



le Nichoir

2024 News

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Paying Tribute to Our Friends

This year's newsletter highlights the countless ways that members of our community support the work we do at Le Nichoir – be they the hundreds of volunteers who exponentially magnify the efforts of four core employees and small team of summer staff, or the many individual and corporate donors, foundations, and commercial sponsors who support us financially – they all come together to make it possible for us to treat thousands of injured or orphaned wild birds every year while spreading the word about how and why we should adopt sound conservation practices.

Of course, there isn't room to mention everyone in these pages but if you are reading this newsletter you are likely one of the people, or one of the organizations, that we are talking about. I hope you all enjoy the read but, before you get started, let me just say THANK YOU one more time!

Susan Wylie

Director of Operations



Elise, Jamie, Jo-Annie and Susan

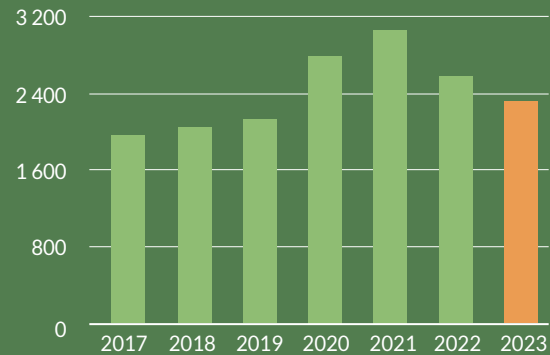
2023 in Numbers

Over the course of a year, Le Nichoir receives thousands of cases and most of the admissions are due to human impact: collisions with a window or a vehicle, fishing line entanglements, intentional and unintentional nest removals, and cat attacks, to name a few.

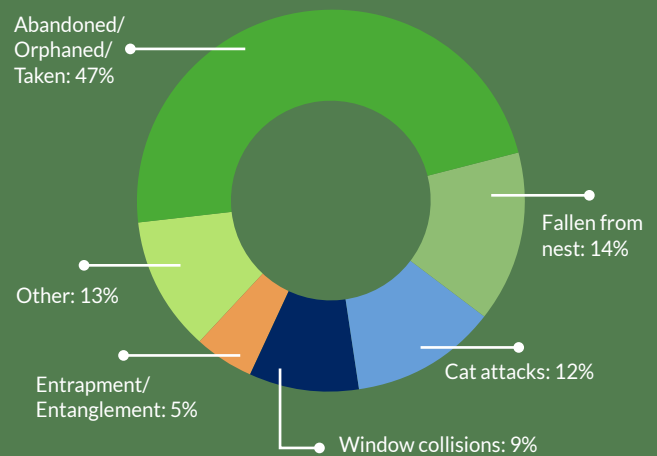
In 2023, 2327 birds were admitted. This represents the second year in a row that Le Nichoir has seen a decrease in admissions, following record numbers experienced during the pandemic. We believe this is due in part to the fact that the public is now spending less time outdoors or at home decreasing the chance of seeing an injured bird. However, the severe wildfires and the resulting smoke in 2023 may have had an impact on reproduction and nestling survival. While it is impossible for us to know for sure, it is an interesting hypothesis as smoke exposure has been found to negatively impact health and development of both humans and wildlife.

For many of these cases, simple solutions exist to help reduce the risk of injuries in our feathered neighbours. Please contact us or visit our website to learn more about how you can make cohabitation safer for the wild birds sharing our environment.

Number of admissions per year



Most common causes of admission



Engaging Youth in Wild Bird Conservation

Young people clearly have the biggest stake in the future of our planet and Le Nichoir can play a role in helping them understand the importance of biodiversity and the need for good conservation practices. Fortunately, we have the helping hand of programs such as the Federal Government's Canada Summer Job Program as well as internship programs such as the Canadian Conservation Corp funded through the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

Both these programs offer youth the unique experience of having a real impact on wild bird conservation by working directly with the patients at Le Nichoir. Their help with the day-to-day tasks of feeding and caring for our wild bird patients also lightens the load carried by our staff and volunteers. They have become an important part of our family!

