



Rescue. Rehabilitate. Release.

Established in 1990, the Medina Raptor Center is a leading raptor rehabilitation facility in Ohio. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate, and release injured and orphaned raptors. We specialize in birds of prey and treat over 400 birds each year. All receive individual attention, appropriate veterinary care, physical therapy, and conditioning before returning them to the wild.

MRC is a non-profit 501 © (3) organization and permitted by State and Federal Agencies. We operate solely on donations of time, funds, and supplies.

Medina Raptor Center Spring 2018

From the Director's Desk

by Laura Jordan

We are looking forward to Spring here at the raptor center. We have already seen a few migrants come through. We had a woodcock stop by for some TLC after making a wrong turn into a garage in Medina. He was successfully released on a sunny day at the start of March. Our winter weather this year brought us more injured birds than usual. Our flight cages are still full but we are hoping to be able to release all of these birds in another few weeks.

This year we are thrilled to introduce three new educational ambassadors to our center. These birds all have permanent injuries that would severely limit their abilities to hunt and survive in the wild but they also possess such great personalities that allow them to be calm and collected while in the presence of people.



Photo by Taryn Leach

First is the smallest new ambassador, the Eastern Screech Owl we are lovingly referring

to as "Bellatrix." She is small but fierce with an attitude that befits her name. She came to us with severe feather damage most likely caused by West Nile Virus. Her primary feathers do not grow properly, meaning she cannot fly. Her permanent enclosure is designed specifically to fit her needs. For more information about the effect of West Nile Virus come see "Bella" at one of our educational events.



Photo by Jackie Mahland

Next is a medium sized bird with a big following. This beautiful juvenile Snowy Owl came to us during the exceptional irruption of owls that came from the north this winter. He or she was found with a dislocated wing that did not heal properly and is now unable to fly. We are calling this gorgeous bird Juneau. In time we hope to find out if Juneau is a male or female but we feel lucky just to be in his or her presence for now.

Last but certainly not least we would like to introduce this young fellow that we will have the honor of watching grow into his namesake plumage. Denali is a juvenile male Bald Eagle that came to us this summer after breaking his shoulder blade which caused a severe wing droop. He is slowly learning to behave like a gentleman and will hopefully make his debut at a program soon.



Photo by Taryn Leach

We worked hard this winter to update our program materials and banners with the support of our partners at the Akron Zoo. We are looking forward to sharing our new logo and our new educational tools and materials at programs this summer and fall.

Above all we want to share with all of you our love and respect for these beautiful raptors and the necessity to keep and protect the habitats in which they live. Happy Spring and Happy Birding!

Volunteer Spotlight

In August, Glenn and Susan will be celebrating 10 years of volunteering with us at the Center. After relocating to Ohio, both wanted to continue their earlier volunteer work with wildlife. During their tenure at the center, they have worked on both the morning and afternoon crews, in the hospital, out in the mews, training with our educational birds, and participating in our outreach programs. Both work with a wide variety of our educational birds from hawks to vultures to falcons. Admittedly, Susan has a keen interest in owls, where Glenn

is especially taken with our American Kestrel, Mika. However, they gain their greatest satisfaction working with, rehabilitating, and seeing the successful release of the birds that are admitted to the center.

Glenn and Susan's love of birds does not stop at the MRC's door. Their property is a certified National Wildlife Foundation backyard wildlife habitat. Living in Medina County, they are fortunate to be in a birding hot spot. They have been documenting all the species that have passed through their property for almost 15 years with 69 different species from songbirds to birds of prey on record. Additionally, avid world travelers visiting all continents except Antarctica (that's still on their bucket list) both seek out time for birding.



The Natural Perspective

By Alison R.

When I first moved into my house several years ago, I spent time watching and listening for the birds that lived in my neighborhood so I would know what to plant to attract birds to my yard. Birds prefer and require areas of shelter and cover while they forage, so it's important to plant vegetation that is varied in height while they are taking advantage of your nearby bird feeders. My chickadees like to hide in the large hydrangea bush in my yard, but they will

also take shelter in small shrubs such as Forsythia and Burning bushes.

Birch trees, Dogwoods, and Crab apples are small to medium trees that will provide seeds and fruit throughout the year, and larger native trees such as Black Cherry, Sycamore, and Mulberry provide important natural food during the spring and summer. Pine trees, such as the one my Tufted Titmouse fly in from provide natural food sources in the cones.

In the fall, birds take advantage of flowers such as Coneflowers, Tickseed, Sunflowers and Zinnias since those flowers produce seeds before going dormant. I leave the flower heads on the plants and watch as Goldfinches visit my flower beds to have a snack. Large pink Zinnias such as "Purple Prince"

bring hummingbirds onto my patio all summer.

Mulching protects plants, as well as providing a wonderful habitat for bugs that your backyard birds will eat throughout the year. As for insects, I never use pesticides in my garden as it can inadvertently harm not only the songbirds, but the raptors as well. In time, the birds will help keep the insects in control, naturally. I have watched Sparrows, Blue Jays and Northern Flickers bounce joyfully off my cedar fence to snag the ants that crawl on it.

If you'd like more information on planting native Ohio plants that attract birds, try myohiolandscape.com, audubon.org, and allaboutbirds.org.

And don't worry if you don't have a yard to plant flowers or trees! You can still grow many plants that attract birds in pots on patios or terraces so that anyone can enjoy the wonder of birds in their backyard.



