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Audubon Society of Rhode Island

REPORT



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VOLUME 52, NO. 1

WINTER 2018



THEIR FIRST BRUSH WITH NATURE

Audubon Builds the Next Generation of Conservationists

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

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From the Desk of the Executive Director



Building Environmental Citizenship

Audubon's mission is to protect birds, other wildlife and their habitats through conservation, education and advocacy. Our three branches are intertwined and must work closely together for us to meet our goals. This issue of the Report dives specifically into our education mission and explains not only what we do and how we do our job, but also why. We aim to develop *Environmental Citizenship*.

To take a paragraph from our strategic plan: The major outcome we are looking for from our programs is the development of *Environmental Citizenship*, where people take action and make choices that promote environmental health including the political and financial support necessary to achieve environmentally protective public policy and strong environmental organizations.

We believe that people will protect what they value. And what people value most are those things that are important to their personal wellbeing or that of their loved ones. Adults and children need memorable positive experiences with the natural world along with the awareness, knowledge, skills, options and tools they need to take action. Through our environmental education initiatives, Audubon provides opportunities for those experiences in nature and the development of environmental citizenship.

To ensure environmentally protective public policy requires educated and supportive legislators and regulators, along with the active presence, knowledge and persistent vigilance of watchdogs like Audubon and supporters like you.

Thanks again for your continued and steadfast support of this work.

Lawrence J. F. Taft, Executive Director

Will Power

More people make charitable contributions while they are living than later through their wills. In fact, most people never get around to making a will. According to a Gallup poll in 2016, 56% of Americans do not have a will.

What is there about a will that puts people off? Why do so many of us seem to lack the will to make a will? Well, for one thing, it is inconvenient to find a good attorney, make an appointment, and go through the process of gathering information and making decisions. It's much easier to put it off.

Another reason to delay is the uneasiness many feel in having to contemplate their own death or the death of a spouse. They plan to face these feelings later. Always later.

Still others lack a will because they consider it unimportant or irrelevant. They may believe they have too few assets to bother with or may assume that everything will go automatically and equally to members of the family. They fail to understand the benefits of a will, not only in settling their estates according to their wishes, but in making things easier for the loved ones left behind.

Whatever the reason, making a will takes will power. It requires not only choice, but also action.

At Audubon, we know the difference a will can make. We have witnessed the peace of mind it provides, not only for the individual, but also for their family members. We have seen as well the good a bequest can do for protecting birds and wildlife and the legacy it creates. Indeed, Audubon depends on estate gifts to help us serve future generations.

We would like to send you a complimentary will information kit that includes helpful details about making a will. It also contains material on basic estate planning and ways you can use planned giving techniques to benefit your charitable interests, as well as yourself.

The kit is available by emailing Jeff Hall, Senior Director of Advancement at jhall@asri.org or by calling 401-949-5454 x3017. Jeff is also available to talk with you confidentially about your gift and estate plans, and to assist you in finding a good attorney.



Jane Blount, long-time Audubon member and supporter passed away in 2016, leaving Audubon in her will. Her generous gift is now permanently protecting nature in Rhode Island. From right: The late Jane Blount with Audubon Donor Relations Manager Sharon Cresci.



THEIR FIRST BRUSH WITH NATURE

Audubon Builds the Next Generation of Conservationists

By Todd McLeish

On a chilly February morning in the brightly lit church hall adjacent to St. Kevin's School in Warwick, 30 second graders gathered around Audubon environmental educator Lisa Maloney. They were learning about the adaptations animals have developed to survive the winter. Asking question after question to keep the children engaged, Maloney elicited answers about how a beaver stays warm, how its tail is used to communicate, and why the animals chew on tree branches, among many others.

The children could not have been happier. With every question asked, numerous students politely raised their hand to answer, and it was obvious they were pleased with the diversion from their usual classroom activities. When correct answers led to several children being selected to "model" a faux beaver vest, tail, teeth and flippers, it was clear by their smiles that the children were proud to stand before their classmates, despite their outlandish attire.

And yet the activities were just getting started in Audubon's Animal Adaptations program. After dividing into groups, Maloney guided the

students through activities at four education stations, where they matched photos of animals with the food they eat, manipulated a turtle shell, deer antler, racoon pelt and beaver skull, and discovered the seasonal activities each animal undertakes. While the noise level in the room rose precipitously during this part of the program, the students' enthusiasm did, too. And it continued as they played a board game to learn whether particular animals "stay, sleep or go away" during the winter.

