

RESCUINGAnimals
FROM
DISASTERS

SAVING ANIMALS FROM OIL SPILLS



by Stephen Person

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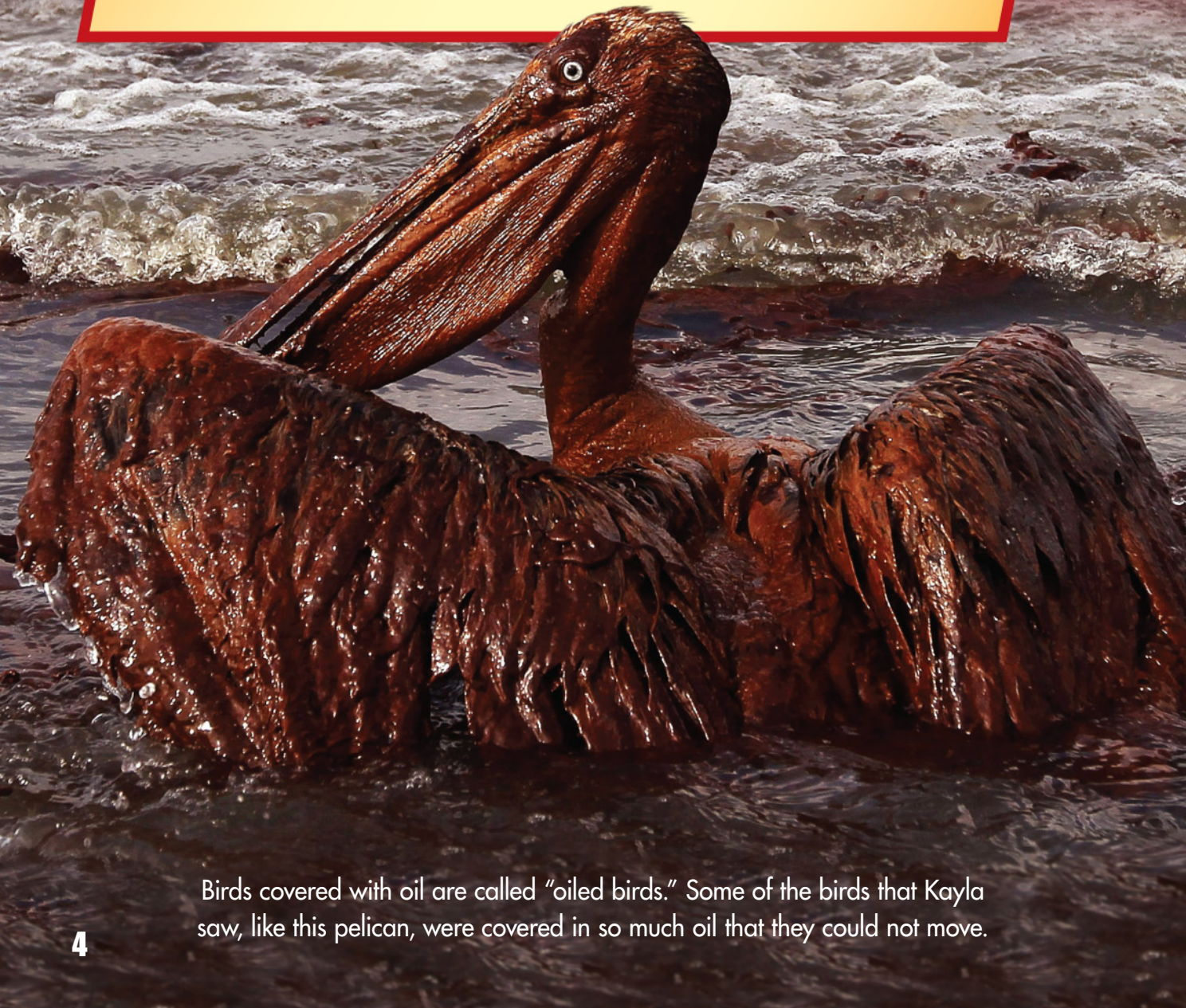
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CONTENTS

