Peggy Stenger casually admits to having a freezer of dead birds.

The Cleveland native, who lives in Chicago's South Loop and works in the Loop, collects the creatures when she sees them on the ground, often dead or injured from midflight collisions with buildings in her neighborhood.

Stenger puts the dead birds in Ziploc bags and labels them with the date, time and location they were found, to later be dropped off at the Field Museum for further research and documentation. The live ones are carefully placed in brown paper bags and sent off to a rehabilitation center.

"I've always loved birds," said Stenger, a volunteer with the Chicago Bird Collision Monitors. "When I was a child, our dentist gave us bird cards when we were good, which I always thought was odd, but I just learned to love birds. I rescued a pigeon more than 10 years ago and I took it someplace. And the people there said, 'There's a group that goes around and rescues the birds that hit the buildings.' I was like, 'I want to do that.'"
because there's different parts of town," she said. "Today, there were some parts of town where people weren't finding any birds. And then there were other parts of town where they were being inundated with birds."

Prince wants to remind people that during daylight hours, ground level lobbies or any large glassy area that keeps its inside lights on can draw birds toward fountains or trees they see in said lobbies as well. She said the CBCM group has worked with staff and management at many buildings to help with that. She's seen improvement in a lower number of injured birds.

"That's an improvement from initially when it was mostly just the top lights (of buildings) that people were turning off," she said. "We have to continue to work on that more. We're hopeful that that will mean that less birds are coming to these buildings."

This week's migration is part of the estimated 3.5 billion birds returning north to the United States each spring, according to a 2018 study published in *Nature Ecology & Evolution*.

"In March, we get birds that may just be coming up from the southern U.S.," Prince said. "They're the first to get here. The ones that just had to move up from Florida or just move up from Texas. Now we're seeing birds that have been flying for quite a while all the way from South America. They made it from South America to Central America. They made it to the southern U.S. and now they're doing that final leg of the journey and they're making it to Chicago."

Now that Chicago is starting to see the long-distance travelers, Prince doesn't want them to get hurt in her territory.

"We're really rooting for those birds," she said, "to be able to finish their journey safely after everything that they've done in the thousands of miles that many of them have traveled."
