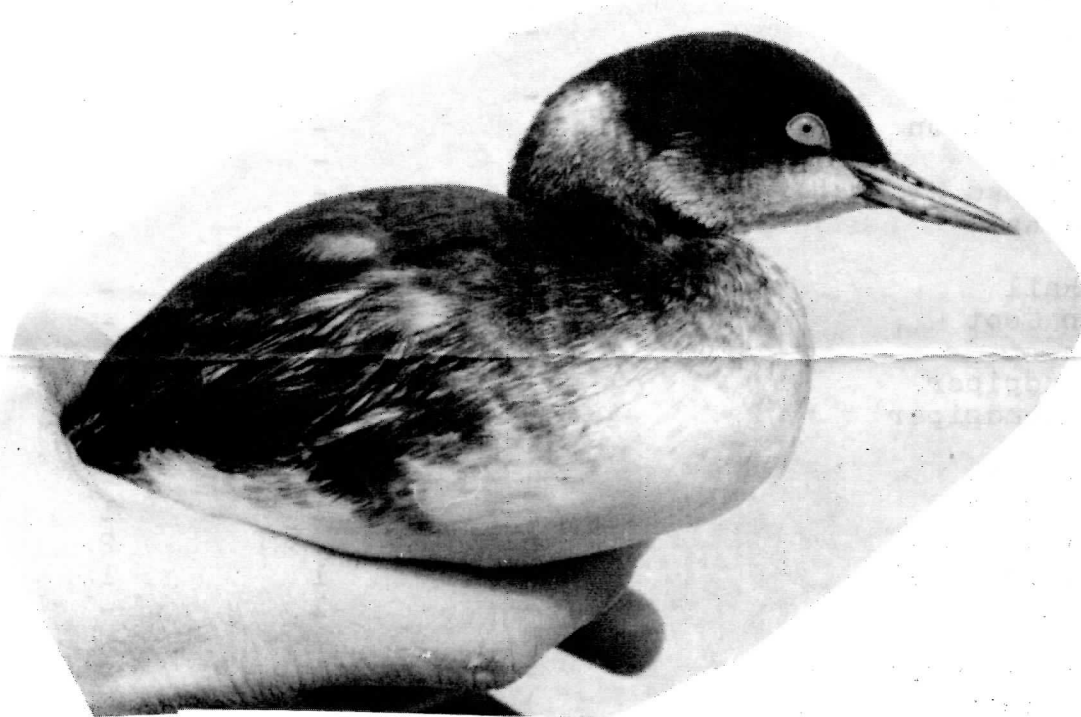
For the birds that survived all of the above problems there is still the matter of re-establishing waterproof capability to their plumage. For many of the coots and mallards, little more seemed to be required than for the bird to be relatively healthy, unstressed, have access to water, and preen its feathers for a few hours. The grebes, on the other hand, are still soaking up water at the time this is being written (2½ weeks after being cleaned in solvent). Other water birds have shown varying rates at which they regain full waterproofing. Individuals that have shown signs of being in other than top health are slowest to improve.

The research that we are undertaking with these birds includes microscopic examination of feathers to help us understand reasons for varying rates of plumage recovery. Another study is designed to determine the effectiveness of an orally administered drug, Pimaricin, in controlling aspergillosis (see Vol. 1, No. 2, page 10). Also in progress are blood tests to monitor blood glucose, serum protein, hemoglobin, packed cell volume, blood urea nitrogen, and liver function. These tests are being conducted at the Valley Veterinary Hospital in Walnut Creek, California and are being financed in part by Clean Bay, Inc. The blood tests are the only part of our operation receiving outside funding. All other expenses are being met by the fast dwindling funds of IBRRC which we hope will be bolstered by kind contributors.

-- David C. Smith

OILED BIRDS TREATED in the OAKLAND OIL SPILL

	In Custody 6 Feb 73	Released	Died Since Capture	Total
Red-Throated Loon	0	0	1	1
Western Grebe	5	1	27	33
Horned Grebe	1	0	13	14
Eared Grebe	1	0	1	2
Pied-Billed Grebe	2	0	28	30
Mallard & Mallard hybrid	9	10	6	25
Canvasback	5	5	2	12
Scaup Spp.	22	3	6	31
Goldeneye Spp.	7	2	12	21
Ruddy Duck	3	0	14	17
Black-Crowned Night Heron	0	1	0	1
Clapper Rail	0	3	3	6
American Coot	8	62	46	116
Dunlin	0	0	1	1
California Gull	1	0	0	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	64 (21%)	87 (28%)	160 (51%)	311



EARED GREBE (Podiceps caspicus)

Found oiled in the Oakland Estuary on the 20th of January, 1973.
Released into Berkeley Aquatic Park on the 24th of February, 1973.

