

Avian Rescue & Rehabilitation

Kite flying festival, Jaipur

January 2020



Supported by



Enriching Lives

KIRLOSKAR EBARA PUMPS LIMITED (KEPL)

Introduction

1. Emergency Relief Network

The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), in partnership with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), launched the Emergency Relief Network (ERN) in 2004. It is an online platform for expert and amateur rehabilitators to exchange share and contribute their knowledge and professional skills in the care for animals in crisis and distress. The aim of this project is to rapidly respond to animals, domestic or wild, that are under distress due to any natural or man-made disasters.

Veterinarians, rehabilitators, ecologists, wildlife biologists, law enforcement personnel and varied other professionals with a diverse set of interests and expertise come together to form ERN. They are also committed responders who urgently reach the location of reported wildlife emergencies and disasters in different parts of the country when needed. The network currently consists of more than 700 members representing 28 states and union territories of India.

Over the years, ERN deployed in various states of India like Bihar, Odisha, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, etc. for disaster responses. The nature of affected animals ranges from fledgling birds that have fallen from nests during a cyclone to vast population of livestock that are injured, starving and non-sheltered due to floods.

In January 2020, IFAW-WTI, provided support to a number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and individuals who are also part of ERN, for rescue and rehabilitation of birds that are injured due to the 'Kite Flying Festival' also known as 'Makar Sankranti'. IFAW-WTI, through ERN, has been involved in this since 2014 and has been assisting various agencies in organizing veterinary camps and mobile veterinary squads. Even this year, hundreds of birds were directly handled and released through projects in Jaipur, Rajasthan during January 2020. This report elaborates on the rescue response this year.

The team could save valuable individual lives of birds due to the timely support of agencies like yours and we are thankful to you for extending the same.

2. Kite flying as a man-made disaster

Makar Sankranti, a festival welcoming the harvest season, is celebrated by flying kites in Rajasthan and Gujarat. The string used to fly these lightweight paper kites is called as '*manja*' as it contains coatings of abrasives (usually glass shards or plastic/metal filings) to cut down other people's kites. Hundreds of birds are grievously injured and even more die by entangling in manja. The injuries are mostly related to the wings and range from fractures, ligament and muscle separation and, worst of all, complete traumatic amputation of the wing. Manja strings that remain entangled on trees continue to be a threat for birds for months to follow if not removed. The legs or wings of the birds that sit on such trees get entangled in the manja, and stay there, sometimes hanging upside down for days on end, bleeding, and dying a slow death.

3. Best Management Practices

In continuation with last year's practice, this year IFAW-WTI employed the framework for the Best Management Practices (BMP) for handling avian emergencies during such man-made disasters. The objective of the framework was to develop policies, procedures and systems to handle such emergencies in the most professional, scientific and efficient manner. Under the framework IFAW-WTI developed a blueprint to establish the camp at specific sites, documentation protocols, treatment and management protocols and most important safety protocols for the rescuers.

Even this year, through the local support of our ERN Organizational members Raksha and Hope and Beyond, we organized two Bird Treatment Camps (BTC) in two areas of Jaipur. We improved our response this year through the financial support of Kirloskar Ebara Pumps Limited (KEPL) provide better infrastructure, logistics and overall veterinary intervention to enhance the emergency response. The details of the two camps organized at different locations are given below

4. Ramniwas Bagh, Jaipur

Like every year, with support from Raksha WTI organized a veterinary camp in Jaipur in January 2020 and carried out bird rescues with a dedicated team of veterinarians, birders, volunteers, wildlife rescuers and rehabilitators. A total of 141 wild bird cases (except pigeons) were rescued belonging to 31 species. The commonest species that was

rescued was Black kite (25 cases) followed by barn owls (16 cases), spotted owl (10 cases) and even two case of great white pelican, a migratory species. Of all the birds rescued, 77 were released (54.61%), 33 were sent to lifetime care centres/zoos as they were found to be grounded and would not be able to live in the wild and 31 died succumbed to major injures and grave prognosis (figure 1). Of the 77 released birds, 18 were released on spot after minimal intervention as they did not require

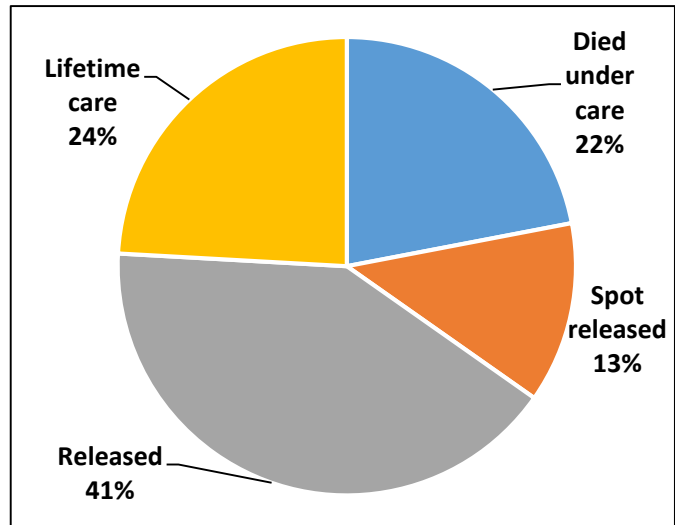


Figure 1: Outcome of cases handled by the BTC in Ramniwas Bagh



Figure 2: A barn owl being examined post-operatively

protracted care. This was possible because of the adept first aid and emergency measures the team undertook during the rescues itself. The remaining birds were brought to the two veterinary centres that were temporarily established for at least a month around Makar Sankranti. These birds were injured and required treatment ranging from dressing and bandaging of soft-tissue wounds to surgical fixations of complicate wing fractures (figure 2). Dedicated operation theatres were established in both these facilities and experienced and trained veterinarians were made in-charge of the units.

