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Audubon Society of Rhode Island

REPORT

ADOPT AN ACRE

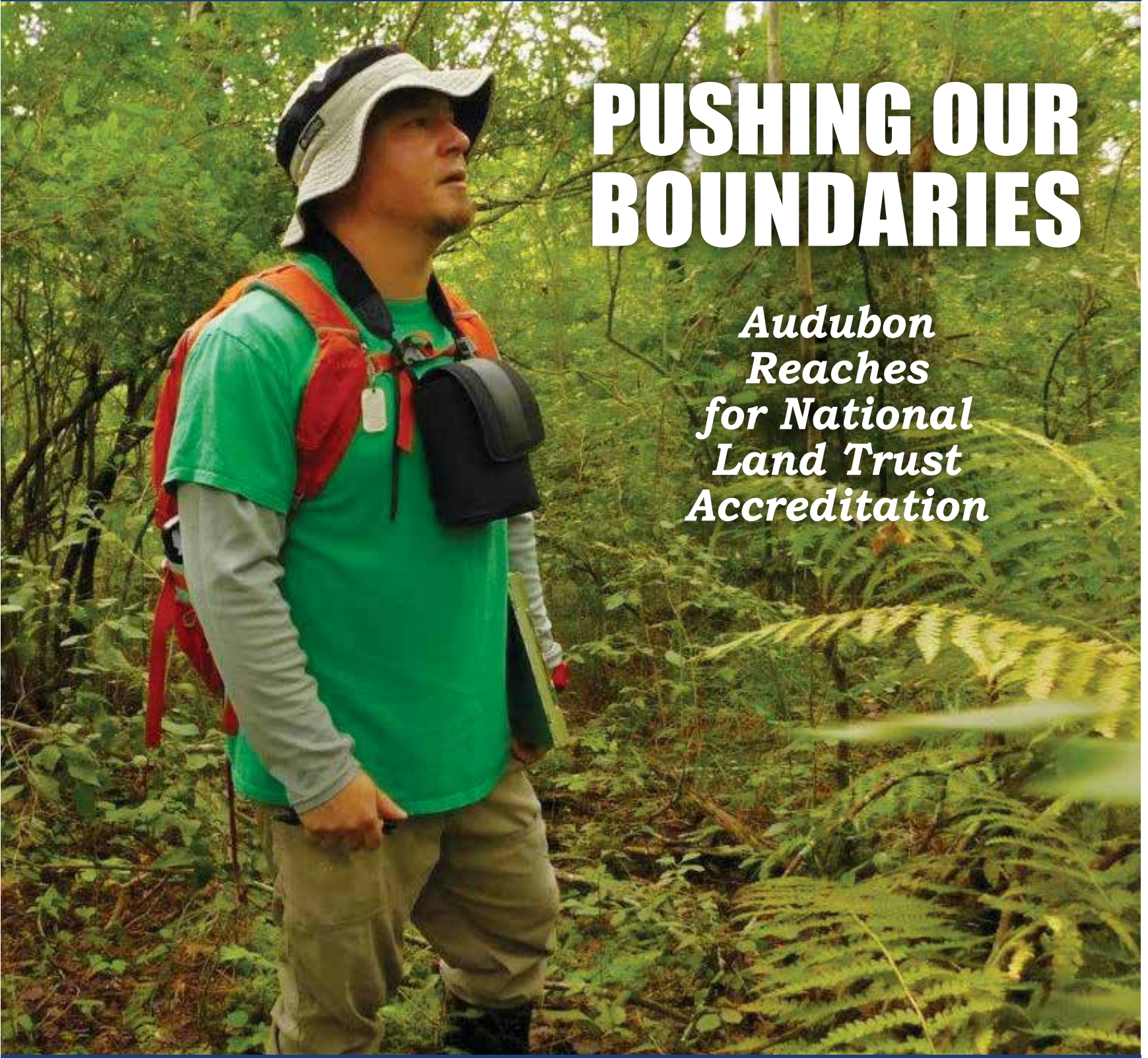
*Consider the Gift of Nature
this Holiday Season!*

Adopt an acre of Audubon conservation
land in a family, friend or colleague's name.
See page 5 for details.



VOLUME 52, NO. 4

NOVEMBER 2018



PUSHING OUR BOUNDARIES

*Audubon
Reaches
for National
Land Trust
Accreditation*

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

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From the Desk of the Executive Director



Reaching for the Gold Medal of Land Conservation

Five years ago, Audubon set a goal to attain accreditation with the national Land Trust Alliance (LTA) to prove to ourselves, and our supporters, that we are indeed (and not just in theory) careful and proper stewards of the land. This accreditation is the national gold standard for non-governmental organizations that conserve land. Some would argue that this is our *most* important responsibility – conserving these natural places for wildlife as well as future generations.

Preparing for accreditation is no easy task, even for a new land trust with limited properties. An older organization such as Audubon has a tremendous amount of acreage to monitor with some records that date back almost one hundred years. Gaining accreditation is a much more strenuous procedure for larger and more established organizations

It has taken the diligence of board members, staff and volunteers to do the work of reviewing and revising organizational policies and practices, finding and organizing old documents (sometimes in town halls), inventorying the flora and fauna on our properties, finding and inspecting boundaries, looking for possible encroachments, and creating reports. Most of the work is detailed and tedious (except when staff get to go bush-whacking in the back corners of Audubon's numerous properties, which we enjoy.)

The next time we can apply for accreditation will be in 2020. It is more of a marathon than a sprint to the finish line. But if we can keep up the pace that we have set, we will finally earn that gold medal.



Thanks to all who have joined us on this journey.

Lawrence J. F. Taft, Executive Director

“WE ARE IN DEBT.”

Not financial debt... but “IN-debted” to YOU.

We meet so many people throughout the course of a year. Some are taking a workshop, many are enjoying a guided hike or bringing family to a nature program. Others are participating in an advocacy campaign. We meet children of all ages during the hundreds of school programs Audubon brings into every district in the state.

In each interaction, we meet people that are gracious and thankful for what Audubon does to protect nature.

But in fact, we are thankful for YOU.

Everyday we are surrounded by acts of kindness and generosity by individuals like you who contribute to assure that birds and wildlife have a “home” and that other people learn about the importance and critical needs of nature.

Without these acts of philanthropy, Audubon would be able to do only a fraction of our work to provide safe places to hike and important classes about the environment. We need this community of like-minded citizens, who believe we all have a responsibility to give back and provide future generations a clean and healthy environment.

One of the reasons people give to Audubon is to express gratitude for the trails and programs they have enjoyed. Another reason is simply to express appreciation for the intangible benefits of knowing wild places still exist in our tiny state. They give to Audubon to say “thank you” for kindnesses that have come to them along their journey of discovery. They know their gift to Audubon is needed and appreciated.

Audubon's Senior Director of Advancement, Jeff Hall, is ready to talk with you not only about your reasons for making a gift, but about the various methods of giving. He can share many examples and other helpful gift-giving information. Chatting with Jeff entails no cost or obligation and may be well worth your time.

You can contact Jeff Hall by email at jhall@asri.org or by phone at 401-949-5454 ext. 3017. There is also information about giving on our website. Visit www.asri.org and click the “donate” button.

We look forward to continuing to protect nature... together.



Cardi Swamp by Scott Ruhren. Pileated Woodpecker by Peter Green

PUSHING OUR BOUNDARIES

Audubon Reaches for National Land Trust Accreditation

By Todd McLeish

At Cardi Swamp in Foster, Scott Ruhren and Kyle Hess bushwhacked through thickets, slogged through ankle-deep mud, and traversed stone walls, small hills, and dense forests. Along the way they made note of the various habitats they encountered and recorded as many species of plants and animals as they could find on the 130-acre parcel, which was donated to Audubon in 1995.

Hess, Audubon's conservation assistant, called it "wandering with a purpose." He and Ruhren, the senior director of conservation, cataloged a calling Pileated Woodpecker, several green and wood frogs, an active nest of bald-faced hornets, an orange stinkhorn fungus that smelled like rotting flesh, a solitary Atlantic white cedar tree, numerous shagbark hickories, and a high-bush blueberry shrub, among many others. They also recorded several invasive species – Japanese barberry, Asiatic bittersweet and a large patch of phragmites.

The undeveloped property, which is not open to the public, showed little sign of human impacts, other than the stone wall, a distant gun shot, and the sound of cars on the nearby roadway.

The visit by Ruhren and Hess was part of Audubon's effort to seek

national land trust accreditation, an arduous process of recordkeeping, property monitoring, and policy updates that requires all Audubon lands be monitored at least once each year in the future – no matter how remote or difficult to traverse. Offered through the Land Trust Alliance, a national organization that aims to strengthen land conservation across the country, the accreditation typically takes several years to achieve. Audubon hopes to complete the process by 2020.

