

## A Word from the Clinic

As the summer season comes to an end, we begin to reflect on our successes during our busiest baby season to date! This summer was a season of many firsts and records broken, including number of intakes admitted and number of birds released.

The avian flu caused many rehab facilities in Michigan to severely limit or even stop accepting avian patients. Our clinic was one of just a few still admitting waterfowl, causing us to take in **over three times as many ducklings** as we normally had in past years! Following strict protocols to protect against avian flu, we accepted nearly 360 ducks this summer. It was our first summer ever raising Merganser and Wood Ducklings, which was a true delight and an amazing experience to release them back into the wild! In addition to high waterfowl intakes, we also took in more shorebirds such as Killdeer, and were able to raise and release several Killdeer hatchlings who were brought to us in critical condition. Through all of our work with waterfowl species, we continued to maintain our high number of songbird intakes.



We also began implementing new medical treatments and care protocols this summer, which allowed us to greatly improve the release rates of our beloved Common Grackles and various swallows, and included the release of our first-ever Bobolink, who came to us with a broken wing.

Our newest flight cages, along with the dedication of our volunteers, interns, and staff, allowed us to rehab and release more birds than ever before! We are truly grateful for all the hard work everyone put into making this busy season so great, and for making it possible to release over 600 birds back into the wild!

As we look forward to the fall and winter months, we are excited to help migrating birds heal from their collisions and to continue to learn and grow through wildlife rehabilitation conferences and research.

Thank you for supporting the Bird Center of Michigan!

**Marissa Jardine**  
Clinic Manager  
Bird Center of Michigan



Thanks to our generous GoFundMe supporters, plus over \$10,000 in donations from our Board of Directors and donations we received outside of GoFundMe, we have surpassed our fundraising goal of \$20,000! We're so excited to get started with the electrical work, whole-house generator installation, and chimney repairs that we're already in the process of scheduling contractors. Check out our social media for progression updates!

Our feathered patients will be warm and well-cared-for this winter thanks to the support of our incredible community! We always need help with providing food, medications, and more for our patients, so we welcome any additional donations. We are beyond grateful for your support, and so are the birds! ☐

[Donate Here](#)

## Advocacy in Action

This is the season of migration and a good time to talk about migratory birds. While our main mission is caring for injured and orphaned songbirds so that they can be released into the wild, we also keep an eye on laws and policies that impact birds and other wildlife. We take positions when appropriate and provide information to you as part of our educational work.

Let's start with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 16 USC § 703 *et seq.* passed in 1918 which is the bedrock law protecting birds for over a century. The Act makes "taking, killing, or possessing migratory birds unlawful." The Act's protections are much more secure now than they had been over the past few years. Efforts had been underway to weaken the law by limiting enforcement to actions *purposefully* intended to harm birds. Activities that *incidentally* harmed birds, however inevitable or avoidable, would no longer be illegal.

About a year ago, the federal Fish & Wildlife Service adopted a rule that restores protections under the Act and penalizes incidental actions by drilling, construction, and other industrial activities. In 2021, the Migratory Bird Act, H.R. 4833 was introduced in Congress to clarify that incidental take violates the law. The bill has 56 co-sponsors, including Michigan U.S. Representatives Stevens, Levin, Dingell, Slotkin, Kildee, and Tlaib. However, there's been no action on the bill for over a year.

**Action you can take:** Contact your U.S. Representative and ask her/him to co-sponsor H.R. 4833; or, if your congressperson already has, thank them! [Find your representative](#); and [a list of co-sponsors and more information about the bill](#)! Mention that you are a member/supporter of the Bird Center of Michigan.

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## Breaking News!

Just last week, a bill was introduced in the Michigan Legislature that would designate the Kirtland's Warbler as the state bird, replacing the American Robin. [H.B.. 6382](#) has been assigned to the Government Operations Committee. It has bipartisan support; however, there is very little time left in this legislative session so its chances of passing are unclear.

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There are opportunities to watch, enjoy, and celebrate migratory birds this fall, including:

- [CraneFest XXVII 2022](#) is being held on October 8th & 9th in Bellevue, MI.

- [World Migratory Bird Day](#) is October 8th! This year's theme is light pollution. The Bird Center of Michigan is doing its part: see details in "Lights Out for Migrating Birds" report below.



- [Bird Migration Explorer](#), a new database created by Audubon and nine founding partners, uses science contributed by hundreds of researchers and institutions to paint "the most complete picture ever of the journeys of 458 avian species that breed in the United States and Canada."

- Led by Michigan, [Great Lakes piping plovers had a record number of chicks this year](#). Recently a plover who fledged near Sleeping Bear Dunes was spotted in Georgia and a chick born in Charlevoix was found in South Carolina.

- Visit [Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge](#), home to "300 species of birds including 30 species of waterfowl, 23 species of raptors and 31 species of shorebirds" and part of the 3 million + waterfowl who migrate through the Great Lakes Region.

