

## A Word from the Clinic

As fall approaches and the end of August nears, our summer baby season at the Bird Center continues. This season has been one of our busiest yet, with over **1,700** birds admitted so far. While most of our baby birds have been released, we're still caring for various aerial insectivores, woodpeckers, and beloved backyard birds like robins and waxwings, and we continue to receive daily intakes of baby goldfinches, waxwings, and doves. Although we anticipated an earlier slowdown due to the early start of the baby season, the need for care has remained steady.



Looking ahead, we're excited to have water lines run to our pole barn in early September! This project will greatly enhance our ability to care for the hundreds of orphaned waterfowl we admit, further supporting our role as one of the few facilities taking in orphaned and injured waterfowl. As we transition into fall, we're also reflecting on our summer operations to refine and improve our protocols. Current adjustments include expanding volunteer feeding opportunities and updating our hatchling care procedures.

Thank you to our supporters for making this another wonderful baby season! □

**Marissa Jardine**  
BCM Clinic Manager

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## Soaring Costs



Mealworms and other feeder insects are a significant expense at the Bird Center, costing us nearly \$1000 per week. Currently, we have an unusually high number of aerial insectivores in our care - these birds exclusively eat insects while flying. One example is the Barn Swallow, who can consume over 800 insects daily in the wild. With more than 40 aerial insectivore patients, you can imagine the amount of insects we need! This doesn't even account for the 150+ songbirds we have in care who also eat insects.

Help us keep these winged wonders soaring high with a donation towards the purchase of tasty (and highly nutritious!) mealworms! □

[Donate Here](#)

## Advocacy in Action

### Peregrine Falcons: A Thought-Provoking Success Story

An annual spring ritual is coming to an end. This year the Michigan Department of Natural Resources announced it was ending the program of banding peregrine falcons. The birds have recovered sufficiently that the state has "downlisted" them from endangered to threatened.

It was a different story in the 1960s when the population was near extinction. The main culprit was the pesticide DDT which



devastated the birds in two ways. It weakened the eggs causing the death of unhatched birds and killed adult birds who had ingested the substance. The federal government listed peregrine falcons as endangered in 1970 (under the precursor to the Endangered Species Act) and outlawed DDT in 1972. The birds were removed from federal protection in 1999.

As part of Michigan's efforts to revitalize the species, which remained endangered in Michigan until 2023 and continues as a threatened species, several human-built nests were constructed and the chicks banded so that their movement and health can be monitored over their lifetimes. Because peregrine falcons build nests in cliffs, locations were found that replicated nature. A well-known nesting box sits atop Spartan Stadium. The DNR program has at least 25 sites across Michigan, each with a falcon cam (which makes for fascinating and addictive watching). Here's the one for Spartan Stadium: <https://youtu.be/8zpv33K7SNo>.

Although the DNR's program has ended, researchers and current volunteers with proper permits, plan to continue, collecting even more data than the DNR has.

A positive story, but one that highlights the role of humans in both harming and helping wildlife. The decline of peregrine falcons is a direct result of human activity. On the other hand, we have brought the population back from the brink.

Some of the peregrine falcons are given names (although not as part of the DNR program). This goes against the principle followed by BCM and reputable rehabilitators, that the animals are wild and should not be named or treated as pets. DNR officials may have provided insight into this practice in a recent interview: "...without human interest and involvement, the falcons would not have this success story. It's really great seeing the excitement that folks have about having these birds in their communities," [DNR wildlife biologist and bird specialist Karen Cleveland said](#). "That's something that we as an agency have really enjoyed seeing."

[One DNR employee described the program's success](#): "We just don't need to interfere anymore and can let them be wild." Perhaps this can provide guidance for us humans as we consider our interactions with wildlife.

□: Peregrine falcon in nest box atop Spartan Stadium, courtesy of Jen Owen, fishery and wildlife associate professor at Michigan State University.

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## Shop our Wishlists

Wishlists aren't just for Wednesdays! Make a direct difference in the lives of our feathered patients by donating much-needed supplies from our Amazon and Chewy wishlists.



## Amazon Wishlist - Bird Center of Michigan

You can donate supplies to be delivered directly to the Bird Center by making a purchase from our Amazon wish list.

[Shop our Amazon Wishlist](#)



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## Chewy Wishlist - Bird Center of Michigan

Supporting our feathered patients just got easier with our Chewy wish list!

[Shop our Chewy Wishlist](#)

## Postcard from California

After partnering with [Living Coast Discovery Center](#) of San Diego over the past two summers, we've got some exciting updates from staff on two birds we transferred to be educational ambassadors at their shorebird sanctuary. While our goal is to rehabilitate and release animals back into the wild, certain patients who are non-releasable meet criteria that enable them to do well in a captive setting as educational ambassadors. You might remember these charming former patients from the BCM who are now living it up in sunny California in a native shorebird sanctuary habitat!





### **Gulliver the Herring Gull**

"He's our largest bird in the group so it's been a delight to see his stature compared to our wood ducks, the ring-billed gulls, and a merganser. He's a big ol' sweetheart... We broadcast insects every day to them and he readily gets in the water to catch them! He's been making his way across the water to settle on the boardwalk wall and on top of the floating islands."



### **Vinegar "Vinny" the Ring-billed Gull**

"Vinny is quite bonded with our other ring-billed, Salt, so much so that they built a nest and laid an egg (unfertilized) last week! They have been taking turns sitting on it which is very sweet to watch."

## **Thank you, interns!**

As summer winds down, our interns are heading back to school, and we want to take a moment to reflect on their amazing contributions. Each season, we welcome around 15 interns who spend their summer immersing themselves in all aspects of wildlife rehabilitation. This year, our interns helped care for nearly 1700 birds, performing tasks from feeding them every 30 minutes to assisting with new intakes and providing essential medical treatment to our patients. Their dedication and hard work make a huge difference in our operations.

In August, we celebrate their efforts with our annual end-of-season intern party - a small token of our appreciation for all they've done. A big thank you to our awesome 2024 interns! You've made this summer one of our best yet.



## Conjunctivitis Cured

After a little less than two weeks under treatment, this House Finch's conjunctivitis has cleared up almost completely. When he was found by his rescuer, this finch was suffering from Finch Eye Syndrome, a highly contagious illness that primarily infects the eyes of finches but can be spread to other birds as well. **This disease often spreads at feeders, which is why it's so important to disinfect your feeders at least every two weeks with a 1-part bleach and 10-part water solution.** Even though his eyes appear clear, we will continue his treatment through the three-week mark to ensure it does not reappear.



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## Foam Friend Helps Nestling Adjust

When baby birds are brought to the Bird Center, they are sometimes fearful and hesitant to take food from humans. Depending on their age, it can take hours or even days for them to adjust and feel comfortable eating. To help ease this nestling American Goldfinch's transition, we perched a foam figure of an adult goldfinch on her nest to simulate a parent returning to feed her.



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

For volunteer opportunities, contact our volunteer email: [volunteer@birdcentermi.org](mailto:volunteer@birdcentermi.org)

To check on a bird you rescued, please email [intakes@birdcentermi.org](mailto:intakes@birdcentermi.org) with the bird's ID number and date of rescue.

**For a list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators in Michigan, please visit the Michigan DNR website:** <https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/dlr/>



## Some fun before you go...



Have you ever seen a baby hummingbird scratch behind their ear before? Check out our [adorable video on TikTok](#) and you'll be able to say yes, you have!

## We appreciate your support!

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 3718 • Ann Arbor, MI 48106

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



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