WILD BIRDS TREATED

IBRRC has undertaken the task of accepting injured and ill wild birds for treatment. These birds are covered by permits granted to us by both state and federal agencies. The following list represents birds admitted for treatment from August 1, 1972 until December 31, 1972. The bulk of the birds were cared for at the home of Marilyn and Malcolm Raff with funds from the Berkeley Humane Society and IBRRC.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>DIED</u>	<u>ON HAND</u> <u>(1/1/73)</u>	<u>RELEASED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Arctic Loon	-	-	1	1
Red-Throated Loon	-	1	-	1
western Grebe	2	-	-	2
Pied-Billed Grebe	-	1	-	1
Ashy Petrel	1	-	-	1
Brandt's Cormorant	-	-	2	2
Mallard	-	-	1	1
Pintail	1	-	-	1
Shoveler	1	-	-	1
Canvasback	1	-	-	1
Scaup (Spp.)	1	-	-	1
Ruddy Duck	2	-	-	2
Red-Breasted Merganser	-	1	-	1
Cooper's Hawk	1	-	-	1
Red-Tailed Hawk	-	-	2	2
Sparrow Hawk	-	2	-	2
Great Blue Heron	1	-	-	1
Green Heron	1	-	-	1
Black-Crowned Night Heron	1	-	-	1
Virginia Rail	1	-	1	2
Yellow Rail	1	-	-	1
American Coot	1	-	-	1
Killdeer	1	1	-	2
Least Sandpiper	1	-	-	1
western Sandpiper	1	-	-	1
Western Gull	4	2	-	6
Herring Gull	2	1	1	4
California Gull	6	2	2	10
Ring-Billed Gull	-	1	1	2
Mew Gull	-	1	-	1
Bonaparte's Gull	-	1	-	1
Caspian Tern	1	-	-	1
California Murre	3	1	1	5
Band-Tailed Pigeon	4	-	-	4
Rock Dove	27	22	8	57

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>DIED</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>	<u>RELEASED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Mourning Dove	18	6	7	31
Ringed Turtle Dove	-	1	-	1
Screech Owl	-	1	-	1
Great Horned Owl	-	1	1	2
Short-Eared Owl	-	1	-	1
Barn Owl	2	-	-	2
Poor-Will	-	1	-	1
Anna's Hummingbird	3	4	2	9
Red-Shafted Flicker	-	2	-	2
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	3	-	-	3
Western Flycatcher	-	-	2	2
Scrub Jay	6	-	2	8
Red-Breasted Nuthatch	-	-	1	1
Bewick's wren	1	-	-	1
Mockingbird	2	-	-	2
Robin	9	9	4	22
Varied Thrush	1	1	-	2
Hermit Thrush	2	-	1	3
Swainson's Thrush	2	-	-	2
Ruby-Crowned Kinglet	1	-	-	1
Cedar Waxwing	6	-	2	8
Starling	1	1	2	4
Hermit Warbler	1	-	-	1
Yellow Warbler	1	-	-	1
Wilson's Warbler	-	-	1	1
House Sparrow	7	-	3	10
Western Meadowlark	2	-	-	2
Brewer's Blackbird	2	1	-	3
Western Tanager	1	-	-	1
Black-headed Grosbeak	2	-	-	2
Purple Finch	1	-	-	1
House Finch	2	3	1	6
American Goldfinch	1	-	1	2
Brown Towhee	8	-	-	8
Oregon Junco	2	1	2	5
White-Crowned Sparrow	1	-	1	2
Golden-Crowned Sparrow	-	-	2	2
Fox Sparrow	1	1	1	3
TOTAL	154	71	56	281
Percentages	55%	25%	20%	

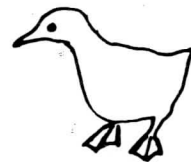


HUNGRY HUMMERS

Bird Rescue was most gratified at the response of the public to our plea on behalf of hummingbirds in December. The San Francisco Bay Area was subjected to abnormally cold temperatures that month with the resulting frost kill of most flowers then in bloom. This left the hummingbirds without their normal food supply. People were most concerned and pet stores were soon sold out of appropriate feeders. The media was very responsive and cooperative and deserve a vote of thanks.

The best hummingbird feeder is a natural environment with flowers and small insects but in lieu of that it is not difficult to make your own feeder. I purchased a stopper with a metal tube (used for hamster water bottles) for 29¢ at a pet store. This I fit to a used salad dressing bottle. The holder is a bent clothes hanger. I use a four-to-one solution of sugar water. Boil four cups of water and add to one cup of granulated sugar. Add red food coloring. Change the solution every three days. Store surplus solution in the refrigerator. Keep your feeder clean.

--Alice Berkner



JUNIOR BIRDCGIRL

Here I am again writing another article for the newsletter. Well I don't really know what to write.

I guess you have all heard about the oil spill. I didn't work very much with the birds but I went up to Benicia a few times. Up at Benicia there were some birds that had to be fed every day.

Well I don't think I did so well on the last paragraph so lets try it again. O.K.!

Another idea Dave had was to give like a progress report on my ducks. So lets give that a try.

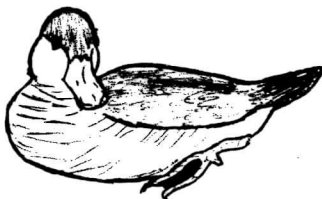
Well to start out my ducks are fine. To my surprise I found that Tina is a boy and so is Socortesse.

In their pen I used to have a pool in it but it got too muddy and hard to clean so one day I decided to take the pool out of the pen to make it easier to keep clean. The only problem to that is that I have to let them out every day so they can take a bath.

Well I must tell you this. Socortesse has been very snobby lately that when I stick my foot by him when he is in or near the pond he will straighten out his body, his neck straight out and beak open attacks me back at my foot and bites it. And when I go to the house for something he does his little act and chases me until we hit the cement then he rushes back to the pond, very satisfied. One thing for a trick is that they can walk up a board and hop in their pen.

I'll guess that's all for now.

--Judy Berkner



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