Audubon's Executive Director Larry Taft said that land trust accreditation is a way of documenting and ensuring that the Society follows the proper standards and best practices in how it handles land management and conservation. The accreditation process includes a review of everything from the organization's mission, bylaws and policies to financing, fundraising and volunteer recruitment, with a special focus on recordkeeping and monitoring of all properties acquired throughout the organization's history.

"It's a rigorous look under the hood at everything we do," Taft said. "It's all about proving how solid your organization is. And it has helped us to focus, to better understand our strengths and point out those areas where we could improve."



Cardi Swamp, which is not open to the public, shows little signs of human impact.

“The process reminds us that we have an obligation to set an example and to do really sound conservation work,” he added. “There is worry in the land protection community that careless organizations may set some bad precedents and undermine the enforceability of easements and other agreements. We want to make sure that we are safeguarding the trust that the public has placed in Audubon.”

According to Julia Sharpe, who serves on Audubon’s Council of Advisors as well as on the board of the Land Trust Alliance, more than 400 of the Alliance’s 980 member organizations have been accredited in the last decade. Five Rhode Island land trusts are already accredited – Westerly, South Kingstown, Aquidneck Island, Sakonnet and Tiverton. Nationally, those that are accredited have experienced far greater organizational growth than those that are eligible but have not yet applied. For instance, accredited land trusts have doubled their operating budgets in the last decade, compared to the 37 percent increase for non-accredited land trusts. Those that are accredited also have experienced far more significant growth in the number of private donors, staff members, volunteers and acres conserved than those that have not achieved accreditation.

“The numbers are pretty amazing,” said Sharpe. “And while the public doesn’t necessarily understand what accreditation means, it is defi-

nately making a huge difference within the industry. Eighty-five percent of public agencies and foundations have indicated that accreditation has increased their confidence in land trusts, and now we’re beginning to see grant opportunities that are limited to accredited land trusts.”

It’s an especially challenging undertaking for an organization like Audubon, however, which is much older and has a much broader mission than traditional land trusts.

Most land trusts are less than 30 years old and own relatively few properties. Audubon, on the other hand, acquired its first parcel in 1923 and owns more land than all of the state’s land trusts put together. It is one of Rhode Island’s largest land holders, having acquired 167 properties and 25 conservation easements since its founding.

One of the biggest obstacles to accreditation for Audubon is that the documentation for many of its older acquisitions is lacking, especially for properties that are not open to the public and are seldom visited.

“We had a lot of catching up to do,” Taft said. “For many years when Audubon began acquiring properties, it was a ‘just do it’ type of organization. We went and did programs and acquired properties and then we’d figure out how to deal with any problems later. That approach used to work, but now we have a large backlog of projects that might not have the proper documentation.”

Thanks to a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation, Audubon was able to hire Hess to visit all of the properties, document the wildlife at each, and see how things have changed.

“One good thing is that much of what is required for accreditation related to policies and finances has already come under scrutiny with our independent annual audit, so we just may need some minor tweaks,” said Taft. “But we’re still playing catch-up on site visits and management plans for our properties. That’s the fun part Kyle is doing.”

If you ask Hess, however, it’s not all fun. He started with a list of nearly 200 properties and then created a series of maps for each one.

“The challenge was dealing with older acquisitions, some with hand-drawn maps,” he said. “Just finding lot lines can be really difficult. We don’t have surveys for most properties, so I was often comparing what we have to town assessor maps,

which aren’t always right and which sometimes had instructions like ‘take a left at the big oak.’”

Once he had constructed reasonably accurate perimeter maps, he visited each site to ground-truth his maps.

“I typically walk the perimeter and take pictures at every corner that I can,” Hess said. “Some boundaries might be in the middle of a river or an impassable wetland. Then I try to walk as much of the interior as possible to identify plants and animals, get an idea of what wildlife the property supports, and to monitor for human encroachment. Then I create a current condition report and a monitoring report.”

Documenting the boundaries of a seldom visited property isn’t like taking a leisurely stroll, especially for a committed conservationist like Hess.

“In my desire to document every corner of one property, I went a bit too far into a wetland and found myself up to my neck in 32-degree water,” he recalled. “My camera got ruined and I barely pulled myself out. Now I’m a lot wiser, and I’ll give in and admit that I can’t get to some spots. I just get as far as I can now.

“But I’m always finding interesting things,” Hess added, “like an old tree that was in the middle of a field that’s now completely wooded, or a house foundation somewhere you wouldn’t expect to find one. I frequently find hunters’ tree stands or trail cameras that hunters put out in hopes of documenting deer moving through.”

His field work also requires that Hess spend considerable time interacting with abutting landowners.

“Sometimes they wonder or worry about who’s out there on a property that seldom has visitors,”

Please turn to page 21

“We want to make sure that we are safeguarding the trust that the public has placed in Audubon.”

- Executive Director Lawrence Taft



Kristine Stuart has volunteered over 500 hours to organize the files on every property that Audubon protects.

How Can You Make *Your* Mark On Conservation?

Not everyone is able to donate a large parcel of land for conservation, but that doesn't mean you can't make a significant contribution to protecting habitat for birds and other wildlife. By adopting one acre of Audubon wildlife habitat, you can help to protect those special places that connect people with nature.

Since 1897, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island has been preserving nature throughout Rhode Island with support from donors like you. Over 9,500 acres of land are now forever preserved and protected for birds and wildlife.

Help us save this precious landscape by donating \$95 to adopt one acre of prime wildlife habitat.

Your donation supports trail maintenance, removal of invasive species and other habitat enhancements that provide maximum value to birds and wildlife for their survival. It will also help pay

for annual property monitoring to ensure our refuges are safe from illegal dumping and poaching.

From coastal salt marshes to upland forests, animals require specific habitats. As the climate changes, many species are migrating in search of new homes. These animals, if they're able to relocate, will rely on the diversity of Audubon's protected lands.

Now you can make your own mark on conservation. Adopt one acre of prime wildlife habitat. Donate for yourself, a family member or a friend. Consider adopting one acre as a thoughtful gift in a loved one's name.

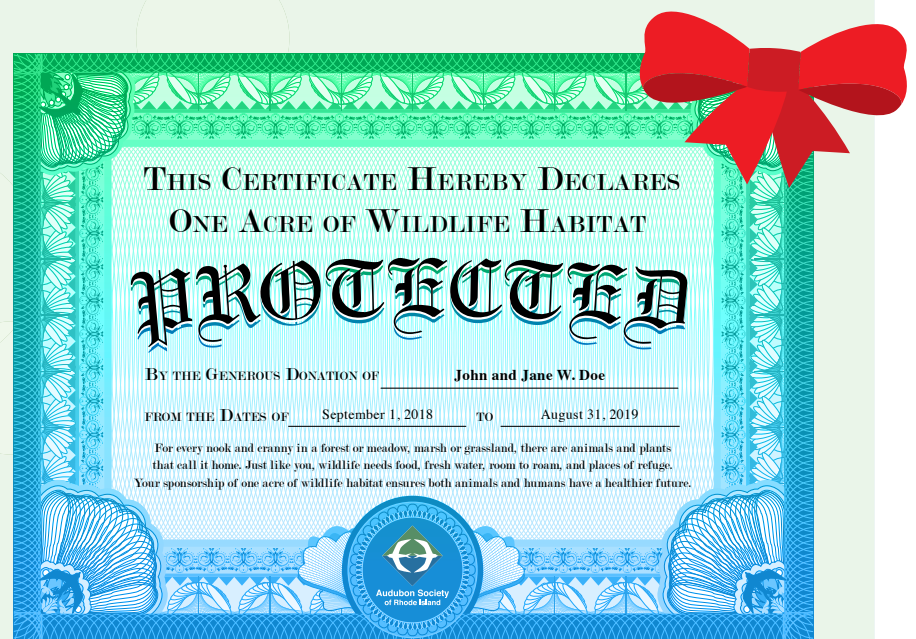
Support the birds and animals that you love by protecting the homes where they live. Nature needs your support now more than ever.



ADOPT AN ACRE

*Consider the Gift of Nature
this Holiday Season!*

Visit www.asri.org to learn more.



The Faces of Audubon in the Field

Once each week, Audubon's six-person conservation staff gets together for a work day at one of the refuges. Sometimes trail maintenance is on the agenda, or clearing trees damaged in a storm, or preparing refuge buildings for winter, or even grading a gravel parking lot. During the rest of the week, their responsibilities are even more varied.

