



# PROTECTING THE FUTURE

- 2024 ANNUAL REPORT -

NATIONAL AVIARY

# Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

**2024 was an unparalleled year for the National Aviary, featuring numerous accomplishments in our conservation efforts across the globe.**

The Aviary's long road to the reintroduction of the Extinct-in-the-Wild Guam Kingfisher (known locally as sihek) took an exciting turn in 2024! Nine kingfishers, including three that hatched in the Aviary's care, now live on the predator-free and fully protected island of Palmyra Atoll—marking the first wild sihek population in four decades. The Aviary's dedicated animal care team, in collaboration with more than a dozen international partners, worked around the clock to ensure our very own Lânget, Mames, Sindâlu, and the other six kingfishers made it through this incredible journey. We regularly receive uplifting reports of the sihek in the wild from our partners, and we remain hopeful that with our support, the wild Guam Kingfisher population will continue to thrive...and grow! (*Learn more on page 7.*)

As the National Aviary remains committed to protecting the future of all bird species, our flock welcomed several other new and exciting species in 2024! This includes Vera, a Eurasian Eagle-Owl, who visitors were introduced to last spring. She is now a fan-favorite Animal Ambassador that chooses to participate in our education programs! We also introduced an adorable Northern White-faced Owl, Apollo, which has continued to be a huge hit with visitors as an ambassador for his species. (*Read more on page 17.*)

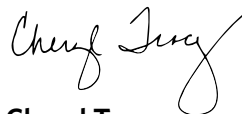
Strengthening relationships with international conservation partners was an important component of 2024. In Latin America, our collaborative efforts with Bioparque Amaru in Ecuador led to great strides in conservation research, education, breeding, and healthcare for Andean Condors, which are Critically Endangered in Ecuador. As part of our collaboration, we welcomed two members of the Amaru team to the National Aviary to provide them with hands-on training. Our teams also worked in tandem

to implement the use of satellite-based transmitters to study the movement of condors in southern Ecuador for the first time. (*Learn more about this on page 9.*) In Costa Rica, our relationship with Rescate Wildlife Rescue Center benefited from reciprocal veterinary staff visits for training and technique sharing between our facilities. The National Aviary continues to remain a leader in conservation for the African Penguin—whose species was officially uplisted to Critically Endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in October of last year. Prior to this heart-breaking update, leaders of our animal care and conservation programs traveled to the islands of Namibia to deploy artificial nest burrows. (*Learn more on page 9.*) Lastly, we continued our extensive work to address threats to birds on the Marianas Islands through the Marianas Avifauna Conservation Project. (*Learn more on page 14.*)

Back in Pittsburgh, overall attendance for programming across the board continued to reach new heights. We served nearly 217,000 guests at the National Aviary, a new record! We also had more than 25,000 children, students, and adults visit the Aviary for field trips and group visits, as well as attend our educational outreach programs.

**Thanks to our Board of Directors, Friends of the Flock, leadership team, staff, donors, and community of supporters, the National Aviary is happy to highlight an exceptional year that immensely advanced our mission to save birds and protect habitats!**

Sincerely,



**Cheryl Tracy**  
Executive Director





## Animal Highlights

### A Majestic Flight

Dillon, the striking Martial Eagle, participated in the live and immersive bird show, *SkyDeck presented by Pittsburgh International Airport* in 2024! Powerful birds of prey flew over the heads of delighted guests before circling Allegheny Commons Park and returning to the National Aviary's rooftop for a snack!





*The hatching of this Vietnam Pheasant chick, Wanda, gives great hope for the future of this Critically Endangered species, not seen in the wild since the year 2000. She currently resides inside of a habitat in the National Aviary's Canary's Call Presented by Dollar Bank.*



*2024 was a remarkable year for hatchings of species whose numbers are in critical decline. This Hooded Vulture was the first-ever to hatch at the National Aviary! Hooded Vultures became Critically Endangered just two decades after being considered "Least Concern."*







*Male Guam Kingfisher (sihek) Mames flying into the wild;  
photo courtesy of The Smithsonian's National Zoo and  
Conservation Biology Institute (NZCBI)*



