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Audubon Society of Rhode Island

REPORT



RAPTOR WEEKEND

September 11 & 12, 2021

Audubon Nature Center
& Aquarium

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VOLUME 55 • NO. 3 • AUGUST 2021

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE



NATURE'S ESSENTIAL WORKERS ARE IN CRISIS

AUDUBON EXPANDS AND PROTECTS HABITAT FOR BEES,
BUTTERFLIES AND OTHER POLLINATORS



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From the Desk of the Executive Director



It Takes a Village

No doubt you've heard the phrase many times. Originally coined to refer to child-raising, "It takes a village" can also easily apply to Audubon's work. No one person, or organization, can do it alone. This is especially true with the work we do to protect and nurture pollinators, birds and insects that are so vital to plants, including the crops that we depend upon.

We can all do our part to make the world a safer place for pollinators – and in turn, for ourselves. We can reduce our dependence on pesticides in our gardening and lawn care practices and increase the number of native flowering plants in our landscaping – instead of just lawn. And watch for information and support Audubon's efforts to enact legislation to restrict the use of dangerous chemicals to only those who are properly trained to use them.

I hope that someday soon you will come visit the wonderful Palmieri Pollinator Garden on the grounds of the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol. It is full of ideas and inspiration to take home and try in your backyard. A big THANK YOU to all the volunteers and donors who helped make this new effort such a success. It truly takes a village.

Thank you for your support,

Lawrence J. F. Taft

Perpetuity is a Long Time

Perpetuity is one of those words you don't run across every day. Chances are, you'll never hear it on the news or read it in the newspaper. But perpetuity is a word we cherish at Audubon. We use it often because it describes our endowments.

The phrase "in perpetuity" means "forever or for an indefinite period." Let's use the example of George and Martha (I've changed their names to protect their privacy) who established an endowment to ensure that their annual giving to Audubon would continue in perpetuity. They started the fund rather modestly, but plan to enlarge it with a bequest from their estate. For now, they can see how the "George and Martha Endowment" is working, and how they can expect it to continue to protect nature after they are gone. All of Audubon's named endowments are managed prudently by investment professionals. The goal is to obtain both annual income and long-term growth. It is Audubon's policy to preserve endowment principal. Only the earnings, or part of the earnings, are available to be used annually. This means our endowment funds will last. They will continue in perpetuity. And every name associated with an endowment will endure as well.

Would you like to do something lasting for nature? Audubon's endowment program is the ideal way to create a legacy for yourself and for your family. To learn more about our endowments and how easily you can establish one, contact Jeff Hall, Audubon senior director of advancement. You can get started now with a current endowment, or you can activate one later through a deferred gift. Or, like George and Martha above, you can do both. Just give Jeff a call at (401) 949-5454 ext. 3017. You can also contact him by email at jhall@asri.org.





NATURE'S ESSENTIAL WORKERS ARE IN CRISIS

AUDUBON EXPANDS AND PROTECTS HABITAT FOR BEES,
BUTTERFLIES AND OTHER POLLINATORS

By Todd McLeish

Left to right: Ann Brouillette, Audubon Board Member Terry Meyer and Katie Bickford are garden volunteers at the Nature Center and Aquarium.

All throughout the summer and early fall, the Palmieri Pollinator Garden at Audubon's Nature Center in Bristol is a feast for the senses. It's alive with vibrant colors, the wonderful aroma of flowers, the gurgle of water trickling over a waterfall, the musical whistles and chirps of nesting birds, and the buzzing and humming of bees and other insects. It couldn't be a more pleasing place to spend some quiet time observing wildlife and learning about the interconnectedness of the natural world.

On a recent visit, dragonflies and damselflies danced among the aquatic vegetation in the ornamental pond as Carolina Wrens, American Robins and Gray Catbirds darted in and around the flower beds. The sweet smells of milkweed and butterfly bushes were mixed with the earthy aromas of mulch and fresh-cut grass. And monarch butterflies, several varieties of beetles, and innumerable bees staked out claims on their favorite flowers.

When you slow down and take some time to look, you see so much activity here, it's amazing," said Barry Cohen, the caretaker of the Nature Center property. "I like nothing better than to wander through to see what wildlife is about."

But there's more to it than just a beautiful and relaxing setting. The garden is there to tell the story of the predicament facing native pollinators—bees, butterflies, and more—and to provide an example of what area residents might do in their own backyards to provide a refuge for pollinators.

"We wanted to do it big, not just scatter a few flowers in the corner," said Larry Taft, Audubon's executive director. "And we wanted to develop brochures, interpretive signage and other educational materials so people would know what kinds of plants, butterflies, insects and wildlife they could observe during different seasons."

The idea was driven largely by growing scientific evidence that populations of bees and other pollinators around the world are declining significantly. These insects—along with some bats and birds, among others—are primarily responsible for the cross-pollination of most of the world's plants. The plants, in turn, provide essential food and habitat for wildlife. Many of those insects also pollinate the crops that people rely on for sustenance as well.

Please turn to page 4



Clockwise from top left: Bees in the Palmieri Pollinator Garden; two young Audubon campers relax in the garden; Audubon Board Member and garden volunteer Nick Califano greets Heidi Born of Providence, with her 10-month-old daughter Lorelei, in the Palmieri Pollinator Garden; children attending Audubon summer camp explore life in the garden pond.

The decline of pollinators can be traced largely to human development, which has dramatically reduced habitat. But several other factors also play a role, including the increased usage of pesticides, especially those containing neonicotinoids (see sidebar), emerging pathogens, parasites and the changing climate.

The Palmieri Pollinator Garden got its start in 2017 when an interpretive master plan for the Nature Center concluded that the area around the building, which was mostly lawn, should be made more engaging to visitors. Award-winning landscape architect John Gwynne of Little Compton volunteered to design the garden in the northeast corner of the property, and numerous volunteers—including URI Master Gardeners, the Bristol Garden Club, and Audubon board members Terry Meyer and Nick Califano—constructed the garden and continue to maintain it. Funding for the project was

provided by Vivian J. Palmieri Trust and private donors. The bench and pergola with climbing roses honors Palmieri, a conservationist who loved roses and nature.

The garden is primarily planted with native plants that evolved with local pollinators and have synchronized their life cycles to the reliable cycles of plant life. The plants were selected so at least some flowers are blooming throughout the growing season to ensure that nectar is available to pollinators at all times.

Wildlife benefit from native plants for food and shelter, said Scott Ruhren, Audubon's senior director of conservation. Pollinator life cycles and diets depend on native plants as nectar sources. For many butterflies, the plants also provide food for their larvae. Insects have evolved eating these plants; their digestive systems are adapted to handle these plant species.

That special relationship between plants and insects is vital to their survival," added Cohen. As we lose plant species, we lose insect species, and vice versa. The more we can plant native species, the better the insect populations will be. And the healthier the insect populations, the better it is for birds and small mammals and other creatures.

One showy plant in the garden that generates considerable attention from both pollinators and human visitors is anise hyssop, a perennial in the mint family with a spike of purple flowers that bloom for months. You'll hear the buzz of the bees around it all summer," said Cohen. It's one of the plants I get the most questions about. You can't help but notice how much the bees like it.

Everyone can play a role in restoring our pollinator populations, even if it's just planting a small garden or using planters filled with flowering species. Audubon is doing what it can to show the way."

– Audubon Executive Director Larry Taft

In addition to its role boosting the health of area bee populations, the pollinator garden plays a significant role in Audubon's education programs. According to Lauren Parmelee, Audubon's senior director of education, summer camps use the garden as a classroom to learn about insects and pollinators, and school curricula are being developed about pollinators that will feature discovery walks through the garden, nature detective programs, and storytelling about pollinators.

The wonderful thing about the garden is that it concentrates wildlife in one place, so it's easy for kids to find insects and other wildlife, and see them up close," said Parmelee. We can't always bring them down into the back field, but kids can easily get into the garden and see different things.

When school field trips to the Nature Center begin again after a year-long absence due to the COVID pandemic, the garden will be a key feature of many school visits.

We can weave the garden right into their nature walks and specific field ecology programs and habitat comparisons," Parmelee said. Fall is an especially good time for learning in that garden because there is still a lot of blooming going on—goldenrods and asters especially—and then the plants go to seed and a lot of birds get in there. And birds feed on the seeds all through the winter.

The Palmieri Pollinator Garden isn't the only garden at the Nature Center that deserves attention, however. The Jack Doherty Bird Garden, located immediately behind the Center and adjacent to the raven enclosure, has also been revitalized and is a vital addition for pollinators. Named for a conservationist whose wife was a long-time Audubon educator, it was originally planted a decade ago and featured several bird feeders that visitors inside the Nature Center could easily see. But it eventually became overgrown and Audubon decided it needed a complete overhaul.