Robin eating Crabapples
Photo by Ed Wransky

Watch for Red-winged Blackbirds to signal Spring

By Karen S.

It's common for northern Ohio to get a late snowstorm or two, even in April. But no matter the weather, we know that warmth is on its way when we start to hear the high-pitched song of the red-winged blackbird. *Agelaius phoeniceus* is a squat, robin-sized bird native to North America. The male, with its luminous black body, long tail and brilliant scarlet and yellow shoulder bars, is our first harbinger of spring.

Redwings are known to fly as many as 800 miles to winter in the warmer climes of the southern United States. In Ohio, as February freeze gives way to milder March temperatures, male redwings head north to establish breeding territories near salt marshes, swamps, fields, and at the edges of water. The best territories are plentiful with seed-bearing plants and insects. During breeding season, redwings dine on caterpillars, moths, spiders and snails. In fall and winter, they rely on mostly seeds and some small berries. You might attract a redwing to your feeder with suet and sunflower seeds; be sure to put some seed on the ground as well, where redwings like to dine.

Within about two weeks, the females make the trek north, although they're less obvious to the human eye. Female redwings are a medium brown, with dark striping on their backs, a striped, off-white belly and sometimes a white brow line; they can look like a sparrow at a quick glance. The females keep a lookout for promising territories, and for the flashy males who guard them from atop cattails, reeds or wires. As many as 15 females may settle in a territory dominated by a single male.

Nesting takes place from March through May. Females build their cup-shaped nests from sticks, roots, leaves, and grass. They position them low to the ground in reeds or brush, where their clutch of three or four eggs will be more protected. Redwings are notably aggressive in protecting their territories and nests. The Red-winged Blackbird is well populated through North America, although as their habitat has dwindled, so have their numbers. The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology cites a North American Breeding Bird Survey, which determined that redwing population had dipped 30 percent between the mid-1960s and 2014.



Red-winged Blackbird Photo by Ken Busch
Kenbuschphotography.smugmug.com

You can use a dish like this one to simulate a nest if you are unable to find the original nest a baby bird came from. For more advice on rehoming a baby bird feel free to call the center.

Photo by Taryn L.



Help, I found a baby bird!

By Taryn L.

Springtime is nearly here, the phone calls have begun to pick up at the Center, and as you can imagine, we often are giving the same advice in each call. While this seems like monotony, it's not; it gives us the perfect opportunity to educate the public to do what is ultimately best for the bird and give it the best chance of survival.

We typically herald spring baby season with the Robin babies first, and then everything expands out beyond that. Most of the calls will be fairly simple: "A baby fell out of the nest and it's now on the ground, what do I do?"

Baby birds fall from their nests all the time. A gust of wind can rock the nest too hard and one rolls out. A thunderstorm sweeps through and the nest gets destroyed. One little critter decides he's Christopher Columbus who wants to start exploring and heads over the ledge. Birds are remarkably bouncy creatures and can hit the ground with nary a bruise or scratch. The great news is that unless that bird is bleeding somewhere, it can and should go back up into the nest. If you know where the nest is, that's great. Pick the little thing up (it's okay, you can use your hands, birds don't have a keen sense of smell) and put it securely back in the nest.

Sometimes you may not know where the nest came from exactly, it may be too high up or in a spot that is not easily accessible. That's okay, too. For birds that have cup nests (Robins, Mourning Doves, Finches, etc.) you can use a butter dish with holes poked in the bottom and filled with natural things like grass clippings and leaves. For cavity nesting birds (Woodpeckers, Flickers, Wrens, etc.), you can use an old orange juice carton with a hole cut in the side and holes poked in the bottom, filled with grass clippings and leaves. Then

wedge it in some branches as far up in the tree as you can, or nail it to the side of the tree. The parents will hear the calls of the baby and come down and feed it instinctively. The important thing is to get the nest far enough off the ground so that a ground predator such as a raccoon or cat cannot get to it.

What you shouldn't do is relocate the babies out of line of sight and sound because you think it's safer. That can create too many challenges for the parents and they may not find their babies in order to take care of them. We always suggest contacting your local wildlife rehabilitator to discuss what help is necessary and getting advice on how to give that help.

Amazingly enough, parents do the seemingly impossible and raise their young from an egg until it flies away. When it happens in our backyard, we get a front-row seat to it and sometimes feel like we need to intervene. Intervention may be necessary, but only when it's done right.

The best chance is always going to be with the parents, which means doing everything possible to get those babies back up into the nest or into the replacement nest so that the parent can continue caring for them. We can raise them and help them learn how to be birds to the best of our experienced abilities, but it has nothing on what its own species can do. Always try to reunite the bird back into the nest. Do the birds the ultimate kindness and either leave it for the parent to raise, or bring it to us so that we can help get that baby raised and back out to the wild, flying free, where it belongs.

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Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Our Wish List

Some of the items we are in need of are: forever stamps, gas cards, gift cards from office product stores, Home Depot gift cards, computer paper, bird seed-cardinal mix for rehabbing songbirds, paper towels, non-latex gloves, and much more. You can find our full wish list on our website or on Amazon.com.

Visit MedinaRaptorCenter.org to learn more about donating.

How Can You Help?

Our wish list and Bird Sponsorship information are available online at MedinaRaptorCenter.org.

Checks should be made out to The Medina Raptor Center and mailed to PO Box 74, Spencer, OH 44275.

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