Visitors who view the conservation staff as the face of Audubon should not be surprised to find them mowing grass, repairing kiosks, building boardwalks or doing innumerable other tasks that some may not consider conservation work. But while they are happy to answer questions, identify plants and do whatever else may be necessary to help visitors enjoy their experience on the property, there is always more to do.

"Conservation work isn't always glamorous; it's not like the traditional park ranger," said Scott Ruhren, Audubon's senior director of conservation. "One of the things that makes us especially complex is that we own a lot of buildings, which require upgrades, repairs and sometimes landlord-type duties."

Mike Cavaliere is the resident caretaker at Eppley in West Kingston, for instance, but he is a jack-of-all-trades and can be found doing repairs of one sort or another at any of Audubon's refuges. Laura Carberry is the resident refuge manager at Fisherville Brook in Exeter and an expert birder, so she leads the Wednesday Morning Bird Walk somewhere around the state, teaches birding classes, and conducts bird surveys at a wide variety of Audubon properties.

Ruhren said that the entire conservation staff floats from property to property, depending on what needs to be done. They lead public events at their designated properties, and they all pitch in at major Audubon events, from Raptor Weekend to Party for the Peregrines. Some, like Kim Calcagno, the refuge manager at the Fort and Powder Mill Ledges refuges, often lead scout programs or bring animals to church groups or nursing homes for nature presentations.

"I'm really impressed with the varied skills that the staff has," Ruhren said. "And they've developed some unexpected skills as well."

While Joe Metzen's primary role is facility maintenance at the Maxwell Mays refuge in Coventry, he has taken it upon himself to learn mushroom identification, making him Audubon's number one fungi guy. And although Cavaliere mostly manages properties and equipment, his passion is reptiles and amphibians, which led him to launch a study of vernal pools on Audubon properties.

"We encourage them to develop their passions, which provides motivation and ensures they're not always doing the same thing every day," Ruhren said. "It's not expected of them, but we encourage it."



Scott Ruhren
Senior Director of Conservation

Hiking the trails with Scott Ruhren is like having a walking botany textbook with you. He makes the study of plants fascinating and adds plenty of humorous anecdotes when he is leading programs, giving property tours or talking with the media.

As Senior Director of Conservation, Scott has been at Audubon for 13 years and is responsible for overseeing almost 9,500 acres of Audubon property across the state as well as managing the conservation crew, special projects, partnerships and collaborations with students, interns and other environmental organizations. He holds a masters degree in Botany from University of Maryland and a PhD in Ecology & Evolution from Rutgers University. Scott also has extensive training in rare species biology, habitat management and restoration.

With so many hours in the field, he likes to stress how sometimes the most unexpected things can happen in the most common of places, like how he spotted a rare RI butterfly, the hackberry emperor, in the parking area at Davis Wildlife Refuge after a kayak paddle. If you happen to meet him on the trails, listen to his tips and guidance on the special flora and fauna that the refuges hold. He has a way of making the ordinary plants along the way seem simply extraordinary.

"Effective conservation is a balance of science and society." – Scott Ruhren

"Conservation is a rewarding field with opportunities for people with different skill sets. It is not just "hugging trees," but is the field of managing natural resources...for the immediate and long-term." – Jon Scoones



Jonathan Scoones
Refuge Manager at Caratunk Wildlife Refuge

While Jon has been at Audubon for over 7 years, he is the new face of Caratunk. Managing one of Audubon's most popular wildlife refuges involves long hours and creative problem solving. Whether it is rescuing injured birds, repairing an old culvert or keeping 15 third-graders engaged on a cold winter hike.

He explained that the best part of his job is seeing visitors get excited about nature. A favorite experience was with young children on a recent salamander hike, watching their faces light up as four different species of salamanders were found. Jon holds a degree in environmental studies from Connecticut College and a graduate degree from Syracuse University. He is thrilled to be in a job where he can pass along his knowledge and enthusiasm for nature to others.



Laura Carberry

Refuge Manager at Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, Birding Expert

It's not surprising that her favorite Audubon property to visit is Lewis Dicken's Farm on Block Island, as she explains how watching the falcons flying over the bluffs can be magical. Laura Carberry is one of the best-known and respected birding experts in the State, leading the popular Wednesday Morning Bird Walks, Block Island Birding Weekend, as well as many other programs throughout the year.

But that is only part of her job. She holds a chainsaw as comfortably as a pair of binoculars and spends a great deal of time on a tractor in the fields as well. In fact, part of the reason she enjoys her job is the variety that everyday brings. From a very young age she had an insatiable curiosity for nature, which inspired her to pursue a degree in wildlife biology and conservation from URI.

Laura has been with Audubon for over 22 years and has brought her knowledge, skills and love of nature to thousands of people across Rhode Island.

"We are plumbers, carpenters, foresters, landscapers, birders, scientists and naturalists. We do it all and most of it is behind the scenes." – Laura Carberry

"One day during a program in the meadow, a child picked a praying mantis egg mass or ootheca. Soon another child found one – then another and another. We realized that the whole meadow was flush with mantis egg cases. We talked about how thousands of baby mantises would hatch in the spring. Sometimes it's hard to get humans excited about invertebrates, but when it happens so effortlessly, it is singularly joyful for me." – Kim Calcagno



Joe Metzen

Property Manager at Maxwell Mays and Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuges, Mushroom Expert

If you ask anyone at Audubon, Joe Metzen is the "mushroom guy." If you walk with him in fall, you will understand why. Autumn is his favorite season for the diversity of fungi that can be found. He points out species large and small, poisonous and edible, colorful and camouflaged. He has been with Audubon over 18 years, and his mushroom programs are some of the most popular that Audubon offers.

While Joe primarily manages the Maxwell Mays and Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuges, his favorite place to hike or work is the Emilie Ruecker Wildlife Refuge in Tiverton. The diversity of habitats there is a draw to staff and visitors alike. Like all the conservation staff, he is pulled into projects as needed, in all seasons and in all types of weather. Joe is also known for his woodworking, which is put to good use maintaining buildings, kiosks and signs for Audubon.



Kim Calcagno

Refuge Manager at Powder Mill Ledges and Fort Wildlife Refuge

What do I do with the baby rabbits in my yard? Can I deter that woodpecker on my house?

Hundreds of calls like these are directed to Kim Calcagno each year at Powder Mill Ledges. In addition, she deals almost daily with visitors inquiring about natural specimens, wildlife sightings or trail inquiries. Not only are her naturalist skills second to none, she is also an expert costume designer. Have you seen Audubon costumed characters at events? Those are Kim's handiwork.

Kim has been with Audubon for 14 years, and like the other members of the conservation staff, her job varies from day to day. From leading programs, overseeing repairs at headquarters, caring for our live birds, and discussing wildlife on talk radio, her time management skills and knowledge of nature are put to the test.

She holds undergraduate degrees from Tufts University in biology and environmental studies and a master's degree from Antioch University.

Mike Cavaliere

Property Management at Eppley Wildlife Refuge and all other Audubon Conservation Areas

He can be found at any of the Audubon wildlife refuges, always with a smile and usually handling tools or operating equipment. Mike Cavaliere has been with Audubon for two years and he monitors conditions on all Audubon conservation land, that's approximately 9,500 acres across the state. Like all conservation staff, he is out in all weather conditions, handling everything from removing fallen trees to building boardwalks and repairing equipment. The quiet Newman Refuge in Glocester and Smithfield is his favorite place to work, as that is the rural community where he grew up.

Mike comes to Audubon with 10 years of RI DEM management area ranger experience and he is working on a degree from URI in wildlife conservation biology. He has a passion for conservation and is also an enthusiastic herpetologist (one who studies reptiles and amphibians.) Mike was thrilled to find box turtles thriving at the Eppley Wildlife Refuge.



Finding Finches

With fall upon us, we start to look for birds that migrate to Rhode Island from farther north. A large number are finches. With low cone crops on spruce, ash and birch trees this year, many finches will find their way south in search of food. This is a great year to fill feeders with nyger and black oil sunflower seed to attract these birds to your backyard.

During Audubon's annual Block Island Birding Weekend at the end of September, we spotted a large number of Purple Finches flying through. Even though some Purple Finches do nest in Rhode Island, they are not common. Winter is the best time to look for these beautiful birds.

Note that they are particularly attracted to black oil sunflower seed. The males have beautiful rose-colored heads and chests. Another finch to search for this winter is the Pine Siskin. Listen for their fun little upward zip noises as they fly around. I have already seen them at Fisherville Brook this fall. These streaky finches with yellow on their wings are attracted to nyger seed, so be sure to put out your thistle feeders.