So earlier this year, landscape architect Shannon Rozea, who designed the bioretention pond that is part of the pollinator garden, redesigned the bird garden to include a walkway through the middle linking the Nature Center patio to the enclosure where Audubon's Common Raven resides. Then Cohen and volunteers removed some hedges and replanted much of the area with winterberry, black chokecherry, coneflower, coreopsis, goldenrods, milkweeds, and other plants and shrubs. Like the pollinator garden, it was designed to require little maintenance, no pesticides, and very little water.

We call it the bird garden because the raven is right next to it and the native plants attract a wide variety of birds that you can see up close from

Please turn to page 14

The Threat from Neonicotinoids

One of the greatest threats facing bees, butterflies and other pollinators is the excessive use of pesticides, and perhaps the most dangerous pesticides on the market today are neonicotinoids, a class of insecticide that is absorbed into the tissues of plants. Plants sprayed with neonicotinoids become toxic to insects that feed on them or that come into contact with their pollen or nectar. The chemicals in the pesticide are neurotoxins that disrupt the ability of insects—and even birds that eat contaminated seeds—to navigate around in their environment.

Pesticides are nasty," said Meg Kerr, Audubon's recently-retired senior director of policy. There's no such thing as a safe pesticide. They're designed to kill.

Audubon has been advocating for a ban on neonicotinoids in Rhode Island since first proposing legislation to do so in 2016. The ban was opposed by the Rhode Island Farm Bureau, Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association, the turf industry, and golf course managers, however, so the legislature established a Pollinator Working Group to study the issue, co-chaired by Kerr. Recent scientific studies of the issue have convinced Kerr even more that the pesticides should be banned, but the opposition remains strong. This year the neonicotinoid ban bill was amended to ban neonicotinoid application by non-licensed professionals and passed in the House at the end of June (H 5641 Aub A). The legislature will return in the fall and advocates will continue to push for a vote on the bill in the Senate (S 702).

Since Rhode Island isn't a big agriculture state, one of the greatest concerns about neonicotinoids is residential users, who aren't trained to apply it and often use too much. We need to get people to be less careless and thoughtless when using these toxic chemicals," Kerr said. In pursuit of a green lawn, we're killing the ecosystem.



For more information on Audubon's legislative priorities, visit: <https://bit.ly/2021PrioritiesAudubon>



Pesticide Free Providence Audubon Intern Creates Pesticide Report that Launches City-wide Campaign

By Todd McLeish

While working on several Rhode Island farms in recent years, Samantha Kronyak learned a great deal about pesticide use and organic land management. So, when Audubon hired her as an intern to document the City of Providence's commitment to limiting its use of pesticides, she felt it was a perfect combination of work she was already doing and work she hoped to do in the future.

Kronyak grew up in New Jersey, studied wildlife and conservation biology at the University of Rhode Island, and worked as an interpretive ranger at Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota before returning to Rhode Island to work as a farmer, a passion she developed at URI.

I went from one farm to another, learning as much as I could, and I've grown to love it, she said. I'm not sure it's something I'll do forever, but right now I'm training to be the manager of a farm in Maine, and that will help me decide if I want to own my own farm in the future. I'm mostly interested in land management, and I get to think a lot about that while I'm working on the farm.

During her four-month internship at Audubon, Kronyak interviewed numerous people working in the Providence Parks Department and the city's Office of Sustainability to document their pesticide use practices. She also examined the city's climate action plan and stormwater management program and researched what's at stake when pesticides and other toxins are used in public parks.

She really dug into the topic, researched it thoroughly, and was very organized and thoughtful about it, said Meg Kerr, Audubon's recently-retired senior director of policy, who served as Kronyak's mentor during the internship. She interviewed a ton of people, and there was a lot of information to sift through to come up with the important nuggets. A lot of research needed to be digested.

City officials have been working to eliminate the use of pesticides at public parks in Providence as much as possible in recent years, and they contracted with Audubon to prepare an independent report on their progress. Kronyak was impressed with what she found.

The city is doing really good stuff, she said. I'd research something and wonder if the city even knew some of these things even exist like non-toxic materials for playgrounds and then I found that they're already using it. So a lot of what I found was really encouraging.

The Roger Williams Park Botanical Center, for instance, is managed almost entirely chemical-free. Managers of the facility even release beneficial insects to control pests, and they use goats to graze the weeds on the property. In addition, dozens of other parks in the city have received recent modifications to reduce the use of chemically-treated wood and rubber mulch (which can leach toxins) at playgrounds. And with the exception of emergency situations like a very large patch of poison ivy pesticides and herbicides are almost never used.

In the lengthy report Kronyak prepared for the city, entitled Pesticide and Chemical Free Management Practices, she made a series of recommendations for expanding existing programs, like the use of beneficial insects for pest control. She also suggested that the city launch a chemical-free lawns campaign to discourage residents from using pesticides and herbicides on their properties. The latter suggestion was adopted and announced during an Earth Day event hosted by Mayor Jorge Elorza that received statewide media attention.

When the city launched its pesticide campaign, Samantha's report was the showcase piece of that event, said Kerr. The mayor spoke with pride about the city's practices documented in Samantha's report.

The whole experience was gratifying for Kronyak.

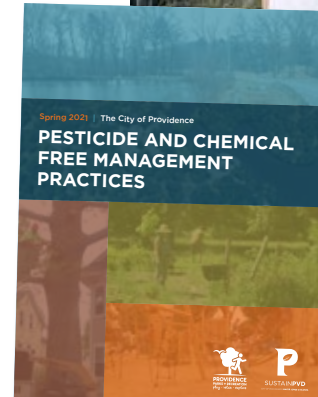
I've always wanted to work for Audubon, and this was a tremendous opportunity, she said. Meg was always there to help, but for the most part she let me figure it out for myself. And the whole project was super rewarding.

I learned so much about how the city works and how a parks department functions, Kronyak added.

Learning about the intersection between Audubon, the parks department, and other conservation groups around Providence was awesome. Having those checks and balances between city government, the community and these other groups is so important.

To view the report, visit:

providenceri.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/pvd-parks-environmental-practices-report.pdf



Top: Audubon Intern Samantha Kronyak
Bottom: Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza introduced the Pesticide Free PVD Campaign on Earth Day, April 22, 2021. The campaign encourages Providence residents, property owners, and businesses to commit to eliminating the use of harmful chemicals like pesticides and fertilizers in lawns and gardens, as well as other toxins in the home. Recently-retired Audubon Senior Director of Policy, Meg Kerr, stands at far right.

SAVE THE DATE!

October 17, 2021

**AUDUBON
ANNUAL MEETING**

Details to Come



CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE OCEAN STATE

As temperatures and sea levels rise, and unstable climate patterns increase, humans, birds, animals, fish and plants will all struggle with ecosystem change. Issues of the 2021 Audubon Report will highlight several climate-threatened bird species and their habitats.

Hummingbirds and Climate Change

By Laura Carberry and Scott Ruhren

In New England, there is one bird that is recognized as an important pollinator, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. In fact, two species of plants found in the Ocean State depend on hummingbirds for pollination. Both cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) and scarlet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), are native plants that benefit from these specialized birds with their long beak and tongue. Few insects can work their way into native honeysuckle and cardinal flowers like the hummingbird. (Scarlet honeysuckle is native unlike many of the invasive honeysuckles throughout Rhode Island.)

While Orchard and Baltimore Orioles will help pollinate fruit trees in early spring, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird works at pollination all summer long. Many people observe the energetic hummingbirds in their gardens flitting to and from feeders and flowers. These feisty birds often may be observed fighting over nectar sources. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are found throughout Rhode Island from the suburbs to large tracts of forest where there are trees to nest in and nectar for food.

Hummingbirds are nectivorous (nectar eating) relying on plants and feeders* for their daily nutrition. To balance their diet, they also feed on spiders and flying insects for essential protein, fat, and amino acids.



The Audubon Society of Rhode Island is concerned about the impacts of climate change on this beautiful species. Hummingbirds need to time their migration with food resources. For hummingbirds, this means arriving to their summer nesting destinations when plants are flowering. With warming temperatures, many plants are blooming earlier. If hummingbirds don't time their migration correctly, they may miss important nectar sources. This can lessen their survival and success in raising young.