The highlight of the morning came when Maloney introduced the children to Autumn, a four-foot long corn snake, which immediately brought the students to rapt attention. Again, Maloney discussed how the animal's physical attributes – like scales, coloration and tongue – help it survive in the environment. And then she encouraged each student to touch Autumn's scales. "What does she feel like?" asked Maloney. "Is she wet? Slimy? Dry? What colors do you see on her scales?"

It was clearly the most exciting moment of the children's day, and a lesson they would not soon forget.

Please turn to page 4



Audubon's Inflatable Whale program educates students on whale biology, anatomy and adaptations.

Their First Brush With Nature Continued from page 3

Environmental education has been part of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island's mission since its earliest days. And it didn't take long for the Society to realize how critical it is to focus much of its education efforts on children.

Audubon educators are often the first to introduce Rhode Island children to the wonders of the natural world. From L'il Peeps and summer camps to urban middle school programs and developing schoolyard habitats, Audubon is a leader in environmental education. Considerable time is spent dispelling fears and encouraging a love of science and nature among those who previously had little exposure to it.

Lauren Parmelee is the ideal leader for this effort. Audubon's senior director of education, she said that she began her love affair with nature while still a toddler.

"Your brain is so malleable when you're young, so if you spend time outside observing nature, it's easy to get hooked. It becomes a part of who you are," she said. "That's why it's so important for us to get young children outside and to encourage their caretakers to take them outside, too."

"But it's not enough to introduce nature to kids just once; you have to nurture curiosity as they grow. And to do that, we have to build relationships with school systems."

Audubon's educational offerings have grown to be quite extensive. School programs now include hands-on science lessons for all ages in the classroom, at Audubon wildlife refuges, and in the Environmental Education Center in Bristol. Many programs focus on animal adaptations, senses, habitats and ecosystems, and all align with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS are K-12 science content standards that set educational expectations for students. The NGSS were developed by states, including RI, to improve science education for all students.) Also offered are special programs on maple sugaring, geology

and biodiversity. Interactions with live animals – from hawks and owls to snakes and turtles – are especially popular, as is a program that uses a life-sized inflatable whale to teach about mammal anatomy and adaptations. Outdoor field explorations at Audubon refuges introduce life in fields, forests, wetlands, ponds and coastal regions.



Students head to the outdoor classroom in Bristol to study life in the Wetlands.

After-school and summer science enrichment programs are offered in a variety of formats, including weekly series, one-time visits and field trips, and cover many of the same topics as the classroom programs. Audubon Explorers targets the elementary grades with environmental investigations of the schoolyard, visits with live animals, and nature games, while Urban Naturalists introduces middle schoolers to wild plants and animals in their neighborhoods, plus visits to parks, hikes and hands-on experiments.

The reaction from students and teachers alike is always overwhelmingly positive. Cindi Rapoza, who runs the Little Peeps Montessori School in Little Compton, for example, has scheduled monthly visits from Audubon – including a live animal – for several years. She said that nature is a core part of her curriculum, and Audubon programs provide unique opportunities for her students to get close-up contact and education about native wildlife.

Please turn to page 8

READY, SET, GO!

In this day and age when video games and computer screens have taken the place of outdoor play, Audubon educators encourage families to get outside and unplug. You don't need to be a biologist to have fun in nature, just some curiosity and a sense of adventure. Throughout this issue we have listed some ideas for family explorations. So gather up the brood and go outside!

GO OUTSIDE! FAMILY FUN ON HIKES

Hikes with children can take place in a park, on an Audubon wildlife refuge, or even in your backyard. Kids move at a different pace and are lower to the ground – giving them a unique perspective. You may find their sense of wonder is quite contagious. Here are some fun activities to try on hikes.

"I SPY"

This is a fun game where someone starts by saying "I spy with my little eye..." then giving a brief description of something they see. Everyone else tries to guess what it is.

SCAVENGER HUNTS

There are a variety of scavenger hunts you can make up on your hike, like looking for different colors, shapes, textures or specific items. Simply ask children to find a natural item that fits the description you have given.

NATURE RUBBINGS

Take along some crayons and paper to capture different textures you find. Place the paper over the item, like a leaf or bark, and rub with the crayon. Collect rubbings and you will have a visual story of your hike.



JOURNALING & SKETCHING

This is a great way to engage older children and those more artistically inclined. Bring a notebook, a pencil and your creative spirit.



Audubon Roots Run Deep in Environmental Education

Since its founding in 1897, Audubon has seen tremendous dedication from a large number of educators. Three of the most celebrated are listed below. Their insight, dedication and persistence built the platform that supports environmental education today, not only at Audubon, but throughout Rhode Island.

