



Ohio Bird Sanctuary

MANSFIELD, OHIO

A PLACE FOR FAMILIES - A PLACE TO LEARN - A PLACE TO EXPLORE - A PLACE FOR NATURE

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

~On the Wing: A Year of Impact~

OBS Staff

- Julie Schwartz
Executive Director
- Emily Tackett
Director of Operations
- Amanda Vanderford
Curator of Animals
- Abby Yates
Program Coordinator & Volunteer Coordinator
- Clara Agnes
Environmental Educator
- Sarah Evans
Animal Care Specialist
- Emily Lingafelter
Animal Care Specialist
- Gail Laux
Founder
- Dan Mace
Facilities Maintenance
- Bob Parnisari
Grounds Maintenance
- Susan Kalkbrenner
Grant Writer



OBS's new Avian Encounters Area was featured on the cover of the Destination Mansfield Visitor's Guide in 2025; a publication widely distributed all across the region.

We were also recognized with a "Tourism Award of Excellence" during the Destination Mansfield Annual Partners meeting in May, 2025.

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- Brady Groves
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- Zak Bramlage
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- Nikki Lewis
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- Traci Karger
Member
- Jeff Miller
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- Sandy Messner
Member

Thanks to a generous grant from our local Meijer store, OBS was able to purchase a professional mascot costume.

"Opal the Owl" made her event debut at the annual family favorite, "Christmas for the Birds" event in December.



OBS was nominated for and then recognized as the **Large Non-Profit of the Year** for 2025 by the Richland Area Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development.



Flying Free in 2025

Enjoy a few of our more than 150 bird releases in the last year!



FINANCIAL REPORT

January 1, 2025– December 31, 2025

INCOME

Charitable Donations	\$399,177
Founder's Fund	\$213,225
Investments	\$54,740
Programming Income	\$86,064
Events	\$17,361
Grants	\$102,114
In-Kind	\$4,110

Total: \$876,791

EXPENSES

Bird Care	\$206,550
Education	\$173,682
Utilities	\$31,750
Events	\$4,563
Operations	\$167,788
Admin Expenses	\$118,213
Contracted Services	\$2,709
Maintenance	\$133,072

Total: \$833,327

Visitor Statistics

- ◆ More than **16,100 visitors** came through the bird display area in 2025. Even more came and hiked our trails!
- ◆ 25% of Visitors traveled **more than 60 miles** to visit OBS!
- ◆ We had Visitors from **28 different states** and **at least 8 different countries** including: England, Canada, Japan, Belgium, Scotland, Jamaica, Ireland, and Spain.

Conservation Efforts

Visitors were inspired through our programming to support species of concern and habitat issues.

The following amounts were raised in 2025:

- \$644 for American Crows
- \$169 for American Kestrels
- \$94 for Vulture Conservation





2025 PROGRAM REPORT

Abby Yates, Program Coordinator

At the Ohio Bird Sanctuary, we believe connecting people with nature can happen in many ways, and through diverse programming in 2025 we reached audiences of all ages, helping foster a deeper appreciation for the environment. We're grateful to the families, groups, clubs, and schools who made us part of their year, and to the dedicated staff, volunteers, and community partners who make it all possible. This includes, but isn't limited to, Emily Tackett for leading the Junior Naturalist program and outreach and on-site efforts, Clara Agnes for bringing fresh ideas and guiding our preschool program since joining full time in December 2024, and our incredible education volunteers who support field trips, camps, homeschool programs, and more.



Outreach Programs: In 2025, we completed over 250 outreach programs, reaching a variety of audiences across Ohio. Over 2,000 students experienced an outreach program from OBS within their school, and over 3,500 people experienced OBS programming through churches, senior centers, libraries, and community events! Each outreach program provided an opportunity to engage directly with the community, fostering a greater sense of environmental stewardship.

Field Trips and On-site Programs: Field Trips at the sanctuary are a great opportunity for students to gain hands-on experiences with the world around them by offering up-close encounters with our ambassadors, nature-inspired activities, and so much more. We were pleased to welcome over 1,500 students across 41 different field trips in 2025. We are proud to have served such a large number of students, helping to instill an appreciation for nature and conservation in the next generation. Over 400 individuals scheduled personalized on-site experiences such as our "Raptor Up-Close" and "Feathered Friends" programs. These encounters gave visitors the opportunity to learn about our resident birds of prey and gain insight into the Sanctuary's mission. Additionally, our Homeschool Program welcomed a **record 92 students**, ages 5-18, and our Preschool Activity Hour welcomed approximately 10 preschool students, ages 3-5, every month.



