



birdcalls



It's a bird... it's a plane... it's...

**SUPERHEROES
OF THE SKY**

This Summer Only! Adventure Awaits: Superheroes of the Sky

Each season offers a new way to experience the National Aviary and provides a different perspective on birds and their habitats. It's a bird! It's a plane! It's the National Aviary's new summer season, Superheroes of the Sky Presented by Breeze Airways! Now through September 4, you can explore the dynamic world of nature's superheroes through action-packed programming, exciting play spaces, and awesome add-on experiences.

Making a triumphant return this summer is the guest-favorite live rooftop theater show, SkyDeck Presented by Pittsburgh International Airport. Watch as incredible birds of prey fly freely above Allegheny Commons Park. See lightning-fast Lanner Falcons, super swift Black Kites,

and impressive Hooded Vultures glide through the air and learn about the heroic role each species plays in its ecosystem, from controlling pest populations to preventing the spread of disease.

The National Aviary's thrilling new immersive bird show, Habitat Heroes presented by AAA Travel, takes guests on a journey around the world to meet fascinating species with 'superpowers' of their own! Learn about the amazing adaptations of birds like Bald Eagles, Green-winged Macaws, and Eurasian Eagle-Owls as they fly, glide, and perch close by, and find out what it takes to become a habitat hero yourself.

Continue to page 2

This Summer Only!

Adventure Awaits: Superheroes of the Sky *cont.*

Little superheroes can engage their superpowers of creativity and imagination in fun play spaces throughout the Aviary. Climb to new heights in a bird's nest play space. A Test Your Superpowers station is perfect for testing your feats of strength. Be a real-life hero at the Jr. Veterinarian station, explore a sensory table, and watch your artistic powers come to life on screen at the Draw Alive! station. Superhero-themed décor and photo ops make this summer's visit to the National Aviary a super experience for all.



Daily Activities Schedule

10:30 am	Penguin Feeding <i>Penguin Point</i>	1:00 pm	Tropical Rainforest Feeding <i>Tropical Rainforest</i>
10:30 am	Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 🍃 <i>Canary's Call</i> Presented by DollarBank	2:00 pm	Habitat Heroes Presented by AAV Travel 🍃 <i>Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater</i>
11:00 am	Habitat Heroes Presented by AAV Travel 🍃 <i>Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater</i>	2:30 pm	Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 🍃 <i>Canary's Call</i> Presented by DollarBank
11:00 am	Tropical Rainforest Feeding <i>Tropical Rainforest</i>	3:00 pm	SkyDeck Show Presented by PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT 🍃 <i>SkyDeck</i>
12:00 pm	Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 🍃 <i>Canary's Call</i> Presented by DollarBank	3:00 pm	Wetlands Feeding <i>Wetlands</i>
12:00 pm	SkyDeck Show Presented by PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT 🍃 <i>SkyDeck</i>	4:00 pm	Penguin Feeding <i>Penguin Point</i>
12:00 pm	Wetlands Feeding <i>Wetlands</i>	4:00 pm	Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 🍃 <i>Canary's Call</i> Presented by DollarBank
12:30 pm	Meet Incredible Carnivores <i>Condor Court</i>		

🍃 = Requires additional ticket or fee. Purchase online during checkout or at the Visitor Services Desk.



American Flamingos standing in the pond of the Wetlands Habitat

Take a visit to the beautifully updated Wetlands!

The National Aviary's coastal-themed habitat welcomed new birds and unveiled gorgeous features last year. The National Aviary capped off a milestone 70th anniversary year in 2022 with the renovation of the Aviary's second-oldest, and largest, habitat: the Wetlands. The renovation of the 1969 structure combined industry leading sustainability upgrades, naturalistic features that benefit birds and encourage their natural behaviors, and immersive elements that create a fantastic experience for guests.

