



## A Word from the Clinic

What an exciting year of growth we've had! With your support, the Bird Center was able to add a total of six new flight cages to our property in 2022! Two flight cages were created utilizing our existing pole barn porch - a flight cage was constructed on both sides with a double-door hallway in between, preventing any feathered escapees from self-releasing before they're ready. Our greatest feat this year was the construction of our newest (and largest!) outbuilding of flight cages. Consisting of four 8' x 16' flight cages with natural lighting and electricity for those cold winter months, this flight cage will help thousands of birds perfect their flight for years to come!



The Bird Center also took in over 1800 birds in 2022! A few memorable highlights include raising each woodpecker species found in our area - Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied, Red-headed, Pileated, and the Northern Flicker - and we also rehabilitated a substantial number of various duck and gull species. Due to our increase in intakes of waterfowl and shorebirds, we have also started planning the conversion of our pole barn into a designated waterfowl and shorebird clinic! Electricity was installed in November, and we will soon begin constructing indoor/outdoor kennel run enclosures for ducklings and purchase dry brooders for raising young. With HPAI in mind, this separate building will allow us to provide optimal care to shorebirds and songbirds alike - all while helping to prevent the spread of avian influenza.

As we anticipate an increase in the number of intakes each year (2022 brought us the highest number of intakes yet!), staff are utilizing this off-season to update protocols, streamline volunteer and intern programs and trainings, and continuing to learn the latest information in the field of wildlife rehabilitation.

The new year is fast approaching and we can't wait to see what 2023 has in store for the Bird Center as we continue to grow and help hundreds of songbirds each year. Thank you for your continued support! We could not save thousands of Michigan's birds without the help of supporters on all levels - donors, social media followers, volunteers, board members, and interns alike!

Happy New Year from the Bird Center of Michigan! □

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

# Gun Pellets Found in Mallard



This female Mallard was initially brought to the Bird Center suspected of being attacked by a feral cat. On intake she had wounds on her neck and wing, and she was having difficulty using her back legs. We were unable to feel any abnormalities within her legs, so she was taken to our veterinarian for an x-ray to rule out any possible breaks.

Unfortunately, the x-rays revealed 6 - 8 gun pellets throughout her body. This is sadly not uncommon to see during hunting season. Slowly but surely she has begun to walk again, and she has also started to eat a little bit on her own. This Mallard was lucky enough to survive the spray of bullets; however, toxicity and obstructions from the bullets are our main concern.

Your donations will help cover expenses for this Mallard's trip to the avian specialist in Toledo, Ohio, on Tuesday, December 27th. We're hopeful that with help from the specialists and our wonderful supporters, she can make a full recovery!

[Donate Here](#)

## Advocacy in Action

The story of the Mallard duck in BCM's care is an opportune time to talk about lead ammunition. X-rays showed she had 6 - 8 pellets lodged in her body. Although we cannot say for certain, we suspect the duck was shot with lead bullets. She is being monitored for possible toxicity.



The US banned lead paint in the 1970s. You don't have to be a chemist to know that lead is bad: for people, the environment, and wildlife -- with an outsized impact on birds.

Many people think toxic ammunition and tackle are universally banned. **They**

**are not.** Michigan and all states require non-toxic shot for waterfowl hunting. In 1991, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banned the use of lead ammunition to hunt migratory waterfowl. According to Michigan's Department of Natural Resources website, [Lead Poisoning \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.dnr.state.mi.us/waterfowl/lead-poisoning):

"[t]he switch from lead to non-toxic shot has significantly reduced the number of waterfowl dying from lead poisoning in Michigan and in the U.S. Mortality still continues to be seen however in loons and eagles, as the sources of lead consumed by these two species are still legal to use (lead sinkers and jigs and lead bullets, respectively)."

As noted, Michigan has no restrictions on the use of lead fishing tackle; or the use of lead ammunition to hunt upland game birds, small game, or big game. The DNR does acknowledge that the "use of non-toxic alternatives is recommended."

California banned lead ammunition in 2019, and other state legislatures or agencies (not Michigan) have attempted to ban or reduce its use.

In early 2017, a federal ban was enacted by the outgoing Administration. The ban was repealed in March 2017. In the last two years, bills have been introduced in Congress, and regulations proposed by USFWS to ban lead on national lands. Proponents see these measures as pro-environment; and advancing animal welfare and human health. They argue that non-toxic ammunition and tackle is not prohibitively expensive. Opponents say they are anti-hunting and 2nd Amendment violations.

