

A Word from the Clinic

It's the height of summer, and the Bird Center is in full swing! ✨

This is our busiest time of year, and as we move into the second half of the season, we're now seeing second broods from early nesters, along with late-nesting species such as Cedar Waxwings and Chimney Swifts. Surprisingly, we're also still admitting young ducklings, more than usual for this late in the season.

We're currently caring for around 320 birds, and this year we've reached our highest number of annual admissions since our founding in 2004! Looking through our records, we are fast approaching 20,000 birds admitted at the Center since our founding.

In addition to the birds at our facility, our team fields countless calls and texts from across the state to assist rescuers and provide guidance. In June alone, our phones registered more than 18,000 messages between rescuers and the Center—a testament to the incredible need and the dedication of our staff, interns, and volunteers.

Our interns and volunteers have been a tremendous help this summer, keeping up with demanding feeding schedules and animal husbandry. As August approaches and our interns begin to head back to school, we expect a slight slowdown in admissions—before things ramp up again during fall migration.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We couldn't do this work without you!

Marissa Jardine
Clinic Manager



Helping Hummingbirds

Caring for hummingbirds in rehabilitation is challenging, so whenever preventative care is possible for birds in the wild, we always urge taking those measures first. To help them thrive, make sure to keep feeders clean and filled with a simple sugar-water solution (4 parts water to 1 part sugar), and avoid using red dye.

Hummingbirds are also vulnerable to window collisions, like this patient currently in our care.

To help prevent window strikes, place feeders either very close to windows (within 3 feet) or far away (over 10 feet). Consider adding decals, netting, or screens to break up reflections. Creating a safe and inviting environment helps ensure hummingbirds stay healthy and out of harm's way.

If you'd like to support the care of patients like this little one, please consider making a donation. Every gift helps us give these tiny birds a second chance!



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Advocacy in Action

We've got updates to three policy reports from recent newsletters.

The simplest definition of public policy is "what the government (broadly defined, both elected and appointed officials, from international bodies to local boards) does—or does not do—about a particular issue." Governments and officials change, and change their minds, so it's not surprising that public policy also changes.



Left: Spotted Owl | Photo by step2626/iStock



Right: Barred Owl | Photo by iculizard/iStock

"Owl vs. Owl: an ethical dilemma" (*BCM newsletter*, Dec. 2024) asked whether it is justified to kill members of one species to save another. Spotted owls live in old growth forests in

the Pacific Northwest. The species has been facing extinction, primarily from habitat destruction due to logging. In 1990, the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the spotted owl as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The listing was controversial, pitting industry against environmentalists.

Thirty-five years on, the spotted owl is still threatened and its population continues to decline. According to FWS, the greatest threat now is the barred owl. They are native to the eastern U.S. with plentiful populations. Human development and other factors have allowed them to move westward and eventually into spotted owl territory. FWS considers the larger, more aggressive and adaptable barred owl to be "invasive" and released a Management Plan last year. It calls for the killing of between 450,000 and 500,000 barred owls over the next 30 years to save the spotted owl.

The Bird Center Board, after much discussion, voted to oppose the FWS Barred Owl Plan, and signed a letter in opposition. Reflecting the complexity of the issue, the vote was not unanimous.

Update: Just this month, several media outlets reported that the Plan is in jeopardy, that the FWS has cancelled some of the grants, a bi-partisan group of legislators wrote the Interior Secretary[i] asking the program to be cancelled, and there is talk that Congress may use a measure to overturn the Plan.



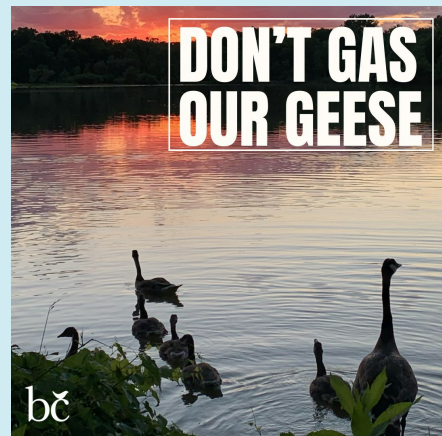
"Piping Plovers: Bad news, not so bad news" (BCM newsletter, Apr. 2025): The bird is critically endangered, with an estimated 80 nesting pairs as of 2023, about half in Northern Michigan. A program at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is crucial to their survival but there were concerns that this Administration's cuts to the National Park Service budget could have dire consequences. However, Michigan DNR soon announced it would increase its funding to compensate for any federal dollars lost.