The beautifully updated Wetlands has a beachy, coastal feel. The room is bright and expansive, and light filters through the lush foliage that reaches up to the ceiling. New residents of the Wetlands, a Black-necked Stilt pair, dart along the pebbly beach at the edge of the pond. The resurfaced walkway that spans the habitat is a sandy color and leads to a 20-foot tall custom sculptural tree, the branches of which provide perching for new species like Straw-necked Ibises. The sprawling roots offer seating for guests during daily activities, like the Wetlands Feeding. More than 100 birds call the habitat home, including the Blue-billed Curassow, American Flamingos, the Hadada Ibises, the Blue-bellied Roller, Inca Terns, Boat-billed Herons, Plush Crested Jays, Roseate Spoonbills, and several more.

The habitat features more than 20,000-square-feet of new, bird-friendly glass by Vitro Architectural Glass, the exclusive glass partner of the National Aviary, with Walker Glass glazing. Two glass styles—one fully etched for a frosted look and the other etched with a grassy pattern—are designed specially to help prevent birds from striking windows. The glass also maximizes UV light to warm the habitat, increase energy efficiency, and provide beneficial light for plants and birds all year.

The renovation of the Wetlands was generously sponsored by presenting sponsor Peoples, along with Vitro Architectural Glass. The \$3 million project received additional support from the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD), Buhl Foundation, Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, Caroline Fredricka Holdship Charitable Trust through the PNC Charitable Trusts Grant Review Committee, W.I. Patterson Charitable Trust, and Walker Glass Company Ltd. This Project was financed in part by a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Financing Authority.



A female Blue-billed Curassow



A Puna Teal stretching its wings

Letter From the Director



Summer at the National Aviary is always an exciting time, as the birds bask in the sunshine, socialize with one another, and greet our guests with a song.

This season, we are beyond excited to warmly welcome back our neighbors, friends, and visitors to Pittsburgh. There is always something new to

discover at the Aviary, like the beautifully renovated Wetlands, our thrilling summer season - Superheroes of the Sky, our new theater show - *Habitat Heroes*, the return of our rooftop bird show - *SkyDeck*, and the completion of our signature fundraiser - *Night in the Tropics*! Every habitat, program, and event is thoughtfully designed to create immersive experiences that inspire respect for nature through an appreciation of birds.

No two visits to the Aviary are alike. The Aviary is always changing, growing, and adapting, just like our incredible birds. Our latest improvement, the Wetlands, offers a bright, coastal space where birds fly, swim, wade, and perch in a large, walk-through habitat surrounded by beautiful bird-friendly glass.

Our summer season, *Superheroes of the Sky*, continues to highlight the incredible adaptations that make birds' nature's superheroes. Fun play spaces give kids and families the chance to test out their own super powers, and daily talks and feedings give guests a first-hand look at the incredible diversity of birds.

Two daily shows offer and even closer look at the remarkable abilities of birds!

Habitat Heroes is a free-flight theater show featuring macaws, an armadillo, a majestic Bald Eagle and more. The audience discovers the many ways they can be heroes for our planet, as birds fly through the theater above them. *SkyDeck*, our rooftop

theater, highlights impressive birds of prey, like vultures, a falcon, and kites that soar over the audience and circle above the park before swooping in for a treat! The Aviary is renowned for experiences like these that offer guests a chance to see the natural behaviors of birds up close, as Aviary experts share fascinating facts, personal stories, and important conservation information.

Conservation and avian care are always at the core of our programming. This year, we're proud to share the news that a paper featuring the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was published in a peer-reviewed journal, changing the narrative around an iconic species, thought by many, to be extinct. A juvenile African Penguin, affectionately named Pierogi, thrives in our Penguin Point habitat, bringing hope to an endangered species. And, two juvenile Andean Condors, critically endangered throughout their range in Ecuador, impress guests with their 10-foot wingspan! These are only a few examples of the outstanding impact the National Aviary has for birds and their habitats.

As we wrap up another successful *Night in the Tropics* event, and prepare for our next fundraiser, *Hike-A-Thon*, we are continuously amazed by the support we receive from the generous community.

We invite you to see the fruits of this support in real time and plan a visit to the Aviary before the end of the summer!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cheryl Tracy". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cheryl Tracy
Executive Director

Stay Connected

aviary.org | 412-323-7235

Twitter: @National_Aviary

Facebook: Facebook.com/NationalAviary

Instagram: @National_Aviary

BirdCalls is published for friends of the National Aviary.