A 2021 study found that lead poisoning reduced the population growth of bald and golden eagles by 3.8% and .8% respectively, across North America: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/national-news-release/groundbreaking-study-finds-widespread-lead-poisoning-bald-and-golden>.

We'll keep you updated on this issue. In the meantime, you can enjoy watching bald eagles 24/7 at the Northern Michigan Eagle Cam: [Watch Our Live Michigan Bald Eagle Cam | CarbonTV](https://www.carbon.tv/live-michigan-bald-eagle-cam).

☐: Jay Rembert | Pexels <https://www.pexels.com/photo/close-up-of-bullets-4689133/>

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## Donate with Venmo!

The Bird Center of Michigan can now accept donations through Venmo! Find our verified charity profile at <https://venmo.com/u/birdcentermichigan>, or simply scan the QR code!



## A Fortunate Flicker

This beautiful Northern Flicker came in critically stunned and nearly immobile after suffering a severe window collision. With pain medications and time, he began to heal despite an uncertain prognosis. Most concerning during his initial exam was his inability to use his legs.

After he stabilized, we began occupational therapy treatments by working on getting him to perch vertically on logs, which is how he will spend most of his day in the wild. We're happy to report that he has regained full strength and feeling in his legs! This fortunate flicker is now in an outdoor flight cage for pre-release conditioning!



We are so excited he has made such improvements! It will be a while longer before his release as it can take time to fully recover from these injuries, but we are now much more hopeful for a successful release! Your donations will help us continue to provide life-saving treatments to injured songbirds like this Northern Flicker! For information on how to

[Donate Here](#)

## Giving Tuesday Thanks

Thanks to you, our amazing supporters, we reached our Giving Tuesday goal of \$3000 so we can purchase two new oxygen concentrators that will help our patients catch their breath after enduring injuries and stress!

Today and always, we are truly grateful for our bird-loving supporters who like, share, and donate to our cause - you make a life-saving difference for our feathered friends! Thank you for being a breath of fresh air for our birds!



## Kinglet Flying Free

Golden-crowned Kinglet #211 was admitted to the Bird Center after colliding with a window. After spending some time recovering and fueling back up on nutritious food, he was released back into the wild! These birds are smaller than a chickadee and weigh as much as a few pennies, yet they can survive even the harshest Michigan winters; pretty impressive!



## Sharp-shinned Hawk Rescued

On December 16th, a rescuer driving to work saw a bird lying on the side of the highway. He pulled over and approached the bird - it was moving only slightly and seemed very disoriented so he scooped it up in his jacket and put it in his car. He has brought many birds to the Bird Center in the past and was only minutes away, so he decided to bring it in for help.

Upon arrival, staff uncovered the bird to discover it was a Sharp-shinned Hawk! This is a smaller species of hawk who hunts songbirds in the wild. Normally the Bird Center would refer straight to local raptor rehabber Alysha Mae of the Raptor Center of SE Michigan, but the rescuer had no more time to transport the bird and it would have to be triaged until it could reach Alysha.



The hawk was most likely stunned from a glancing car collision, and needed pain meds and oxygen therapy to stabilize. After just half an hour on oxygen, he started becoming more and more bright and alert, until he was able to be moved to an enclosure with food for transport. Staff brought the hawk to Alysha that night, where he was evaluated and observed overnight. After a full flight-test in the morning, he was deemed releasable and was returned to the area of rescue to continue his wild life. □

It's always best to get injured wildlife to a licensed rehabber for a thorough exam and monitoring. Especially in the case of collisions, the first 24 hours are crucial for the bird's well-being. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of the rescuer, the Bird Center, and Alysha, this hawk was able to shake off the collision in as little time as possible and pick up where he left off. It all starts with a member of the public seeing a bird in need and deciding to help. We thank you for continuing to help and support the Bird Center! Through rescues and donations, you make it possible to help injured birds like this stunning Sharp-shinned Hawk.

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...

If you hear us shouting "GO BLUE" as the Michigan Wolverines take on TCU in the Fiesta Bowl this Saturday, rest assured we aren't shouting at Blue, our sweet ambassador Blue Jay!



# We appreciate your support!



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