

A Word from the Clinic

Red-winged Blackbirds and Grackles are visiting our feeders, and robins have been seen scouring the BCM property for yummy insects. We all know what that means - spring is finally here! ☐

Our busy baby season is fast approaching and staff are making final updates before summer arrives. The staff utilized our winter season by updating our intern and volunteer programs, intake and triage protocols, as well as general building updates.



In addition to the new staff and program updates, we are also making updates to the property. Electricity was recently installed in our pole barn and in the newest set of flight cages that were built last summer. With the help of a local Boy Scout, we are rebuilding a flight cage on property that was previously utilized by our dedicated flight cage hosts Dick and Diana Dyer. This new flight cage on property will be utilized by thousands of birds for years to come!

We also are expanding and upgrading our pole barn. With the help of very generous donors John and Kathryn Mathey, we will be converting our pole barn into a separate building solely for waterfowl and shorebirds. With Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) seemingly here to stay, we have to acclimate to the new normal. By utilizing our pole barn as a space for waterfowl, shorebirds, and other HPAI risk patients, we will be able to help these vulnerable species while still keeping our songbirds safe in the main building. Some of the things we are upgrading in our pole barn include new dry brooders, installing windows and an additional doorway, and four indoor-outdoor pre-release enclosures with pools.

With baby season just around the corner, we're excited for another successful baby season at the Bird Center! We can't thank our supporters and volunteers enough for all their help over the winter. From donating items from our wishlist to helping with daily bird care at the Center, we couldn't do it without you!

Marissa Jardine
Clinic Manager
Bird Center of Michigan

Shower Time! ☐



Baby season is not only our busiest time of the year...it's also the most expensive! We came up with a special [Baby Shower Wishlist](#) on Amazon that features the most urgent supplies needed to prepare for the more than 1000 baby birds we'll raise this summer.

Including cleaning supplies and a wide variety of seeds and foods for the various species we care for, your donations of items from this Baby Shower Wishlist will benefit Michigan's injured and orphaned baby birds this upcoming baby season.

If you'd prefer to donate to our Baby Shower in other ways, please visit <https://birdcentermi.org/donate/>, or you can support the Bird Center of Michigan on PayPal by clicking the donate button below. We appreciate our amazing community of supporters!



Bird Center of Michigan Baby Shower Wishlist

Help support the rehabilitation and release of native birds by donating items on our baby shower wish list!

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

Donate

Advocacy in Action

Why are we discussing the Farm Bill? No, the Bird Center hasn't started raising chickens. Notably, however, the Farm Bill can have a major impact on wild birds. We're calling on you to contact your U.S. Senators and Representative.

The 2023 Farm Bill: Every five years or so, Congress debates and passes a Farm Bill that steers the course of farm, food, rural, nutrition, agricultural, and conservation policies in this country for half a decade. This is a Farm Bill year. If you live in the United States and you eat, the Farm Bill impacts you.



Impact on Wild Birds: You should also pay attention to the Farm Bill if you care about wild birds. The conservation measures in the Farm Bill are crucial to protecting wildlife on private lands. Over the years, grasslands and wetlands that provide essential bird and other wildlife habitat have been diverted to farmland and other uses. “Farm Bill conservation programs are the largest source of federal funds for ... producers to conserve wildlife and natural resources on their working agricultural lands” (Defenders of Wildlife blog, below). The American Bird Conservancy’s 3 key recommendations for the 2023 Farm Bill are:

- Expand the program that provides dollars to farmers who set aside land and plant native grasses and groundcover
- Provide technical support to farmers who want to incorporate conservation strategies
- Create a new program and expand the existing one, that provide incentives to ranchers to “rest” some of their grazing lands

Call to Action: Contact your two U.S. Senators (note that Sen. Debbie Stabenow is chair of the Senate Agriculture committee), and your U.S. Representative. Tell them you are a member/supporter of the Bird Center of Michigan. Ask them to consider wildlife and particularly wild birds in the Farm Bill, by supporting stronger conservation measures and more funding for farmers to set aside land for bird habitat, and for ranchers to rest some of their grazing lands.

Note: You do not need to be a Michigan resident because this is a federal bill. Find your senators here: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>, and your representative here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Additional Resources:

- American Bird Conservancy:
 - February 15, 2023 News Release, <https://abcbirds.org/news/the-farm-bill-helps-birds/>
 - BIRD SAVER: Conservation Priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill, <https://dariuszdziedzic.wenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ABC-Bird-Saver-Farm-Bill-Platform-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
 - March 2023 webinar, “Strengthening the U.S. Farm Bill for Farmers and Birds,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjJ2sWUoaac>
- NABCI, State of the Birds 2017, Benefits of the Farm Bill, <https://www.stateofthebirds.org/2017/benefits-of-the-farm-bill/>
- Defenders of Wildlife Blog, PFAFFKO AND PARSONS, “How Conserving Wildlife Could Prevent Another Dust Bowl Disaster”, March 2, 2023, <https://defenders.org/blog/2023/03/how-conserving-wildlife-could-prevent-another-dust-bowl-disaster>

Final Note: The Bird Center of Michigan board voted unanimously to support ensuring that Farm Bill 2023 includes provisions that support wild birds, at its March meeting.

