

## A Word from Our President

Often throughout the years, I have been asked about wildlife rehabilitation from wildlife biologists. "Why do you bother?", they say. These are scientists who study the data and global populations of entire species. They simply cannot understand why rehabilitators would put so much time and resources into an injured cardinal or sparrow. "What possible difference will it make to release a few hundred common robins back to the wild?", they ask me.

The answer is as simple as it is beautiful...we do it for that ONE.

It is much like the famous "starfish story", throwing one at a time back in the sea while thousands lay dying, stranded on a beach. Each precious life matters as much to us as it matters to the bird itself. This is a cruel and difficult world in which wildlife is just trying to survive. All too often, their quiet existence is threatened by a car collision, window strike or a domestic cat. The greatest joy in our work is the day they fly free again, healed and healthy. And on occasion, when a rare and endangered species does come in for care, our skills have been honed and perfected by our work with thousands of the "common" birds. All matter equally in our eyes.



To continue to rehabilitate the injured and orphaned birds of Michigan is a challenge, season after season. This year has been especially challenging, as donations to the Bird Center of Michigan and most non-profits have plummeted since the pandemic began. We are looking to you, our bird-loving supporters, to help us to get through. We are experiencing increased expenses from mealworms to medications, at a time when contributions are down, almost 50% thus far in 2021.

If you can contribute to the care of a wild songbird this summer, whether it is a little or a lot, we thank you! If you have recently donated to the Bird Center, we thank you, too! Together we can cherish and celebrate each little wild life.

**Dana DeBenham**  
*Board President*  
Bird Center of Michigan

## Patience with a Rare Patient

A true rarity to the Bird Center of Michigan, we received a fledgling American Robin who was full



albino and appeared to have been cat-caught after finding punctures and blood. We began pain medication and antibiotics and the bird responded well to the treatment. Now paired up with other robins, this bird is just like the other robins!

Albino birds that lack the color pigment melanin have a genetic mutation called albinism. These birds are often pure white, but in some cases an albino bird might have yellow or orange feathers, along with red eyes. Albino species are prone to predators more easily due to their coloring, can have poor eyesight, and may have a hard time hearing.

Our Clinic Director consulted with other licensed rehabilitators and discussed this condition as well as release criteria. There is no requirement under the USFWS (United States Fish and Wildlife Service) that we have to keep this bird due to its genetic condition, and this bird can be released to fly free with other robins. However, the bird does need to have good vision in order to be released, which will be evaluated by our veterinarian. Otherwise, the bird can be placed for educational purposes.

Stay tuned to this one's journey with us!

[Donate Here!](#)

## Rehabilitation Clinic Update

from Andrea Aiuto, Clinic Director



It's been a busy start to the season! Since April 1st we have taken in **477 birds**.

As of May 27th, we have **15 ducks** and **126 songbirds**.

All three of our sub-permits (rehabilitators who operate under the BCM permit from the MI Department of Agriculture) who assist with Mallard rehabilitation are full on intakes. A quick count from all three rehabbers and we total **95 ducklings!**

The majority of our adult birds who have come in are from collisions. Young nestlings or fledglings commonly come in due to being cat-caught or

trees being cut down.

Blue, our educational blue jay, will be participating with her handler Raylene in educational events throughout the season. If you'd like to schedule a session, please email Andrea at [birdcentermanager@gmail.com](mailto:birdcentermanager@gmail.com).

### How You Can Help Birds This Summer

1. Use window decals (every 2 inches), blinds, or artwork on your windows to prevent collisions!
2. Keep your cats inside.
3. Trim trees if needed from October - March.
4. Plant native.
5. Avoid using pesticides.

# Advocacy in Action

Our primary mission is to care for injured and orphaned songbirds and release them into the wild. We also follow legislation and policies that impact birds and other wildlife, and provide information to our members and supporters as part of our educational work.



**Sandhill Cranes *Update*:** We reported last month that the BCM board voted to *oppose* Michigan Senate Resolution 20, which calls for the Natural Resources Commission to designate Sandhill cranes as game birds, and to seek permission from the federal government for a hunting season. We joined 29 other organizations in opposing the resolution in the Natural Resources Committee. It passed out of committee and could be brought to a vote by the Michigan Senate at any time. We *oppose* SR 20:

- The Greater Sandhill crane is not a suitable game species in Michigan; evidence does not support the resolution's assertion that the population has expanded.
- Our Sandhill crane population is likely a source population to neighboring regions.
- Farmers can get special permits for cranes who are damaging crops; a hunting season is not the solution.
- Sandhill cranes have cultural and historical value; they are beloved by many bird watchers, who contribute economically to *watch* them.