*The National Aviary's photographer Mike Faix snapped  
this amazing photo of Eastern Loggerhead Shrikes being  
released in the wild in Ontario at the end of August at  
the Wildlife Preservation Canada field site.*



*The National Aviary was excited to share the growth and development of two Eurasian Eagle-Owlets (one male and one female) in our Avian Care Center window in the spring of 2024.*





Female Guam Kingfisher (sihek)  
Lānget, who hatched at the National  
Aviary, living in the wild on Palmyra  
Atoll! Photo courtesy of Gene  
Kornman, Sihek Recovery Program

## Breeding and Conservation

### The Mighty Little Bird

The National Aviary's collaborative work to ensure a genetically diverse Guam Kingfisher population paid off in 2024 as nine of these precious birds were released into the wild. Will there be a day when this species is no longer Extinct in the Wild? Time will tell.



## A Return to the Wild

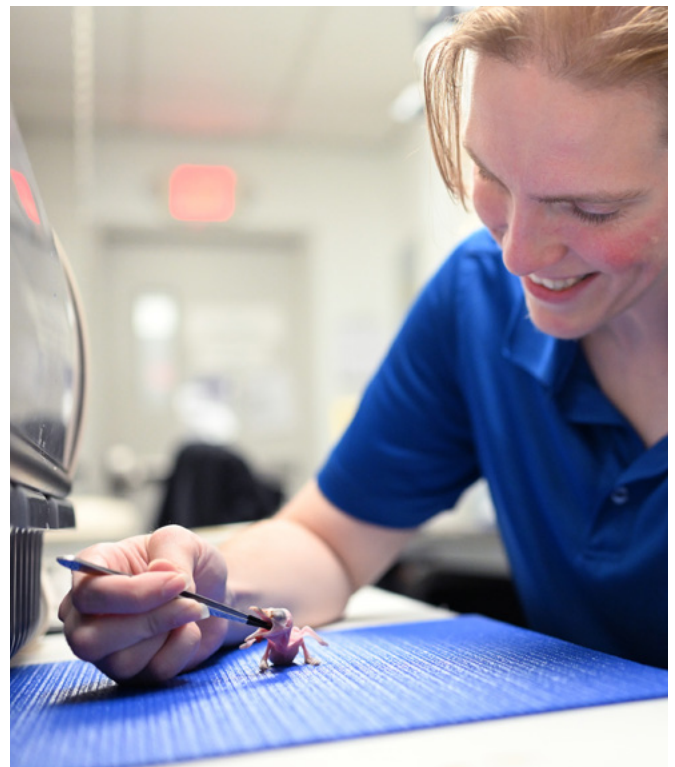
**In 2024, the National Aviary played a significant role in introducing Guam Kingfishers (known locally by the CHamoru people as sihek) back into the wild after a nearly 40-year hiatus through our participation in the Sihek Recovery Program.**

The collaborative program comprised of 25 facilities around the continental United States and Guam including the Aviary actively worked toward the now-realized goal of introducing nine Guam Kingfisher hatchlings, three that hatched in the Aviary's care, onto Palmyra Atoll, a predator-free and fully protected island located about 6,000 km (3,729 miles) from Guam. Recent reports from program partners inform us that our very own Långet and Mames (two chicks produced by our adult Guam Kingfisher pair in the public-facing habitat Canary's Call Presented by Dollar Bank) and Sindålu, a chick that was entrusted to hatch in our care by the Cincinnati Zoo, have been seen practicing individualized nesting behaviors. These continued observations allow us to remain hopeful that with our support, the wild Guam Kingfisher population will continue to grow.

For the past several years, the Guam Kingfishers residing at the National Aviary have been a part of the Association of Zoos and Aquarium's (AZA) Species Survival Plan® (SSP), which works to keep the kingfisher population within expert care healthy and genetically diverse. Guam Kingfishers have been Extinct-in-the-Wild for four decades due to the accidental introduction of the invasive Brown Tree Snake on their home in Guam.