Purple Finch (*Haemorhous purpureus*)

Silcock, W.R., and J.G. Jorgensen. 2018.

Due to the poor birch seeds up North, we may also have a good chance of seeing Common Redpolls this year. These finches aren't that common in the Ocean State and most years we don't see them at all. These little birds have a red cap and usually travel in flocks. If you put out a thistle feeder, you may be lucky enough to attract them. If you do find a Redpoll flock, be sure to look for the even scarcer Hoary Redpoll. Hoary Redpolls are lighter in color and less streaked. These birds typically stay farther north but in a year like this with poor cone crops, our chances of spotting one increase.

Although a lot of the Red-winged and White-winged Crossbills will go West and East to find food, we may get a few that fly South. Our coastal beaches and areas with a lot of cones are a good place to look for these species.

We also are likely to be seeing a larger number of Blue Jays and Red-breasted Nuthatches in our area. We saw over 100 Red-breasted Nuthatches migrating through Block Island. It was an incredible sight. These little guys will love you if they can find a suet block hanging in your yard.

There is never a bad time to go birding in Rhode Island. So get out there and see what you can find this fall and winter!



Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*)

Peter Green



Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta Canadensis*)

T. Teizner



Charles Ledoux

Wild and Wondrous Raptors!

Over 2,000 people flocked to the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium on September 8 and 9, 2018 for Raptor Weekend. Visitors got up-close with eagles, hawks, falcons and owls – learning all about these amazing creatures, their habitats and conservation efforts.

New this year, Audubon introduced Westie's Birds of Prey with a free-flight program. A vocal Kookaburra (below, top right photo), introduced along with the raptors, was a crowd favorite and came close to stealing the show!



Photos above by Jason Major



OCTOPUS INFO

A California two-spot octopus (*Octopus bimaculoides*) has taken up residence in an aquarium focus tank at the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium. With its complex brain, these creatures are considered one of the world's most intelligent invertebrates.

We thought it would be fun to share some quick facts about this octopus with you.

ESCAPE ARTIST

Octopuses are considered the most intelligent of the invertebrates and can learn tricks and solve problems. They can also CAUSE problems. There are stories of mischief in aquariums as they have taken apart thermometers and gone missing from their tanks.

25 INCHES

The California two-spot octopus has arms that can grow up to 25 inches long, while its body (mantle) can grow up to 7 inches in length.



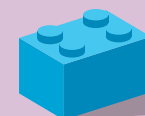
LEFTOVERS

After they have eaten, the octopus piles up leftover bits of shells and claws from their prey. Small piles of refuse called "middens" are formed at the entrance to their dens.



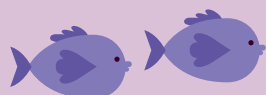
LEGOS

A favorite challenge. The octopus pulls apart Lego blocks to get tiny bits of shrimp hidden inside.



2 YEARS

The average lifespan for this species of octopus.



MASTER OF DISGUISE

The California two-spot octopus can camouflage easily to blend in with rocks, sand and beach pilings. Its name comes from the two blue spots under its real eyes - well placed markings that deter predators.

MIXED-USE PROPELLER

Their siphon is used to breathe, to expel waste, and to propel themselves.



ARM ADORNMENTS

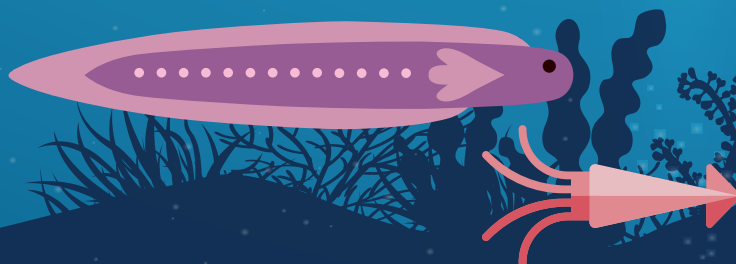
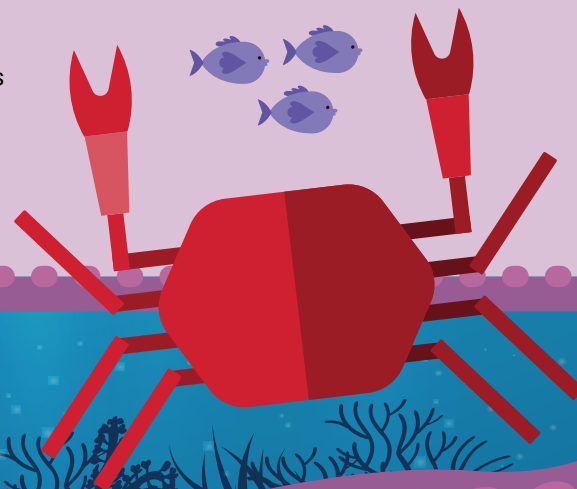
Each of the suckers adorning the octopus arms can move individually. They are used to feel and to taste as the octopus crawls across the ocean floor.

HIDE & SEEK

The octopus likes to curl up and hide. Visitors may walk right by, thinking the tank is empty and not noticing a little eye observing them from a green glass jar at the tank bottom. Other times, the octopus can put on quite the show, fluidly propelling itself across the tank.

MOLLUSKS & CRUSTACEANS

The octopus's favorite foods, although this species also eats small fish.



* Special thanks to Custom Marine Plastics of Bristol who donated a custom designed plexiglass cover for the octopus tank.

WHOO'S OUT THERE?

While we are warm inside on winter nights, owls are out and about in the cold – setting up territories, calling to their mates, finding places to nest and hunting prey. Whether you live in a big city, a small town or out on a farm, if there are trees, there are probably owls living nearby.

Take a walk on a moonlit night and LISTEN for the deep hoots of the Great Horned Owl, the horse-like whinny of the small Eastern Screech Owl or the bark of the Barred Owl that sounds like “Whooo cooks for you? Whooo cooks for you all?”



Great Horned Owl



Eastern Screech Owl



Barred Owl

Why are winter nights the best time for owl adventures?

Most owls are nocturnal, they find and catch their prey at night. They sit very still on a perch looking and listening for a meal to scurry by. Their large eyes help them see well in low light and their round face (facial disk) helps focus sound to their ears. If an owl hears something behind them, their fourteen neck bones (vertebrae) allow them to turn their heads to look directly at it. When they spot prey, they swoop down and catch it with their sharp claws or talons.

Owls that nest in Rhode Island begin setting up breeding territories and bonding with their mates in December. Calling is how they communicate with each other. If you hear the hoot of a male Great Horned Owl, listen for the deeper hoot of the female calling back. If you hear one Screech Owl whinny, listen for their neighbors to call back and say “this is my space, stay out.”

Remember that owls do not build their own nests, so look for tree holes and old hawk or crow nests that might hold owl babies.

Audubon Owl Prowls are a great way for families with older children to get outside at night and search for owls with an expert guide. See page 11 for a listing of Owl Prowl programs for children and adults.

AUDUBON NATURE TOURS & PROGRAMS

December 2018 – February 2019 For more information and to register, visit the events calendar at www.asri.org



BIRDING WITH AUDUBON

FREE WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS

Please visit Audubon's website or Facebook page for the weekly location.
Every Wednesday through June 2019; 9:00-11:00 am

WINTER BIRDING VAN TRIP: WATERFOWL AND SEABIRDS AT THE SHORE

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; December 1, 2018; 8:00 am-4:00 pm.

SACHUEST POINT BIRDING

Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge, 769 Sachuest Point Road, Middletown, RI; December 9, 2018; 9:00-11:00 am.

WINTER BIG DAY 2019

How many species can we find? Join this popular birding tradition.
Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; January 3, 2019; 8:30 am-5:00 pm.

EAGLE CRUISE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

Explore the Connecticut River to search for eagles, hawks, waterfowl, seals and other mammals.
Van departs from Powder Mill Ledges Refuge, 12 Sanderson Rd. Smithfield, RI; February 16, 2019; 7:00 am-4:00 pm.

WINTER BEACH WALK WITH AUDUBON

Moonstone Beach Road, South Kingstown, RI; January 19, 2019; 12:00-1:30 pm.

WINTER BIRDING AT SACHUEST POINT

Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge, 769 Sachuest Point Road, Middletown, RI; February 23, 2019; 10:30 am-1:00 pm.

WINTER VAN TRIP TO CAPE ANN

Visit this historic fishing community in Massachusetts known for a great diversity of wintering sea birds.
Departs from Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI; March 3, 2019; 7:00 am-5:00 pm.



EAGLE CRUISE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

Explore the Connecticut River aboard the RiverQuest and search for eagles, hawks, waterfowl, seals and other mammals. For details and to register, visit the events calendar at www.asri.org.