Elizabeth Dickens

A shining moment in Audubon's formative years occurred in 1914 when leaders decided to hire Elizabeth Dickens to teach bird study on Block Island. She would become a legend in Rhode Island for a detailed record of 52 years of bird observation. It is still considered one of the world's best and longest diaries of bird observances from one location.

Her records have been invaluable to the world of ornithology, but she also is fondly remembered for imparting a love of nature to hundreds of local children over the years, as she enthusiastically taught programs in schools for decades.



reach a larger audience. Clement hired Al Hawkes, a biology teacher and naturalist at Rhode Island College, to run Audubon's education program. Together, they moved Audubon into the modern age.

Alfred Hawkes

Al Hawkes, executive director from 1958 to 1993, guided Audubon through its most critical growth period to date.

Under his watch, Audubon became a strong voice for environmental education, advocacy and land acquisition. He also made Audubon headquarters in Providence, and then Smithfield, accessible destinations for those with interests in birds and conservation.

Many strategic meetings for the increasing environmental concerns of the 1960s were held at Audubon headquarters in Providence, including the ban of DDT that caused the steep decline of Osprey and other raptors. In the 1970s he established the Environment Council of Rhode Island as National Wildlife Federation's state affiliate. As a voice for enforcing Clean Water, Clean Air and other federal legislation as well as the state's own protective laws, the Environment Council met at Audubon headquarters into the early 2000s.



Roland Clement

Biologist, author, and artist, Roland Clement was the first executive director of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and was at the helm of the organization from 1950 to 1958, during a transitional period for both Audubon and the environmental movement.

Under Clement's leadership, Audubon developed into an environmental organization concerned not just about birds and wildlife, but also protecting their valuable habitats. He was a strong advocate of involving the public through lectures and field trips and built relationships with the media to



Today

Audubon brings the same strong dedication to hands-on environmental education today, and faces new and ever growing issues. Educating the public on climate change, reaching urban youth, encouraging families to unplug, and meeting demand with limited staff and resources are ongoing challenges.

For Over A Century, Audubon Members Have Made Environmental Education A Priority

We depend on your support to continue our work of championing environmental literacy. Please use the attached envelope or visit www.asri.org and donate today to support Audubon Environmental Education initiatives.

Excerpts taken from "A Century of Dedication" by Ken Weber

Audubon Educator Lisa Maloney *Honored as Environmental Educator of the Year*

Rhode Island Environmental Education Association (RIEEA) recently named Audubon's Urban Education Coordinator Lisa Maloney as the Environmental Educator of the Year. An inspired, enthusiastic educator and expert naturalist, Lisa has many years of experience teaching all ages in a wide variety of settings including classrooms, after school programs, city parks and Audubon wildlife refuges.

In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Lisa's work extends to RIEEA projects and events, GEMS-Net trainings, collaborations with US Fish and Wildlife's Schoolyard Habitat projects, and work in urban education partnerships.



We Are a Forest, Not a Tree

The Audubon team collaborates with many partners across the state to provide environmental education to as many children, schools and teachers as possible. In an era where budgets are extremely limited and the need is ever expanding, we simply could not achieve our goals alone. Audubon would like to acknowledge the following groups that will be key partners in 2018.

Rhode Island Environmental Education Association (RIEEA)

RIEEA is a collaborative effort to promote high quality environmental education throughout the state to increase environmental literacy of all children and adults. Audubon educators have been actively involved in RIEEA for decades.

The Audubon team collaborates with many partners across the state to provide U.S. Fish & Wildlife “Schoolyard Habitats Project” (USFW) teachers as possible.

USFW is helping schools create wildlife habitat and outdoor classrooms. As a project partner, Audubon is developing an outdoor science curriculum guide and facilitating professional development for the teachers involved.

Providence Parks Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership

- Through U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s Urban Bird Treaty Program, Audubon educators will be leading monthly bird walks in parks and neighborhoods around Providence from 2018 through 2019.
- This coming summer, Audubon educators will be facilitating four weeks of summer day camp at Roger Williams Park Botanical Center.

URI’s Guiding Education in Math and Science Network (GEMS-Net)

This high quality initiative includes science kits and professional development workshops for 13 school districts. Audubon staff provide environmental expertise at a number of the workshops.

After School & Summer Enrichment

Audubon has worked in a number of school districts over the years to provide afterschool and/or summer science enrichment, but these two partners are our longest collaborations:

Providence After School Alliance (PASA) “Urban Naturalists”

- A critical after school program for Providence youth, Audubon educators take middle school students outside to explore nature in schoolyards, city parks and Audubon refuges.