Nature Camps: 2025 was a very successful year for our Nature Camps, bringing back fan-favorites, as well as introducing brand new opportunities. We saw over 400 students throughout the year at a variety of our camps, including three Winter Camps, seven Summer Nature Camps, seven Summer Preschool Camps, and three Evening Camps. 2025 was also the start of our **new Intermediate Camps which are designed for children ages 12-15**. We hosted three Intermediate Camps, including one Conservation Camp, one Summer Career Camp, and one Fall Evening Camp.

Special Events: Throughout 2025, we hosted a handful of special events, including our annual Fall Festival, Christmas for the Birds, and Luau! Other events included our Owls of Ohio (February), Pollinator Palooza (April), Snapshot Sundays, Birding Boat Tours (May), Avian Hospital Uncovered (August), and a variety of nature hikes. We also introduced our new Summer Show series, "Birds and Beyond", in our Avian Encounters Area. Over 200 guests got to have up-close encounters with a variety of ambassadors, and got to experience some of them taking flight!



Looking Ahead: In 2026, we are dedicated to continuing our mission of connecting people with nature. Some exciting ways we are hoping to accomplish this are by updating our outdoor play area, known as the "Naturescape", investing in more interpretive signage, and creating innovative programming. We look forward to another successful year of connecting with individuals and organizations who share our passion for preserving the natural world.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all who have supported the Ohio Bird Sanctuary throughout 2025. Your partnership and dedication help us continue to offer these valuable educational programs and ensure that our mission remains at the forefront of our work.

2025 Curator Report

Amanda Vanderford, Curator of Animals



In 2025, the Avian Hospital of the Ohio Bird Sanctuary experienced one of the most impactful years in our 37 year history. Thanks to the dedication of our Bird Care staff, volunteers, and generous supporters, we provided lifesaving care to **517 sick, injured, and orphaned birds from 43 counties across Ohio**. These intakes represented **84 different bird species**, reflecting both the biodiversity of our state and the growing need for specialized Avian care. We proudly partnered with a number of other rehab facilities, too, to ensure the best possible outcomes for birds all over our state.



Redtailed Hawks and American Robins remained our most frequently-admitted species, continuing a long-standing trend. However, 2025 also brought several less commonly seen patients, including an Eastern Whippoorwill– an excellent reminder of the wide range of birds that rely upon our expertise.

The year marked another milestone: **17 Bald Eagles** were admitted to our facility, the highest number we have ever recorded. We also treated a record number of Osprey patients. Both of these species continue to see dramatic increases in population numbers in our state thanks to targeted conservation efforts.

The most common reason for bird intakes was **vehicle collisions**, often accompanied by incidental findings of **lead toxicity** during routine bloodwork. Lead poisoning remains one of the most preventable threats to Bald Eagles. When hunters use lead-based ammunition in the field, scavenging animals ingest fragments that can lead to life-threatening toxicity. Choosing nonlead alternatives is a simple, powerful way to protect Ohio's wildlife.



Among the eagles we treated last year was "**Star**," a juvenile Bald Eagle from the Columbus area who was a bit of a celebrity to the bird watching community there, who was suffering from an unknown toxicity. Her condition was grave upon her arrival at our hospital and she was unable to take any food or medication by mouth. Our team worked late nights, providing care and partnering with Lilac Hill Veterinary Hospital veterinarians to provide the best possible treatment plan. Thanks to our upgraded medical equipment, including newly donated IV fluid infusion pumps, we were able to deliver lifesaving hydration and medications. Star's quick turnaround, recovery, and ultimate release is a testament to how essential these tools are for treating critically ill raptors! After just two weeks in our care, Star was flying free once again.



The donation of medical equipment and supplies were made possible entirely through the generosity of our supporters. Every donation directly strengthens our ability to provide expert medical care and give Ohio's native birds a second chance. We are profoundly grateful for the individuals, families, organizations, and partners who stood by us in 2025! Your support fuels every rescue, every treatment, and every release back into the wild. Purchases from our Amazon wishlist and donations such as fish and venison help to keep our supply costs low. As we look ahead into 2026, we remain committed to expanding our impact, advancing our Avian Hospital, and protecting the species that make our natural world so extraordinary.