Conservation News

Bird-Friendly City

Hudson was accredited as a Bird-Friendly City in 2023. The Bird-Friendly City program was launched by Nature Canada in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). The goal is to educate and encourage residents, businesses and municipalities to actively get involved in making changes to help support wild birds and their habitat. Wendy Dollinger and Jo-Annie Gagnon from Le Nichoir provided advice and actively participated with Hudson town councillors in the successful application process.



Creek 53 Conservancy Trust

The future for Le Nichoir's principal clients (wild birds) just got immeasurable brighter as 2023 marked the launch of the Creek 53 Conservancy Trust in Hudson. The mission of the Trust is to preserve the biodiversity and ecosystem integrity of the Hudson escarpment and Creek 53 watershed. Le Nichoir lent support to Creek 53 in the early stages of its development and watched the dream take shape. Through hard work and determination, a small group of nature lovers have made an invaluable gift-back to the natural world for all time. Bravo!



Hudson Forest Play

Hudson Forest Play has a mission: To enhance well-being by spending time outside where children play, explore and learn every day! Their website asks us to imagine a "one-room schoolhouse where different age groups interact, inquire and play with the elements of nature".



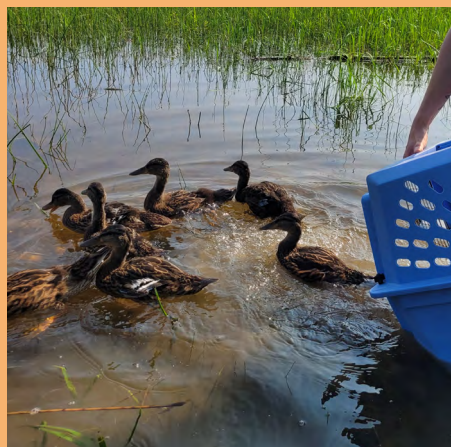
As a Forest Play partner, Le Nichoir has offered space on our outdoor property for a winterized tent. Sounds like great learning for budding naturalists and lots of fun!

Bird Release – a Magical Moment, Fraught with Risk

The ultimate goal for every bird in our care is a successful release back into the wild. It can be a magical moment and people often ask us if they can participate in releases. For the most part, the answer is no.

It's important to remember that every day is stressful for an animal in rehabilitation, even when offered perfect care. Birds are unable to tell you when they are scared but there are subtle behaviours to keep an eye out for. We know, for example, that the sound of human voices changes a bird's behaviour, that human forward-facing eyes mimic those of predators, and that a bird being held is a bird too scared to move! As humans, being cuddled by a T-Rex would likely cause us to behave in the same way!

So, while releasing a bird may seem magical to us, in the eyes of a bird, it triggers a flight or fight response, and can be extremely stressful. That's why our team takes every precaution possible, and it's why all birds are released discreetly without an audience.



Treasured Partners

The extent of support Le Nichoir receives from local businesses and other organizations is impressive, and contributes greatly to meeting operating needs. Many different organizations and businesses give time, and/or products and services to help keep our operations running smoothly and the past year was no exception. A special thanks to some of those who helped in 2023:



ABG Sport Inc. in partnership with VAUDE Canada who organized a fundraiser and donated \$3200 to Le Nichoir!



The Hudson Artists for donating the proceeds from their annual art show raffle to Le Nichoir, raising over \$700.

The Hudson Christmas Craft Fair, and organizer Susan Donnelly, who has for many years donated the proceeds from the event to Le Nichoir, raising over \$3,900 in 2023!



Les Jardins Carya and Ramzy Kassouf, for generously donating bountiful supplies of fresh and healthy organic greens for our ducks and geese throughout the summer months..



The Hagen Group, and Mark Hagen, for continuing to support Le Nichoir since its beginning through both donations and bird supplies.



Cardinal Brewery for hosting Le Nichoir on its site for several different community events and parades in Hudson during the year.



Animo-Nourri and Caroline Paquette, for coming to our rescue on many occasions over the years by donating bird food, especially insect paté, a favoured diet by many of our birds.



The Hudson Garden Club for tending to our veggie patch in the spring (used for growing food for the birds); and **Les Jardins Gourmands** for generously donating and planting kale and swiss chard in the patch.



Mon Ami pet store has supported Le Nichoir for many years by donating proceeds from their pet nail clipping event. Since the beginning, this longtime partnership has raised over \$5000.

