



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

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## **JAVITS CENTER'S NEW SUSTAINABLE UPGRADES SERVE AS URBAN HABITAT FOR HUNDREDS OF BIRDS IN NEW YORK CITY**

*More Than 520 Birds Observed During Study of 6.75-Acre Green Roof*

*Only Green Roof in New York City Known to Be Used by Nesting Herring Gulls*

*Bird Collisions Dropped 90% After Installation of Bird-Friendly Glass*

NEW YORK (March 2, 2015) – New York Convention Center Operating Corporation (NYCCOC) President and CEO Alan Steel today announced the results of a new study that shows 11 bird species have utilized the Javits Center's green roof as a habitat, demonstrating the roof's importance to the community's eco-system. Located on Manhattan's West Side, the 6.75-acre green roof yielded 524 bird sightings during an ecological study conducted by the New York City Audubon and Fordham University in the spring and summer months of 2014. The construction of the 6.75-acre green roof is a part of the Javits Center's top-to-bottom renovation, which included the installation of thousands of fritted, translucent glass panels along the facility's giant façade and rooftop. This bird-friendly glass is designed to prevent bird collisions, and as a result, bird collisions decreased 90% since the installation, creating a healthier environment for those who live and work in and around the Javits Center, according to New York City Audubon.

Comprised of layers of sedum, the green roof was installed as part of the Javits Center's comprehensive renovation that was completed last year. In an effort to reduce storm water runoff, the green roof is equipped to collect as much as 6.8 million gallons of water a year, improving the quality of life for the surrounding community. Among the other improvements include new energy-efficient mechanical units, new energy-efficient lighting and a state-of-the-art WiFi system that can serve up to 70,000 users at one time. With its sustainable upgrades, the Javits Center will reduce the building's energy consumption by 26%, translating into millions of dollars in savings. In October 2014, the New York City Audubon honored the Javits Center with an award for the installation of its bird-friendly glass.

"With the installation of our green roof, we have created an oasis for the area's wildlife in an urban environment dominated by concrete and steel," said Alan Steel of NYCCOC, which operates the Javits Center. "For nearly 30 years, the Javits Center has sought to improve New York's economy, and now, we are working to

improve the quality of life in the community around us. I would like to thank the New York Convention Center Development Corporation, FXFOWLE and Tishman Construction for their roles in implementing all of our sustainable improvements, which have served as an exciting model for buildings across New York City.”

“Our surveys have shown that the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center’s green roof provides suitable habitat for wildlife, from soil arthropods to nesting gulls to bats feeding on insects on the wing,” said Kathryn Heintz, Executive Director of New York City Audubon. “As the vegetation continues to thrive, more wildlife will find this valuable habitat up on the roof. The installation of the green roof was a large step in creating new habitat in a previously diminished urban environment.”

“More than 1/3 of New York City's surface area is rooftops. Traditional roofs provide little habitat for urban wildlife, but green roofs, like the new, cutting edge green roof at the Javits Center, can be a critical source of habitat for urban wildlife, particularly birds,” Professor J. Alan Clark of Fordham University. “Our research at Fordham University has confirmed that urban green roofs can successfully support wildlife, but we were surprised and delighted how quickly birds began utilizing the Javits Center green roof. What is especially exciting about the Javits Center green roof is its sheer size – being one of the largest green roofs in the country.”

According to the study, the most common birds using the green roof were herring gulls, European starlings and barn swallows. The study found that American kestrels, a species never before observed foraging on green roofs, was seen foraging on the Javits Center’s green roof, which was fully completed in 2014. In New York City, 35 bird species have been recorded on green roofs, according to the study. Utilizing specialized equipment installed on the green roof, researchers observed 11 bird species– seven of which had been recorded on non-green roofs, three of which had been observed on green roofs and one of which was a previously unrecorded species, the great black-backed gull. The following species were observed on the Javits Center’s green roof – the only such roof known to support great black-backed gulls and nesting herring gulls in New York City.

- Canada goose
- American kestrel
- Herring gull
- Great black-backed gull
- Rock pigeon
- Mourning dove
- Fish crow
- Barn swallow
- Northern mockingbird
- European starling
- House sparrow

The green roof also provides an appropriate habitat for insects and bats, exemplifying its unique status in such a dense urban setting. Due to its recent installation and dynamic environment, the observed species will likely change as the roof ages, the study reported. The New York City Audubon and Fordham University will continue to study the environmental impacts of the green roof in the months ahead and determine if additional species make a home atop the iconic structure.

### **About Jacob K. Javits Convention Center of New York**

Known as the “Marketplace for the World,” the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center of New York was designed by I.M. Pei & Partners and opened in 1986. The iconic facility has since become New York City’s primary venue for large conventions, trade shows and special events and serves as home to many of the world’s top 250 trade shows, hosting millions of visitors a year. These largem scale events generate up to \$1.5 billion in annual economic activity for New York City and New York State, supporting as many as 14,000 jobs in and around the facility. Located on 11th Avenue between 34th and 40th sts., the Javits Center has 840,000 square feet of total exhibition space, 102 meeting rooms and four banquet halls, as well as a range of telecommunications services, including WiFi access. For more information, visit [www.javitscenter.com](http://www.javitscenter.com).

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