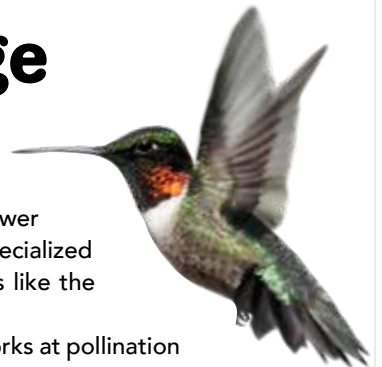
Climate change can affect hummingbirds in other ways. As the temperatures rise, hummingbirds will look for shade to stay cool instead of foraging for food. These birds use a lot of fuel throughout the day, and not spending enough time feeding can lead to low energy and even death of babies or adults.

At night when they stop feeding, hummingbirds often go into torpor, a short-term metabolic slow-down to conserve energy. Warmer evenings make torpor less efficient, therefore less energy-conserving.

Climate change has led to other weather extremes. Too much rain, more frequent droughts, or major storms can decrease nectar production in plants. Switching to a new diet, introduced plants, or traveling to search for food are not viable options for these vulnerable birds that depend on reliable food sources.

There are simple and effective things people can do to improve hummingbird survival. The most important is planting native flowering plants that hummingbirds depend on for food and cover. Native plants visited by hummingbirds include bee balm, Cardinal flower, and turtlehead. Hummingbird feeders, though not crucial, can help supplement diets*. Consider joining a citizen's science project like National Audubon's 'Hummingbird at Home.' This project tracks nectar times, plants, and the migration and feeding behaviors of hummingbirds across North America.

* To learn more about a mysterious bird disease and current Audubon recommendations for bird feeding, please visit asri.org/news-events/2021/audubon-monitoring-bird-illness-in-mid-atlantic



WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Purchase green power to heat and cool your home and insulate it well.



Reduce energy use. Drive less (walk, bike and use public transportation) and create an energy-efficient home.



Support land conservation. Forests remove CO₂ from the atmosphere, provide shade to keep the landscape cooler, and are critical habitat for birds and wildlife.



Landscape and garden with native plants that provide food, cover and nesting materials for birds and wildlife.



Stay informed. Support legislation and community efforts that reduce carbon emissions. Sign up for advocacy emails by contacting Priscilla De La Cruz (pdelacruz@asri.org).



Lelia Palmieri and John Murphy, trustees of the Vivian J. Palmieri Trust, cut the ribbon at the dedication of the Palmieri Pollinator Garden.



Peg Richardson and George Kortyna



Ann Gizzi, John Amos, and Gayle Amos



Ray Brown and Chris Powell



Guests of the Queen family enjoy the firepit.



Bridget Hall and Audra Delaney



Senior Director of Education Lauren Parmelee presents a Barred Owl to guests.

2021 Audubon Garden Party

at the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium

Over 100 guests celebrated the dedication of the Palmieri Pollinator Garden and the 20th Anniversary of the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium on August 7, 2021.

Guests strolled among the summer blossoms, enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres and mingled in the garden. Live music by Colin Nagle topped off the evening festivities as guests enjoyed drinks around blazing fire pits. Thank you to all who joined Audubon for this unique summer celebration!



From right: Executive Director Larry Taft presents ceremonial shovels to garden designer John Gwynne and Board Members Terry Meyer and Nick Califano to recognize their outstanding work and dedication to the Palmieri Pollinator Garden.



Council of Advisors Member Candy Powell, Eilish Clarkson, and Erin Alberino.



Elizabeth Queen and Michael Fink



Board Member Christian Capizzo with Lauren Capizzo



The new Palmieri Pollinator Garden sign



John Gwynne discusses the garden with guests John Kennedy and Amanda Shannon.



Paul and Pam Goulet



Guests of Patty Grealish-Rust gather around one of the sponsor firepits.

CREATE YOUR OWN POLLINATOR GARDEN

Careful planning is essential to creating a successful pollinator garden. Follow these easy steps to make sure you have everything covered before you make your investment.

CHOOSE YOUR LOCATION

Many pollinators like to bask in the sun. A variety of their favorite wildflowers grow best in full or partial sun with some protection from the wind.

IDENTIFY SOIL AND SUNLIGHT

Look at your soil. Is it sandy and well-drained or more clay-like and wet? Your soil type and the amount of sunlight it gets will help determine the kinds of plants you can grow. The University of Rhode Island offers soil testing throughout the state. For a schedule of dates and locations, visit uri.edu/mastergardener/soil-testing-service

CHOOSE YOUR PLANTS

Varieties of wildflowers are native to our state. These plants are the ideal choice as they require minimal maintenance, water, and fertilizer. They also tend to be hardier. It is essential to choose plants that have not been treated with pesticides or insecticides. You'll also want to select perennials to ensure your plants come back each year.

Remember to consider more than just the summer growing season. Pollinators need plants that bloom early in the spring, throughout the summer and even into the fall. Choosing plants that bloom at different times will help you create a bright and colorful garden that both you and pollinators will enjoy for many months of the year!

NATIVE PLANTS FOR SEASONAL BLOOMS:



WILD GERANIUM (*Geranium maculatum*)

- April–May bloom
- Height 1–2 ft.
- Full sun to part shade
- Attracts butterflies



WILD COLUMBINE (*Aquilegia canadensis*)

- April–May bloom
- Height 1–3 ft.
- Part sun / part shade
- in any well-drained soil
- Attracts long-tongued insects, butterflies, bees and hummingbirds



NEW ENGLAND ASTER (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*)

- August to frost bloom
- Full sun to part shade
- Height: 3–6 ft.
- Attracts bumblebees, insects, butterflies, bees, and hummingbird



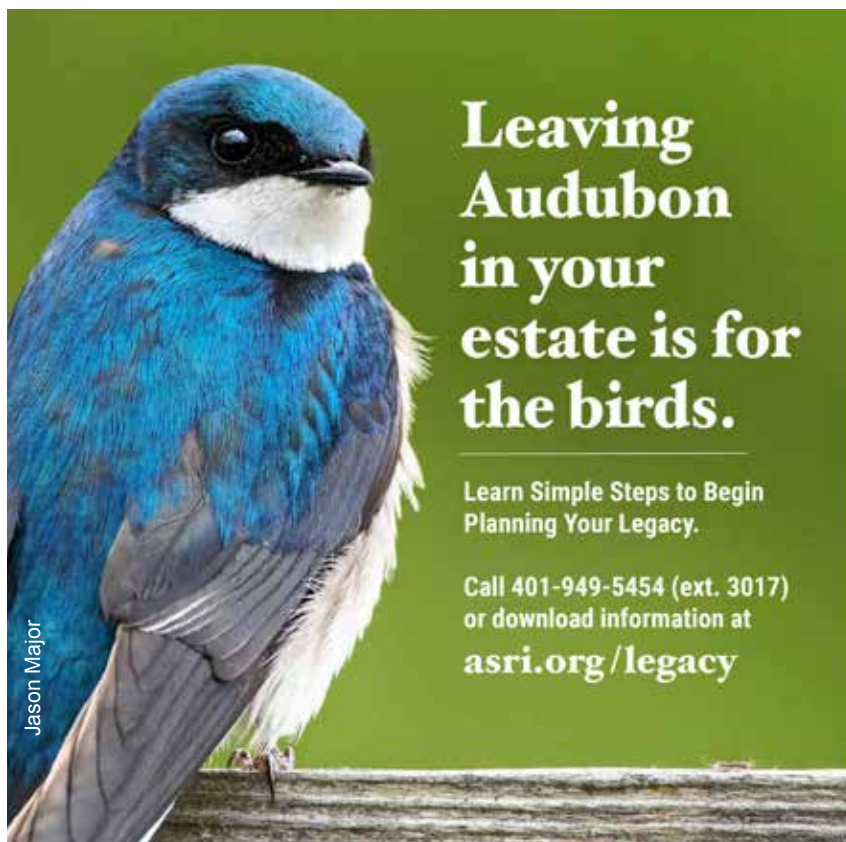
BUTTERFLY WEED (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

- June–August bloom
- Height 1–2.5 ft.
- Full sun
- Attracts butterflies



GOLDENROD (*Solidago* and other species)

- September to frost bloom
- Height 1–3 ft.
- Full sun to part shade
- Attract bees and other insects; extremely important fall plants for pollen



Leaving Audubon in your estate is for the birds.

Learn Simple Steps to Begin Planning Your Legacy.

Call 401-949-5454 (ext. 3017) or download information at asri.org/legacy

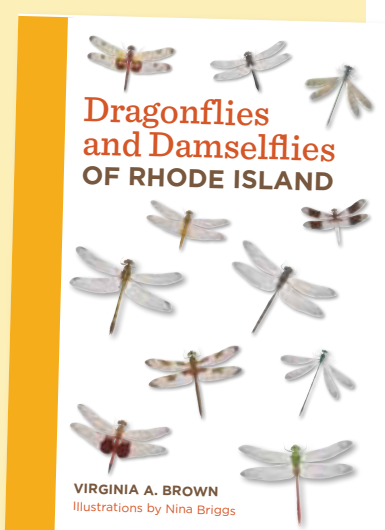

Jason Major

NOW AVAILABLE

the Audubon **Nature shop**
This shop is for the birds!