Photo by ArtHouse Studio: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/birds-flying-over-remote-empty-prairie-4321771/>

NWRA Conference

Bird Center staff learned so much at the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association conference from rehabbers across North America! Some highlighted classes they took included Managing Spinal Trauma, Avian Ophthalmology, Intro to Avian Radiology, and various workshops including Avian Splinting, Blood Smears, and Sticky Trap Removal.

They were also able to network with other rehabbers and catch up with past Bird Center staff! Lessette, a former intern, who now works as a vet tech at a wildlife rehab in Texas; and Dominick, former assistant manager, who is working as a clinic manager of a wildlife rehab in DC.

From BCM board member Sherri:

I went off to this conference with Marissa and Katie. Between my bad knee and recent broken rib, I had a hard time with my luggage in the endless corridors of the big airports we went through. Katie and Marissa carried my luggage for me in addition to their own. I'm deeply grateful to them and know they will go straight to heaven for this!



A Sticky (and sad) Situation

We often have rescuers bring a bird to the Bird Center after they have already been removed from a glue or sticky trap. While well-meaning, this can often do more harm than good! We've seen several injuries occur due to removal by untrained citizens, including wing and leg breaks due to the force from removal, and clipped wing feathers to get the bird unstuck.

Clipping wing feathers is particularly

detrimental, as the clipped feathers will need to be plucked so they fully grow back in (it is unfortunately not possible to imp feathers on the majority of songbirds).

Breaks and particularly clipped wing feathers will result in longer rehab stays. If you have found a bird stuck in a glue trap, the best thing you can do is to bring the bird **with the trap** to a wildlife rehabilitation center where trained rehabbers can safely and effectively remove the bird.

Your donations will allow us to provide optimal care to Michigan's injured birds like this unfortunate American Robin, who was safely removed from the trap by our trained staff. We appreciate your support!



[Donate Here](#)

Welcome New Staff

With the new season brings many exciting changes! Former staff members Dominick and Davey have moved on to new adventures out of state, and we're excited to welcome new Rehabilitation Assistants (two are former Bird Center interns!) Sarah, Zach, and Ena to our team!

We'll also be employing the equivalent of twelve full-time interns this season instead of last year's nine. Extra interns will allow us to tackle a higher patient load while still providing optimal care to our feathered patients. We've also added an additional intern assignment to our program for our reception area. This will allow for a speedier intake process and quicker phone call back times!



Volunteer With Us

Our online volunteer orientation took place this past weekend, but there's still time to join us this season! Our volunteers help with many different tasks such as administrative duties, transportation, and animal husbandry for the birds at our clinic in Saline. Volunteers are usually scheduled for one or two 3-hour shifts per week, but if you're unable to commit to a weekly schedule, no problem! You have the option of being a fill-in volunteer by picking up open shifts on the volunteer schedule.



If you're interested in sharing your time by helping Michigan's injured and orphaned songbirds this spring, please visit our website at <https://birdcentermi.org/volunteer/> to apply. We can't wait to meet you!

Every Second Matters

If you find an injured bird, it is imperative that you contact a licensed rehabilitation facility right away! The sooner an injured bird is brought to a licensed rehabber, the faster it can receive critical care and medications that will likely result in a better prognosis.



This Mourning Dove was brought to the Bird Center 10 days after he was initially injured by a window collision. There are signs of neurological trauma, and as a result, the bird is unable to use his legs normally. Unfortunately, due to the length of time the bird was kept before being brought to the Center, he is in critical condition. The dove came in extremely dehydrated and emaciated on intake. Due to the malnutrition and dehydration, his cloaca is distended and was on the verge of prolapsing.

Despite everything found during the exam, it would be hard to tell the dove was in such poor condition just by looking at him. Birds are great at hiding their injuries, making it all the more important - even if you don't think a bird is "that" injured - to get in contact with a licensed rehabber.

His prognosis is guarded but he is a fighter! He is currently on medications and fluids to help regain his strength. We hope once his body condition improves, we will see improvement in his ability to walk.

We hope to bring more awareness to the public on wildlife rehabs and the importance of injured wildlife being cared for by licensed individuals only. Bookmark this link - it's a great resource on the Michigan DNR website of licensed rehabbers by county. You'll need it if you ever find injured or orphaned wildlife in need of help: <https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/dlr/>

[Donate Here](#)

Contact Info

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

For volunteer opportunities, contact our volunteer email:

volunteer@birdcentermi.org



One last thing...

Putting off outdoor spring-cleaning isn't procrastination - it's an important way to protect your yard's ecosystem! The dead plant material protects insects, promotes the growth of microbes, and ultimately further up the food chain supports our feathered friends. Until the temperatures are consistently above 50°F, just let them be! ☐

DON'T SPRING INTO GARDEN CLEAN-UP TOO SOON!

Wait until temperatures are consistently above 50°F (10°C). Many butterflies, bees, and other pollinators are currently wintering in dead leaves and hollowed out stems of last year's plants.

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LET THEM BEE!

We appreciate your support!



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Phone: 734.761.9640

Website: birdcentermi.org

Donate: birdcentermi.org/donate

