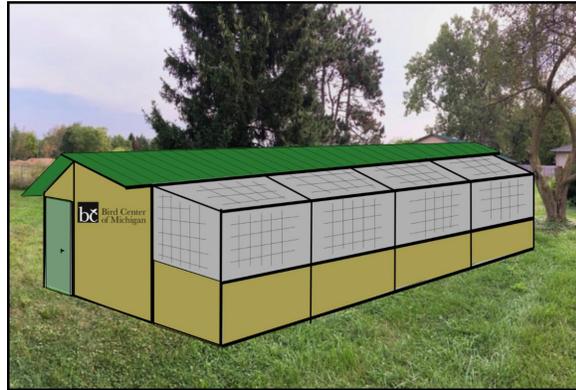


A Word from Our President

For the Bird Center of Michigan, September has been a month of both reflection on our past and looking ahead to the future. We recently shared the passing of our founder and beloved friend, Carol Akerlof, whose vision and compassion live on in the mission of the BCM. We are grateful that after her retirement five years ago, Carol was able to witness the organization's exciting growth including our expansion to the new larger facility in Saline.



That momentum is building! Through the generous support of bird lovers across the state, we are positioning ourselves to meet the increased demand for songbird rehabilitation into the future, up 20% in the last two years alone. One such gift is the recent sponsorship of our new outdoor pre-release facility by our long-time friends, John and Kathryn Mathey. With their generous gift, we hope to break ground on the much-needed bank of flight pens later this month, professionally constructed and in full compliance with state and federal wildlife regulations. These four outdoor pens will prepare thousands of birds for their second chance at a free and healthy life in the wild. We are so grateful. Carol would be so pleased.

The bad news for all rehabilitators is that human activity continues to accelerate the rate of wildlife injuries. The good news is the palpable change in our culture...more than ever before people view wildlife as valuable, important to the planet, and worth saving. Together these factors present an enormous challenge for wildlife rehabilitators to expand facilities, staff, and resources quickly. The Bird Center of Michigan is poised to meet this challenge. We know Carol would be proud of not only where her Bird Center began but where it is heading in order to serve the wild songbirds of Michigan.

Dana DeBenham
Board President
Bird Center of Michigan

Remembering Bird Center of Michigan Founder Carol Akerlof

A Life of Dedication and Compassion

Carol's kindness, calmness, compassion for people and animals, and undying determination have left a legacy of education and countless wild lives saved.

Around 1980, Carol was living in Palo Alto, CA, with her family, while her husband was working on a project for U of M. She and the children found an injured bird and took it to a wildlife rescue. That was the beginning of Carol's serious involvement with wild bird rehabilitation. She was able to take a rehabilitation class and spent many days volunteering.



When Carol returned to Ann Arbor, she joined the wildlife rehab team at the Humane Society of Huron Valley. In 1984, she attended the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association Conference, and quickly applied and was granted a permit. She also applied to become a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

It was official! The Bird Center then became a licensed Songbird Rehabilitation Center. Carol held a training session at Washtenaw Community College and began acquiring a group of passionate volunteers.

For many years birds were cared for in volunteers' homes, with Carol's careful guidance and support always available. Her phone rang well into the night, her refrigerator was filled with mealworms, and people constantly arrived at her door, often in tears, while lovingly carrying injured or baby birds.

In 2004, the Bird Center received a grant that allowed the Center to move into the tiny building on Mary Street in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

In 2021, the Bird Center of Washtenaw County became the Bird Center of Michigan and acquired a new home in Saline, Michigan with 2.5 acres, all due to Carol's vision and foresight for saving birds.

Her legacy will soar for generations to come!





Thank you to videographer David Brown for capturing the essence of a compassionate woman who made her mark on the world for countless feathered and human friends.



Help us continue the legacy of this amazing woman by saving wild lives for years to come!

[Donate Here!](#)

Advocacy in Action

Our primary mission is to care for injured and orphaned songbirds and release them into the wild. However, we also keep an eye on laws and policies that impact birds and other wildlife



and take positions when appropriate. We'll be providing this information to our members and supporters as part of our educational work.

This work today is an extension of Carol Akerlof's vision. She understood the importance of working with like-minded organizations and believed that a threat to one species is a threat to all. As a result, the Bird Center supported the initiative in 2005-06 to protect mourning doves (which successfully overturned a law making these birds a game species). Carol herself collected signatures as part of the Keep Michigan Wolves Protected effort in 2013-14. We owe a debt of gratitude to Carol for instilling these values to the board, staff, and volunteers of the Bird Center.

This month's report concerns a bird who is very controversial: the mute swan. Michigan authorities consider them to be an invasive species who compete with native birds and who are destructive to wetlands. Since about 2010, the DNR has not allowed their rehabilitation, and "under no condition will captured mute swans be released back into the wild in Michigan" according to the [2012 Final Mute Swan Policy](#) (at page 7).

The state manages these swans by issuing permits, either upon the request of 70% of homeowners impacted, or upon a resolution of the local government. The swans are often killed, although some management includes nest disruption. This summer, Livingston County's Genoa Township issued such a resolution that streamlines the process for all township residents based upon complaints from residents at one lake claiming that the swans were attacking people on jet skis.

The swans have their defenders who say that the birds are provoked by human behavior and that the DNR's claims are not scientifically sound. Protesters have demonstrated demanding the township rescind the resolution and that the governor place a moratorium on mute swan control. More information is available [here](#).

