

# Help at hand for sick birds

A bird in distress, close to death, has caring humans – a caller named Jenny and two dedicated volunteers, Hammy and Natalie – to thank for saving its life, writes **Pam Carstens**



**TO THE RESCUE:** A seabird's greatest ally – Helen 'Hammy' Forrest – a volunteer with the Pelican and Seabird Bird Rescue, who helped capture and transport an injured jabiru. XF

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RESCUING a sick jabiru from the Wynnum Esplanade last week was all in a day's voluntary work for the Forrests – Natalie and her mum Hammy, of Gumdale.

The urgent distress call to the The Pelican and Seabird Bird Rescue hotline was just one of 1200 calls a year received by the wildlife rescue service.

At the recent annual Healthy Waterways Awards the small but active organisation of 24-seven dedicated bird lovers was awarded the Brisbane Airport Community Award.

Explaining what they do 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Natalie said the hotline received a call from a very distressed lady named Jenny who thought the bird was a pelican.

“To our amazement the pelican was in fact a beautiful but very malnourished sub-adult black-necked stork,” Natalie said.

“We’ve called her Java. What a truly incredible bird!

“She was so ill she was down on her hocks and could barely hold her head up.”

Java was packed with pillows and towels and whisked to the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital at Beerwah for immediate vet treatment.

“We’re glad in a way that she was a little too weak to stand up, it made capturing and transporting her a little easier, also if she was standing we would have been virtually eye to eye,” Natalie said.

“We respect her a lot,” she added.

The following morning the bird was discharged into care at the

privately owned Pelican and Seabird Rescue Inc. Rehab Facility, also at Beerwah.

With months of recovery ahead Java is making progress and is now able to stand and has tolerated some solid food.

Both Hammy and Natalie are full of praise for people like Jenny who care enough to make the call in the first place.

“She was prepared to stay there all day if need be until help arrived,” Natalie said.

■ **Pelican and Seabird Rescue**  
Hotline: 0404 118 301