Real estate agent and free-lance writer, **Ingrid Hein**, took the time to visit Le Nichoir last August and write beautifully about what she saw for our 2023 Annual Campaign solicitation letter.



Behind the Scenes

Partnerships with local veterinarians offer an important and unique support system to Le Nichoir which allows us to offer our patients a professional level of care. Throughout the years we have had an enormous amount of help from these veterinary practices.

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to: Clinique Vétérinaire Dorval, Clinique Vétérinaire Timberlea, Hôpital Vétérinaire Pierrefonds and Hôpital Vétérinaire St-Lazare for supporting Le Nichoir's bird care programs over the years.

The team at **Timberlea Veterinary Clinic** has rallied alongside Le Nichoir from its inception. Dr. Amanda Glew, Director Emeritus of Le Nichoir, and our licensed veterinarian, first gave a helping hand when Le Nichoir officially opened its doors in 1996. Since then, the TVC team has helped with veterinary consultations and medical supplies, and acting as a depot for Christmas tree and Flowers for Feathers customers on the West island of Montreal. Their team has continually encouraged Le Nichoir and it is comforting to know that they are always willing to lend a hand.



Meet 26-year Volunteer, Tracy Gallagher

Around 1997, I found an injured bird in Lachine. What to do? Luckily, I connected with Le Nichoir founder, Lynn Miller, and brought the wee bird out to her home in Hudson. This started my fascination with how she, and the other 3 founding members, were making a 'hands on' difference in nature. Since then, I have been involved in countless events, fundraisers and workshops at Le Nichoir.

In March 2020 with the pandemic upon us and only a week before the 'A Taste of Hudson' event, Le Nichoir had to cancel this major fundraiser as the world adjusted to a new normal. Suddenly, there were no funds coming in as expected. Yet, the spring-time flood of bird patients was to be starting soon and food needs would be increasing sharply! I was contacted about a new pilot project, "the grocery team". Some volunteers joined me and each week, we bought the required groceries to feed those gaping mouths.

I help Le Nichoir any way I can because I feel it's important. I have taught in the outdoors my entire life. The protection of flora and fauna has always been a big part of my passion and curriculum. The decline in the bird population concerns me.

I love seeing them at our feeders. I love hearing them in the forest. Yet I know, they face growing threats from wandering cats, windows, cars, habitat loss, diet changes and migration disturbances. When I find one that is injured, I am so thankful to have such a professional and competent organization to turn to for help. Supporting Le Nichoir, which makes a concrete difference, gives me a sense that I have a small hand in positive change. Plus, they're a great group of people to work with!



Learning About Wild Birds

Le Nichoir's education program was launched in 2013 and was initially a series of wild-bird conservation lessons aimed at elementary school children. These in-school curricula were designed to complement our wild-bird rehabilitation services, working together in advancing our mission: *To conserve wild birds as part of our natural heritage for future generations*. The pandemic years and the subsequent tightening of school budgets all but put an end to the early school programs but not to our education efforts.

Currently under development is a free downloadable curriculum aimed at elementary school students for teachers and other types of educators to use. The first part of the curriculum will be focused on direct impacts of humans on wild birds using real life cases of birds admitted at Le Nichoir. The second part will explore indirect impacts on wild birds by studying three declining species found in Quebec. Students will learn about concrete actions they can take to help keep wild birds safe.

We also know that there is much to be gained by deepening our involvement in the community. Environmental education goes beyond the classroom, and can be offered in many different forms that are not always obvious. Our Education Coordinator, Elise Laferriere is leading the charge in this direction. Here are some examples:

Admissions – Every time someone brings a bird to the Centre for treatment we take the time to inform them about the bird and its condition as well as what likely led to its needing help. We also provide them with the current copy of this newsletter and invite them to join our email list for online news and information.

Social media – We are steadily increasing our following on Facebook and Instagram with postings, including videos, that describe Le Nichoir's rehabilitation activities, clearly illustrating the risks that human activities pose for wild birds.

Fundraising events – We host fundraising events throughout the year and for 2024, the lineup includes: Up on the Mountain, a gastronomic dining experience and benefit auction for the birds in April, the Festival of Migratory Birds and Nature in May, the Le Birdie golf tournament in September, and Le Nichoir Behind the Scenes in October. At each of these events we provide attendees with information on the plight of wild birds and how they can help us protect them.