Discover the natural history, behavior and habitats of dragonfly and damselfly species. With colorful illustrations, detailed information on identification, range, habitat, and conservation, this beautiful new book by RI biologist and author Virginia Brown is the ultimate guide to these fascinating insects.

Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium
1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI
Shop online at asri.org/natureshop

Identifying Butterflies

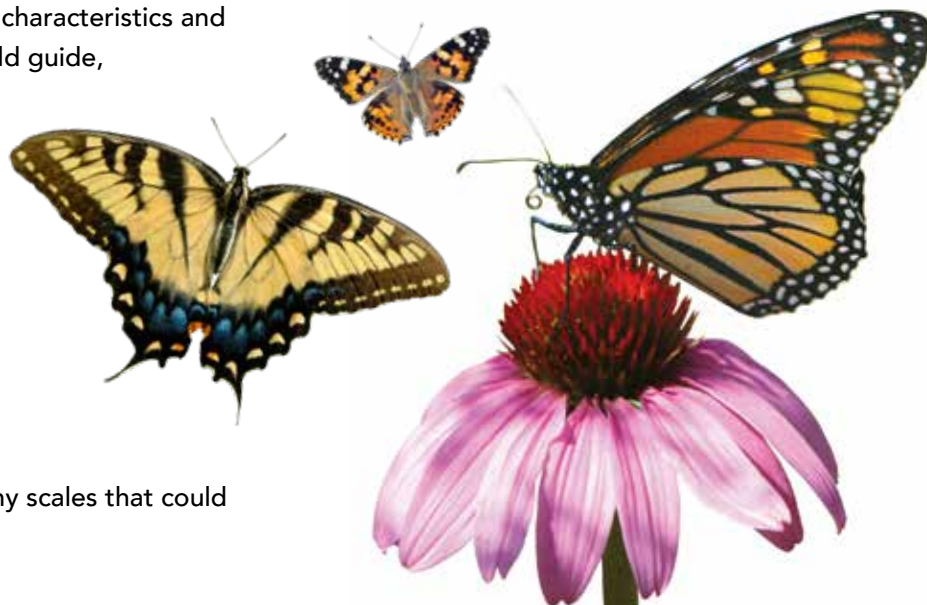
Many varieties of butterflies can be found flitting about fields, gardens and forest edges in the summer.

To help identify the butterflies you see, take note of the following characteristics and then try to match it to one of the photos below, use a butterfly field guide, or visit butterflyidentification.org.

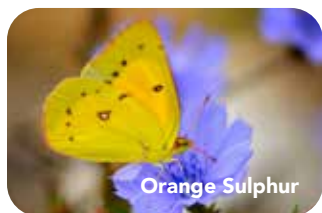
- What is the primary color of the upper side of the wings?
- What is the primary color of the underside of the wings?
- What other colors do you see and where are they located?
- Does the butterfly have spots? How many?
- What does the shape of the wing look like?
- Is the insect bigger or smaller than your thumb?

Try to quietly approach the butterfly to get a closer look. Be careful not to touch the butterfly. Their wings are covered in tiny scales that could come off on your hand. They need those scales to fly and survive!

Butterflies are divided into different groups. Listed below are some that are commonly found in Rhode Island.



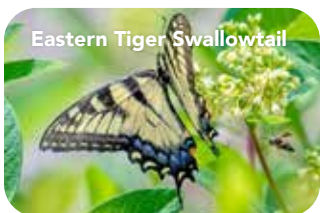
Whites & Sulphurs



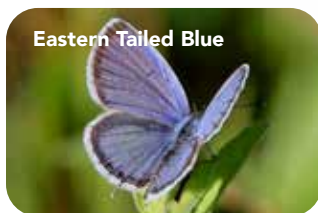
Brush-footed



Swallowtails



Gossamer-wings



Skippers



AUDUBON NATURE TOURS & PROGRAMS

September – December 2021 For more information and to register, visit the events calendar at www.asri.org.



SAFETY NOTICE: Masks are required during indoor programs and van trips for those who have not been vaccinated for COVID-19, including children.

BIRDING WITH AUDUBON

Advance registration is required for all programs.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS

Locations Across Rhode Island. Location determined weekly and will be sent to registered participants in advance.

Every Wednesday through June 2022; 9:00-11:00 am.

FALL BIRDING WALKS AT CARATUNK

Two Dates Offered. Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA; *September 25, October 17, 2021; 8:00-10:00 am.*

HAWKS AND MIGRATION: PRESENTATION AND WALK

Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI; *September 26, 2021; 1:00-3:00 pm.*

OWL PROWL AT POWDER MILL LEDGES

Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI; *October 1, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.*

PROWL FOR OWLS AT CARATUNK

Three Dates Offered. Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA; *October 15, November 19, 30, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.*

HAWK WATCH AT NAPATREE POINT

In Rhode Island, Napatree Point is one of the best locations to look for accipiters, falcons and eagles. If the winds are right, there can be quite a great show. Napatree Point Conservation Area, Westerly, RI (Watch Hill); *October 16, 2021; 10:00 am-12:00 pm*

OWL PROWL AT FORT REFUGE

Fort Nature Refuge, (Rt. 5), 1443 Providence Pike, North Smithfield, RI; *October 18, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.*

OWLING AT FISHERVILLE BROOK

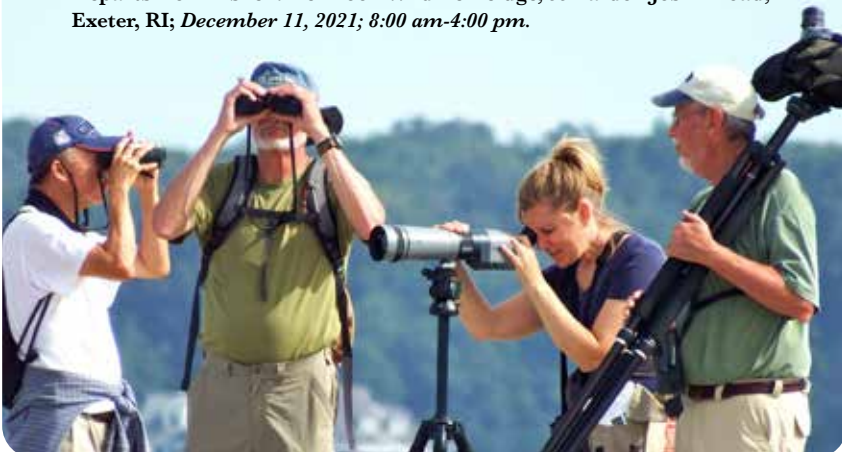
Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; *December 3, 2021; 7:00-9:00 pm.*

DUCKS AND WATERFOWL ID CLASS

Virtual Program. *December 9, 2021; 6:30-7:30 pm.*

WINTER BIRDING VAN TRIP: WATERFOWL AND SEABIRDS AT THE SHORE

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; *December 11, 2021; 8:00 am-4:00 pm.*



THE POWER OF ONE: CONSCIOUS CHOICES TO SAVE BIRDS

LECTURE BY AUDUBON DIRECTOR OF AVIAN RESEARCH
DR. CHARLES CLARKSON

*Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, Bristol, RI
October 24, 1:00-2:30 pm*

Discover ways to help protect vulnerable and declining bird populations with purchasing power. From “bird friendly” coffee to sustainable seafood, many of our choices can have indirect impacts on wild bird populations. Register through the events calendar at www.asri.org.



RAPTOR WEEKEND

*September 11 & 12, 2021;
10 am–3 pm*

Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium
Purchase tickets online at www.asri.org

FORT WILDLIFE REFUGE

1443 Providence Pike (Route 5),
North Smithfield, RI

AUTUMNAL EQUINOX HIKE

September 22, 2021; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

OWL PROWL AT FORT REFUGE

October 18, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.



AUDUBON NATURE CENTER AND AQUARIUM

1401 Hope Street (Route 114), Bristol, RI

PROGRAMS, LECTURES & WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

SCIENTIFICALLY SURREAL

Photography and Art by Alicia Schickle.
September 4 - October 31, 2021; 9:30 am-4:30 pm.

NATURAL JEWELRY

September 5, 2021; 11:00 am-12:30 pm.

GARDENING FOR POLLINATORS AT BLITHEWOLD: LATE SEASON BLOOMS

Blithewold Botanical Gardens, 101 Ferry Road, Bristol, RI; September 16, 2021; 10:30 am-12:00 pm.