**Actions You Can Take:** [Read our letter](#) in opposition to making Sandhill cranes a game bird, and contact your [Michigan State Senator](#) and ask her/him to oppose SR 20 should it come up for a vote. Feel free to mention any or all of the bullet point items above.

**Federal Bird Safe Buildings Act of 2021** has been introduced in both the US House ([H.R. 1986](#)) and U.S. Senate ([S. 791](#)), and would require any new, or significantly altered existing federal buildings, use bird-friendly building materials and design features, excepting historical buildings.

**Actions You Can Take:** Contact your [U.S. Representative](#) and [U.S. Senators](#) and ask them to co-sponsor the Federal Safe Buildings Act of 2021.

**The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 *Update*:** In our last newsletter, we reported that the new administration had *suspended* a rule that would have substantially weakened this bedrock federal law. Earlier this month, the administration followed up with a proposal to formally *revoke* the earlier rule. Since many of our patients are migratory birds, we follow developments with great interest and are heartened by this development.

Let us know if you've contacted your elected officials and what their responses are by sending an email to [birdcentera2@gmail.com](mailto:birdcentera2@gmail.com).

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## Meet the Team

*Each month we will be introducing team members including staff and volunteers who save thousands of wild lives each year!*



### **Marissa Jardine, Assistant Manager**

Marissa graduated from Eastern Michigan University with a bachelors degree in Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology.

She has worked in the animal care field in various settings for the past six years. This is Marissa's third year at the Bird Center. Her favorite part is seeing birds recover from severe injuries and being able to help in their recovery process.

In addition to her love for birds, she enjoys going herping (looking for amphibians and reptiles) in her free time. She also loves antiquing and anything related to horror and Halloween.

Marissa is very excited about the Bird Center's new home, as it allows us the opportunity to care for more birds with bigger and better habitats.

### **Julie & Jessica Decker, Volunteers**

Julie and Jessica Decker are a mother/daughter team who have been volunteering with The Bird Center of Michigan for three years. Jessica is a recent graduate of Ferndale High School who first began volunteering at BCM after being introduced to it through fellow volunteers Travis Kaye and Jill Noll.

In addition to the Bird Center of Michigan, Jessica has also volunteered with the Howell Nature Center in the wildlife department. She holds leadership positions within the Michigan Audubon Young Birders Network and Detroit Audubon Society, and has participated in activities with the Ohio Young Birders Club. Jessica plans to continue her work with birds as she begins her studies in Wildlife Conservation and Ecology at Michigan Technological University this fall.



### **Bev Prenevost, Board Member**

Bev grew up in Ann Arbor next to Bird Hills Park -- working with the Bird Center was destiny! She eventually worked as a designer for a division of Herman Miller; freelanced in the San Francisco Bay area; and was a Senior Graphic Designer at the University of Michigan.

Bev and her husband moved to Chelsea in 1994 where they have enjoyed raising their three children.

She currently stays busy with her family, dogs, gardens and working on a project to restore a historic home in Grass Lake. All of her projects are what she needed to recover, after being hit and seriously injured last July by a driver who was looking at his phone instead of the road.