2024 Events



Here are some of the events we're holding in 2024. Lend your support and learn the "Whys and Hows" of wild bird protection. Spread the word to your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you there!

JANUARY – Le Nichoir Birthday Party

Many joined our team of volunteers and staff for Brews on Tues on January 30th from 5pm-7pm at Cardinal Brewery (466 rue Main, Hudson). It was a blast with Bird Bingo, prizes and more.

APRIL – Up on the Mountain

On April 6th, Le Nichoir will host *Up on the Mountain*, a gastronomic dining experience and benefit auction for birds at Auberge des Gallant, up on Rigaud Mountain.

MAY – Migratory Bird Day

Join the Migratory Bird Day celebration on May 4th. Learn about local birds, Le Nichoir and its current conservation methods in support of wild bird populations. Meet our team of biologists, visit the Centre, participate in bird-watching and nature tours, children's activities, crafts, and more.

JUNE – Rehab a Bird Sponsorship Tour

A site tour specifically for sponsors of our Rehab a Bird Program. If you have sponsored the rehabilitation of a bird in the past year, stay tuned for details.

SEPTEMBER – Le Birdie Golf Tournament

Attend the fourth annual Le Birdie Golf Tournament and enjoy a spread of foods and drinks generously offered by local chefs, while playing a game on the beautiful Whitlock Golf and Country Club course. At the 19th hole, share your stories and bid on gifts donated by local businesses.

OCTOBER – Behind the scenes

Held in mid-October, Le Nichoir's Behind the Scenes is a unique opportunity to visit Le Nichoir's facilities. It is a great way for us to connect directly with the local community by opening our doors to the public.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER – Holiday Activities

Get into the holiday spirit with our Christmas Tree Sale, the Hudson Christmas Craft Fair or by shopping for gifts on your list at our on-site nature store, La Boutique du Nichoir. The shop is full of bird and nature-related items that are sure to please.



At the 3rd Annual Le Birdie Golf Tournament, golfers enjoyed beautiful weather as well as great food and drinks generously offered by local chefs, while playing the Beautiful Whitlock Golf and Country Club. More than \$60,000 was raised for our Bird Care and Education Programs.



A Community that Cares

We are often asked how wild-bird patients find their way to Le Nichoir. It's almost always the result of caring individuals going to extraordinary lengths to bring a bird in need to our door, or to the door of one of our partners such as the SPCA.

A case in point: In February 2023, we received a call from a couple living in Saint-Adolphe-d'Howard, 120 kilometres north of Montreal. A beautiful female Pine Grosbeak had just hit their window and needed help. The couple promptly drove one and a half hours to bring the bird to the Centre where a thorough exam revealed blood in her mouth and an injury to her right shoulder. She was provided with an oxygen-rich environment and anti-inflammatory medication for the first part of her convalescence. Her wing was bandaged to prevent her injury from worsening and allow time to heal.

Two weeks later, the same couple contacted us again to report that another female Pine Grosbeak from the same flock had just collided with their window. Once again, they urgently brought the bird to us. Unfortunately, this time the bird succumbed to her injuries thirty-six hours later -- not a rare occurrence as only 40% of the birds admitted following a window collision survive their injuries.

Happily the first grosbeak did survive and recover. Please visit our website to learn, among many other things, the various ways you can avoid bird collisions with your windows: www.lenichoir.org.



Winter Guest at the Conservation Centre

Last October, we received a call from a veterinary hospital about an injured Swainson's thrush that had been delivered by a member of the public. Swainson's thrushes are long-distance migrants that spend their winter in Mexico, Central and South America. While discreet and hard to see, they have one of the most beautiful songs anywhere. Aside from their large cousin, the robin, the Swainson's thrush is the most common thrush species received at Le Nichoir, most often following a window collision during their spring and fall migrations.

The veterinary hospital team performed a full exam with x-rays and administered medication to the bird. The exam revealed a fractured coracoid, a bone located in the shoulder area. Long-term care was needed so the veterinary hospital was anxious to transfer its patient to Le Nichoir.

