

## A Word from Our President

One tiny, injured bird. This is all it took to light a spark within Carol Akerlof, founder of the Bird Center, back in 1979. That one encounter evolved into a journey led by compassion and curiosity to improve the lives of all songbirds.

Since 2004, the Bird Center of Michigan has cared for over 17,000 injured and orphaned songbirds, always with the goal of releasing them healthy and free back to the wild. Carol's lifelong mission lives on. Our journey is far from over. Through rehabilitation, advocacy and education, the Bird Center strives to improve the quality of life for songbirds throughout the state of Michigan.



With the support of bird lovers like you, the BCM is positioning itself to meet the ever-increasing demand for songbird rehabilitation, up 50% over the last five years alone. Human activity is, of course, the cause. Collisions with buildings and cars, cat and dog attacks and habitat disturbance impact billions of birds globally each year. We will need to expand our facilities, add additional staff and find funding for the rising cost of supplies.

There is much to do. In this season of giving, we hope you will join us on this journey inspired by Carol's legacy of compassion and dedication to the songbirds that brighten our world. Every newly released bird sparks hope for the future. Carol's legacy will soar for generations to come!

To contribute, please visit <https://gofund.me/e7af6ecf>.

Thank you for being a part of our vibrant community helping to create a sustainable and thriving world for birds and people. Your support means everything to us.

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

## A Waxwing's Way Back

Donating to the Bird Center of Michigan can give an injured songbird a second chance at life in the wild. Towards the end of September, a fledgling Cedar Waxwing was admitted to the Center from Lenawee County.

Fledgling birds are often found by



rescuers - it is a vulnerable stage in a bird's life when they leave the nest and are learning to fly and fend for themselves. But most of the time, fledglings are rescued unnecessarily.

In this case, however, the waxwing was very lucky to be rescued. He was bright and alert on intake, but unable to stand and kept his right foot clutched. After further examination, a break was discovered along his femur. This injury would mean death in the

wild, and it's one of the more difficult bones to splint because of its location, but our rehabbers Marissa and Katie applied both the splint for the femur and a boot to correct his toes. The splint kept the leg tucked against his body, aligning the femur and allowing the fracture time to mend. The boot extended the toes and spread the foot into a natural position so he would be able to perch post-recovery.

He spent the next week in a nest in one of our incubators, getting fed and receiving pain medication and supplements to encourage bone growth while the splints were on. There were two other waxwings with him but soon they were starting to fly more and were moved to a bigger enclosure. Because of his injury he had to stay behind to heal safely, even though he was getting around well with the splints and beginning to fly more.

After the week was up, he was brought to the med-room one morning to remove the splints. It took some time for him to get used to having both legs again, but by the end of the day he was using that foot and even putting weight on the leg that had been broken. He was able to join the other waxwings, and they all perched together and practiced flying while he continued to grow and mature through October. In early November, they went to a flight cage to get their final conditioning in before being released into the wild.

Their lives are depending on us!

[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 news, laws, and policies that impact birds and other wildlife and take positions when appropriate. We provide this information to you as part of our educational work.

Endangered, extinct and other at-risk birds have been in the news lately. Earlier this fall the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency that administers the Endangered Species Act, declared 23 species, including 11 birds, to be extinct. The Ivory-billed Woodpecker was the best known of these species. More recently has come good news in Michigan about the Kirtland's warbler recovery.

We spoke with Dan Kennedy, Endangered Species Coordinator, [Michigan Department of Natural Resources](#). Read his interview about how Michigan protects species, which bird he thinks is at most risk, and a success story.



## Michigan DNR Interview | Bird Center of Michigan

Visit the Bird Center of Michigan website to read the full interview.

[Read more](https://birdcentermi.org)  
birdcentermi.org



Image courtesy of Brant Georgia, BCM Intern

## Meet the Team!

*Meet volunteer mentor, Carole Dubritsky! In addition to hands-on volunteer duties, Carole is also a mentor to new volunteers at the Bird Center. In 2021, she trained 14 new volunteers! Thank you, Carole!*



I am a retiree who has been volunteering at the Bird Center for over three years. I have been a casual bird watcher for probably 40 years. When a friend sent me a Facebook posting about the Bird Center and their volunteer program, I decided to attend the orientation. I was hooked!

Cleaning cages, doing laundry, and preparing fruit allows the staff and interns to do the real work of providing rehabilitation for the birds. The staff and interns are fabulous! I have never had a question go unanswered and have always been thanked at the end of my shift. It's been a joy for me to see some of the more unusual birds that I might catch a glimpse of outdoors up close: Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Cedar Waxwing, American Crow, etc.

I'm thrilled with the new property that affords so many efficiencies and opportunities for the future of the Bird Center!

- Carole Dubritsky

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**"Nothing is unreal as long as you can imagine like a crow." - Munia Khan**

# BE LIKE A CROW

- COLLECT SHINY THINGS
- HOP HAPPILY DOWN STREET FOR NO APPARENT REASON
- WHATEVER YOU EAT, EAT IT WITH JOY
- SCREAM LOUDLY WHEN YOU SEE YOUR FRIENDS

ARTIST: *P. Jean Oliver*

## The Resilient Robin

In early October, an American Robin was found injured outside of a window and brought to the BCM clinic for treatment. Like so many window-collision cases, this bird came in with spinal trauma resulting in severe hindlimb paralysis.