The Aviary's efforts toward the Sihek Recovery Program had a major milestone in early April 2024, when two kingfisher eggs were extracted from a specially designed nest box in Canary's Call by National Aviary Senior Aviculturist Brianna Crane and placed into our Breeding Center for incubation. After determining one of the eggs was viable, Crane herself carefully transported it to the Sihek Translocation Biosecurity Facility at the Sedgwick County Zoo where it would remain in quarantine until its hopeful reintroduction into the wild. Despite best efforts,

the egg did not successfully hatch, but less than a month later, hope continued to thrive in the form of a chick we now know as Sindålu. The Cincinnati Zoo brought the beloved chick when he was just an egg to remain in egg-hatching quarantine at the Aviary's Breeding Center, and a few weeks after hatching, Brianna would make her second trip to the Sedgwick County Zoo. The work didn't stop there. TWO more Guam Kingfisher chicks, one female and one male (affectionately named Långet and Mames) hatched in the Breeding Center in June and underwent regularly scheduled neonatal treatments including daily health exams checking weight gain, the chicks' feeding response and hydration status, and much more. Unlike human babies, these kingfisher younglings were checked daily to ensure they were able to meet the extremely high qualifications needed before their potential release in the wild. With completed health exams in their rearview, Brianna would then make her third and final journey to Sedgwick County with the chick duo (plus their incubator) safely in tow.

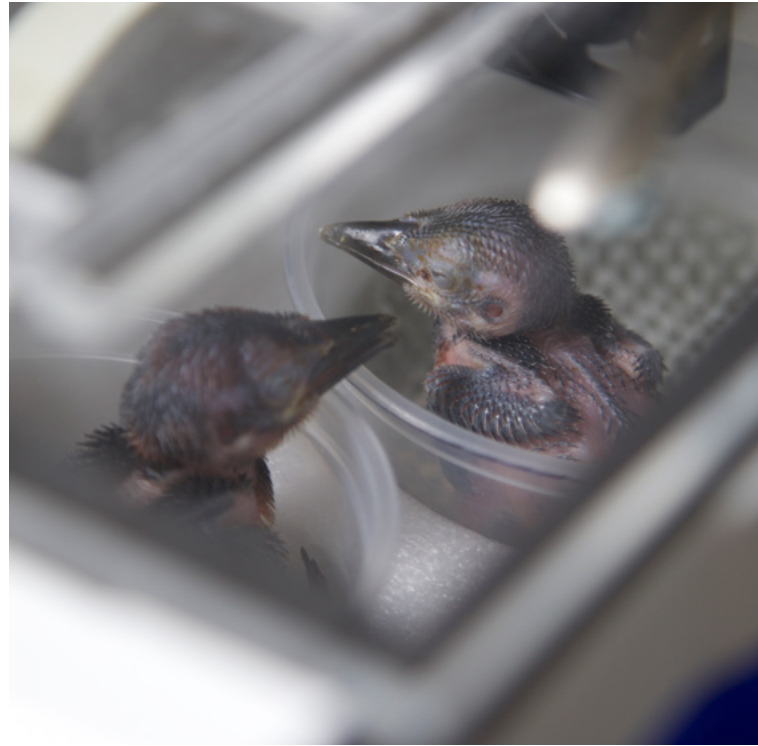


*National Aviary Senior Aviculturist Brianna Crane feeding Guam Kingfisher hatchling in the Breeding Center*



In the early fall, Sindålu, Långet, and Mames, along with six other kingfisher hatchlings, were transferred to Palmyra Atoll where they stayed in temporary outdoor aviaries while acclimating to their new home and being fed under close monitoring by project staff. Before being released into the nearby grasslands, the sihek were outfitted with radio transmitter telemetry devices. The National Aviary was one of only four institutions that participated in an important pilot study to test the same telemetry devices prior to their use on Palmyra Atoll. These tiny tracking devices allowed field researchers to monitor the birds' movements and survival for several weeks after they were released. In late September, the nine sihek were released over the course of two days, solidifying another chapter of their history-making journey.