At the Centre, we continued the care for the damaged bone which, based on the nature of the injury, the species, and the time of year, we suspect was indeed caused by a window collision. We also discovered two parasite infections, a worm and a protozoan, which required additional treatment. Unfortunately, by the time the thrush was back to full health, the migration window for the species had long passed. And so it is, that the thrush is spending the winter with us in an indoor aviary, patiently waiting to be released during spring migration.



In gratitude

ABG Sport Inc. (Benoit Gravel) • Animal Hospital 911 • Animo-Nourri • Ardene • Auberge des Gallant • Barbara Frei • BioParc de la Gaspésie • Bird Protection Quebec • Bristol Myers Squibb Canada • Broderie PhilStitch • Brome Bird Care • Canada Wildlife Federation • Canadian Conservation Corp • Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative • Cardinal Brewing • Christopher Cloutier • Clinique vétérinaire Dorval • Clint Ward • Club ornithologique Vaudreuil-Soulanges • CSJ Government of Canada • Daboom Desserts • Dr Amanda Glew • Dr Florence Erdmann • Dr Sabrina Robert • Ecomuseum Zoo • Environment and Climate Change Canada • Espace Construction Inc • EthiSecure • Frank Hicks • Furley • Granby Zoo Foundation • Hudson Artists • Hudson Environment Committee • Hudson Garden Club • Hudson Village Theatre • Hudson War Memorial Library • IGA Famille Déziel Hudson • Jim Doyle • Katherine Collin • La Maison du Défricheur • Le Baron Catering Co. • Re/Max Royal (Jordan) Inc. • Les Jardins Gourmands Inc. • Lite 106.7 • McGill Bird Observatory • Michel Juteau • Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs • Mon Ami - Food & Accessories • Montréal Biodôme • Montréal SPCA • Nature Canada • Nature Conservancy of Canada • Nextools • Nutrience • Peter Schiefke MP Vaudreuil-Soulanges • Pierrefonds Animal Hospital • Pitou Minou & Campagnons Kirkland • Pridham's Auction House • Que de Bonnes Choses • Regroupement Québec Oiseaux • Rolf C. Hagen Inc • Roussillon SPCA • Ryan Young • Sahib • Saint-Lazare Veterinary Hospital • Serre St.Laz • Soulanges Irish Society • Speaking of Wildlife • Studio MMA • Susan Donnelly • Technoparc Oiseaux • Timberlea Veterinary Clinic • Totem Roasters • Town of Hudson • Verger Hudson • Volunteer West Island • Whitlock Golf & Country Club • Zoo Sauvage de Saint-Félicien • and more!



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Wild Bird Sponsorship Program

Your rehabilitation sponsorship includes:

- Personalized certificate
- A collectable card
- An invitation to a special tour
- Fridge magnet
- Newsletter