Connecting Children & Families “Audubon Explorers”

- After school and summer science enrichment programs for Woonsocket elementary and middle school students in which children head outside to explore nature in their schoolyards and neighborhoods.



GO OUTSIDE! GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

Transform a section of your yard into a wildlife habitat that provides children with a sense of ownership and gives back to nature. Your garden may attract butterflies, songbirds, frogs and other wildlife. The National Wildlife Federation has a guide to get you started. Just visit www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife.



BRING ALONG TOOLS OF THE TRADE FOR YOUNG NATURALISTS

A few simple low cost items can enhance your child’s discoveries by leaps and bounds. They make wonderful birthday or holiday gifts and can be purchased at the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol.

BINOCULARS

A pair of binoculars will bring all those far away birds up close.



MAGNIFYING LENS

These are great to see insects up close or the texture of a leaf.



BUG BOXES

These or other containers can hold insects safely while you get a closer look. Teach children to observe and then release any bugs they find.



NETS

There are field nets and pond or water nets. Each helps you explore different habitats.

FIELD GUIDES

An overall field guide like National Audubon’s Guide to New England is a good place to start. It is simple to follow and has common birds, plants, mammals and insects.





"WOW!"
 Although this is perhaps his best vocalization, he will also make an occasional owl hoot and dog bark.

ZACH FACTS

When it comes to intelligent animals, the Raven is right up there. From playing in the snow to imitating the Barred Owl who lives next door, Audubon's Zachariah is constantly surprising and inspiring his caretakers. We thought it would be fun to share some quick Zach facts with you.

<p>LOBSTER & MICE What do they have in common? They are Zach's favorite foods.</p>	<p>2.4 POUNDS The amount of protein Zach eats each month. Ravens enjoy selections of mice, fish, chicken, lobster, shrimp, and ground beef. A typical New Englander, his favorite is lobster.</p>	<p>STEAMED OR BOILED? He is very clear that he prefers his veggies cooked, not raw.</p>
<p>6.5 YEARS Zachariah's age. He could live to age 40 or more.</p>		<p>CAROLE KING Easily Zach's favorite musician. Carole King songs calm him, and he tends to prefer female vocalists.</p>
<p>HIDE & SEEK A favorite pastime. Zachariah will often hide his food to save it for later consumption and enjoys searching for treats that Audubon staff hide in his aviary.</p>	<p>EASTERN BLUE JAYS, AMERICAN CROWS, & FISH CROWS These are some of Zachariah's relatives. They all belong to the Corvidae family of songbirds that are recognized as among the most intelligent birds in the world due to their ability to use tools, solve problems, and work together.</p>	<p>12 POUNDS The amount of produce that Zach eats each month.</p>
<p>3 POUNDS Zach's weight.</p>		<p>CITRUS Least favorite fruit. In fact, Zachariah will remove citrus offerings from his bowl and toss them on the ground. We learned that preference quickly.</p>

Audubon can use your help to feed and care for this amazing bird. Visit www.asri.org and click on the Audubon Ambassadors box to sponsor Zach today.



Audubon educators bring summer camp to Ncutaconkanut Park in Providence.

Their First Brush With Nature Continued from page 4

“The children look forward to their friends from Audubon visiting,” she said. “Young children often care about the well-being of all animals and insects. Since the animals Audubon brings into the classroom are usually rehabilitated and were once injured, the Audubon staff are heroes in the eyes of our children because they care for hurt animals.”

Renee MacDougall agrees. A second grade teacher at Rockwell Elementary School in Bristol, she has scheduled at least five different Audubon education programs in recent years, and they all complement and enrich the school’s science curriculum by allowing students to participate in meaningful hands-on experiences.

“The lessons spark excitement in our students as they provide experiences above and beyond what typical lessons can provide in a traditional school setting,” she said. “The students are also fascinated by the live animals that Audubon exposes them to.”

The positive student reactions don’t dissipate at the end of the program either. “My feedback from families is that children come home eager to share their knowledge and bird watching experiences with their families,” said Wakefield Elementary School kindergarten teacher Cindy Hagerty.

The teachers are also inspired by the programs, and with the help of Audubon’s educators, they will often follow-up with additional nature-oriented lessons in the ensuing days and weeks. Rapoza, for instance, invites her students to dissect owl pellets after the visit from Audubon’s Barred Owl.

Parmelee said that is an important goal of Audubon’s education programs – getting teachers adept at bringing children outdoors so they will continue to do so after the Audubon visit concludes. For years Audubon has offered professional development workshops for teachers to help them become more comfortable teaching science, especially outside the classroom. But as school systems change and curriculum requirements evolve,

Audubon has revised its approach to working with educators. Audubon often now works with teachers onsite, serving as a role model in encouraging schoolyard science.