**The National Aviary extends a special thanks to fellow participating Sihek Recovery Program partners not limited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Guam Department of Agriculture's Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, Zoological Society of London, The Nature Conservancy, AZA, Disney's Animals, Science and Environment, Brookfield Zoo, Sedgwick County Zoo, the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens, Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the Richard King Mellon Foundation, in addition to Delta Airlines.**



*Two Guam Kingfishers (sihek) in a portable incubator awaiting transfer to the Sihek Translocation Biosecurity Facility at the Sedgwick County Zoo*



*Guam Kingfisher pair in public-facing habitat had two eggs hatch that became two of the first sihek in the wild after a nearly 40-year absence!*





## Nesting in Namibia

Thanks to the generosity of the Jeniam Foundation, this past fall, National Aviary Senior Conservation Scientist Dr. Patty McGill and Senior Director of Animal Care and Conservation Programs Kurt Hundgen were on the ground in Namibia, working with the Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB) and deploying artificial nest burrows for declining penguin colonies living on the island of Possession. **Fewer than 10,000 African Penguin pairs remain in South Africa and Namibia.** In 2021, there were more than 50,000 individual penguins recorded. That's why, in October 2024, while the team was in Namibia, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature uplisted the species from Endangered to Critically Endangered.



*The Namibian African Penguin colony on Possession Island received 25 artificial nest burrows in 2024, with National Aviary staff on hand to set them up.*

## Condors in Flight

The National Aviary works to improve the Andean Condor populations which are Critically Endangered in Ecuador. As part of these efforts, the National Aviary has a long-term, strategic partnership with Bioparque Amaru, a wildlife conservation center in Cuenca, Ecuador. Over the last several years, Aviary veterinarians and animal care staff have traveled to work at the wildlife rescue center, assist with field biology studies tracking condor populations, establish a wildlife hospital, and organize successful condor breeding programs. Over the next three years, six Andean Condors will be fitted with Eobos Satellite Transmitters thanks to a grant from the Brookfield Zoo Chicago Board of Trade Endangered Species Fund. Our Senior Director of Animal Care and Conservation Programs, Kurt Hundgen, made the journey to Ecuador in mid-November to start this

project, which will allow researchers to understand the spatial ecology of Andean Condors in the Southern Andes region of Ecuador.

Additionally, this past spring, Assistant Manager of Animal Care Sylvia Ronquillo had the opportunity to share some of the recent observations our animal care team has made with our Andean Condor flock to Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) colleagues during a midyear conference, thanks to a grant from the Avian Scientific Advisory Group and the support of Aviary Executive Director Cheryl Tracy. The in-depth presentation, *From Hatch to End of Life Andean Condor Management at the National Aviary*, included key takeaways that have driven our management strategies for Andean Condors.



*Attaching a transmitter to "Avi," a wild juvenile condor named for the National Aviary, in Ecuador*

## Growing International Connections

This summer, we were pleased to welcome Bioparque Amaru's Executive Director Ernesto Arbelaes, and Veterinarian Dr. Rubi Carpio, during two separate visits to the National Aviary. Ernesto presented an intriguing talk to current National Aviary Members as well as a lecture for Aviary staff on the multifaceted work taking place in Ecuador. The new medical skills acquired at the National Aviary will provide Dr. Carpio extra leverage to treat a variety of birds, including parrots, eagles, toucans, and naturally, Andean Condors.

The National Aviary's conservation and breeding programs made sustainable gains to help conserve birds across the planet in 2024 through funding from the Richard King Mellon Foundation given in 2023.



## Veterinary Medicine

### Avian Adventures in Costa Rica

Dr. Pilar Fish, DVM, Senior Director, Zoological Advancement & Avian Medicine, trained Rescate Wildlife Rescue Center veterinary staff on laboratory, hospital habitat redesign, and neonatal medicine best practices; how to treat wing fractures and care for orphaned parrots; and how to prepare Scarlet Macaws for reintroduction back into the wild.

*Dr. Pilar Fish and Dr. Sofia, a wildlife veterinarian from Rescate, tending to a macaw chick*





## 2024 Veterinary Highlights

### Preventative Healthcare

Birds are sensitive to certain conditions, such as avian fungal pneumonia and malaria. The National Aviary has developed innovative preventative treatments to meet birds' unique health needs with a high success rate.



*In 2024, 47 new birds arrived at the Aviary and received comprehensive preventive healthcare, including exams, test screens, vaccines, and treatments. This Peregrine Falcon fledgling received preventative health tests, anti-parasite treatments, and a West Nile virus vaccination series.*

### Beak Healthcare

Birds' beaks are fragile and prone to injury, with a beak fracture resulting in a medical emergency. Beaks are not only necessary to eat, but vital to grooming feathers for flight and warmth. The National Aviary developed an innovative technique to repair broken beaks using human light-activated dental acrylics.