But despite the paralysis of the legs, he could surprisingly fly! It is highly uncommon for severe collision cases to be able to fly on intake. He was promptly given pain medications and placed in oxygen therapy. Oxygen therapy is essential treatment on intake for collision cases as it can help reduce inflammation in the brain and helps stabilize them.

Unfortunately, birds with the most severe hindlimb paralysis cases are not likely to make a full recovery. This robin had moderate-to-severe paralysis of his hindlimbs, and despite being able to eat on his own and move his wings, there was little to no progress made with his legs. After a week and a half of



treatment, there was a little progress, but not enough to where the robin would be releasable. He was running out of options to make a full recovery and be returned to the wild. Since we had seen these types of cases end poorly before, we looked into different methods of treating spinal trauma that might work.

After consulting with other wildlife rehabilitators, we decided to try a new treatment that had proven successful with other avian species. This treatment involves an intramuscular injection of an anti-inflammatory medication, which is not a typical route of medication delivery and had previously only been performed on waterfowl at the BCM. Because the robin was still able to fly, was eating on his own, and had plenty of grit left, we wanted to give him as much time and as many chances to bounce back as possible.

Within one day of this new treatment, the robin began to hop and move around, and by day two he was even perching on low-hanging branches in his enclosure! BCM staff could tell he was feeling better as he began to be much more vocal and active in his enclosure. Just a week after his new treatment began, he was moved into a flight cage with two other robins, where he could be closely monitored for any changes in condition.

After a month in the BCM's care, he was successfully released back into the wild thanks to the care and dedication of the Bird Center team and the large community of support that allows us to do the work we do. It takes a village to save each and every songbird we can, and we greatly appreciate any help you can provide.

[Donate Here!](#)

## Newspapers Needed!



Due to multiple enclosure cleanings each day for more than 100 clinic patients, we are finding ourselves in need of newspaper!

Keeping enclosures consistently clean and disease-free is a top priority of the staff and volunteers.

It doesn't matter if it's the Wall Street Journal, Detroit News or Free Press, New York Times...we are not picky! Any amount would be greatly appreciated!



## Bird Center of Michigan Apparel Now Available in Time for the Holidays!

We're incredibly excited to launch our new Bonfire apparel store! You can now show your

support for the Bird Center of Michigan with style!

<https://www.bonfire.com/store/birdcentermi/>

Our new apparel store features Bird Center of Michigan t-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts and more, and a percentage of your purchase will go directly to the songbirds in our care.

Thank you for your support!



### **Bird Center of Michigan | Official Merchandise | Bonfire**

Visit our Bonfire store to purchase Bird Center of Michigan merchandise!

[Read more](#)

[www.bonfire.com](http://www.bonfire.com)



## **A Global Day of Giving: 11/30/2021**

[Giving Tuesday](#) was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Giving Tuesday is now an independent nonprofit and a

global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

# GIVING TUESDAY

The Bird Center of Michigan will be participating in Giving Tuesday on November 30, 2021. Our goal is to raise \$3,000 to provide much needed food and supplies for the more than 1,500 birds we care for and rehabilitate each year.

Please stay tuned to our [Facebook page](#) as we showcase our efforts and dedication on behalf of the wild lives we serve.

## Wren Stuck in Glue Made Anew!

In mid-October, a pair of Carolina Wrens were brought to the clinic after getting caught in a glue trap. These types of traps can cause serious injury and death to songbirds who get stuck to them, and even if they can be safely removed, the glue can ruin the bird's feathers and flight. These two wrens had been removed by the rescuer but still had glue all over their bodies upon intake, and unfortunately one of them did not stabilize and passed away that night.



Any songbird that becomes covered in a foreign substance like glue or oil is at a huge risk, because the necessary treatment for such a condition is very intensive. Since flight is imperative to their success in the wild and feathers are imperative to flight, for a bird to be humanely released, their feathers have to be in perfect condition. Otherwise, it's like taking off in an airplane that's missing parts.

This meant full-body baths for the remaining wren, weighing less than an ounce. Every bath a bird goes through is a tremendous shock to their system, but it's the only way for them to be well enough for release. This wren had to receive six baths over the span of a week and a half before his feather quality and flight was back to normal.

He maintained a feisty attitude throughout his rehabilitation, going from each bath to be dried and then into an incubator to warm his body temperature again. Once the glue was gone from his feathers, he was moved to an outdoor enclosure with space to condition for release. After a few days of practice, he was in perfect form and couldn't wait to fly out and be free again.

Please consider donating to support the work we do at the Bird Center of Michigan. When birds like this wren are caught in glue traps, it takes a lot of professional care and specialized equipment to get them back where they belong. You can help us continue to provide that care when you give to the Bird Center of Michigan.

[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](mailto:clinic@birdcentermi.org)

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

[admin@birdcentermi.org](mailto:admin@birdcentermi.org)

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

[volunteer@birdcentermi.org](mailto:volunteer@birdcentermi.org)



## Thank you, feathered friend supporters!

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