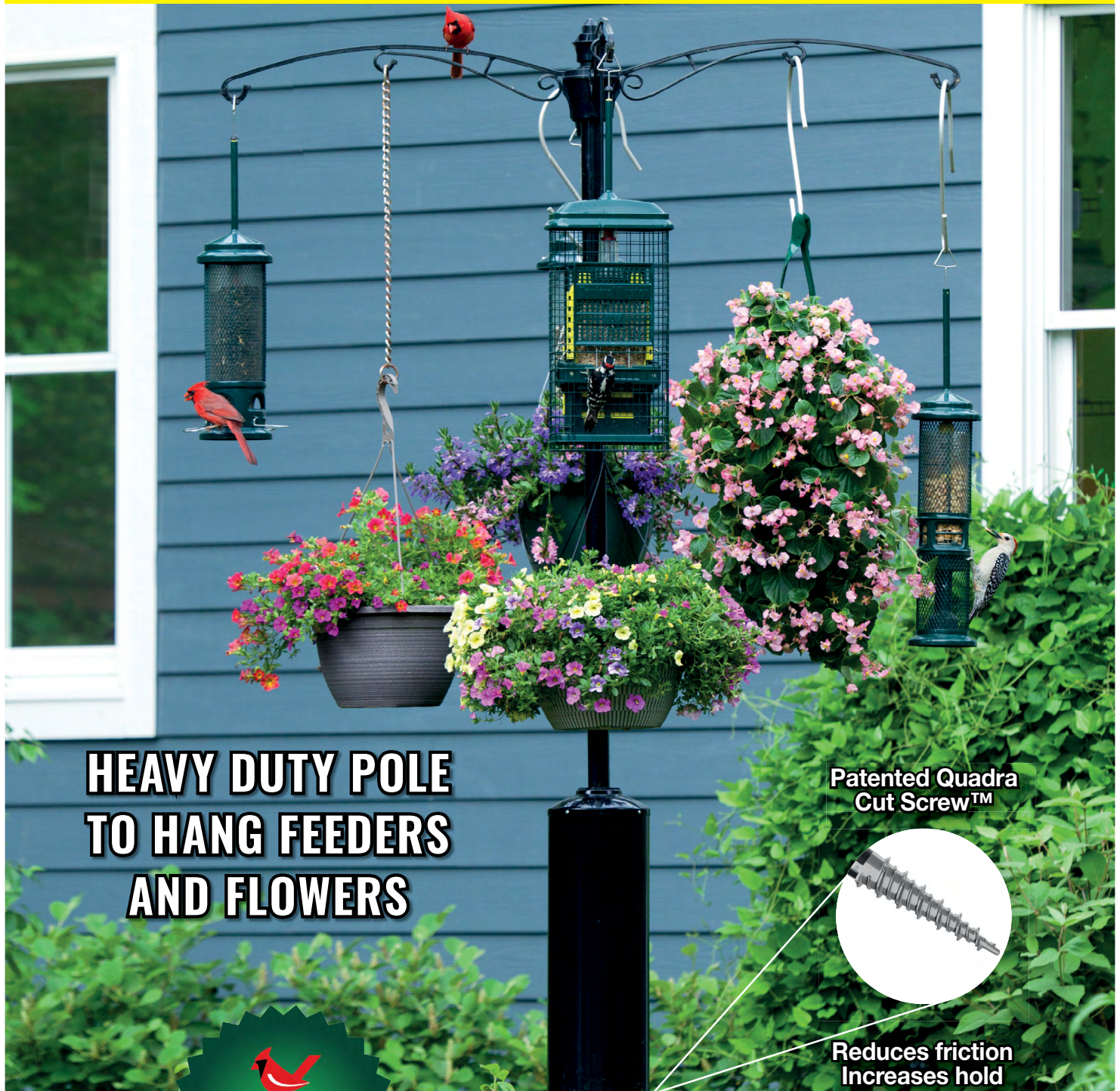
By sponsoring a wild bird brought to Le Nichoir you are contributing to the care and release of a healthy, breeding bird back into its natural habitat.



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Help Us Pay the Bills

Many wild bird populations are in decline and in need of help. Here are some ways that you can make a financial contribution:

Make a gift to our Operations Fund or, better still, make a monthly gift

A donation to Le Nichoir shows your support for wild bird conservation, and allows our team to do what we do best: take care of wild birds in need. By giving a recurring monthly donation, you not only support our immediate needs, but also allow us to manage our cash flow and plan for the future.

Make it a special gift in honour of, or in memory of, someone you love

Is there an avid nature lover or bird lover in your life deserving of recognition? An "In Honour" donation is a great way to acknowledge someone special while supporting an important cause. A gift "In Memory" is a meaningful way of commemorating the loss of someone special or of showing your support for a family who has lost a loved one. If you wish, we will send a card to make your donation known.

Consider making room for Le Nichoir in your will

Remembering Le Nichoir in your will is an easy and effective way to extend your commitment to wild birds long into the future. Simply designate the Centre de Rehabilitation Le Nichoir as beneficiary when drafting or amending your will.

Volunteer your services – we always need help

Volunteers are the backbone of Le Nichoir. We cannot do what we do without them. Our volunteers help us with many different tasks from cleaning aviaries and food preparation, to maintenance work, fundraising and translation.

La Boutique du Nichoir

We are happy to announce that we are rebranding our shop to La Boutique du Nichoir.



SHOP WITH A PURPOSE

All profits from sales at our boutique are used to support Le Nichoir's conservation programs including the care of injured and orphaned wild birds and environmental education programs.