*A Hadada Ibis received a customized dental bridge, allowing the ibis to heal and resume using its long beak to probe for food.*

### Neonatal Healthcare

The National Aviary is a leader in breeding programs for Endangered species, as well as others in AZA Species Survival Plan® (SSP) programs. Providing high-quality neonatal healthcare optimizes each chick's growth and success: fragile hatchlings receive physical examinations and growth assessments, as well as preventative healthcare customized for the species.

In 2024, 30 chicks received advanced neonatal healthcare, including three Guam Kingfishers, two Eurasian Eagle Owls, two African Penguins, one Vietnam Pheasant, one Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise, and one Hooded Vulture chick.



*Associate Veterinarian Dr. Shannon Smith examines a newly hatched Guam Kingfisher chick: one who eventually made its way into the wild!*



*Juvenile Hooded Vulture receiving a routine check-up*



## Veterinary Healthcare Education Programs

The Aviary's veterinary educational programs offer a specialized education in cutting-edge medical techniques and preventative medicine practices that increase the success of birds recovering from common conditions.

### This year, the Aviary trained...

- **6** veterinary students from universities globally, as far as New Zealand.
- **8** pre-veterinary students from local universities and throughout the United States.
- **18** high school students participating in a Teen Job Shadow Program.
- **75** students who were mentored and reached through veterinary education programs and lectures on careers in avian medicine, as well as specialized behind-the-scenes tours of the National Aviary's Veterinary Hospital.
- **50** veterinary technology science students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade local to nine school districts in Pittsburgh exploring careers in veterinary medicine.
- **25** students from the Veterinary Technical Institute of Pittsburgh.
- **12** professional consultations with international vets and local wildlife centers to assist with unique and complicated avian cases, including Ecuador, Costa Rica, and a local wildlife rescue center in Pittsburgh.

### Specialized Surgery

The National Aviary Veterinary Hospital provides avian surgical services with specialized orthopedic and soft tissue surgery developed to meet birds' needs. Fragile procedures are performed to help birds recover from common conditions. Surgical techniques are customized for the size of the bird, even smaller birds weighing only one-third of an ounce.



*A Scissor-tail Flycatcher had surgery to repair a leg injury. The veterinary team closely monitored her under general anesthesia while performing the intricate leg procedure. The results were successful, and she has recovered well.*



*Scissor-tail Flycatcher strong and perching after her surgery*



# COLORS IN FLIGHT

## Education

### Summer Season

During our 2024 summer season, *Colors in Flight*, visitors explored a kaleidoscope of feathered fun. This exciting new theme offered up-close access to colorful birds and a feather-themed scavenger hunt to discover the spectrum of color in the natural world. Guests were immersed in a colorful world as vibrantly hued birds flew around in bright and tropical habitats. New daily talks and curated educational programming highlighted the ways different species utilize feather pigmentation in their natural habitats to attract mates or ward off predators.

Kids enjoyed Interactive Play Spaces where they put on a puppet show, created a colorful masterpiece with giant magnetic tangrams, and watched in awe as their vibrant drawings came to life onscreen with Draw Alive!

Visitors during Colors in Flight, captivated by a Southern Bald Ibis



Visitors popping up to say "Hello!" to our penguin colony





## Connecting Conservation and Education

The National Aviary closely collaborates with international organizations to address threats to birds on the Marianas Islands through the Marianas Avifauna Conservation (MAC) Project. This project aims to breed threatened species and work to establish populations in the wild. The Aviary is home to several species involved in the project including the Saipan White-eye, Golden White-eye, Mariana Fruit Dove, and White-throated Ground Dove.

The 2024 field program involved the Saipan Reed Warbler, locally known in CHamoru as gā'ga' karisu, which is a Critically Endangered species threatened by the invasive Brown Tree Snake. Our Curator of Education, Katie Manion, visited the islands and spent her time building community relationships and planning programs for future years. She met with officials from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System and conducted strategic planning sessions for future education programs. Connecting the community with the local ecosystems and species that inhabit them highlighted the direct link between the well-being of the community and birds like the Saipan Reed Warbler.