“It’s so important to take kids outside,” Parmelee said. “We serve as a model for teachers and caretakers, to show them how children become curious and engaged when they are in nature. The key is to give the adults some tools and the confidence to encourage outdoor science investigations and to expand on what we do.”

Lisa Maloney has been on the frontlines of environmental education for 25 years, the last 11 at Audubon. She grew up in the outdoors, exploring the woods, and loved making up stories about the animals that live there.

“That experience is what I hope I provide to the students I work with. That’s what fuels me,” she said. “Teachers have a lot of tools at their disposal, but they’re so busy that getting kids outside is often difficult.”

“So we try to connect with teachers to show them how to use their schoolyard as a field trip. With school budgets so tight, it’s difficult – especially for urban districts – to find money to travel. We try to meet kids in their own communities and get them outside to have an experience with nature right there.”

Maloney is especially enthusiastic when she leads the programs for preschoolers, which often includes nature stories, a live animal, and various activities.

“At that age, their eyes are opening to the wonder of the world around them, so it’s a perfect time to be out in nature with them,” she said. “Their observations are amazing – and hilarious. They’re like little scientists. It’s my favorite age group.”

Children aren’t the only audience for Audubon environmental education programs, however. The Society offers numerous programs for adult audiences as well, from lectures and birdwatching field trips to advanced birding classes and art projects of many varieties.

Please turn to page 16

BRING ALONG YOUR SENSES

As you explore outdoors with children, slow down a bit and use your senses. It’s amazing what you will discover.



HEARING

Close your eyes and focus on sounds around you. How many different sounds can you hear? Where are they coming from? Try cupping your hands behind your ears. This helps direct the sound to your ears a little better. Can you pinpoint the exact location of a sound like a fox, rabbit, or deer would?



SIGHT

We use our eyes all the time, but do we really see everything? Look under logs, up in trees, under bushes, in the grass, and under leaves. By changing your view-point you just might discover something you never knew was there. Animals are masters of camouflage so it takes an observant eye to find them.



SMELL

Ah the smell of spring flowers, cut grass, ocean air, the musk of a skunk (all smells are not be pleasant ones.) The idea is to use your sense of smell as you explore. Some plants that have a strong scent include birch trees, wild chives, mint, spice bush, and even skunk cabbage. Simply crush a leaf to release the fragrance.



TOUCH

Many museums don’t let you touch, but nature encourages it. Explore different textures – soft, spiky, rough, smooth, squishy, and so on. Get to know trees by feeling their bark. Find a plant that is as soft as a fleece blanket. Remember to watch out for pesky plants like poison ivy or others that may be sharp to the touch.



TASTE

Unless you are an expert, this sense is best saved for your snack.



2017 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to the following photographers whose images were selected as the winning photographs

Audubon is grateful for the photographers who submitted such a wide range of wonderful images. We received over 80 contest entries this year!

We would like to thank the following photo contest judges: Bob Breidenbach, Kris Craig, Glenn Osmundson, all professional photographers at *The Providence Journal*.



1st Place: KEVIN BERNARD
Audubon Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, Seekonk, MA



2nd Place: PETER FISH
Audubon Marsh Meadows Wildlife Refuge, Jamestown, RI



3rd Place: MATT WENDUS
Audubon Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, Exeter, RI

HONORABLE MENTIONS:



Kevin Bernard



Kevin Bernard



Jason Major



**Under 18
1st Place:
RYAN BOMES**
*Audubon Claire D.
McIntosh Wildlife Refuge,
Bristol, RI*



Heidi Piccerelli



**Under 18
2nd Place:
GEORGE KASS**
*Audubon Davis Memorial
Wildlife Refuge, North
Kingstown, RI*



Abeselom Zerit



**Under 18
3rd Place:
SAMUEL
BRUMBAUGH**
*Audubon Claire D.
McIntosh Wildlife Refuge,
Bristol, RI*



Heidi Piccerelli

Visit www.asri.org for a closer look at these winning photos!



Keep a sharp eye out in May for details on the 2018 Photo Contest

FAVORITE PICKS FOR CHILDREN'S NATURE STORIES

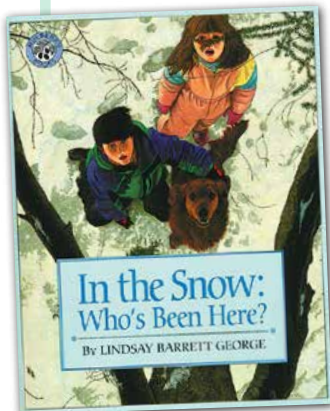
Selected by Audubon Educators



Many of us have fond memories of curling up on a big couch next to our parents or grandparents as they read cherished children's books. And remember those favorite teachers who held up picture books and read with extra enthusiasm? Most of us had favorites with worn covers and dog-eared pages that we read over and over.