☐: [USFWS](#)

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## Lights Out for Migrating Birds



Fall migration is a unique time for the Bird Center - as we are rapidly winding down with baby bird intakes, we see an increase in "rare" birds being brought to the clinic. The joy of seeing a migratory bird like a Swainson's Thrush up close is mixed with the sadness that they came in with severe injuries as a result of colliding with a window. We do everything we can to treat their injuries, but sometimes the trauma is too severe, and they don't end up making it.

This Swainson's Thrush was brought in recently with signs of neurological trauma and hind-limb paralysis. He is currently in critical condition and receiving oxygen therapy. **Please help do your part by keeping lights out at night during migration season, and by placing window deterrents to help prevent window collisions during the day.** Your preventative measures can help save the lives of our feathered travelers! For more information, check out the American Bird Conservancy's guide to [Glass Collisions: Preventing Bird Window Strikes](#).

[Donate Here](#)

## Team Appreciation

### Intern Party, August 20th

It's that time of year again when interns begin heading back to school and ending their summer internship at the Bird Center.

To celebrate all their hard work this year, we held an intern appreciation party at Pinball Pete's in Ann Arbor! Thank you so much to all of our incredible interns for helping out this

season, and for making it possible to rehabilitate and release a record number of birds this year! We couldn't have done it without them!



### **Volunteer Party, September 18th**

Hooray for all of our incredible volunteers who joined us in celebrating their hard work this season! Their dedication allowed us to rehabilitate and release nearly 600 birds back into the wild this summer - more birds than ever before!

We simply couldn't operate without the kindness of others. Whether our volunteers are providing a safe, clean

space for injured birds to heal, whipping up yummy snacks for hungry patients, or getting their hands dirty at our outdoor events, their help is appreciated more than words can say! We ☐ our volunteers!

## **Operation Flight Cage**

After several months of extremely time- and energy-consuming work, our newest bank of flight cages finally has birds in it! Thanks to an incredibly generous donor, we were able to purchase and build this wonderful bank of cages that will house and help us release many songbirds for years and years to come. It's been stressful and very time consuming, but we couldn't be any more thrilled with the final product, and we know the birds are going to love it just as much!

Feathered residents of the new enclosures currently include Mourning Doves, American Robins, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and American Crows. Take a peek into these incredible flight cages as the birds are all perched high and basking in the warm sun! ✨



## Fall Migration Safety

The birds need your help to successfully migrate to their overwintering grounds! With our number one cause of intake being migrating birds who have suffered from window collisions, please remember the following if you find an injured bird:

- Place the bird in a box without any food or water in a quiet area away from other animals. Providing water or incorrect food can potentially worsen an injured bird's condition.
- Immediately call a licensed wildlife rehabber for assistance. Birds who may appear okay can actually develop symptoms of severe head trauma later on - similar to how humans get concussions!

Follow these migration tips to help our traveling feathered friends this fall! □

### Fall Migration PSA

Turn off or dim non-essential lighting at night. Turning off lights dramatically reduces hazards from attraction to and disorientation by light!

Use window deterrents so birds can differentiate between windows and the outside world.

If you have bird feeders up, clean your feeders regularly to prevent the spread of HPAI.