PAINTING OWLS WITH ARTIST ELIZABETH O'CONNELL

September 19, 2021; 1:00-4:00 pm.

AUTUMN HERBAL WALK

September 26, 2021; 10:00-11:00 am.

USED NATURE BOOK SALE

October 2, 2021; 9:30 am-4:30 pm.

TENACIOUS WOMEN: A HISTORY OF PRESERVATION IN NEW ENGLAND

Lecture by Leigh Schoberth, Senior Preservation Services Manager at Historic New England.
October 3, 2021; 1:00-2:00 pm.

WILDLIFE & HABITAT CONSERVATION TALK

Lecture by Roger Williams Park Zoo's Director of Conservation Programs, Lou Perrotti.
October 7, 2021; 7:00-8:00 pm.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY EXPLORATION

Two Dates Offered.
October 10, 2021, November 28, 2021; 9:00-10:30 am.

THE POWER OF ONE: CONSCIOUS CHOICES TO SAVE BIRDS

Lecture by Dr. Charles Clarkson.
October 24, 2021; 1:00-2:30 pm.

FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

Paper Montage Artistry by Galen Snow.
November 1 - December 27, 2021; 9:30 am-4:30 pm.

COASTER MOSAICS

November 12, 2021; 7:00-9:00 pm.

VENOMOUS SNAKES

November 14, 2021; 1:00-2:00 pm.



FAMILY PROGRAMS & CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

LABOR DAY NATURE ACTIVITIES

September 6, 2021; 10:00 am-3:00 pm.

CITIZENS BANK FREE FAMILY FUN DAY

Thanks to Citizens Bank, the Nature Center and Aquarium is open free to the public the first Saturday of every month. Join us for crafts, nature stories, animal discoveries, hikes and more. No need to register!
September 4, October 2, November 6, 2021;
10:00 am-3:00 pm.

SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM DAY

Audubon joins participating museums nationwide to open their doors free of charge. Visit www.smithsonian.com/museumday.
September 18, 2021; 9:30 am-4:30 pm.

LI'L PEEPS

This popular program introduces children ages 18 months to 2 years to the delights of nature.
September 23, 30, October 7, 14, 21, 28; 9:45-10:45 am.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY NATURE ACTIVITIES

October 11, 2021; 10:00 am-3:00 pm.

THE PERFECT PUMPKIN PARTY

Join Audubon for a different kind of autumn celebration and find out just how much fun a pumpkin can be!
October 30, 2021; 10:00 am-4:00 pm.

VETERAN'S DAY NATURE PROGRAMS

November 11, 2021; 10:00 am- 3:00 pm.

DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING ACTIVITIES

November 26, 2021; 10:00 am - 3:00 pm



Register online through the events calendar at www.asri.org or call (401) 949-5454 ext. 3014.

POWDER MILL LEDGES WILDLIFE REFUGE

12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI

LET'S TAKE A WALK!

Monthly family program with varying nature themes.
September 7, October 5, November 9, 2021; 10:00-11:00 am.

NATURE TALES FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Monthly story time with varying nature themes.
September 15, October 20, November 17, 2021; 10:00-11:00 am.

INTRODUCTION TO MAP AND COMPASS SKILLS

September 18, 2021; 10:00 am-1:00 pm.

HAWKS AND MIGRATION: PRESENTATION AND WALK

September 26, 2021; 1:00-3:00 pm.

OH DEER! LECTURE

September 30, 2021; 6:30-8:00 pm.

OWL PROWL AT POWDER MILL LEDGES

October 1, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.

FOR GOODNESS SNAKES!

October 2, 2021; 3:00-4:00 pm.

MEET A RAPTOR! (FALCON)

October 3, 2021; 1:00-3:00 pm.

HAND-IN-HAND

Nature program for young children.
October 7, 2021; 10:00-11:30 am.

CLIMATE REALITY PRESENTATION

October 14, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.

NESTS, DENS, AND BURROWS

November 6, 2021; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

GO NUTTY!

November 13, 2021; 3:00-4:30 pm.

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE LECTURE

November 18, 2021; 6:30-8:00 pm.

MEET A RAPTOR! (OWL)

November 21, 2021; 1:00-3:00 pm.



FISHERVILLE BROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE

99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI

BEAVERS OF FISHERVILLE

November 5, 2021; 5:00-6:30 pm.

OWLING AT FISHERVILLE BROOK

December 3, 2021; 7:00-9:00 pm.

CARATUNK WILDLIFE REFUGE

301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA

WHITE BARN STORY TIME

Monthly story time with varying nature themes.
September 2, October 7, November 4, 2021; 2:00-3:00 pm.

HERBAL PLANT WALK AT CARATUNK

Two Dates Offered. *September 22, October 20, 2021; 4:00-6:00 pm.*

EARLY AUTUMN EVENING WALK

September 23, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.

FALL BIRDING WALKS

Two Dates Offered. *September 25, October 17, 2021; 8:00-10:00 am.*

NATURE OF AUTUMN

October 8, 2021; 9:30-11:30 am.

PROWL FOR OWLS AT CARATUNK

Three Dates Offered. *October 15, November 19, 30, 2021; 6:30-8:30 pm.*

NEST, DENS AND BURROWS

October 16, 2021; 1:00-3:00 pm.

GETTING READY FOR WINTER

November 5, 2021; 9:30-11:30 am.

CARATUNK RAMBLE

November 21, 2021; 8:30-10:30 am.



PRUDENCE ISLAND

Narragansett Bay National
Estuarine Research Reserve,
Prudence Island, RI

MUSHROOMS FOR BEGINNERS

September 29, 2021; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

FALL BIRDING

October 9, 2021; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

HIKING PRUDENCE ISLAND

October 28, 2021; 1:30-6:00 pm.

EXPLORE PRUDENCE ISLAND

November 6, 2021; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

PRIVATE PRUDENCE ISLAND ADVENTURE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Contact: Maureen Dewire at
Maureen.Dewire@dem.ri.gov
or by phone at 401.683.1478.



Register online through the events calendar at www.asri.org or call (401) 949-5454 ext. 3014.

the windows," Cohen said. But it's also valuable to pollinators because it's planted with a lot of pollinator-friendly plants."

The large meadow down the hill from the gardens, while not intended as a pollinator garden, serves a similar purpose for much of the season due to the abundant blooming flowers and shrubs. Sweet pea, goldenrod, milkweed, bee balm and many others provide attractive color to the area and offer more nectaring opportunities for pollinators.

What we try to do with the field is provide habitat for other creatures, like birds, foxes and rabbits," said Taft. The fact that it also happens to contain flowering plants is a bonus. It's not as intentional as the pollinator garden, but it's part of the big picture of our efforts to support the needs of local wildlife."

All of these efforts to provide habitat at the Nature Center are part of Audubon's aim to do what conservationists call re-wilding—creating the conditions that will allow nature to take care of itself, enabling natural processes to take over and repair damaged and degraded landscapes. It ultimately results in wilder and more biodiverse habitats.

Going forward, Cohen said the main focus on the property will be on reducing invasive species and adding even more native plants to improve habitat for pollinators. Audubon also plans to invite entomologists from the University of Rhode Island and the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth to catalog the pollinators and other insects that visit the site to add to the educational value of the gardens and document species diversity for better scientific understanding of the insects that call Rhode Island home.

We want to continue to turn people's attention to the plight of pollinators and provide an example of what people might emulate in their own backyards," concluded Taft. Everyone can play a role in restoring our pollinator populations, even if it's just planting a small garden or using planters filled with flowering species. Audubon is doing what it can to show the way."



Garden volunteer Anne Mulready at work in July.

Bees and Insects Have a Home at Audubon's Bug-ingham Palace



Behind the Palmieri Pollinator Garden is an artistic wooden structure that combines bamboo, bricks, rolled up cardboard, stacks of pinecones and bark, piles of straw and other materials to create cavities for bees and other insects to nest and raise their young. It's an impressive and attractive complex constructed in 2018 that has been in active use by bees almost since the day it was completed.

It mimics the spaces that mason bees, leafcutter bees and carpenter bees naturally use," said Audubon's Barry Cohen. The more natural it is, the more suitable it will be."

Dubbed Bug-ingham Palace, it's a fun place for visitors to watch the comings and goings of bees and other insects as they fly to and from the adjacent pollinator garden. During a recent visit, Cohen pointed out a mason bee that flew into the tube of a bamboo stick and then sealed up the opening with mud and sand after tending its young. Around the corner, sawdust from the chewing of carpenter bees indicated where the bees have established a network of tunnels for their growing families.

In addition to the bees, there are lots of spaces for other critters," Cohen said. Butterflies use it to seek shelter when it's raining, insects overwinter as larva, garter snakes linger around the bottom in summer, and there's a couple of bird houses on top and a bat box on the back. It's an all-inclusive structure that attracts lots of attention."