Editor: Becca Hansborough
Content and Communications Manager
Becca.Hansborough@aviary.org

Your donations support the National Aviary's work to save birds and protect their habitats.







Credit: CleanRobotics

Food Waste - It's for the Birds!

When we toss out leftovers, let veggies sit a little too long in the refrigerator, or end up with more on our plates than we can eat and throw it away, we are contributing to a big problem. Food waste toads to greenhouse gases that accelerate climate change, pollute waterways, and throw ecosystems out of balance. All of this has a detrimental effect on birds and the environment.

The National Aviary, through a generous grant from the Posner Foundation, is partnering with CleanRobotics, a company that creates and implements innovative solutions to environmental problems. Using CleanRobotics' TrashBot, food waste at the National Aviary will be sorted using artificial intelligence, robotics, computer vision, and machine learning. After grabbing a bite to eat at Atria's, you can toss your trash in the TrashBot and watch as it automatically separates each item, from leftover food to napkins, with 95% accuracy. This diverts recyclable materials from landfills and reduces waste!

You don't have to have a TrashBot at home to begin reducing your food waste. Small steps can make a big difference for the environment—and your wallet.

-  **Only buy what you need.** Plan meals that use common ingredients, keep quantity in mind when you're shopping, and maintain an inventory of what you already have to prevent overbuying.
-  **Love your leftovers!** Label your leftovers, use staple go-to recipes, and repurpose leftovers.
-  **Store smart.** Learn how to store fruits and veggies and freeze your food when it's at its prime.
-  **Dispose of items properly.** Learn about your municipality's recycling guidelines and keep your trash properly contained.

Take the National Aviary's Food Waste Pledge to minimize food waste at home and at the National Aviary and be entered to win prizes, like free Membership and Gift Shop gift cards!



Collaborating Across Continents to Save Andean Condors

With immense wingspans that can reach up to 10 feet, there are few birds more awe-inspiring than an Andean Condor. But, as their numbers in the wild decrease, these powerful birds need help. The problems facing Andean Condors are multifaceted, from poisoning to habitat loss. Overcoming these challenges requires working collaboratively to conserve vital habitats in the wild encourage successful breeding in condors in human care to support the long-term health of the species, and increase awareness of the critical role condors play in the environment.

Condors nest in caves or on ledges high up on cliffs in the Andes Mountains, which are virtually inaccessible to researchers. Therefore, little is known about the early months of chickhood, before young condors venture outside of the nest. Hatchings in human care provide an incredible opportunity to observe condor chicks and their parents and learn about their behaviors. That's why when Marijo, the Andean Condor chick, hatched at the National Aviary last summer, the Aviary's team closely documented her development and the behaviors of her mother, Lianni; information extremely valuable for those working to save Andean Condors in the wild and through breeding programs in human care.

In the fall of 2022, the National Aviary's Senior Director of Animal Care and Conservation Programs, Kurt Hundgen, traveled to Ecuador to share the work of his team at the *IV Congreso Internacional de Cóndor Andino*

(the 4th International Congress on the Andean Condor), held in Quito. The conference was attended by biologists, ecologists, zoologists, and other researchers, primarily from South America. It was an incredible opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss challenges, and work together on solutions. Kurt's presentation on Marijo's early days caught the attention of his colleagues. There's still much to be learned about Andean Condor breeding, and this rare glimpse into the nest cave can provide insight into the care needed for chicks and parents to thrive.

Sylvia Ronquillo, a Senior Aviculturist at the National Aviary, also made a trip to Ecuador to visit our partner zoo, Bioparque Amaru. As one of Marijo's primary caregivers, Sylvia had firsthand experience in caring for chicks in the delicate early days of chickhood, and supporting parents as they tended to their young. Bioparque Amaru is looking ahead to next year's breeding season, and Sylvia's insight will help the staff in the Cuenca-based zoo create the best conditions for a successful hatching.