[This article](#) has a good summary of the issue and an apt headline: "Beloved birds or invasive species?"

Photo by Damian Barczak from Pexels

Mourning Dove Approved!



Between feedings, this young fledgling mourning dove enjoys looking out the window at the native garden our volunteers recently planted.

A bird's length of stay at the BCM clinic can average between 1-2 weeks or as long as 6-8 weeks, depending on its condition, at an average of \$120 for the cost of care per bird. As we prepare for increased intakes of birds in 2022, you can help by making a donation in any amount to directly save lives!

Thank you, gracious supporters!

[Donate Here!](#)



Image Courtesy of Brant Georgia, BCM Intern

Meet the Team

We hope you enjoy meeting our featured intern, Davey McLeod! Davey has been hard at work this season not only providing exceptional care for our songbirds but also converting our old pens into flight cages. Thank you, Davey!

During my internship at the Bird Center, I've gotten to know some truly amazing people who do amazing work, day in and day out. I feel very lucky to be working alongside whom I do, and everyone I've met here has taught me something valuable along the way.

Watching the staff navigate all the changes this season has been inspiring and only shown me how deeply dedicated they are to the birds. I've seen them adapt over and over but the one thing that has remained totally constant is the unwavering, outstanding care they provide.



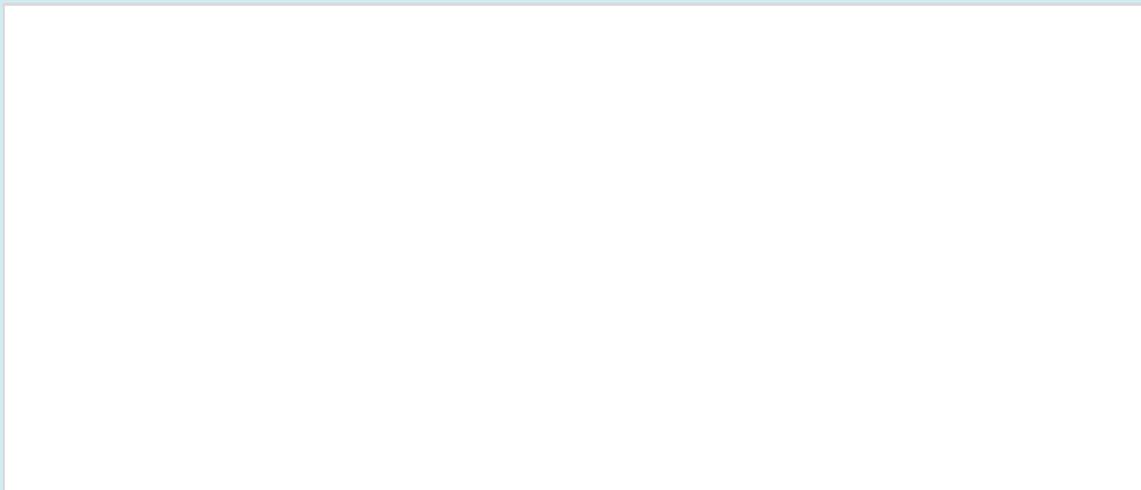
Since I grew up on a horse farm with plenty of animals around, I learned early on to appreciate how rich our relationship with animals can be. I also love being out in nature - I was fortunate enough to spend five months backpacking the Pacific Crest Trail in 2019, which really made me want to give back to what wilderness is left somehow. The fact that at the Bird Center I have the chance to help give songbirds in specific back to nature is special to me too, because I am a musician and they are like little flying flutists.

The releases have such a bittersweet feeling. Everyone, from the rescuers to the volunteers to the rehabilitators and on, puts so much work into preparing a bird for that moment when they finally fly away.

-Davey McLeod

Did you know?

The annual fall migration of monarch butterflies has begun! If you're in Michigan, here's how you can watch these incredible insects make their long journey to the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico.





Monarch butterfly 'super generation' now migrating; how...

Just because it's predictable doesn't make it any less incredible. The annual fall migration of monarch butterflies has begun, when scores of the iconic, imperiled black-and-orange winged insects travel thousands of miles to their southern...

[Read more](#)
www.mlive.com

Collision Consequences

This veery came into the Bird Center due to a window collision. Fall migrants will be fast approaching, so we encourage everyone to utilize window collision deterrents such as [Collidescape](#).



According to the Collidescape website, "Collisions are most commonly caused by the reflective characteristics of glass. Because glass reflects the environment around it, birds do not recognize it as a barrier. The birds see the reflected environment, such as trees and sky, and collide with the glass assuming it is a clear flight path. Any window, large or small can be a killer.

"Birds are frequently killed in these collisions or are stunned, only to die of internal injuries later. It is estimated that one billion birds die as a result of window collisions every year in the United States alone."

Your donation will allow us to continue providing outstanding care for our birds, including our numerous window collision patients. We appreciate your support!

[Donate Here!](#)

It's easy to contact us!



For bird-related questions, concerns, or emergencies, please contact our rehabilitation clinic by phone or email:

Clinic Phone: 734.761.9640

Clinic Email: clinic@birdcentermi.org

For donations, sponsorships, or business-related concerns, please contact our administration email:

admin@birdcentermi.org

For volunteer opportunities or events, please contact our volunteer email:

volunteer@birdcentermi.org

Thank you, feathered friends supporters!

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

Donate: birdcentermi.org/donate