Kayla to the Rescue.....	4
Racing to the Coast	6
Explosion in the Gulf.....	8
Oil and Wildlife	10
Cleaning Oiled Birds	12
Turtle Patrol	14
The Great Egg Rescue	16
Wildlife Hero	18
Disaster in Alaska.....	20
Learning from Nuka.....	22
Lasting Dangers.....	24
Back to the Wild	26
Famous Oil Spills and Rescues	28
Animals at Risk from Spills	29
Glossary	30
Bibliography	31
Read More	31
Learn More Online	31
Index	32
About the Author.....	32

Kayla to the Rescue

On June 5, 2010, Kayla DiBenedetto (dee-ben-uh-DET-oh) sat in a small boat off the coast of Grand Isle, Louisiana. She lifted a pair of binoculars to her eyes and pointed them at the beach. She saw what she was looking for—pelicans. Many of the birds were covered with sticky brown oil. She knew that without quick help, they could die.



Birds covered with oil are called “oiled birds.” Some of the birds that Kayla saw, like this pelican, were covered in so much oil that they could not move.

Kayla grabbed a large net and stepped out of the boat. She splashed through shallow water toward the oil-covered birds. “Our job was to capture them safely—not an easy task,” she said. As Kayla got close, the frightened pelicans ran away. Kayla chased after them, but she tripped and fell facedown in the sand. She was not about to give up, though. Kayla was **determined** to save the birds.

Kayla’s white suit helped protect her from the oil that was on the birds and in the water.



Kayla works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a government group that protects animals and their habitats.

Racing to the Coast

Kayla is a **biologist** who works in Louisiana. On most days, her job is to study fish in Louisiana's waters. In the spring of 2010, however, she learned that an oil spill was spreading across the Gulf of Mexico. She knew this accident could be deadly for animals living around the Gulf. Like many scientists, Kayla left her regular job, raced to the coast, and joined a wildlife rescue team.



This biologist is rescuing a pelican that was covered in oil from the spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Pelicans and other seabirds are wild animals and are not used to being handled by people. As a result, they get very nervous when they are captured. Rescuers must handle the animals very gently, because stress can kill birds.

Though it wasn't easy, Kayla managed to catch many oiled pelicans. She brought the birds by boat to rescue centers along the coast, where they could be cleaned. Kayla then turned her boat around and went back to look for more birds in trouble. "We didn't stop as long as there were still things to do," Kayla said. "We were trying to help every bird."



Oiled birds were kept in small cages until they could be brought to rescue centers.

INDEX

- Alaska 20–21, 22
algae 14
bluefin tuna 29
Deepwater Horizon 8–9, 26
DiBenedetto, Kayla 4–5, 6–7, 8
dolphins 11, 29
Exxon Valdez spill 20–21, 22–23, 24
Florida 17
food chain 24
Holcomb, Jay 18–19, 20
hypothermia 11
International Bird Rescue Research Center 19, 28
Ixtoc 1 well spill 28
killer whales 21, 22, 24
Louisiana 4, 6, 8–9, 11, 12, 15, 26
Lucky (sea turtle) 15
Nuka (sea otter) 22–23
Nyac (sea otter) 23
pelicans 4–5, 6–7, 10–11, 12–13, 26
penguins 28
Prince William Sound 20, 22
rescue centers 7, 12, 14, 26
San Francisco Bay 19
sea otters 20–21, 22–23, 24, 29
Seattle Aquarium 22
sea turtles 14–15, 16–17, 26–27, 28
South Africa 28
Treasure spill 28
turtle eggs 16–17
Vancouver Aquarium 23
veterinarians 12–13

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. He lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, New York.



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RESCUING Animals
FROM DISASTERS

SAVING ANIMALS FROM OIL SPILLS

When disaster strikes, people aren't the only ones in danger. On April 20, 2010, an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico exploded. Millions of gallons of oil began gushing into the water, causing the biggest oil spill in U.S. history. Thousands of pelicans that lived in the Gulf were now in danger of dying because sticky brown oil covered their feathers. Who would come to their rescue?

Look inside to meet the everyday heroes who have found ways to save animals from major oil spills. These brave men and women are able to rescue not only oiled pelicans, but also other seabirds as well as sea otters and sea turtles—sometimes even risking their own lives as they rush in to help.

**SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
EARTHQUAKES**

**SAVING ANIMALS FROM
FIRES**

**SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
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**SAVING ANIMALS FROM
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