The National Aviary's work with Andean Condors has primarily taken place in Ecuador, where the species is considered Critically Endangered (they are Vulnerable throughout the entirety of their range.) Our strong partnerships throughout Ecuador have led to great collaborations: not only do National Aviary staff visit Bioparque Amaru to support their work, but Amaru's staff have also visited the Aviary. The exchange has helped both of our facilities enhance the quality of care for our condors.



In Memory of Lurch the Andean Condor

It is with deep sadness that we share that Lurch the Andean Condor, passed away last fall due to age-related conditions at 52. Lurch had lived at the National Aviary for almost 10 years. He is remembered as a majestic bird with a playful personality who was deeply loved by the National Aviary's staff, volunteers, visitors, and the public. From his perch in the outdoor Condor Court habitat, Lurch captured the attention of countless guests who stopped to admire him and read about the conservation of Andean Condors. We miss Lurch dearly but are heartened to know that his legacy lives on through his daughter, Marijo, who we recently celebrated her one-year hatch day.





Hello, Pierogi!

Pierogi is the juvenile African Penguin who hatched at the National Aviary last fall and quickly stole hearts! Pierogi hatched in an artificial nest burrow in Penguin Point, a specialized nesting space also used in South Africa to help the hatchlings of wild penguins. Pierogi was affectionately named by Aviary staff for his cute-as-a-dumpling appearance. Staff even measured his weight regularly in cheddar and cheese pierogis (a Pittsburgh favorite). Young penguins grow fast—Pierogi weighed just two pierogis at hatching; at age three months he was up to 80 pierogis!

When Pierogi was only a few weeks old, his caregivers discovered he had an abrasion on his left eyelid, which could have occurred while he pushed his way out of the eggshell or while he was very young in the nest. They quickly sprang into action to assess Pierogi's condition and determine the best treatments to ensure the little penguin could thrive. A human eye specialist was brought in to perform a full exam and the results were encouraging: while his condition prevented his left eye from fully closing; he has perfect vision in his right eye.

With a little extra care, Pierogi is thriving in Penguin Point with the rest of the colony. His eye is checked regularly to ensure it remains clean and healthy. And his condition hasn't slowed him down: he is a speedy swimmer, loves basking in the warm sun on the rocks in Penguin Point, and continues to be as cute as a dumpling.



Get Ready to Hike, Bike, and Explore... No Matter Where You Are

This September, get outside to hike, bike, and explore where you are during the National Aviary's third annual Hike-A-Thon Presented by UPMC Health Plan. Participate from anywhere in the world, on your own time. Whether you're climbing mountains, commuting to work by bike, or taking a stroll around your neighborhood, you can be raising funds to support the National Aviary's critical work to save birds and protect their habitats. The easy to use and intuitive platform, **One Cause**, helps you track your progress and engage your friends and family in your efforts while bringing you one step closer to winning great prizes!

Summer Events with the National Aviary



Birdwatching Kayak Tours with L.L.Bean

Take to the water with the National Aviary and L.L.Bean for a birding adventure by kayak! L.L.Bean's experienced and professional guides will provide on-land instruction on kayak equipment, basic strokes, and safety guidelines before a National Aviary expert leads kayakers out on North Park Lake in Allegheny County. Kayakers will scan the shoreline and surrounding forest for birds. L.L.Bean will provide all necessary equipment, including kayaks, paddles, safety floatation devices, and L.L.Bean Discovery Binoculars.

Sunday, July 30 and Sunday, August 13
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Enjoy a scenic sunset as migratory birds like blackbirds, vireos, and tanagers settle in to roost at dusk.

Reserve your spot today!



Riverboat Birding

Join National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill and the Rivers of Steel Explorer boat captain Ryan O'Rourke for a birding experience like no other! Participants in this morning cruise will board the Explorer a half hour before setting sail. Bob will help you spot river birds, such as cormorants, eagles, herons, mergansers, and songbirds before returning to the dock at noon. You are welcome to bring your own brown bag lunch and non-alcoholic beverages.

