

Animal rescue group needs help caring for 89 baby birds

July 17 2019



This July 12, 2019, photo released by International Bird Rescue shows baby snowy egrets being cared for in Fairfield, Calif. The animal rescue group is asking for help caring for baby snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons left homeless last week after a tree fell in downtown Oakland. (International Bird Rescue via AP)

An animal rescue group is asking for help caring for 89 baby snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons left homeless last week after a

tree fell in downtown Oakland.

International Bird Rescue said Wednesday it needs donations and volunteers to help feed and care for the baby birds rescued after an old ficus tree serving as a rookery split in half and partially fell last week.

The group is caring for 89 young birds and eggs it rescued from the tree including, 50 snowy egrets and 22 black-crowned night herons. It also rescued 17 eggs that need intensive care and round-the-clock support. Another 20 birds died when the tree fell.

The rescue group was already taking care of more than 200 Bay Area water birds at its busy hospital in the city of Fairfield, it said.

The birds, which breed in groups, began using the massive and old leafy ficus trees in downtown Oakland for nesting about 10 years ago after non-native vegetation was removed from nearby Lake Merritt, scaring them away, said Cindy Margulis, executive director of Golden Gate Audubon Society.

"Most of those trees are really enormous canopies and their roots are underneath concrete so they cannot spread to get the support they need and gravity takes its toll," Margulis said.



This July 11, 2019, photo released by International Bird Rescue shows workers trimming trees to remove nests containing birds and eggs in Oakland, Calif. The animal rescue group is asking for help caring for baby snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons left homeless last week after a tree fell in downtown Oakland. (International Bird Rescue via AP)

Margulis, whose organization helped rescue the baby birds, said wildlife protection groups are working to get the snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons back to nest in Lake Merritt, where there are more sturdy trees and not as much concrete.

Biologists have identified two trees and have placed speakers in them that broadcast the sounds of a breeding colony, decoys of herons and egrets and nests left over from other breeding seasons to get the birds to raise their chicks there.

"They are visiting the destination sites so, that tells us there is interest and that's very encouraging," she said.

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