Children's literature can open young minds to diversity, emotions, relationships and far away places. They can also lead to outdoor explorations and curiosity for the natural world. With years of working in nature with youth of all ages, Audubon educators share some of their favorite children's books.

..... These titles are available at the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol, RI.



Lisa Maloney
Urban Education Coordinator

- Who's Been Here?** series by Lindsay Barrett George
- *In the Snow, Who's Been Here?*
 - *In the Woods, Who's Been Here?*
 - *Around the Pond, Who's Been Here?*
 - *In the Garden, Who's Been Here?*

(Pre-K – Grade 3)

Readers follow along and look for clues, such as animal tracks and signs, to figure out who lives in different habitats through the seasons.

Judy Doherty
Educator

Bugliest Bug by Carol Diggory Shields
(Pre-K – Grade 2)

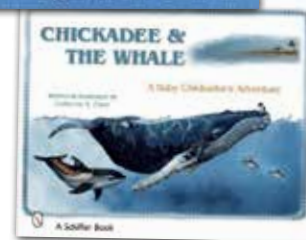
Children learn about insect and spider behaviors through a fun, rhyming story.



The Chickadee and the Whale

by Catherine E. Clark
(K – Grade 3)

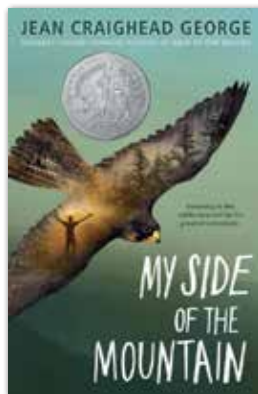
A curious young chickadee wanders to the ocean where he encounters new creatures.



Tim Parker
Lead Visitor Services & Sales Associate

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George
(Grades 3 – 7)

A classic story for older children of a boy who survives on his own in the mountains.



Where Should Turtle Be? by Susan Ring
(K – Grade 3)

A hatchling sea turtle far from home tries to find where he belongs and meets animals in a variety of habitats along the way.



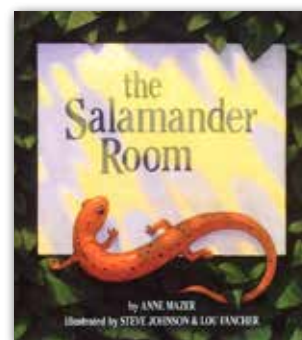
Anne DiMonti
Environmental Education Center Director

Owl Moon by Jane Yolen
(Pre-K – Grade 3)

A wonderful tale of owls and nature exploration in the winter.

The Blue Lobster by Robin Taylor-Chiarello
Big Al by Andrew Clements and Yoshi
(Pre-K – Grade 3)

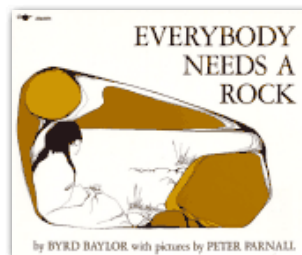
Sea creatures teach tolerance and acceptance of those who are different from us.



Lauren Parmelee
Senior Director of Education

The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer
(Pre-K – Grade 2)

Children learn that wildlife have homes too, and creatures (like salamanders) need to be left in the wild.



Everybody Needs a Rock by Byrd Baylor
(K – Grade 4)

A simple yet classic story of a young girl and her search in nature for a special rock.

AUDUBON NATURE TOURS & PROGRAMS

March – May 2018

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

A Note from the Editor:

We hope to see you on the trails as the temperatures warm! This four-page pullout section is a handy reference for upcoming programs. Please note that the Audubon Nature Tours and Programs Guide will no longer be printed or mailed. Looking to the future, we want to ensure that we use contributions from our supporters wisely, as well as limit our use of natural resources. We encourage you to visit our website for program information, Audubon news, policy updates and more.

Follow us on Facebook or sign up for eWing, our email newsletter, so you will receive updates and won't miss a program. To register for eWing, just go to our website and enter your email at the bottom of the page. Please feel free to contact me at jhall@asri.org with questions or suggestions.

Good Birding,

Jeff Hall



Ed Hughes

BIRDING WITH AUDUBON

FREE WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS

Please visit Audubon's website or Facebook page for the weekly location. Every Wednesday through June 2018; 9:00-11:00 am.