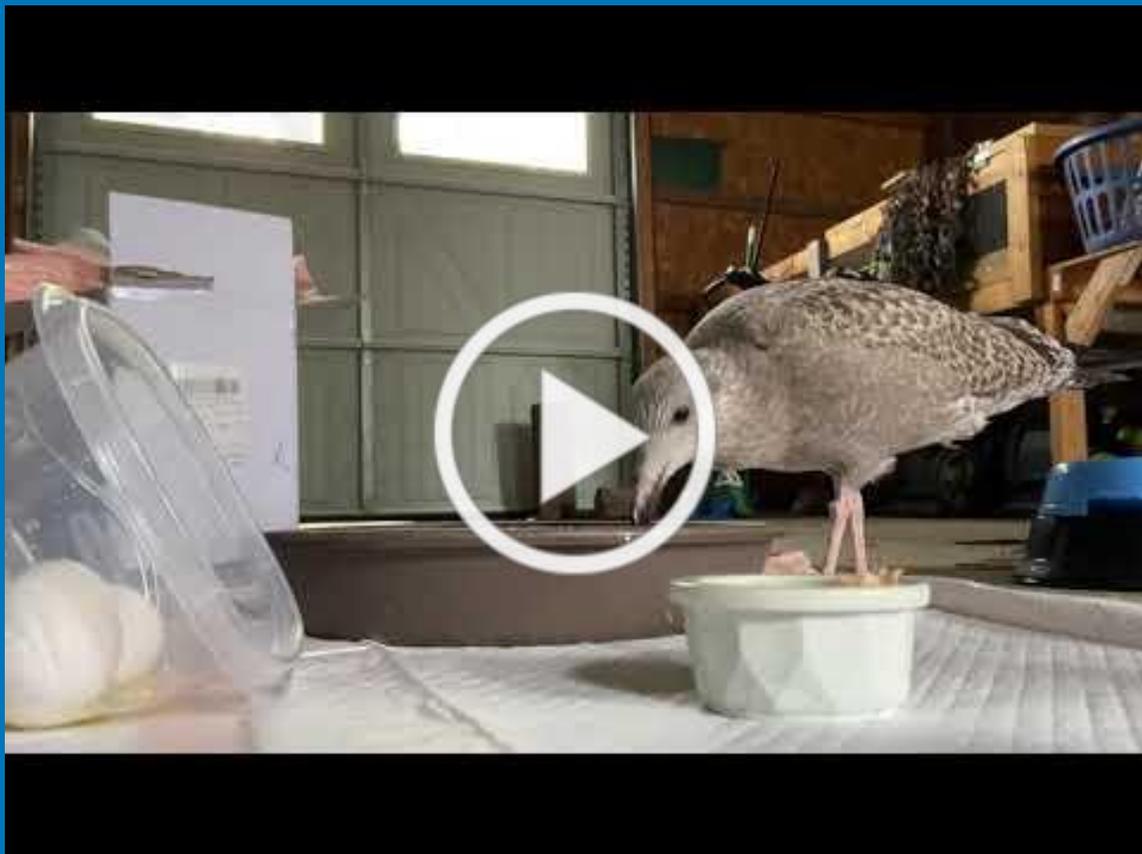
From [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org): To clean your feeder, take it apart and use a dishwasher on a hot setting or hand wash either with soap and boiling water or with a dilute bleach solution (no more than 1 part bleach to 9 parts water). Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry before refilling. Repeat every few weeks for happy, healthy birds!

## Big bird, big appetite!

On the 27th of August, the Bird Center took in its biggest patient of the season so far, a herring gull. Despite the tell-tale juvenile pattern of mottled gray feathers, he weighed in at almost a kilogram and had all the strength of a full-grown gull! Herring gulls keep their juvenile plumage for four years before changing into the clean white and gray wings of an adult, so they have plenty of time to bulk up. He was driven all the way south from Traverse City by a determined rescuer who had seen the gull walking around downtown unable to fly.

Upon intake he was given pain meds and put into our largest oxygen bin to de-stress. He was also treated with a shallow dish of live fish, which he promptly gulped down while waiting to be examined by staff. A bird this big requires two rehabbers to properly examine — one to keep the bird restrained and monitor their stress-levels, and one to inspect them head to toe. Staff found evidence of head trauma along with swelling in the gull's left shoulder, keeping him from flying. The most likely explanation for these injuries is a car collision, coming from the bird's left while he crossed a road too low.

The gull was brought to a local vet we frequently work with - [Countryside Veterinary Clinic](#) - and x-rays were taken to determine the extent of the injury. Thankfully, no breaks in the wing were detected! Our partnership with Countryside Veterinary Clinic enables us to provide optimal care for our more difficult cases by using a variety of diagnostic techniques.



At first the gull was kept in a relatively small enclosure to encourage him to

rest his wing and regain the balance lost from his head injury. Staff administered pain meds twice a day and kept a steady buffet of fish, eggs, veggies and more for the gull, and we quickly discovered he is not a picky eater! Even though they prefer fishing for their meals in the wild, herring gulls will scavenge when given the opportunity, which makes it easy to keep his interest in food up. That said, with a bird this big it takes a lot to fill his belly. He can eat what one small songbird might in a day or two, in just one or two bites!

After resting up for a week and a half, the gull was moved into a much larger space to stretch his wings and get his range of motion back. He loves sitting in his pool and fishing in his new enclosure. Although his left wing is still stiff, he has improved immensely since first coming in, and once he is able to take off again he will be returned to Traverse City to continue his wild life. One of the most valuable things we can provide patients at the Center is time — something not many injured animals are afforded in the wild. Lucky for this gull someone cared enough to drive him four hours from where he became injured and give him a chance. Please consider helping us continue to care for this gull with a donation. He has a huge appetite and needs all the strength we can give him to start flying again. Thank you for supporting wild birds!

[Donate Here](#)

## It's easy to contact us!

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

**Clinic Phone:** 734.761.9640

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

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

For volunteer opportunities, contact our volunteer email:

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



## Some fun before you go...

Bald-headed Blue, our educational ambassador Blue Jay, is looking a little funky this week as she is currently molting! Molting allows birds to replace worn and damaged feathers with completely new ones. Different species molt at varying frequencies, with Blue Jays typically undergoing one complete molt per year. Bald or not, Blue knows she's beautiful! ☐

**We appreciate your support!**



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

