

News

Santa Cruz, California



Animal Rescue volunteer Tricia Wilson tube-feeds an injured grebe

New Center to Aid Animal Rescue Group

FROM HAWKS with bullet wounds to snowy plovers soaked in oil, the all-volunteer Native Animal Rescue is expected to save the lives of more than 2,000 of our wild neighbors this year.

The six-year-old organization's altruism will be aided greatly by a new wildlife rehabilitation center, now being built near the group's headquarters on Rodriguez Street. Built in a house donated by the SPCA, the center will include aviaries and pools to accommodate 500 oil-soaked seabirds should another oil spill hit.

Native Animal Rescue has treated 117 species of local wildlife since 1980, when some 600 animals were brought to the center.

An oil spill in Monterey Bay last month gave Native Animal Rescue's 20 volunteers sleepless nights as hundreds of seabirds were brought in.

"Volunteers are hard to get and keep, because the work is so emotionally draining," said Tim Corcoran, the group's president.

Although no employees are paid for their services, it costs some \$20,000 a year to keep the center open, which comes from private donations and memberships, which cost \$10 per year. The SPCA provides free rent and pays for the phone.

It's a never-ending struggle to keep community interest in the center alive because most people take notice of Native Animal Rescue only during catastrophes, or if they discover orphaned baby animals in their backyards.

As baby animal season approaches, the volunteers are gearing up for their busiest time of year, and donations are needed now more than ever. Anyone finding an injured or abandoned wild animal is urged not to take the matter into their own hands, but to call Native Animal Rescue at 475-6454. •