OWL PROWL AT CARATUNK

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA
March 1, 2018; 7:00-9:00 pm.

AMERICAN WOODCOCKS

Join Audubon for an evening to observe the enchanting and exuberant mating flights of the American Woodcock

- Watching Woodcocks - Supper and Saunter

Departs from Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI; April 6, 2018; 6:00-8:30 pm.

- Woodcocks and Wine

Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI
April 6, 2018; 6:30-8:30 pm.

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS - SIX SESSIONS

Audubon Environmental Education Center, 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI
April 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, 19, 2018; 9:00-11:00 am.

BIRDING, THE NEXT STEP PART II: TAKING FLIGHT

This six-week course is part two of a series, offering a deeper exploration of everything bird. Audubon Environmental Education Center, 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI; April 18, 25, May 2, 9, 2018; 6:30 pm-8:00 pm; Field trips will take place on April 28, May 12, 2018.

GREAT SWAMP WALK

Great Swamp, 296 Great Neck Road, South Kingstown, RI
April 28, 2018; 2:30-5:00 pm; Rain date April 29, 2018.

EAST BAY BIRDING FOR THE BEGINNER

Touisset Marsh Wildlife Refuge, Touisset Road, Warren, RI
May 3, 17, 31, 2018; 9:30 am-12:00 pm.

SPRING BIRDING VAN TRIP

Departs from Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI; May 14, 2018; 8:15 am-4:00 pm.

FREE MAY BIRDING WALKS

May is the peak month for the spring bird migration, with something different moving through each week. Get in on the best birding of the year with Audubon! Novice birders are welcome. Walks are geared for teen to adult.

MONDAYS

Fort Nature Refuge, (Rt. 5), 1443 Providence Pike, North Smithfield, RI
May 7, 14, 21, 2018; 8:00-10:00 am.

Note that no walk will be held on Memorial Day, May 28.

TUESDAYS

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA
- May 1, 15, 29, 2018; 8:00-10:00 am.

Maxwell Mays Wildlife Refuge, 2820 Victory Highway, Coventry, RI
- May 8, 22, 2018; 8:00 am-10:00 am.

WEDNESDAYS*

Locations determined weekly, please visit the Audubon website or Facebook page for details, no registration necessary.

May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 2018; 9:00-11:00 am.

* Free Wednesday Morning Bird Walks will continue through June 2018.

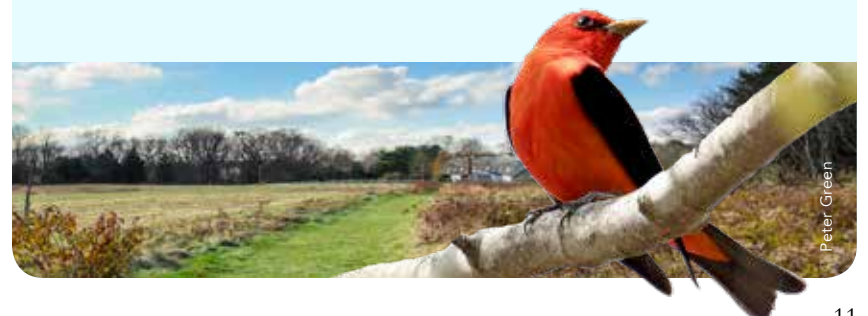
THURSDAYS

Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge, Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston, RI
- May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 2018; 8:00-10:00 am.

Touisset Marsh Wildlife Refuge, Touisset Road, Warren, RI
- May 3, 17, 31, 2018; 9:30 am-12:00 pm

FRIDAYS

Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI
April 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25, 2018; 8:30-10:30 am.



Peter Green

AUDUBON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

1401 Hope Street (Route 114), Bristol, RI

PROGRAMS, LECTURES & WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

FEED YOUR BACKYARD BIRDS

March 4, 2018; 12:00-1:30 pm.

NATURE ORIGAMI

March 10, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.

FELTED RABBITS: MARCH HARES AND EASTER BUNNIES

March 11, 2018; 2:00-4:00 pm.

ADVANCED BEEKEEPING

March 18, 25, 2018; 2:30-4:30 pm.

WHERE'S YOUR WALDEN? A GUIDE TO YOUR OWN REFUGE IN NATURE

Lecture at the Environmental Education Center
March 22, 2018; 7:00-8:30 pm.

LEARN TO PAINT WITH COLOR & WATER

Workshop with Artist Holly Wach
April 7, 2018; 10:30 am-12:30 pm.

SOIL TESTING

University of Rhode Island, Cooperative Master Gardener Program
April 7, 2018; 11:00 am-2:00 pm.