Saturday, September 16 | 8:00 am - 11:00 am

General Admission: \$50

Boats depart from the Rivers of Steel Dock at 1 Allegheny Avenue

Visit aviary.org to register. Space is limited; registration required.

Reserve your spot today!

Summer Camps...For Adults!

Spend a day with National Aviary staff and go behind the scenes to see how we care for the more than 500 birds and animals that call the National Aviary home! Help prepare enrichment for the flock, get up close with Animal Ambassadors, and learn about National Aviary conservation projects across the globe. Registration includes all camp activities, including crafts, up-close animal encounters, and a boxed lunch.

Saturday, August 12 | 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

\$150 per person (includes lunch)

Visit aviary.org to register. Space is limited; registration required.

Reserve your spot today!

Brushes & Birds Art Classes featuring Maria DeSimone Prascak of Maria's Ideas: In Person

Join Maria DeSimone Prascak of Maria's Ideas (MariasIdeas.com) in person or online for a creative and colorful class in painting your own fine and feathered masterpiece. In these courses designed for painters of all ages and abilities, follow step-by-step instructions to paint a portrait of a well-loved National Aviary bird or animal. Optional material kits are available for purchase for virtual participants. Materials and admission are included for in-person participants.

Saturday, August 26 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm EST

Take it slow with a leisurely lesson in painting an adorable Two-toed Sloth!

Reserve your spot today!

Birdwatching Expeditions

Sunday, September 24 | 8:30 am - 11:30 am

National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill helped operate the bird banding station at Powdermill Avian Research Center in the Ligonier Valley for almost 30 years. Join Bob to see a wide variety of migratory birds (like warblers, thrushes, vireos, and flycatchers) up close with an experienced bird bander. Learn about the important research conducted at Powdermill that is helping scientists understand migratory birds and their conservation needs.

Sunday, October 22 | 8:30 am - 11:30 am

Meet up with National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill for a morning of birdwatching. Hone your bird identification skills or learn birding basics as you explore one of western Pennsylvania's most beautiful landscapes: the Allegheny Front in the Laurel Highlands.

Reserve your spot today!



Donor Society

Thank you to the following individual supporters who made donations of \$500+ so far in 2023. Your generosity helps fund the care of our animals. To be a part of our Donor Society, contact Ted.Bartlett@aviary.org or 412-258-9433

2023 Donor Society

Martial Eagle | \$2,500+

Anonymous (2)
Cynthia Baily
David and Elizabeth Brown
Jane and Michael Dixon
Michael and Eileen Flinn
Connor and Rachel Frank
John and Suzanne Graf
Cheryl and Wyatt Herschell
Thomas and Christine Kobus
Lisa Kuzma
David Paulson

Snowy Owl | \$1,000-\$2,499

Anonymous
Harold F. Balk, Esq. and
Dr. Ingrid Wecht
William and Vivian Benter
Greg and Lori Calhoun
Maris Dauer
The Honorable Patricia L. Dodge
Dawn Gotkiewicz
Thomas and Song Kehoe
Joseph and Jeanne Laporte
Dave and Courtney Looman
Leigh Barnes Metcalf
Joan and Robert Milsom
Frederick and Deborah Morgan
Beth Piraino
Eric and Jennifer Pogue
Robert and Chelsea Rodgers

Scarlet Macaw | \$500-\$999

Anonymous (2)
Roy W. and Diana L. Arnold
Charles Baldwin
James Bobenage
The Bonasso Family
Raymond Capone and
Martha Clarke
Thomas and Maryanne Debies
Leigh Anne DiCicco
Jeanne Downey
Karen Esch and Tor Richter
Chris and Susan Farrell
Jeffry and Karen Fink
Timothy and Joan Goetz
Michael and Lisa Hart
Susan Indovina

Patrick Lavezza
Paula Lockhart
Patrick Loughney
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph W. Nocito
Robert and Susan Obenour
Ann Pauley
Vincent Petti and Linda Torres
Bevi Powell
Linda and William Roemer
Peggy & Steve Smith
Sara Tiberi
Mr. Edward Weiler
George Weir
Paige and Stefanie Wingert
Dennis and Pat Zerega