Van departs from Powder Mill Ledges Refuge, 12 Sanderson Rd. Smithfield, RI; February 16, 2019; 7:00 am-4:00 pm.

OWL PROWL

OWL PROWL AT MARION EPPLEY REFUGE

Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge, Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston, RI; December 6, 2018; 7:00-9:00 pm.

DAYLIGHT OWL PROWL

For years Audubon naturalists have heard owls at Fort Refuge during the day. Join Audubon on a search for these amazing creatures. Fort Nature Refuge, (Rt. 5), 1443 Providence Pike, North Smithfield, RI; January 5, 2019; 2:00-4:00 pm.

CARATUNK OWL PROWL

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA; January 12, 2019; 6:30-8:00 pm.

OWLS AND ALE

Meet some of Audubon's amazing birds of prey while enjoying locally brewed beers and take a guided walk to look and listen for owls. Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI; January 19, 2019; 6:30-8:30 pm. Age 21+.

OWLING AT FISHERVILLE BROOK

Join a small adult group for an owl program and winter walk. Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; January 25, 2019; 7:00-9:00 pm.

OWLING VAN TRIP

Hop aboard the new van and search for owls across Rhode Island. Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; March 8, 2019; 4:00-8:00 pm.



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

ANNUAL TREE SALE AND PHOTOS WITH SANTA

Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, Bristol, RI; December 1, 2018; 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

AUDUBON HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR

Artisan Gifts with a Natural Flair. Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, Smithfield, RI; December 1, 2018; 10:00 am-4:00 pm.

WREATH MAKING FOR WILDLIFE

Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, Smithfield, RI; December 15, 2018; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

HOLIDAY HIKE AT CARATUNK

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, Seekonk, MA; December 30, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.





AUDUBON NATURE CENTER AND AQUARIUM

1401 Hope Street (Route 114), Bristol, RI

PROGRAMS, LECTURES & WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

AUDUBON ANNUAL TREE SALE AND PHOTOS WITH SANTA

December 1, 2018; 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

PAINT AND SIP: WINTER BIRDS

December 15, 2018; 6:30-8:30 pm.

SEA GLASS JEWELRY

Two Dates Offered. January 12, February 16, 2019; 11:00 am-12:30 pm.

OWLS AND ALE

Two Dates Offered. January 19, February 23, 2019; 6:30-8:30 pm.

FELTED BIRD HOUSES

Two-session Class. February 2, 9, 2019; 2:00-4:00 pm.

BASICS OF WIRE WRAPPED JEWELRY

February 3, 2019; 1:00-2:30 pm.

BEEKEEPING BASICS AND MORE!

Six-week Series. February 24, March 10, March 17, March 24, March 31 and April 7. No class on March 3.

IMPROV COMEDY NIGHT WITH THE BIT PLAYERS

March 7, 2019; 6:30-8:00 pm.

AUTHOR MEET AND GREET RAPTORS: PORTRAITS OF BIRDS OF PREY BY TRAEER SCOTT

March 21, 2019; 7:00-8:00 pm.



FAMILY PROGRAMS & CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

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.

December 1, 2018: Tree Sale and Photos with Santa

January 5, 2019: Snow and Ice Adventures

February 2, 2019: Owl Valentine

March 2, 2019: Radical Reptiles

AUDUBON ANNUAL TREE SALE AND PHOTOS WITH SANTA

December 1, 2018; 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

JUNIOR NATURALISTS FOR HOME-SCHOOLED FAMILIES

December 18 and 19, 2018: Wonderful Whales

January 29 and 30, 2019: Icy Science

1:00-2:30 pm

DECEMBER SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

December 27, 28, 29, 30, 2018; 10:00 am-2:30 pm.

L'I'L PEEPS

January 10, 17, 24, 31, February 7, 14, 2019; 9:45-10:45 am.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY NATURE ACTIVITIES

January 21, 2019; 10:00 am-2:00 pm.

FEBRUARY SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

February 18 – 22, 2019; 10:00 am-2:00 pm

PRESCHOOL ADVENTURES

February 26, March 5, 12, 19, 2019; 10:00 am-11:00 am.



Meet Finn & Atlanta!

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

AUDUBON HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR

December 1, 2018; 10:00 am-4:00 pm.

WREATH MAKING FOR WILDLIFE

December 15, 2018; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

ANIMAL TRACKING FOR ADULTS

January 19, 2019; 10:00 am-12:00 pm

ANIMAL TRACKS AND SIGNS FOR FAMILIES

January 19, 2019; 2:00-4:00 pm.

NAKED TREE I.D. WORKSHOP

February 9, 2019; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

FEBRUARY SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

February 19-22, 2019



PRUDENCE ISLAND

Narragansett Bay National Estuarine
Research Reserve, Prudence Island, RI

SEALS, BIRDS AND THE HISTORY OF PRUDENCE ISLAND

December 8, 2018; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

SEAL TOUR OF PRUDENCE ISLAND

Two Dates Offered. February 21, March 21, 2019; 1:30-6:30 pm.

WINTER WILDLIFE ON PRUDENCE ISLAND

March 9, 2019; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.



Cate Brown

GUIDED NATURE WALKS

at Scenic Locations across Rhode Island

WOODLANDS BEFORE WINTER

*Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuge, Maple Valley Road, Coventry, RI;
December 10, 2018; 9:30 am-12:00 pm.*

DAYLIGHT OWL PROWL

For years Audubon naturalists have heard owls at Fort Refuge during the day. Join Audubon on a search for these amazing creatures.
*Fort Wildlife Refuge, 1443 Providence Pike, North Smithfield, RI;
January 5, 2019; 2:00-4:00 pm.*

DECEMBER SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, Bristol, RI
December 27-29, 2018; 10:00 am-2:30 pm.

Bring the kids for a wild time! Meet some cool critters, cook up treats for birds, try some icy investigations and more. *Visit the events calendar at www.asri.org for details.*



Cate Brown

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

CARATUNK WILDLIFE REFUGE

301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA

COCOA & COFFEE AT CARATUNK

December 2, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.

WHERE DO ANIMALS LIVE AT CARATUNK?

December 16, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.

HOLIDAY HIKE AT CARATUNK

December 30, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.

SNOWSHOE SUNDAY

Three Dates Offered:

January 6, February 17, March 3, 2019; 8:00-10:00 am.

CARATUNK OWL PROWL

January 12, 2019; 6:30-8:00 pm.

WILDLIFE SCAVENGER HUNT

January 21, 2019; 1:00-3:00 pm.

TRACKING ANIMALS

February 2, 2019; 11:00 am-12:30pm.

SEE THE STARS AT CARATUNK

February 10, 2019; 6:00-8:00 pm.



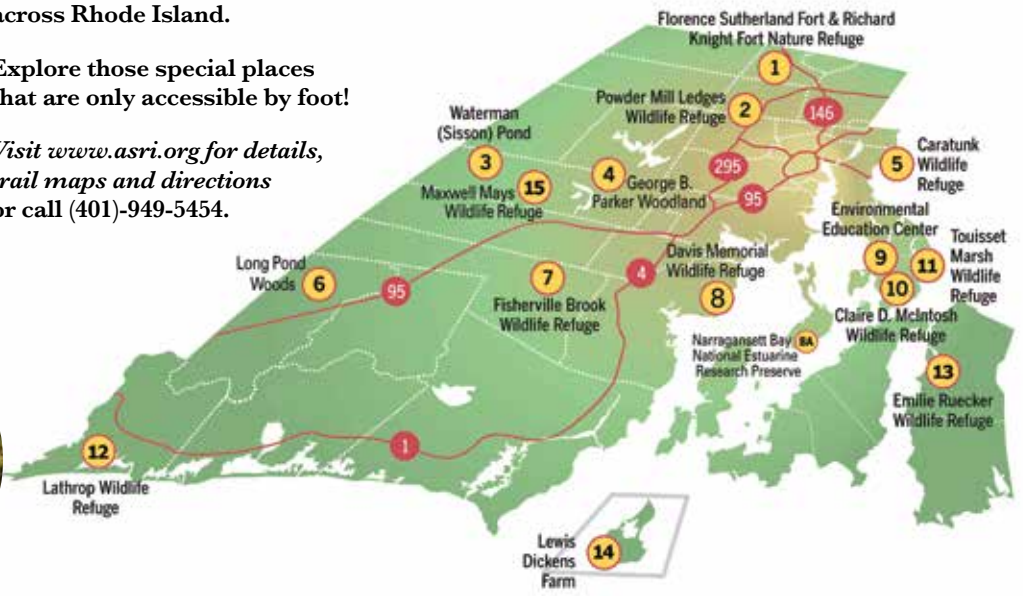
YOURS TO DISCOVER!