Special focus was paid to maintain sterile environment, least disturbance to the bird and excellence post-operative care to improve the rehabilitation prospects of the birds (figure 3). Aviaries were also erected to ensure the birds have ample space and are able to practice flying, post-operatively to improve their chances for survival in the wild.



Figure 3: A team of veterinarians, bird handles preparing for surgery

2. Vaishali Nagar, Jaipur

Another BTC was organized in collaboration The team from Hope and Beyond in



Figure 4: Veterinarians examining the bird upon admission and providing first aid

Vaishali Nagar which operated from the other side of Jaipur. We established a permanent shelter where a team of about 6 veterinarians, veterinary students and volunteers were divided into various teams to streamline admission, first aid, treatment and surgery (figure 4). All the birds upon admission were tagged, triaged and sent to the respective unit. An orthopaedic Operation Theatre was also setup for conducting complex surgeries. Prior to the setup of the actual camp itself, the team also conducted training workshops for the voluntary rescuers through whom the reach of the response could be enhanced. General awareness about the menace of kite flying was raised around the city using various platforms like Social media, Print media, FM Radio, Posters, Pamphlets, etc. (figure 5).

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Figure 5: Minister of State, Environment and Forests, Govt. Of Rajasthan releasing a poster on saving birds during kite flying festival

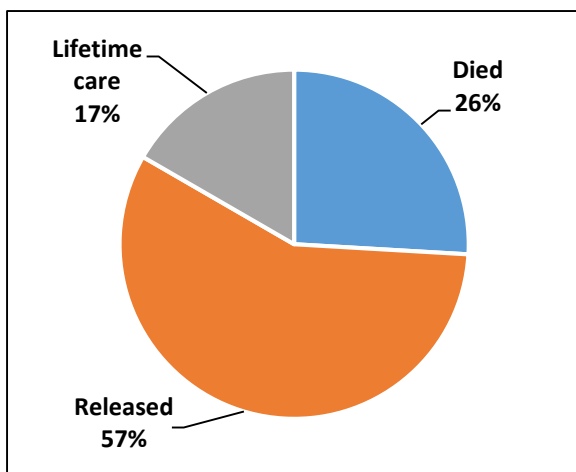


Figure 6: Outcome of cases handled by the BTC in Vaishali Nagar

The team in the response lasting for about 10 days, handled a total of 51 cases of bird emergencies (except pigeons) belonging to 12 species. The commonest species that was most affected and hence handled the maximum were black kite, lapwing, spotted owlet and peacocks. Of all the birds handled, 30 were released (58.82%), 9 were resigned to captivity in lifetime care centres/zoos while 14 died despite all efforts of treatment (figure 6).

Conclusion

In total, 192 wild birds were rescued by teams in Jaipur of which, 107 (55.72%) were released. Such efforts not only save the lives of many wild animals, but also helps in raising awareness of the importance of these species. With donors such as Kirloskar Ebara Pumps Ltd (KEPL), IFAW-WTI can continue our efforts in saving individual animal's lives and releasing them back to the wild. We are thankful to your agency once again for coming forward at this time of crisis and lending you hand to save every individual life that matters.

Annexure

Annex 1: Wild birds handled at Ramniwas Bagh, BTC

Species	Outcomes				
	Spot Released	Rehabilitated	Lifetime Care	Dead	TOTAL
Asian Koel	0	0	0	1	1
Barn Owl	2	9	2	3	16
Black Kite	2	11	6	6	25
Bank Myna	1	1	0	0	2
Collared dove	1	1	0	2	4
Common Myna	1	1	0	1	3
Cattle Egret	1	2	1	1	5
Grey Lag Geese	0	0	2	0	2
Great white pelican	0	1	1	0	2
Greater Coucal	0	2	0	1	3
Gray Francolin	0	1	0	0	1
House Sparrow	0	0	1	1	2
House Crow	1	2	1	1	5
Indian Peafowl (m)	0	1	1	0	2
Indian Peafowl (f)	1	1	3	0	5
Indian Scops Owl	0	0	0	1	1
Indian Eagle Owl	0	1	0	0	1
Indian roller	0	0	0	1	1
Jungle Babbler	1	1	0	0	2
Laughing Dove	1	2	1	1	5
Indian Pond Heron	1	1	2	0	4
Rosy Starling	0	2	1	1	4
Rosy Pelican	0	1	1	0	2
Red Wattled Lapwing	0	4	3	2	9
Rose Ringed Parakeet	1	3	2	2	8
Red Vented Bulbul	1	1	1	1	4
Shikra	0	2	1	1	4
Spotted Owlet	2	4	2	2	10
White Throated Kingfisher	0	1	0	0	1
Yellow Footed Green Pigeon	1	3	1	2	7
GRAND TOTAL	18	59	33	31	141

Annexure 2: Wild birds handled at Vaishali Nagar, BTC

Species Rescued	Total	Died under care	Released	Lifetime care
Barn Owl	2	1	1	2
Black Kite	15	1	7	7
Cattle Egret	3	1	2	0
House Crow	3	1	2	0
Laughing Dove	5	2	3	0
Great White Pelican	1	1	0	0
Indian Peacock	3	0	3	0
Red wattled Lapwing	6	3	3	0
Rose ringed parakeet (Psittacula krameri)	3	2	1	0
Spotted Owlet (Athene brama)	5	0	5	0
Yellow Footed Green Pigeon (Treron)	4	2	2	0
Greater Coucal	1	0	1	0
Total	51	14	30	9