Katie Manion, Curator of Education, in the Mariana islands; photo courtesy of Joe Smith

## Serving the Region's Students

"When I grow up," yelled a student in pigtails, "I am going to work here so I can see birds every day!" The girl was visiting as part of a school field trip, and her enthusiastic statement demonstrates the success of the National Aviary's Education Program in 2024.

### This year, the Aviary educated...

- **26,835** individuals through educational field trips and outreach programs for primary and secondary schools (and community members).
- **7,154** of these students and community members through free services, many with multiple free experiences.
- **325** children and **29** teachers and chaperones from the Aviary's flagship education program, One Northside For Every Student, which serves under-resourced second graders through a multi-visit, yearlong program with **9** schools.
- **4,609** students and adults through offsite outreaches in Allegheny, Washington, Greene, and surrounding counties.
- Nearly **400** people who participated during our free Sensory Friendly Time, a sensory-inclusive experience designed for those with sensory processing needs.

None of this would have been possible without the support of generous foundation, corporate, and government funders, including:

Aerie Real Foundation, Allegheny Regional Asset District, AmerisourceBergen, Baird Private Wealth Management Fleming Rodgers Group, Jack Buncher Foundation, The Anne L. and George H. Clapp Charitable and Educational Trust, Dollar Bank, EQT Foundation, First National Bank, The Grable Foundation, The Hearst Foundations, Maher Duessel, Massey Charitable Trust, PA Department of Education, PPG Foundation, Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, UPMC Health Plan, and Williams Coulson.



# 2024 PROJECTS

## Roof Renovation and New Skylights

Thanks to capital support from the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD), the Aviary was able to install new roofs over parts of our facility in 2024, including adding skylights to provide more natural light for our birds—and staff!

While the Grasslands' roof was replaced, the habitat was beautifully revamped. It features new and improved roofing, additional lush plants and greenery, and new skylight glazing that maximizes UV transmittance for our birds.

If bird activity in the Grasslands is any indication, the Aviary's songbirds are clearly loving the renovation and the additional light.

Also benefiting from this renovation is the National Aviary's TreeTops Presented by Peoples. This indoor habitat features Toco Toucans and Vietnam Pheasants, a species that has not been seen in the wild since 2000.

## Condor Court Pavers Installation—Part Two

A truly memorable event, the Aviary held a Condor Court Paver Reception and Unveiling in 2024, the second of three installations. The event took place on a brisk November evening, and we hosted dozens of donors who purchased pavers in memory of loved ones or had precious memories attached to the pavers dedicated.

Donors were delighted to reminisce about fond memories and expressed their joy in being able to have such a wonderful place to come and make new memories while honoring their loved ones. Pavers are more than just a donation to the National Aviary; they are an action that cements a legacy.

All new orders received through the end of 2025 will be part of our spring 2026 installation. To learn more about our Condor Court Pavers, please visit:

[aviary.org/support-our-work/](https://aviary.org/support-our-work/)

## The Garden Room Lobby Soundproofing

In 2024, the Aviary also completed the refurbishing of The Garden Room Lobby to add acoustic soundproofing. While the lobby was a beautiful, functional space, it could be loud for those who used the space. The refurbishing was made possible by a generous grant from the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust to advance our sensory-friendly initiatives.

Sound absorption is crucial for The Garden Room Lobby as it is one of many spaces at the National Aviary that provides sensory-friendly learning and play. This space is often filled with kids quietly at play or caregivers enjoying a cup of coffee and relaxing after spending time within our habitats.



*Kids at play in The Garden Room Lobby*

## Accessibility Exit Ramp

Finally, the National Aviary received an Accessibility and Inclusion Project Grant from RAD to add an exit ramp from our Wetlands/Grasslands habitat vestibule out of the building, increasing safety during an emergency evacuation. We are grateful for RAD's ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusion and the advancements made possible through their support.