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND WILDLIFE REFUGES

Take to the trails and discover the natural wonders found on Audubon Wildlife Refuges across Rhode Island.

Explore those special places that are only accessible by foot!

Visit www.asri.org for details, trail maps and directions or call (401)-949-5454.



- 1 **Fort Wildlife Refuge**
1445 Providence Pike (Rt. 5), North Smithfield, RI
- 2 **Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge**
12 Sanderson Road (Rt. 5), Smithfield, RI
- 3 **Waterman Pond**
Waterman Hill Road, Coventry, RI
- 4 **George B. Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuge**
1670 Maple Valley Road, Coventry, RI
- 5 **Caratunk Wildlife Refuge**
301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA
- 6 **Long Pond Woods**
Long Pond Road, Rockville, RI
- 7 **Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge**
99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI
- 8 **Davis Memorial Wildlife Refuge**
Davisville Road, North Kingstown, RI
- 8A **Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve**, Prudence Island, RI
- 9 **Claire D. McIntosh Wildlife Refuge/ Environmental Education Center**
1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI
- 10 **Touisset Marsh Wildlife Refuge**
Touisset Road, Warren, RI
- 11 **Lathrop Wildlife Refuge**
Route 1A, Westerly, RI
- 12 **Emilie Ruecker Wildlife Refuge**
Seapowet Avenue, Tiverton, RI
- 13 **Lewis-Dickens Farm**
Cooneymus Road, Block Island, RI
- 14 **Maxwell Mays Wildlife Refuge**
2082 Victory Highway (Rte 102), Coventry, RI

FISHERVILLE BROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE

99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI

WINTER BIRDING VAN TRIP: WATERFOWL AND SEABIRDS AT THE SHORE

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; December 1, 2018; 8:00 am-4:00 pm.

OWLING AT FISHERVILLE BROOK

Join a small group owl program and walk for adults. Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; January 25, 2019; 7:00-9:00 pm.

SNOWSHOEING BY THE FULL MOON

February 18, 2019; 7:00-9:00 pm

OWLING VAN TRIP

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; March 8, 2019; 4:00-8:00 pm.



WINTER BIRDING VAN TRIP

WATERFOWL AND SEABIRDS AT THE SHORE

Hop aboard the new Audubon van and visit Rhode Island's coastal habitats and ponds to look for winter waterfowl and seabirds. Please dress for the weather, bring a lunch and optics. For more information and to register, visit the events calendar at www.asri.org.

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; December 1, 2018; 8:00 am-4:00 pm.

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

Work in Progress: Enhancements at Caratunk in Full Swing

By Lawrence Taft, Executive Director

Although Audubon primarily protects land to conserve habitat for birds and other wildlife, over a dozen of our properties are open to the public. These wildlife refuges are designed with scenic walking trails and some are particularly well suited for educational programming.

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge in Seekonk, MA is one such property that is especially popular with the public. It has a variety of scenic habitats including open fields, forests and wetlands, all within easy walking distance. Caratunk offers wooden bridges over bubbling streams, lovely meadows and a big, white barn. The refuge's proximity to Providence and its suburbs make it a popular spot for hikers of all ages. With so many traversing the trails, Audubon felt the need to enhance the visitor experience at Caratunk, while also carefully managing the needs of wildlife.

One of the first projects now being enjoyed by visitors is the new trail system and improved signage that was completed in the summer of 2017. Next on the itinerary was the expansion of the parking area to hold more cars and to create a more inviting entrance to the refuge.

In August, when summer camp ended, contractors began scraping and shaping the gravel and grass parking area with earth-moving machinery to improve the drainage and to create a handicapped accessible parking area near the barn that serves as a nature center for visitors. This fall new plantings will create a rain garden, which will also attract pollinators. Thanks to a grant from the Champlin Foundations as well as gifts from individual donors, the work is expected to be complete before the onset of winter.

Future projects for Caratunk include extensive habitat restoration for grassland nesting birds

and pollinators and improving the comfort and energy efficiency of the nature center including brighter and more efficient LED lighting and new heating/cooling systems.

Audubon wishes to thank the following donors who have contributed to these ongoing renovations.

- R. Keith Blackwell
- Dickson and Emily Boening
- Joseph and Laura Browne
- Loren Byrne and Kim Seymour
- Nathan and Mary Chace
- Charles and Eilish Clarkson
- Mary E. Costello
- Tony and Leslie Courtney
- Sonya and Jay Dent
- Suzanne French
- Meghan Frost
- David and Jean Golden
- Thomas Golden
- Pamela and Paul Goulet
- J. William and Cristina Harsch
- Owen Heleen
- Jana Hesser
- Constance and John Jacobucci
- Helen Jankoski
- Barbara and James Kenney
- George and Janis Kortyna
- Deborah S. Linnell
- Sara Low
- Terry Meyer
- Linda Miller
- Rosemary Moore and Josh Nesmith
- James Morris
- Colleen Murphy
- Steven and Lisa O'Brien
- Elizabeth Paquette and Jacqueline Proulx
- Nancy Poor
- Leslie Samayoa
- Kathy Schnabel
- Rafael and Amanda Soares
- Martin and Charlotte Sornborger
- Susan and Edward Synan
- Maija Lutz and Peter Tassia
- Michael Viveiros and Suzanne Dunkl
- Cynthia Warren and Martin Bauermeister
- Gary and Kathryn Wessel

Audubon Osprey Monitor Training



Photos by Butch Lombardi

Attend this free two-hour training session to learn about the Audubon Osprey Monitoring Program and how to become a monitor. Attendees should be over 16, have binoculars or a spotting scope and have access to a computer.

*Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, Seekonk, MA;
February 24, 2019; 11:00 am-1:00 pm.*

*Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium, Bristol, RI;
February 26, 2019; 6:00-8:00 pm.*

*Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, Smithfield, RI;
March 3, 2019; 1:00-3:00 pm.*

*Kettle Pond Visitor Center, Charlestown, RI;
March 10, 2019; 1:00-3:00 pm.*



The entrance to Caratunk has recently been transformed with a new rain garden and improved parking area.

The Evening Was Lit!

*Thanks to Audubon Members
for Making AuduBonfire a Hit!*

Great music, delicious food, candle-lit trails, bonfires and picture perfect weather—all combined to create a memorable evening to honor and thank our members.

On September 28, over 300 members walked the lighted trails to stations of bonfires, were engaged by costumed characters, made s'mores, played lawn games, danced along to live music and more. With the overwhelming response and such positive feedback, we can't wait to do it again!

We are looking forward to more s'mores with our members in 2019!



Thank you to AuduBonfire sponsors Green Energy Consumers Alliance (formerly PP&L), Ethan Tucker (for Bristol Town Council), Doug Gablinske (for State Rep in District 69), The Mint Gallery, The Kimberly Group Real Estate and Harbor Bath and Body.

AUDUBONFIRE

Let's do it again! Watch for details on AuduBonfire 2019.

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



What is that big, wooden, house-like structure in the Pollinator Discovery Garden at the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol?

It's an AMAZING home for bugs designed by John Gywnne, constructed by Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium Caretaker Barry Cohen, and completed with the help of staff and volunteers. The structure was installed in August and staff has been filling it with bricks, wood, sticks, reeds and other natural items that insects can use for nests and refuge.

Bug-ingham Palace was completed in October, ready to accept insects for the winter months. Stop by and take a look at this creative installment that supports the health of our native pollinators.

Audubon would like to thank United Natural Foods, Inc. for making this project possible.



Insect hotel under construction



Compartments are filled with a variety of insect nesting materials



The structure makes a visual impact in the Pollinator Discover Garden

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.

- Blount Fine Foods
- Blue State Coffee
- Citizens Bank
- Dassault Systemes SIMULIA Corp.
- Green Energy Consumers Alliance
- Lyons & Zaremba, Inc.
- MetLife
- New England GreenStart
- Nourishing World
- Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP
- Perfect Supplements
- Rhode Island PBS
- United Natural Foods, Inc.
- Whole Foods Market

GIFTS IN HONOR

The people listed here 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: Jean Bernstein

From: Christine Skibski

In Honor of: Greg and Karen Breene

From: Porter and Hillary Birtell

In Honor of: Jeffrey Hall

From: Gayle Amos

In Honor of: Pattie King

From: Paul Peckham

In Honor of: Sophie Amelie Murphy

From: Janet Koladay

In Honor of: Eli Schwartz and MacKenzie Brigham's wedding

From: Brianna Abbey

Katherine Berry

Kimberly Bowerman

Dallas Briney

In Honor of: Eli Schwartz and MacKenzie Brigham's wedding continued

Peter Brown

Amanda Clayton

Alexander Duncan

Pamela Frank and Howard Nelson

Mandy and Conrad Gees

Sophie Gees

Dale Gordineer

Michael Greenberg

Sonya Haines

Danielle Heller

Peter Hochschild

Betsy Robichaud Hopkins

Kate Pines Kirschner

Deborah Pines

Michael and Vicky Pratt

Emily Schwartz

Bob Vaughn and Kate McNulty

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:

John C. "Andy" Anderson

From: Kathy Robrman

In Memory of: Edith Anthony

From: Eric Sjoblom

In Memory of: Rachel Carson

From: Johnston High School Music Department

In Memory of: Zechariah Chafee, Jr.