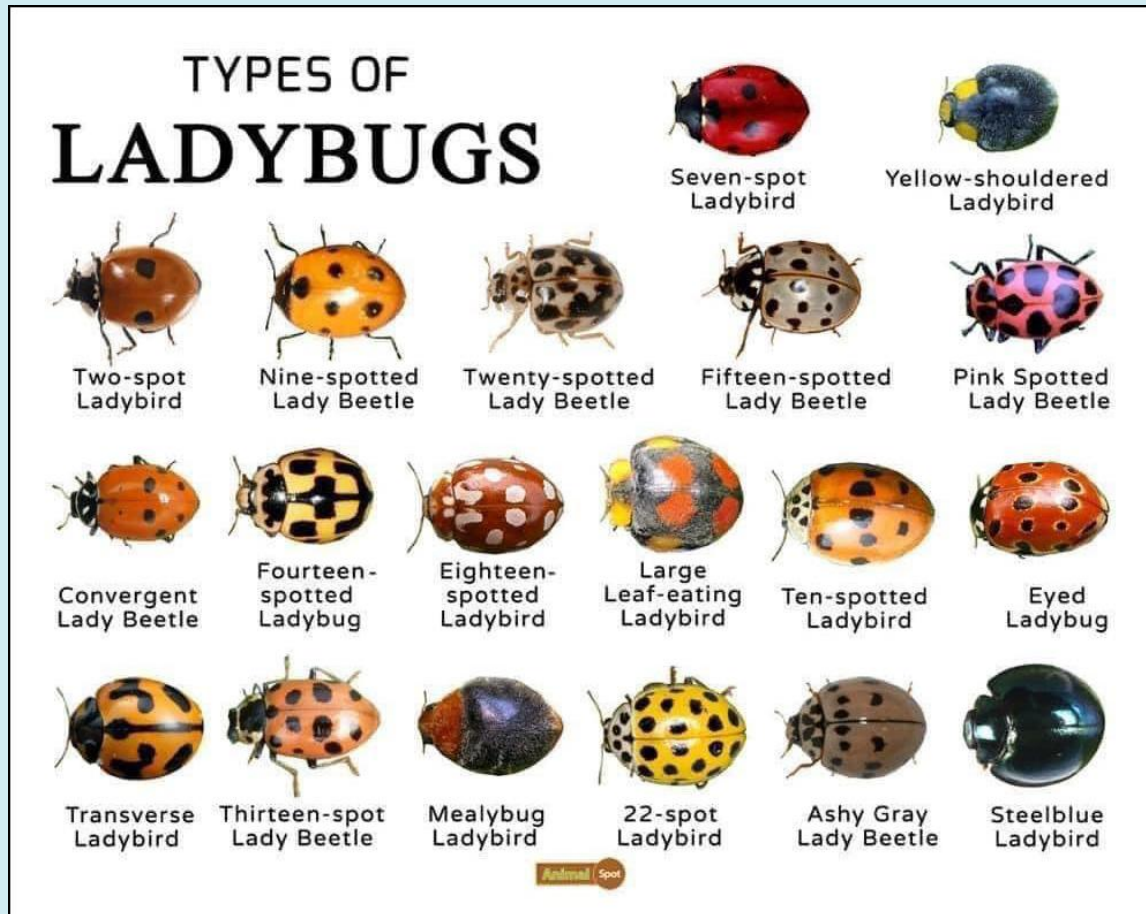
After taking an injured bird to the Bird Center a few years ago, she started volunteering. Shortly after, she joined the Board of Directors. She loves all animals, but has always had such a fascination with birds. Bev states, "I am so proud to be a part of a dedicated group who works hard on a worthy cause dear to my heart."

**Thank you team!**

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## **Did You Know?**

Did you know there are about 5,000 different species of ladybugs in the world? These much-loved critters are also known as lady beetles or ladybird beetles. They come in many different colors and patterns, but the most familiar in North America is the seven-spotted ladybug, with its shiny, red-and-black body. In many cultures, ladybugs are considered good luck!



## Upcoming Events

### Summer Yard Clean-Up

Join us on Saturday, June 5th from 10am-5pm for our Summer Yard Clean-Up Day! We need volunteers to help us in tearing down the old chicken coop area, cleaning up the yard, etc. We have some supplies, but feel free to bring your own.

We welcome you to bring and plant any native plants that you would like to donate to our landscaping efforts. We really need help with removing the stakes from all our apple trees as well.



We are also going to be working on making our windows bird-safe with the help of Washtenaw Safe Passage's Heidi Trudell, one of our board members!

We will be providing refreshments and snacks. Parking will be up the driveway and on the grass for overflow. If you have any questions, please email Kaisa Ryding, our Volunteer Coordinator, at [birdteamvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:birdteamvolunteer@gmail.com). To RSVP, please visit our [Facebook Event Page](#).

# The Perfect Father's Day Gift

Please consider honoring your father or another special man in your life this Father's Day with a gift to the Bird Center of Michigan. These adorable baby robins and all our other wild birds in need thank you!

**Donate Here!**



**Donations/Mailing Address:** PO Box 3718 • Ann Arbor, MI 48106

**New Location:** 7800 Platt Road • Saline, MI 48176

**Phone:** 734.761.9640

**Website:** [birdcentermi.org](http://birdcentermi.org)

**Donate:** [www.birdcentermi.org/donate/](http://www.birdcentermi.org/donate/)