# 2024 EVENTS

## Night in the Tropics: Island Oasis Presented by UPMC Health Plan

*Night in the Tropics Presented by UPMC Health Plan* transported guests to an *Island Oasis* on July 26. This year's annual summer fundraiser had not one but two firsts: typically held on a Saturday, *Night in the Tropics: Island Oasis* brought in a packed house on a Friday evening! Plus, for the first time in the signature fundraiser's history, VIP ticket holder access began at 5 p.m., giving VIPS two extra hours of partying. The event, chaired by National Aviary Board Member and UPMC Health Plan's AVP, Marketing Administration, Community Charitable Giving & Employee Communications, Maris Dauer, raised more than \$350,000 to support the National Aviary's work to save birds and protect habitats. At the sold-out event, nearly 1,300 guests enjoyed special interactions with Aviary Animal Ambassadors, flight-themed signature cocktails courtesy of Pittsburgh International Airport, and fantastic performances from headliner No Bad JuJu. Event-goers also danced the night away to the Cuban-inspired tunes of Guaracha and took part in a group dance lesson from renowned dancer Marlon Silva and his team. Incredible food was provided by more than 20 of Pittsburgh's best restaurants, including Atria's Specialty Catering, Bistro To Go, Pittsburgh Barbecue Company, Il Pizzaiolo, Gianna Via's, and many others.



*Fun on the dance floor during an Island Oasis!*

## Gentlemen's Night Out on the North Shore

The 2024 Gentlemen's Night Out on the North Shore benefitting the National Aviary was held on Friday, February 9, in the PNC Champions Club at Acrisure Stadium. The event was hosted by Michael Mascaro, Executive Vice President of Mascaro Construction Company, and member of the National Aviary Board of Trustees. The evening raised a record-breaking \$212,000 to support the National Aviary's work to save birds and protect their habitats.

National Aviary Animal Ambassadors greeted guests, and Aficionado-level sponsors were treated to a VIP tour of the Pittsburgh Steelers locker room by Steelers alumni and Super Bowl XLIII Champion Matt Spaeth, along with a meet and greet with an African Penguin. Guests enjoyed cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a multi-course dinner with wine pairings, live music, and an assortment of premium cigars.



*Michael Mascaro, Executive Vice President, Mascaro Construction Company and Cheryl Tracy, Executive Director, National Aviary*



# DONOR SPOTLIGHTS



## Lydia and Matthew Burg – Honoring Jacob

Matthew and Lydia Burg first approached the National Aviary in early 2024 with an interest in the Name-A-Bird program. They wanted to name a bird in memory of their late son, Jacob, who passed away on December 23, 2021.

The Burg Family hails from Pittsburgh, but are a retired military family who now live in New Jersey. The National Aviary was a very special place for Jacob, and almost every time Jacob visited his grandma in Pittsburgh, they would go to the Aviary.

Jacob was 21 years old when he passed away. He was autistic and while struggling to form relationships with people, he had a special connection with animals. He loved birds. He especially loved owls and birds of prey. Jacob loved to draw all sorts of birds and creatures, and one of his favorite characters was an eagle named Apollo. When an opportunity arose to name our newest Northern White-faced Owl, the Burg Family chose the name “Apollo” to honor Jacob’s love of birds and his favorite place, the National Aviary.

Apollo is now a beloved Animal Ambassador that interacts with thousands of people, including Aviary visitors and school groups, and he also travels offsite for education programs. He is such an important part of our education and conservation mission.

In addition to naming Apollo, the Burg Family also dedicated a large paver in Condor Court and a bench plaque in the Canary’s Call habitat to honor Jacob’s memory.

Matthew and Lydia’s support will greatly help us achieve our mission to inspire respect for nature through an appreciation of birds, and we are so thankful and honored to continue to be that very special place for their family.



## Atria’s Specialty Catering

Atria’s Specialty Catering has been the exclusive onsite caterer for the National Aviary since 2001. During this time, Atria’s has prepared thousands of delicious meals for guests.

Without fail, Atria’s has worked with us as a partner. They have provided significant corporate support to the Aviary, including sponsoring The Garden Room and *Night in the Tropics*. They have also contributed many in-kind donations, such as 2024’s Backyard BBQ for 25 for our Night in the Tropics Online Auction.

Atria’s also runs our Kookaburra Café daily to provide visitors with tasty meals when visiting our birds. Fun fact: All napkins and utensils provided by the Kookaburra Café are made from 100% recycled material!