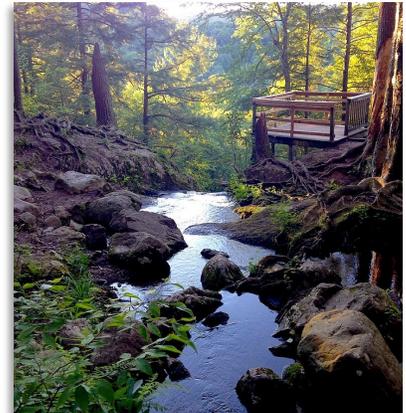
“Vitamin N”: How time in NATURE improves your health

Julie Schwartz, Executive Director

Time spent in nature is truly the most inexpensive and readily available tool we have for our mental and physical well-being. With plenty of paved walking trails through the bird display area, our unique Treehouse classroom, a variety of lengths of woodland hiking trails, and weekly Nature-based Yoga classes, the Ohio Bird Sanctuary can provide just the place for you to engage directly with nature for whole-body wellness in 2026.

There is no doubt we are living in the age of constant notifications, endless scrolling, and digital overstimulation. While technology is a helpful tool and here to stay, in excess, it is not good for the human body or its nervous system. Large-scale research studies show that people who spend **at least 120 minutes per week** in Nature, whether in parks, forests, gardens, or near water, report better overall health and higher psychological well-being than those who don't go outside as much. The 120-minute threshold seems to hold true whether the time is in one visit or spread across several shorter outdoor outings.

Since time outdoors often encourages physical activity such as walking, biking, kayaking, gardening, etc., **cardiovascular health** benefits such as lower blood pressure, healthier heart function, and a reduction in chronic vascular disease are noted in the research. Scientists are also linking time outdoors with **improved sleep quality**. When we are exposed to natural light, especially in the morning, it helps to regulate the body's internal clock (known as our circadian rhythm.) This exposure to natural light, when done consistently can increase daytime alertness and amplify the restorative benefits of sleep. It also leads to the **production of Vitamin D** in our bodies. Just 20-30 minutes spent in a green space has been shown to significantly **lower the stress hormone Cortisol** in our bloodstreams, improving both cardiovascular and immune system functioning almost immediately. We also see clear evidence that natural environments **activate the parasympathetic nervous system**, which is responsible for the rest/digest/recovery functions in the body. Moods stabilize, creativity blossoms, concentration sharpens, and a sense of connection takes over. Symptoms of **anxiety and depression are seen to decrease** with consistent access to nature. Activities such as taking walks in nature, birdwatching, sitting near water, or nature journaling can make a clinically significant difference for people. These experiences are shown to create cumulative mental health benefits over time and the benefits are noted across study participants of all ages. It is never too early or too late to spend more time in nature!



The simple truth is that humans have had a relationship with the natural world for as long as there have been humans. Our brains, bodies, and nervous systems are biologically designed to respond to natural environments with calm, regulation, and clarity. Sometimes feeling better isn't about adding something new, but about returning to something ancient. You are always welcome here!





Founders Fund

Established by OBS Founder, Gail Laux, in 2023 this fund secures additional donations to support the operational budget and stabilize the organization during times of transition.

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Maintenance Fund

Establish in 2021, this fund generate interest from restricted gifts for maintenance needs around the property



Mary K Dare
 Scott & Joann Taylor



Mural Sponsors

The Sanctuary is even more colorful & full of wonder thanks to some beautiful touches by Allison Pence Art

Jeff Boals
 Bramlage Family
 Kristen Duncan
 Judy Forney
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Dave & Terrie Siebold
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ANNUAL APPEAL

Donations to the Annual Appeal support bird care, youth programs, and general operations.



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EAGLE MEMBERS

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 Kathy Wilkinson
 Colton Young

Bald Eagle & Peregrine Falcon populations were both negatively impacted by the pesticide DDT that cause their eggs to become fragile. Thanks to diligent efforts by wildlife biologists and concerned members of the public, both species are fighting back with neither one listed as endangered at this time.





HAWK MEMBERS

Our most popular member level includes admission for a family to the Sanctuary all year long, keeping up-to-date on happenings via newsletters and email blasts, & receiving advanced notice and a priority enrollment into paid programs and events.