From: Adalaide Comegys

In Memory of: Irving Chucnin

From: Peter and Molly Ann Blumenthal & family

Sandy Chang

Elizabeth Cohen

William and Carol Corrao

Michael and Jane Litner

Toby and Stan Ore

Jim and Maggie Plasse

Paul and Gail Principe

Jay and Roberta Singer

Robert and Rhonda Smith

Denise and Ted Winston

In Memory of: Alfred L. Hawkes

From: Laura Landen

In Memory of: Richard Laramee

From: Frances Pacheco

Michael and Nancy Ramsey

Lisa St. Pierre

In Memory of: Francine Read

From: Warren Boothman

Paul and Carol Buteau

Donna and Christine Filonow

Sonia Healy

John and Arline McKenna

Robert and Helen Reall

In Memory of: Pauline Sherboten

From: Stephen and Susan Archambault

In Memory of: Sylvia (Flint) Silvia

From: Jason Goffe - New England Raider Boosters

In Memory of: William Vican

From: Anne Anderson

Ronald and Donna Bodell

George and Jill Bowen

Lee Boyan

Vivian Dafoulas

J.A.R. Bakers' Supply

Harutyun and Uta Matkasyan

Robert and Laura Pesare

Mary Samaras

Thomas and Barbara Walsh

Volunteers from Dassault Systemes SIMULA Corp. Roll Up Their Sleeves and Clear Invasive Species at Powder Mill Ledges

On September 14, volunteers from Dassault Systemes SIMULA Corp. spent a day with clippers and shovels clearing invasive species and pruning along Audubon's frontage on Route 44 in Smithfield. The company also donated over \$2000 toward the construction of a new owl mew at Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge.

This is the third large volunteer project that the company has completed for Audubon in Smithfield. Their volunteer enthusiasm, commitment to conservation and ongoing support is most appreciated.

We thank the volunteers and management of Dassault Systemes SIMULA Corp. and look forward to this continued partnership.



Powder Mill Ledges Refuge Manager Kim Calcagno (at right in hat) with the many volunteers from Dassault Systemes SIMULA Corp. before they start work on the refuge.



SAVE THE DATE! 2019 RHODE ISLAND LAND AND WATER SUMMIT

Saturday, March 9, 2019, 7:30 am – 4:30 pm
University of RI Memorial Union, Kingston, RI



Get smart about
your environment

For the latest Rhode Island environmental news delivered to your inbox every Tuesday, subscribe to ecoRI News.

ecoRI.org/read

ecoRI
news

Orange You Glad There's a New Lobster at Audubon?

Another orange lobster has joined the crew of sea creatures in the Nature Center and Aquarium tidepool exhibit.

The Stop and Shop grocery store in Fall River received this orange beauty in their lobster shipment and offered to donate it to Audubon. The female lobster is bright orange and estimated to be only around 7 years old. Stop by and say hello!



TWICE THE FUN
= BECAUSE =
WE KNOW YOU *Love*

BIRD WATCHING

Rhode Island PBS **Learn**

7AM WEEKDAYS
digital 36.1
RI cable 08

10AM WEEKDAYS
digital 36.2
Cox 808/Verizon 478

RIPBS.ORG



Planning a Celebration?

Weddings
The Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol, Rhode Island is a scenic destination for weddings, bridal showers or photography.



Birthday Parties
Customize your child's party and have a wild time!



Getaways
Audubon's Maxwell Mays Cottage in Coventry, Rhode Island is an ideal and affordable location for a short getaway or weeklong family vacation.

Naturally, Audubon Has You Covered.

For birthday party options and rental details, visit www.asri.org and click on the services link.

Climb Aboard... and Away We Go!

Thanks to Donors, Audubon Guided Birding and Nature Trips Are Now Offered in the Comfort of a NEW Van.

Join a Birding Trip with Audubon in the New Van! Climb aboard the NEW Audubon van and travel in comfort to scenic birding destinations.

Visit the events calendar at www.asri.org for details and to register.



The new Audubon van was put to good use during the annual Block Island Birding Weekend.

Thanks to the donors listed below, Audubon now offers guided trips in the comfort of a new passenger van. Comfortable seats, a smooth ride, large windows and a climate-controlled environment make our excursions even more enjoyable. Audubon thanks the many donors who made this possible.

- Palmira Brummett and James Fitzgerald
- Nicholas and Julia Califano
- Ying and Kyin Cho
- Charles and Eilish Clarkson
- Mary Ann Cofrin and Tim Pafik
- Joanne Conklin
- Mary E. Costello
- Stacy Couto
- Meg Curran
- Priscilla De La Cruz
- Stephen M. Delozzo
- Jeannine M. Dougherty

- Robert and Wendy Fournier
- Andrew Geoghegan
- David and Jean Golden
- Thomas Golden
- Paul and Virginia Gonville
- Peter Green and Adam Olszewski
- Jeffrey Hall
- Donald Heitzmann
- Owen Heleen
- Jana Hesser
- Constance and John Jacobucci
- Helen Jankoski

- Lorell Jones
- Jessica Kiamco
- Dian Kriz
- John and Alexandra LaForce
- Deborah S. Linnell
- Robert and Claire McCorry
- Lory Snady McCoy and Charles McCoy
- Esselton and Tantha McNulty
- Kelle' O'Connor
- Stan Oldstein
- James and Carol O'Neill
- Candy and Christopher Powell

- Mike Preis
- Henry B. Reiley III and Anne L. Reiley
- Steve and Judith Ruscito
- Sandra Saunders and Fred Griffith
- Kathy Schnabel
- Roland and Stephanie Serino
- Kristine and Everett Stuart
- Maija Lutz and Peter Tassia
- Bill and Beth Tyler
- Michael Viveiros and Suzanne Dunkl
- Cynthia Warren and Martin Bauermeister
- Barbara and Randy Watts

WINTER BIRDING VAN TRIP: WATERFOWL AND SEABIRDS AT THE SHORE

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI ; December 1, 2018; 8:00 am-4:00 pm.

WINTER BIG DAY 2019

How many species can we find? This popular program has become a tradition. Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; January 3, 2019; 8:30 am-5:00 pm.

EAGLE CRUISE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

Van departs from Powder Mill Ledges Refuge, Smithfield, RI; February 16, 2019; 7:00 am – 4:00 pm.

WINTER VAN TRIP TO CAPE ANN

Cape Ann, Massachusetts, is a historic fishing community known for a great diversity of wintering sea birds. Departs from Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI; March 3, 2019; 7:00 am-5:00 pm.

Johnston High School Band Makes Donation in Memory of Rachel Carson

In January 2018, Rachel Carson, 18, of Johnston passed unexpectedly. She was a senior at Johnston High School where she was a proud member of the band and she had planned to attend the University of Maine to study wildlife ecology.

To honor Rachel, the Johnston High School Music Department took donations in her name at their Friday Night Live event in October. Due to her love of nature, they chose to donate the funds to Audubon in her memory.



Left to right: Zachary Morin, Jordan Oliveira, JHS Music Director Ronald Lamoureux, Audubon Senior Director of Advancement Jeff Hall, Kelsey Scott, Noah Campbell, JHS Principal Dennis Morrell.

International Game Technology Staff Volunteer in Pollinator Discovery Garden

International Game Technology (IGT) staff members joined Audubon Board Member Terry Meyer in the new Pollinator Garden at the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium on August 14, 2018 for a productive day of planting, watering and weeding. Thank you to these hard-workers and to United Way of Rhode Island – a great resource for creating connections in our community.





Audubon Society of Rhode Island

2018 ANNUAL MEETING

October 21, 2018

The Squantum Club in East Providence, Rhode Island was the setting for Audubon's 2018 Annual Meeting. Dr. Charles Clarkson, Audubon board member and RI Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator was the keynote speaker and shared his perspective on the state of the birds in Rhode Island. Meeting attendees also heard from Gubernatorial candidates Democrat Governor Gina Raimondo, Republican Alan Fung and independent Joe Trillo as the election approaches in November.