2024 was the year that we said goodbye to Executive Chef Josef Karst, who is now enjoying a well-earned retirement. Chef Josef worked for Atria’s at the National Aviary for many years, and we are so grateful for his dedication and service. He truly loved making delicious guest meals. Born in Mittelreidenbach, Germany, Chef Karst graduated from culinary school in 1980 and became a certified culinary educator in 1986 through Poppe + Neumann. In the 1980s, he worked as chef saucier at Hotel Kulm in Valbella, Switzerland, and later as Executive Chef at Gasthof Helmer in Schwangau, Germany. He was Executive Chef and owner of Meisenheim Brewery in Germany from 1989 to 1995 and came to Atria’s in 1999.

While filling Chef Josef’s shoes is no easy task, we are pleased to welcome the very talented Executive Chef Nathan Collins. We look forward to all the delicious meals he plans to create and continuing our fulfilling partnership with Atria’s Specialty Catering.



# 2024 BY THE NUMBERS



**45** eggs hatched by **19** species!



**58** birds received specialized beak care procedures to maintain an ideal beak shape and length, including a Burrowing Owl.



**4,603**  
Free Admissions

The National Aviary took part in the summer RAD Pass program as part of our partnership with the Allegheny Regional Asset District!



**4,732**  
Member Households



**\$9,314,395**  
2024 Operating Budget



**20,921** people attended special events at the National Aviary. Thank you for choosing the Aviary as your place to celebrate!



Congratulations and gratitude to our **2024 Volunteer of the Year, Linda Fetchen!** Linda has volunteered at the National Aviary for the past seven years, serving more than 2,000 hours. In 2024 alone, she volunteered more than 500 hours. We are beyond thankful to Linda for her invaluable contributions to helping the Aviary fulfill its mission.

In 2024, we had **91 volunteers** who participated in **13,621 hours** of work, a **31% increase** in active volunteers. This number does not include our **30** Board of Trustees and **16** Friends of the Flock, who also serve in a volunteer capacity. Our incredible volunteers range in age from **14 to 87**, showcasing a diverse and dedicated community. This year, we also established the **Kindness in Action Award** in memory of our beloved volunteer Sarah Anderson-Brownlee.

**Thank you to all National Aviary volunteers!**



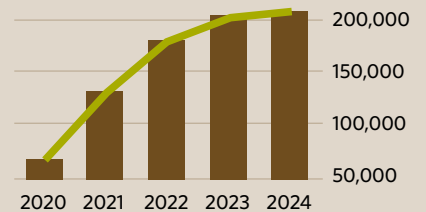
**1,414**  
FREE ADMISSIONS

provided to children and their caregivers from **57** organizations through the Tickets for Kids program.

## Soaring to New Heights in 2024

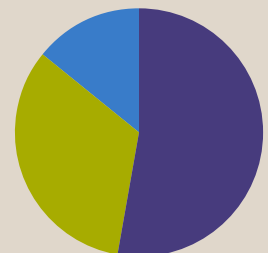
It is only thanks to the generosity of our community that we are able to achieve these impressive statistics. Imagine how far we can go with your continued support.

**216,826**  
Total Visitors



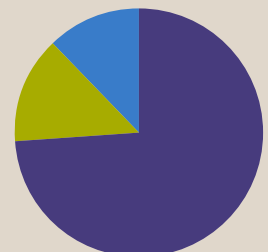
## Funding Sources

Earned	53%
Contributed	33%
Government	14%



## Total Expenses

Programs	74%
General & Administrative	14%
Fundraising	12%





# NATIONAL AVIARY

## - 2024 DONORS -

### **MARTIAL EAGLE**

**(\$2,500+)**

Anonymous (4)  
 Patrick and Michele Atkins  
 Josh and Jacklyn Banyas  
 Jennifer and Keith Bertetto  
 The Bonasso Family  
 David and Elizabeth Brown  
 Nancy Brown  
 Judy and Steve Brunner  
 Matthew and Lydia Burg  
 Richard Caruso  
 Donald and Gloria Casey  
 Jantzen Chelsted  
 Verna Corey  
 Thomas and Maryanne Debies  
 Jane and Michael Dixon  
 Rheba Dupras  
 Kim and Robert Fanelli  
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