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 Dorothy Adamescu
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 Emily Adams
 Larry Amato
 Victoria Andrews
 Amanda Argo
 Brendan
 & Heather Argo
 Erica Bache
 Bette Backus
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 Nicole Wilson
 Ashleigh Windnagel
 Tonya Winningham
 Denise Witherup
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 Ashley Yates
 Mindy Yocum
 Kate Yurick
 Joe & Lisa Zemancik





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- Mary Collet
- Jerome Cosyn
- Sarah Curtis
- Eva Delamater
- Nora Ebie
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- Susan Steele
- Robin Strine
- Tyler Theaker
- Michael Towne
- Patricia Triplett
- Angela Van Mun
- Nancy Wagner
- Matthew Ward
- Nancy Wasen
- Beth Willis
- Karen Wise
- Woody Woodrow
- Caitlin Zarnoch



The benefits of an Owl Membership include admission to the Sanctuary all year long, keeping up-to-date on happenings via newsletters and email blasts, & receiving advanced notice and a priority enrollment into paid programs and events.

License Plates

In 2025, **\$6,822.00** was raised as a result of the purchase of custom OBS license plates. We are so grateful for the financial support as well as for the advertising. Since OBS receives \$15 from each plate purchased, this means there are **454 custom OBS License Plates out there on the roads!!**



2025 GENERAL DONATIONS

Thank you to all the individuals and corporations who supported the Sanctuary's mission through a general donation or project. Your gifts supported the care of our Avian Ambassadors who are the foundation of our educational programming and provided the necessary resources to care for our 90 acre preserve. Many additional donation are made anonymously and are therefore, not listed.

Dallas Albright
Sandra Ammon
Sandi Arnold
Teresa Backstrom
Laura Baker
Eric Baratta
Lisa Benjamin
Denis Blake
Denise Blankenship
Sandra Boehm
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Rachel Workinger
Matthew Wurgler
Rashell Yochem
Olivia Yoho
Caitlin Zarnoch
Emily Zeiter
Laura Zeiter



GIVING TUESDAY

On December 3rd, 2025, the Sanctuary joined its peer non-profit organizations to encourage individuals to support our missions through **Richland Gives**. The Richland County Foundation supported this initiative by providing all organizations an online giving platform and by providing prize money for reaching fund-raising goals. Thank you to the following donors that participated in Richland Gives and helped us win over \$6,000.00 in prize money.



Chris Arnold
 Marcus Arnold
 Annalisa Arostegui
 Cheyenne Baker
 Jennifer Beavis
 Neil Bernstein
 Anya Berstein
 Alexis Berstein
 Kyle Bierly
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 Candy Bores
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 Rachel Weber
 Molly Weyhmeller
 Amanda Williams
 Nancy Withowski
 Pam Wolf
 Logan Yates
 Adam Yates
 Abby Yates
 Stacie Yates
 Barb Yeager



MEMORIAL GIFTS

The Sanctuary received financial gifts in memory of the following individuals in 2025:

Debra Bonino
 Emma Enig
 Anton Freiheit
 Cindy French
 Tom Garrison
 Delores Green
 Mabel Hawk
 Gary Holzheimer

Carolyn Hootman
 Pam Hulit
 Ruby Hunt
 Bruce & Nancy Jackson
 Debbie Lee Loder
 David Loney
 Edwin Madden
 Cliff Marsh

Jimmy McPherson
 Simmy Milano
 John Neumann
 Kay Oster
 Bill Smith
 Mary Louise Thomas
 Cathy Wiltanger





2025 Volunteer Report

Abby Yates, Volunteer Coordinator

Here at OBS, we simply cannot complete our mission without the help of our wonderful volunteers! As we reflect on an amazing year, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to all the volunteers who helps us along the way! In 2025, **we had 84 active volunteers!** Their volunteer tasks ranged from manning our front desk to assisting with educational programs and special events. Volunteers also help to maintain our grounds & trails, complete cleaning and painting projects, and interact with guests in our aviary.

Throughout the year, volunteers spent roughly:

- 900 hours greeting visitors at the Front Desk
- Over 200 hours assisting with Educational Programs
- More than 50 hours assisting at special events
- At least 100 hours maintaining our grounds and trails
 - Participating in 7 volunteer work days



Join Us Today!

There are so many ways you can be a part of our mission!
<https://www.ohiobirdsanctuary.com/support-the-sanctuary>



MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Owl - \$25 (Individual)

Free admission for one individual.

Hawk - \$50 (Family)

Free admission for one household.

Falcon - \$100 (Family & Friends)

Hawk level benefits plus free admission for 4 guests and a \$10 Gift card.

Eagle - \$500 (Supporter)

Hawk level benefits plus free admission for 8 guests, a \$25 Gift card, and a tour.

All members receive discounts and early notification on special events.



Name _____ Cell Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

Please designate if for a Membership _____ General _____ Wings Maintenance Fund _____