Clockwise from top left: A bee emerges from a nest made in a bamboo shoot in Bug-ingham Palace, a close-up of a section in the structure, Audubon campers learn about the benefits of an insect hotel.

Bug-ingham Palace is funded by United Natural Foods, Inc.

NEW AUDUBON STAFF DIRECTORS

Audubon will host virtual town hall meetings with Priscilla De La Cruz and Charles Clarkson this fall. Please join the conversation, ask questions, and get to know Audubon's new directors as they discuss current environmental issues. Watch for details on dates and times.

PRISCILLA DE LA CRUZ

**Audubon Senior Director
of Government Affairs**



Audubon welcomes Priscilla De La Cruz as Senior Director of Government Affairs. In this role she will work to initiate and advance legislation and policies at the state and local level to protect birds, wildlife, and Rhode Island's environment. Ms. De La Cruz will advocate for legislation that promotes renewable energy and other policies that work to mitigate the impacts of climate change in the Ocean State. Other Audubon legislative priorities will include limitations of pesticide use, protecting forested land, and advancing green infrastructure and stormwater solutions.

In 2019, Ms. De La Cruz was elected President of the Environment Council of Rhode Island (ECRI). Under her direction, and working with other policy leaders, the Council launched the Climate Crisis Campaign, playing a key role in advocating for the successful passage of the 2021 Act On Climate legislation. Working with the Council's executive committee, Ms. De La Cruz is also leading an equity-based strategic planning process. She recently became the co-chair of the Climate Jobs Rhode Island initiative, a partnership among labor and environmental groups working toward a just transition to a green economy.

Before joining Audubon, De La Cruz held the position of Rhode Island Director of the Green Energy Consumers Alliance, where she developed strategic management and marketing and oversaw advocacy initiatives, including coalition organizing.

Ms. De La Cruz earned a Master of Liberal Arts (ALM) with a concentration in Management, and Sustainability & Innovation from the Harvard University Extension School. She also earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Marketing from Rhode Island College. She is a life-long resident of Providence.

DR. CHARLES CLARKSON

Audubon Director of Avian Research



Dr. Charles Clarkson has been appointed Audubon Director of Avian Research. In this new position, he will lead efforts in developing a research program to protect birds, other wildlife, and their habitats on Audubon protected properties and natural spaces in Rhode Island.

This work will include implementing plans to assess the current abundance of birds utilizing Audubon properties, as well as developing a research plan for understanding the long-term population trends during the breeding season, winter months, and as stopover habitat during migration periods. Dr. Clarkson will work closely with staff on a management plan for Audubon habitats to enhance long-term biodiversity and minimize the impacts of climate change on birds utilizing Audubon properties.

Dr. Clarkson recently served as the coordinator for the Rhode Island Bird Atlas, assessing long-term changes to the state's avian populations. He has been responsible for all aspects of the project including the experimental design and implementation of field protocols, the recruitment, training, and management of over 200 volunteers, the collection, compilation, and analysis of the atlas data.

He also has worked in coordination with Audubon to provide RI DEM with written testimony based on analysis of Bird Atlas data for the state's Energy Facility Siting Board (EFSB) and provided written and spoken testimony in conjunction with Audubon on RI House Bill (H 5641) regarding the impacts of neonicotinoids on avian populations.

Dr. Clarkson earned an undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences at Mary Washington College, a master's degree in biology from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Doctorate degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of Virginia. He has received numerous awards for his research in the field of ornithology and served on Audubon's Board of Directors from 2013 to 2021. He resides in Middletown, RI.

Ecology of Pollination

The work is usually done behind the scenes. Audubon conservation staff on tractors, mowing acres of field and then collecting seeds. Removing invasives, clearing brush, and monitoring bird and pollinator habitat. In forests, they purposefully leave standing dead trees and fallen wood for bees to nest. Brush piles provide protection for numerous insects.

But meeting the diverse needs of pollinators is an ongoing ecological challenge. Every project undertaken is a thoughtful and positive step toward addressing the pollinator crisis. Within two large fields at Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, Audubon monitors and maintains native flowering species including asters, milkweeds and goldenrods. Seeds and plants were locally collected and grown. These plants and native grasses are vital pollinator habitat. At wildlife refuges such as Touisset Marsh, Maxwell Mays, and Powder Mill Ledges, Audubon avoids mowing large patches of milkweed until butterfly lifecycles are complete. And those messy edges on all properties where habitats meet? They are critical to many of the native flowering plants we see in bloom.

Those endlessly diverse floral displays are driven by the evolution of plant and pollinator relationships. Colorful, showy flowers evolved to attract pollinators. But because flowers are costly to produce, plants cannot waste their resources on unrewarding relationships. Pollination relies on predictable and reliable delivery services. This mutually beneficial relationship depends on rewards for both partners. Plants provide nectar in many cases, but some pollinators are rewarded with other gifts such as pollen, oils, amino acids and even fragrances. If the plant does not reward the pollinator or the pollinator is harmful or inefficient, the relationship will not be maintained.

Butterflies and beetles prefer fragrant, open flowers with a landing platform. Moths tend to look for flowers that are usually pale colored, fragrant, and open at night. Hummingbirds usually choose flowers that are bright red, orange and yellow with a long tubular shape and abundant nectar. Bees love yellow but there are exceptions to every rule. There are even cheaters on both sides. For example, some flowers lure naive pollinators in with no real reward, a ploy that would never succeed with experienced pollinators. Some bees chew a back entrance to steal nectar while bypassing the pollen. These are just a couple of the natural challenges to pollination.

The best pollinators possess crucial adaptations. Hairy bodies trap pollen, specialized mouthparts and long tongues help collect nectar. Many bees have "baskets" on their legs to collect pollen. However, the more specialized species become, the more vulnerable they are to disruptions. Specialized, tightly co-evolved pollination relationships tend to be more efficient and productive, but they run the risk of extinction and failed pollination as environmental changes occur. Most of New England's insect-pollinated plants are versatile generalists, capable of successfully receiving more than one type of pollinator. But they are still very vulnerable.

Pollinators and plants are under threat worldwide. Habitat destruction, pesticide use, diseases, invasive species, and climate change are some of the threats to pollination survival. Audubon's work on wildlife refuges and in pollinator gardens is aimed toward saving pollinators, their plants and habitats as well as reducing threats from pesticides and climate change.



Get Ready for Fall Migration!

Rhode Island Birding Trails

Over 60 Places to Watch Birds in the Ocean State

Published by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island

Three separate trails: Northern Rhode Island, Southern Rhode Island and East Bay and the Islands • All locations easily accessible

Find out where the birders ... bird!

Order Now \$14.95

Order your copy at ribirdingtrails.com or purchase at the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol.



LET'S GET SOCIAL!

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LIKE/SHARE/FOLLOW

The most followed Audubon Facebook page in New England!



Meet Acorn the Owl!

A gray morph Eastern Screech-Owl is Audubon's newest educational ambassador. Acorn was found roadside in Rhode Island with an injury to her right wing. She was rehabbed by the Wildlife Clinic of Rhode Island, and although she is feisty, she is only partially flighted and will never be able to return to the wild. Once she is ready, she will join Audubon educators on visits to schools, community centers, assisted living homes and libraries.

Her name was chosen by members and supporters in an online naming contest in July. Welcome, Acorn!



Meet Acorn at Audubon Raptor Weekend on September 11 and 12!



Planning a Celebration or Special Event?

Caratunk Barn

The big white barn at Caratunk provides the perfect rural setting for weddings, showers, family reunions or meetings. Birthday parties for children are also offered.

For availability and reservations regarding weddings and birthdays, visit asri.org and click on 'services.' For all other rental queries, contact Jon Scoones at jscoones@asri.org.

Generous Donor Provides Caratunk with New Conservation Utility Vehicle

Thanks to a generous donation, the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge recently received a utility vehicle to assist with refuge management. Former Board Member Nate Chace, a long-time Audubon supporter and passionate hiker, funded Audubon's purchase of The Bighorn, a heavy-duty, four-wheel-drive two-seat vehicle. This versatile machine will be used to carry heavy tools, equipment, supplies, lumber, gravel and staff where trucks cannot be driven on the refuge. Caratunk Refuge Manager Jon Scoones expressed his gratitude. The Bighorn will enable us to make repairs and improvements to the trails in a more timely and safe manner. Instead of making numerous trips to a work site carrying heavy loads, we will now be able to complete projects much more efficiently. Audubon thanks Nate Chace for his continued generosity and support.



Former Board Member Nate Chace and the vehicle he recently donated for Caratunk Wildlife Refuge maintenance and conservation work.