Update: 2025 has been a record year for piping plovers. According to a recent Michigan Environmental Report[ii], "'This year, we're doing great. We actually just hit another record pair count. So, we have 85 nesting pairs this year. And that's four more pairs than we had the last two years,' said Stephanie Schubel at the University of Michigan Biological Station."

□: Piping plover, Jim Hudgins/USFWS, Public Domain, <https://www.fws.gov/media/piping-plover-19>

Canada Geese policy reversal (BCM newsletter Apr. 2025): We reported that the board is studying a recent decision by the Michigan Natural Resources Commission to reverse ~40 years of non-lethal conflict resolution. Changes to the Resident Canada Goose Management Program, effective in 2025, require rounding up the geese and gassing them.[iii]

Update: In what can only be called "Canada Geese policy reversal reversal", the DNR in early May put a hold on the 2025 program[iv] in the face of well-organized and tenacious opposition by a number of organizations, including BCM. The board voted to oppose the plan. The BCM used social media to talk about why we opposed the plan[v]. Clinic Manager Marissa Jardine testified at the Natural Resources Commission meeting on May 8, 2025. Her testimony was from a unique and highly relevant perspective, because she had cared for many Canada Geese over the years and spoke movingly of how the round-up and gassing of the adults and chicks, would negatively impact them.



[i] <https://animalwellnessaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Garbarino-Gray-letter-to-Sec.-Burgum-on-barred-owls-20-signers.pdf>

[ii] "A Record Year for Great Lakes Piping Plovers," Jul. 11, 2025, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-environment-watch/record-year-great-lakes-piping-plovers>

[iii] https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/-/media/Project/Websites/dnr/Documents/Boards/NRC/2024/September-2024/Signed_09WCO2024_Info.pdf

[iv] <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2025/05/13/canada-geese-michigan-lethal-gas-pilot-program-rescinded/83596620007/>

[v] https://www.instagram.com/p/DI_5Os5O5J6/?img_index=1

Swallows Soar Again

At the end of May, we were finally able to release all of the overwintered Barn Swallows who had been in our care since last summer! Right before their scheduled release date in 2024, they unexpectedly contracted Finch Eye Syndrome while in a flight cage, likely due to accidental contact with a wild bird in our yard.

Finch Eye Syndrome is caused by a rapidly spreading bacteria, and requires a lengthy treatment of at least 21 days to prevent further spread. After the 21 treatment days, the swallows had missed their window for migration and needed to be overwintered at the BCM until the following spring.

These Barn Swallows are now thriving as they catch mosquitoes and other flying insects at a quiet marshland park, which is home to an entire colony of Barn Swallows. While overwintering such a specialized species was a challenge, our dedicated Clinic Manager, Marissa, saw it through to release.



A Handful of Chickadees

These baby Black-capped Chickadees are quite the handful—literally! Tiny birds like these have incredibly fast metabolisms, which means they need a big diet to grow strong and healthy. In fact, many of our smallest patients—hatchlings, hummingbirds, and others—are fed as often as every 15 minutes for up to 14 hours a day!

Our dedicated team works tirelessly throughout the day to make sure every beak is fed and every bird gets the care they need—but we can't do it alone. If you're inspired by these tiny fighters, please consider making a donation.



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Waddling Back to the Wild

Several of our rescued Mallard ducklings have been safely released back into the wild! After weeks of care and growth, they're now ready to explore their natural habitat where they belong. Watching them waddle into the water and paddle away was a heartwarming reminder of the importance of wildlife rehabilitation. Remember, if you find ducklings alone, always call a local wildlife expert before intervening!



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

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](#)



Chewy Wishlist

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

Summerween

Summerween is here, and even our birds are feeling festive! Our educational ambassador Clementine perched on a watermelon jack-o-lantern is a sweet reminder that summer and spooky can go hand-in-wing.

We're working hard this summer to give birds like Clemmy a second chance (no tricks, just care!). Thank you to all our supporters for helping us care for nearly **1800 patients** so far this season!

Want to keep the magic going? Your donation helps us feed, medicate, and care for every feathered friend who arrives in need. It's the kind of support that's sweeter than candy corn—and a lot more nutritious.



[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

To check on a bird you rescued, please email 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/>



We appreciate your support!

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Donate: birdcentermi.org/donate



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