



**International
Bird
Rescue
Research
Center**
www.ibrrc.org

San Francisco Bay | Los Angeles

Contact: Paul Kelway
Cell: 310-691-9558
Email: paul.kelway@ibrrc.org

News Advisory for: Tuesday, June 8, 2010

IBRRC's Jay Holcomb Receives Ocean Hero Award *Veteran wildlife care expert recognized for lifelong commitment to marine conservation*

Los Angeles, CA – Today, [International Bird Rescue Research Center](http://www.ibrrc.org)'s executive director Jay Holcomb was named Oceana's Ocean Hero for 2010. Holcomb is currently leading IBRRC's bird rescue effort in the Gulf, working alongside Tri-State Bird Rescue to care for wildlife caught in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The Ocean Heroes contest was created in 2009 to recognize individuals making a difference for the ocean, with winners announced on World Oceans Day. This year, [Oceana](http://www.oceana.org), the largest international organization focused solely on ocean conservation, also named a group of Junior Ocean Heroes, honoring The Shark Finatics from Green Chimney High School in New York.

"We are proud to honor these everyday people who are making a difference for the ocean," says Oceana's CEO Andrew Sharpless. "In light of the disaster in the Gulf and the state of the oceans worldwide, we need people like Holcomb and the Finatics to continue their work and inspire others to get involved."

Oceana's 2010 Ocean Heroes contest was launched in March, when the general public was invited to submit nominations. Finalists were selected by a panel of experts from Oceana, and the public was invited to vote online to select the winners.

Holcomb is a lifelong California resident who has been passionate about the ocean since his childhood along the coast. He began his career at the Marin Humane Society and then helped found the rehabilitation program at the Marin Wildlife Center. He joined IBRRC in 1986 with 20 years of animal rehabilitation experience, and has responded to over 200 oil spills around the world, including the 1989 Exxon Valdez and the 1979 Gulf spills.

"It is particularly poignant that I have won this award in the midst of the greatest oil spill in U.S. history," said Holcomb. "My career stems from a passion that has burned in me since I was a child. I have always approached my work as trying to change the world one bird at a time. My hope is that this award reminds people that whatever we can do

personally to protect our ocean does make a difference, no matter how overwhelming the task may seem at times.”

Given his busy schedule on the ground in the Gulf, Holcomb has limited availability for interviews. For the latest news, check out <http://www.intbirdrescue.blogspot.com/>, or follow @IBRRC on Twitter. Creative commons licensed images from the Gulf rescue are available at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ibrcc/>. For photos of Holcomb, email paul.kelway@ibrcc.org.

###