WE CAN HELP WILDLIFE...

WHEN YOU HELP US.



AUDUBON RAPTOR CARE

**DONATE TODAY:
ASRI.ORG/RAPTORCARE**



Audubon and the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center Engage Providence Students in the Storm Drain Mural Project

By Thomas Patti, PSIC Intern

Most conversations about stormwater management only include scientists, engineers, designers, and contractors, but urban water quality is an issue that affects us all. That's why Audubon and the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center (PSIC) reached out to local schools to teach the next generation about the dangers of polluted water, the current solutions, and the reality that there's much more to learn. By bringing real-world experiences into the curriculum, the PSIC hoped to leave a lasting impact on the students, empowering them to think beyond their classroom walls about the problems that need to be solved in their own communities.

This year, the Center worked with three schools in Providence and Cranston: Eden Park Elementary, Sophia Academy, and the New Urban Arts Knights at Central High School. Audubon educators started by providing students with an overview of water issues: Where does stormwater go? How does it become polluted? What is green infrastructure? And how can we all help reduce pollution? Sophia Academy and the NUA Knights also joined us in the park for green infrastructure tours and water quality sampling demonstrations.

Then came the fun part—bringing these lessons to life through public art. Teaching artists Brett Windham, Katie Gui, and Eli Shalan learned about stormwater alongside the students. At Eden Park and Sophia Academy, each student then made a drawing that incorporated these lessons. The teaching artists synthesized the students' ideas into three mural designs to be painted on sidewalks beside storm drains. At Eden Park, students researched storm drain locations in their neighborhoods and asked homeowners for permission to paint a mural outside. This proved to be a great way for students to bring their learning home and educate their neighbors! At Sophia Academy and Central High School, the teaching artists and students painted the murals on school grounds.

The diversity and creativity of ideas developed speak to the success of this program. We are confident that these students will continue to advocate for the environment in their communities. We encouraged them to continue with the kind of innovative thinking that scientists, educators, and artists will need to make a difference in an increasingly urbanized world. We look forward to continuing our relationships with these schools and to extending our educational outreach to new schools this fall.



Learn more at stormwaterinnovation.org



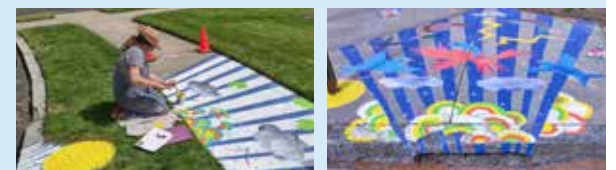
Students from Sophia Academy work on their mural



Students from New Urban Arts Knights at Central High School



Sophia Academy students present another mural



Murals designed by Eden Park Elementary School Students



New Audubon Digital Membership Cards

Enjoy a NEW way to access your Audubon Society of Rhode Island membership! Audubon Members can now receive digital membership cards by email, a convenient, eco-friendly alternative to printed cards. Just download and save it to your smartphone.

Going digital means you never have to worry about forgetting your membership card when visiting the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, in addition to being more environmentally friendly and helping to reduce administrative costs. After joining or renewing your membership, you will receive an email within a week with a link to download your card.

Digital membership cards provide quick links to our website, information on your membership benefits, Audubon contact information and helpful renewal notifications all in one place—your fingertips! If you would prefer to receive a paper membership card, please contact Julius Lundy at jlundy@asri.org or 401-949-5454 ext. 3018.



Planning a Celebration or Special Event?



Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium

Located in historic Bristol, Rhode Island, just 30 minutes from Providence, Newport, and Fall River, the award-winning Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium is one of Rhode Island's most unique meeting venues. With beautiful trails, exhibits and aquarium, large meeting, reception, and outdoor patio space, the Nature Center provides a setting that will captivate guests.

Ideal for weddings, showers, or the site of your next business meeting or off-site retreat.

For availability and reservations, visit asri.org and click on *services* or contact Anne DiMonti at (401) 949-5454 x3116 or adimonti@asri.org.



Wildlife Images from the Audubon Refuges

Audubon has unobtrusive wildlife cameras on wildlife refuges across the state. Located well off the trails in remote locations, they are used to monitor wildlife and any activity on the properties.

A stunning bobcat was photographed throughout the month of April at the Audubon Kraus Wildlife Refuge in Kingston. Coming back again and again, this seemed a favorite spot on the property. In July, a curious buck and two fawns were spotted at the Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge in South Kingstown.

It is always fun to see what creatures are out and about on the Audubon Wildlife Refuges!



New Native Plants Donated to the Fisherville Pollinator Garden

Butterflies, bees and hummingbirds all visit and take advantage of the blooms in the Fisherville Brook Pollinator Garden. This year the garden received an abundance of new flowering plants donated by Bill and Marianne McNee. Milkweed, winterberry, Joe-pye weed, butterfly weed and lupine are all planted and thriving! Thank you to Bill, Marianne and all the volunteers who have contributed plants and their time to support this valuable garden. Along with Audubon, the many pollinator species extend their appreciation!



Least Terns Face Habitat Challenges

Summer is in full swing and many of us head to Rhode Island's 400 miles of coastline to cool off. We share the shore and Narragansett Bay with thousands of species of birds and marine life.

When many folks consider birds that use our shore, they think of gulls. But have you ever noticed the thinner winged birds with darker heads that bounce along and chatter as they fly? These birds are called Terns. Common Terns can be seen throughout Narragansett Bay, but the Ocean State is also home to the State-threatened Least Tern. It is the smallest North American Tern with a black cap, a white forehead and yellow bill that has a bit of black at its tip. They often flutter over the water before diving head first looking for small fish.

In the early 1900s these birds were almost hunted to extinction, when whole birds were stuffed and placed on women's hats. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 brought protection for this species and with changing fashion trends its numbers began to bounce back. But by the 1940s, with coastal development and the increased use of beaches for recreation, their numbers began to decline once again. Conservation measures in recent years have stabilized their numbers, but today Least Terns have another difficult battle ahead: challenges from climate change.

The climate crisis is affecting many coastal birds. Rising temperatures and melting ice caps cause water levels to rise. Least Terns nest on beaches, barrier islands and sand spits. The increasing water levels leave less suitable habitat available for nesting sites. Flood events are becoming more common with larger storms and tidal surges, exposing eggs and chicks to saltwater.

Rising temperatures are also changing the fish that are able to live in our waters. The oil-rich fish that provide energy for the birds survive in colder water, and are slowly moving out of the area. Parent terns need to expend more energy providing food for their nestlings.

The terns are also losing valuable habitat during migration. This is through the rising sea levels and habitat loss through human encroachment.

But there are ways you can help! Please stay up to date with Audubon and get involved with environmental legislation. Vote every chance you get for politicians who are concerned about climate change. Write to your legislators on key issues that you care about. Remember to always reduce, reuse, and recycle. When you are at the beach, be respectful and avoid nesting areas that are roped off. These provide protection for both adult and young shore birds. Do not bring your dogs to the beach. They create stressors that may make birds hide and avoid feeding their young. Please pick up after yourself and others. Fishing line, plastic bags and balloons kill wildlife along our coasts. Reduce your use of plastics as much as possible. Small plastics are ingested and kill fish, birds and marine mammals. And talk to your friends and family encourage them to do the same!



Audubon Society of Rhode Island 2022 Calendar

Do you have an outstanding bird photo taken in Rhode Island?

Submit your Image for Audubon's new 2022 calendar.

Deadline is September 13, 2021.

Visit asri.org/audubon-calendar.html for details.



Scott Slusarski

SAVE THE DATE

AUDUBON FIRE

Member Appreciation Evening

October 2, 2021
5:00-9:00pm



Caratunk Wildlife Refuge
Seekonk, MA

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BIRD WATCHING



Rhode Island PBS

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digital 36.1
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Learn

10AM WEEKDAYS
digital 36.2
Cox 808/Verizon 478

RIPBS.ORG

Thank You!

PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

The companies listed below have demonstrated their significant commitment to the quality of life in Rhode Island and to conserving natural habitats through stewardship and education.

- Bank of America
- Botanical Center Conservancy
- Citizens Bank
- Cox Communications
- CVS Health
- DBVW Architects
- Green Energy Consumers Alliance, Inc.
- Lyons & Zaremba, Inc.
- Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP
- R.I. Beekeepers Association
- Target
- United Natural Foods, Inc.
- Van Liew Trust Company
- Whole Foods Market



GIFTS IN HONOR

The people listed below have been honored by family and friends who found a gift to the Audubon Society of Rhode Island to be the most meaningful way to celebrate someone important in their lives.