Audubon Board Member Charles Clarkson addresses meeting attendees on the state of the birds in Rhode Island.

Newly Elected to the Board of Directors

Robert Berkelhammer

Bob Berkelhammer is a founding partner with the law firm Chace, Ruttenberg & Freedman, LLP. He earned a B.A. from the University of Rochester and a J.D. from Boston University School of Law. Mr. Berkelhammer specializes in corporate and real estate law and was recognized in the 2018 edition of Best Lawyers for his work. As a member of the firm's Real Estate Group, he represented clients in a variety of real estate transactions, including a substantial practice assisting developers of affordable housing.

Mr. Berkelhammer has served as President of the Jewish Family Service. He has also served on the board of R.I. Jewish Historical Association and the Jewish Federation of R.I. A Rhode Island native, he resides in Providence with his family.

David Caldwell, Jr.

Dave Caldwell is Owner/Principal of Caldwell & Johnson, Green Builders. He earned a B.A. from the University of Rhode Island, an M.A. from Columbia University and an M.B.A. from the University of California. As part of the growing "green building movement," the company is committed to building homes in an energy efficient, environmentally sustainable manner.

Mr. Caldwell has extensive experience in sustainable land use and environmental policy. He has served on boards for the RI Builders Association, Builders Healing Heroes, Housing Works RI, RI Green Building Council, Housing Resource Commission and RI Climate Change Coordination Council Advisory Board. Mr. Caldwell resides in Providence with his family.

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island gratefully acknowledges the term of service of Thomas Humphreys who is stepping down from the board of directors this year. Mr. Humphreys will continue to serve as a Trustee of the Caratunk Wildlife Trust.



Volunteer of the Year

Kristine Stuart

North Kingstown resident **Kristine Stuart** was honored for her dedication and strong commitment to Audubon. Ms. Stuart has been a member and volunteer with Audubon for over 30 years. However, within the last five years alone she has logged over 500 volunteer hours. Ms. Stuart has played a key role in Audubon's effort to seek national land trust accreditation, an arduous process of recordkeeping, property monitoring, and policy updates.



Audubon Senior Director of Conservation Scott Rubren presents the Volunteer of the Year Award to Kristine Stuart.

Educators of the Year

Educators **Renee MacDougall** and **Kelly Brum** of the **Rockwell School** in Bristol, Rhode Island were honored for their ongoing commitment to providing hands-on science and nature experiences in their classrooms. For the past four years, MacDougall and Brum have brought Audubon educators into the Rockwell School for a variety of nature and science programs including studies on birds, whales, vertebrates and ecosystems. These programs enhance the science curriculum and strengthen the children's connection to the natural world.



From left: Audubon Educator Sharon Riley, Awardee Kelly Brum, Awardee Renee MacDougall, Audubon Educator Lisa Maloney, and Audubon Senior Director of Education Lauren Parmelee.

Land Trust Accreditation, Continued from page 4

he said. “And sometimes those same people turn into volunteer monitors who are happy to keep an eye on the property for us.”

While Hess has spent close to three years making field visits, long-time Audubon member and volunteer Kristine Stuart has dedicated a similar amount of volunteer office time to the project. And she estimates that she still has at least a year to go.

Stuart, whose husband Everett serves on the Audubon board of directors, has the unenviable task of organizing the files for every property acquisition or easement agreement, separating the legal paperwork from the stewardship records, and ensuring that nothing vital is missing.

“Everett said that the thing that was slowing down the accreditation process was getting the property files in some sort of order,” Stuart said. “I seem to have a knack for organizing, so I said I can do that.”

While she didn’t realize exactly what she was getting herself into, she never complains. Working alphabetically by property name, she typically selects a file and tries to figure out how best to organize the documents. It’s not uncommon for her to find 40-year-old telephone messages, jumbled wildlife survey information, and notes from discussions about an array of issues mixed in with copies of deeds, maps and wills. Many files contain multiple copies of many documents when only one is necessary.

“For Eppley, I had a full file drawer of stuff to throw out,” Stuart said. “It can be daunting.”

But she also made some interesting discoveries. While reviewing documents from the acquisition of the Lewis-Dickens Farm on Block Island, she found several hand-written letters from legendary conservationist Elizabeth Dickens to Audubon’s first executive director, Roland Clement, most of which reported on birds she had observed on the property. Those letters have now been scanned and stored electronically in Audubon’s archives.

Stuart even uncovered a ghost story from Parker Woodland in Coventry.

“For a short time, the house at Parker was rented to a man who called the office one day to report that there was a ghost on the second floor and things were flying off the walls,” she said.

Despite what most might call tedious work, Stuart is committed to continuing the project and completing it in time for the accreditation review.

“Most of my career I did a lot of long-term projects, and you know that they’re going to take a while,” she said. “I actually enjoy the work. I enjoy the chatter of conversations in the office, and I enjoy finding these little personal stories. And for a short time, I get to know each of the properties.”

Ruhren is especially appreciative of the work she has done.

“Kristine has been terrific at sorting through all the records, putting them in order, and purging what she can. It’s been a huge commitment to get things in order, but in the end, it’s going to be a benefit to our conservation efforts to have this accreditation. It builds Audubon’s reputation and it adds cachet to grant applications.”

Taft agrees. “It may sound like it’s just a lot of housecleaning, and it is, but at the same time, when something comes up related to some of our properties, we know we’ll have the answer,” he said. “I’m thrilled we’ve come this far and all this work is well worth the end result of national accreditation.”

Todd McLeish is a life-long birder, freelance science writer and author of several books about wildlife, including “Return of the Sea Otter.”



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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.

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If you wish to join the 1897 Society and help promote the values and mission of Audubon, please contact Jeff Hall at 401-949-5454 ext. 3017.

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.

Gardening for Pollinators at Home

Editorial by Meg Kerr, Senior Director of Policy

My husband, Bob, loves to garden. Over the past decades, his work has transformed our half acre grassed lot into a quirky oasis of gardens and trees. Right after September 11, 2001 he planted a dawn redwood tree. It was a small, five-foot tall remembrance. Today, it towers over our home, and spreads its branches over a big part of our back yard. At about the same time, we celebrated Christmas with a live fraser fir, and he chipped frozen earth to plant it in early January. That tree also loved our yard and grew enormous, filling much of our front yard.

Last year, we decided that the fir was too big and needed to come down so we could have sunlight on our other gardens. Bob contacted the Governor's office to see if we could donate it to the State House, and our tree was selected as the State House Christmas tree. On a cold November day, a crew arrived to take it down and deliver it to Providence. We later removed the stump and dug up the large area that was once covered by the tree and decided to turn the area, now wide open and sunny, into a pollinator garden.

We read up on pollinator gardens and recognized that weed control is a critical consideration. Because the site had been under a very large tree, we assumed that weed seeds were limited. We turned over the soil and removed tree roots until the site was thin layer of pine needles and soil. Before winter arrived, Bob planted daffodils throughout the new garden area and then covered it with a pollinator meadow seed mix. Following the instructions that came with the seeds, he mixed the seed with sand, spread the mix by hand and used his feet to stomp the seeds in place.

In the spring, the small daffodils came up first, followed by other daffodils and then the wildflowers. The spring was cool and wet and the early garden was a sea of California poppies and Islandic poppies which were followed by complete coverage of catchfly and bachelor buttons. Later in the season, the garden transitioned to black-eyed Susan and Coreopsis tintoria.

Gardens, like us, change over the years. My family transitioned from planting Christmas trees in

January to planning gardens for pollinators in an effort to support these insects in crisis. Some of us have vegetable gardens, some have small window boxes, and some of us are lucky enough to own larger spaces for an oasis of wildflowers. Please consider pollinators as you plan your gar-



The Kerr family donated their large fraser fir to be used as the Christmas Tree in the State House. In its place, they planted a garden of wildflowers to support pollinators.

den spaces. If you live in an apartment and have a balcony, put out some pots of pollinator friendly plants. Add flowers to the edges of your vegetable garden or designate a space for pollinator friendly plantings in your landscaping. And if these options are not available to you, recognize and thank the folks around you who support pollinator-friendly plantings.



Information on planting a pollinator meadow:
<http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/EstablishingPollinatorMeadows.pdf>

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND REPORT

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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.

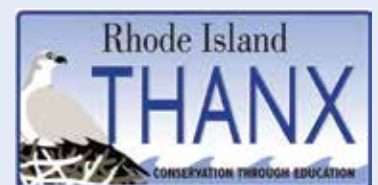
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Register through the events calendar at www.asri.org.

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Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, Seekonk, MA
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