In Honor of: Anonymous
From: Danielle Barry

In Honor of: David Brunetti
From: Sheri Cicatiello

In Honor of: Jameson Chase
From: Faculty Assembly –
Salve Regina University

In Honor of: Thomas Dalglish
From: Hannah Dalglish

In Honor of: Rose Hoisington
From: Sue Brown

In Honor of: Dayna Raye Krahenbill
From: Michael Torres

In Honor of: Chase Leduc
From: Sarah Leduc

In Honor of: Lauren Ostiguy
From: Michael Ostiguy

In Honor of: Alan Rote
From: Dan Roe



MEMORIALS

Memorials serve and support the conservation and protection of Rhode Island's environment. During the past quarter, the families and friends of people listed below have chosen to remember their loved ones through a gift to the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

In Memory of: Nancy Asprinio
From: Rosemarie Di Lorenzo
Linda DeRobbio

In Memory of: James "Jim" Brines
From: Renee Walker-Tuttle

In Memory of: Christopher Corbett
From: Marilyn Fleisig
Grace Holleran

In Memory of: Theresa Emond
From: Donald Cordner and Jean Cavanaugh

In Memory of: Daniel Finn
From: Lisa Campisi

In Memory of: Bertha Klitz
From: Carol Gauthier
John and Kathy Nottell

In Memory of: Michael Officer
From: Patricia and Peter Marshall

In Memory of: Doug Rayner
From: Susan Budge

In Memory of: Jane Smith
From: Em McManamy

In Memory of: Joseph Tramontano, Sr.
From: Robert and Marie Anne Catauro

In Memory of: Geoffrey Wilkes
From: Timothy Faulkner



AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND 1897 SOCIETY



Named for the year of the Audubon's founding, the 1897 Society honors those whose leadership gifts enable the Audubon Society of Rhode Island to advance its mission of protecting birds, other wildlife and their habitats through conservation, education and advocacy. Our donors can take satisfaction that their contributions have an immediate and lasting impact on the people, wildlife and natural beauty of Rhode Island.

The 1897 Society celebrates donors who give annually at the \$1,000 to \$10,000+ level as special contributors to our ongoing mission and shall be recognized at the following levels:

Leader — \$1,000 to \$2,499 **Benefactor** — \$7,500 to \$9,999
Advocate — \$2,500 to \$4,999 **Visionary** — \$10,000+
Conservator — \$5,000 to \$7,499

If you wish to join the 1897 Society and help promote the values and mission of Audubon, please visit asri.org/leadership or contact Jeff Hall at 401-949-5454 ext. 5017.

In recognition of their philanthropic charity, members of the 1897 Society enjoy a variety of exclusive benefits, including invitations to member-only events and special communications.

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A Fresh Look on Jamestown

New signs were installed in July on Audubon properties in Jamestown. The previous signs were weathered and worn and in need of replacement. Racquet Road Wildlife Refuge and Sheffield Cove are now easily recognized as conservation areas protected by Audubon.

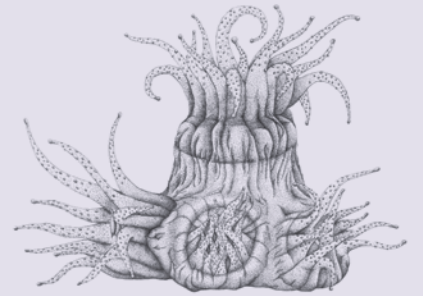


Audubon Stewardship Specialist Mike Cavaliere installs new signage in Jamestown.

Northern Star Coral: Rhode Island's New State Coral on Display at the Nature Center and Aquarium

Good news! The RI General Assembly has designated northern star coral as the official state coral. Roger Williams University (RWU) marine biologist Koty Sharp began the push for this designation as northern star coral is an indicator species of marine ecosystem health, providing scientists the opportunity to research impacts of climate change in our waters. This designation also enhances public awareness to challenges that vital marine life face.

The Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol has an exhibit with live northern star coral, developed in partnership with Roger Williams University. Students in the Marine Biology and Natural Resources Department at RWU provide maintenance and care for Audubon's aquariums, and benefit from hands-on experience in the aquarium field.



2021 Rhode Island Youth Conservation League

After a break in 2020 because of Covid-19 concerns, the 2021 Youth Conservation League is back and working safely on Audubon wildlife refuges and other conservation properties. They have removed invasive species, restored boardwalks, improved wildlife habitat, completed light carpentry and more. Three environmentally minded high school students along with two crew leaders have teamed up this summer to gain valuable experience while helping conservation groups with their service.

The work can be labor intensive and challenging in the summer heat and rain, but the experience is often rewarding and has inspired many environmental careers. One of the co-leaders, Rachel Simone was a crew member in 2019.

Audubon provides guidance, tools and coordination for the league and partners with the RI Conservation Stewardship Collaborative for funding.

The following organizations are partners in the Youth Conservation League:

Burrillville Land Trust
 East Greenwich Land Trust
 Hopkinton Land Trust
 Narrow River Land Trust
 The Nature Conservancy

RI Department of
 Environmental Management
 Sakonnet Preservation
 Association



The 2021 Youth Conservation League at Caratunk

*Back row:
 Sam Kucal, Westin Palumbo,
 Crew Leader Stephanie Duncan.*

*Front row:
 Crew Leader Rachel Simone,
 Serena Leung.*

Refer a Friend!

Help our Membership Grow!
 Audubon Society of Rhode Island

All members receive free admission to the Audubon Nature Center & Aquarium and discounts at the Nature Shop. Membership also includes reduced fees for programs, rentals, birthday parties and more!

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UNWANTED

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR INVASIVE FOREST PESTS

By Scott Ruhren, Senior Director of Conservation



UNH Cooperative Extension

ASIAN LONG-HORNED BEETLE

- Inch-long shiny black beetle with white spots and very long antennae.
- Creates large, dime-sized holes in hardwood tree trunks.
- Not yet sighted in RI, but reported in MA.
- Threat to forests.

This insect was accidentally introduced to North America in 1996. It feeds on many hardwood trees including maple, birch and poplar. Throughout eastern United States and Canada, the beetle has killed over 30% of infested trees.

There is currently no known remedy other than removing infested trees, but biological controls are being researched.

Note: There are other long-horned beetles in Rhode Island. Look for the shiny body and white spots before reporting.

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

- Nymphs are black with white spots, and later they turn red with black and white markings.
- Inch-long adults resemble a gray spotted moth with scarlet hindwings.
- They can gather in massive numbers.
- Reported in RI in 2021.
- Threat to forests and agriculture.

The spotted lanternfly arrived in the United States in 2014. This rapidly spreading planthopper will eat over 70 native and horticultural species of plants.

Eggs, juveniles and adults are known to travel on plants that are being moved and even vehicles. Adults have flight ability and establish on new plants.

EMERALD ASH BORER

- Small, thin metallic green beetle.
- Adults are ½ inch in length.
- Body shape resembles a grain of cooked rice.
- Reported in RI in 2018.
- Tunneling larvae kill ash trees within 3 to 5 years of infestation.
- Look for D-shaped holes in the bark of ash trees.

This invasive beetle spreads by flying and movement of infested wood. They kill native ash trees, which could drastically change northern forests.

Biological controls are currently being researched.

REPORT SIGHTINGS

EARLY DETECTION IS CRUCIAL

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Watch for plant damage or other evidence of these insects.
- Observe and identify insect stages (eggs, larvae/nymphs and adults)
- Take clear, closeup photos.
- Record location and identify host plants or trees if possible.
- Report sighting to RI Department of Environmental Management at <https://appengine.egov.com/apps/ri/dem/demcaps>

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND REPORT

Volume 55, Number 3, August 2021

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Please pass this copy on to a friend or recycle. Thank you.

The Report is the Audubon Society's member newsletter and updates members on the current issues and actions of the Society, its staff and volunteers. We encourage your participation and you may send items that will be considered for publication to: Hope Foley, Managing Editor, Audubon Society of Rhode Island, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI 02917 or by email to hfoley@asri.org.

Audubon Scout Programs

Audubon educators lead scout programs related to natural history and life science. Ask how we can help fulfill your troop's badge requirements. Please email msolis@asri.org.



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OWL PROWLs

They're a Hoot!



Join an expert guide and have some fun as you search for owls on the evening trails. Register early through the events calendar at www.asri.org.

October 1, 2021: Smithfield, RI
October 15, November 19, 30, 2021: Seekonk, MA
October 18, 2021: North Smithfield, RI
December 3, 2021: Exeter, RI



RAPTOR WEEKEND IS BACK!



Live Presentations with Eagles, Owls, Falcons & Hawks

September 11 & 12, 2021

Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, Bristol, RI

Purchase tickets online at www.asri.org