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS - SIX SESSIONS

April 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, 19, 2018; 9:00-11:00 am.

SEA GLASS JEWELRY

April 14, May 19, 2018; 11:00 am-12:30 pm.

BIRDING, THE NEXT STEP PART II: TAKING FLIGHT

This six-week course is part two of a series, offering a deeper exploration of everything bird. Two weekend field trips will be arranged.
April 18, 25, May 2, 9, 2018; 6:30 pm-8:00 pm.
Field trips will take place on April 28, May 12, 2018.

ECO-RESPONSIBILITY AS NORM AND PRACTICE

Lecture at the Audubon Environmental Education Center
April 19, 2018; 6:30-8:00 pm.

PAINT AND SIP: SIGNS OF SPRING

April 28, 2018; 6:30-8:30 pm.

WEED WALK NATURE HIKE

May 6, 2018; 12:00-1:30 pm.

ADVANCED SEA GLASS WORKSHOP

May 19, 2018; 2:00-3:30 pm.

HERBAL COCKTAILS

May 19, 2018; 6:30-8:30 pm.

FAMILY PROGRAMS & CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

CITIZENS BANK FREE FAMILY FUN DAYS

Thanks to Citizens Bank, the Environmental Education Center is open free to the public the first Saturday of each month.
March 3, 2018: *Wonderful Whales*
April 7, 2018: *How Does Your Garden Grow?*
May 5, 2018: *Migratory Bird Day*

JUNIOR NATURALISTS FOR HOME-SCHOOLED FAMILIES

March 13 and 14, 2018; 1:30-3:00 pm - *Shark Science*
April 17 and 18, 2018; 1:30-3:00 pm - *Eco-Engineers*
May 15 and 16, 2018; 1:30-3:00 pm - *Water and Wetlands*
June 12 and 13, 2018; 1:30-3:00 pm - *Science at the Shore*

PRESCHOOL ADVENTURES

March 23, 30, April 6, 13, 2018; 10:00-11:00 am.

CAMOUFLAGED EGG HUNT

March 24, 2018; 9:30 Check-in, Egg Hunt 10:00-11:00 am.
Three locations: Audubon Environmental Education Center, Powder Mill Ledges, and Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge

LI'L PEEPS

March 29, April 5, 12, 26; May 3, 10, 2018; 9:45-10:45 am.

APRIL SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

April 16-20, 2018; 10:00 am-2:00 pm.

AUDUBON EARTH DAY FILM FESTIVAL

April 21, 2018; 1:00-3:00 pm.

FAIRY GARDENS

May 12, 2018; 2:00-3:30 pm.

MEMORIAL DAY NATURE ACTIVITIES

May 28, 2018; 10:00 am-3:00 pm.



Meet Finn!

POWDER MILL LEDGES WILDLIFE REFUGE

12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI

PYSANKY WORKSHOP

March 17, 2018; 10:00 am-12:00 pm.

CAMOUFLAGED EGG HUNT

Three Locations Offered

March 24, 2018; 9:30 Check-in, Egg Hunt 10:00-11:00 am.

- Audubon Environmental Education Center, 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI
- Powder Mill Ledges, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI
- Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI

WATCHING WOODCOCKS - SUPPER AND SAUNTER

12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI

April 6, 2018; 6:00-8:30 pm.

SPRING CRAFT FAIR

June 2, 2018; 10:00 am-4:00 pm.



Jason Major

FISHERVILLE BROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE

99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI

CAMOUFLAGED EGG HUNT

Three Locations Offered

March 24, 2018; 9:30 Check-in, Egg Hunt 10:00-11:00 am.

- Audubon Environmental Education Center, 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI
- Powder Mill Ledges, 12 Sanderson Road, Smithfield, RI
- Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, 99 Pardon Joslin Road, Exeter, RI

WOODCOCKS AND WINE

April 6, 2018; 6:30-8:30 pm; Program Fee: \$20/member; \$25/non-member. Ages: 21+.

FREE FRIDAY MORNING BIRD WALKS IN MAY

April 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25, 2018; 8:30-10:30 am.



SPRING NATURE WALKS



SPRING ARRIVES AT MAXWELL MAYS

Maxwell Mays Wildlife Refuge, 2082 Victory Highway, Coventry, RI

March 27, 2018; 9:30 am-12:00 pm.

SEAL WATCH AT ROME POINT

John H. Chafee Nature Preserve, 1421 Boston Neck Rd, Saundertown, RI

(Rt. 1A across from Gilbert Stuart Road); April 15, 2018; 12:30-3:00 pm.

EPPLEY FLORA AND FAUNA

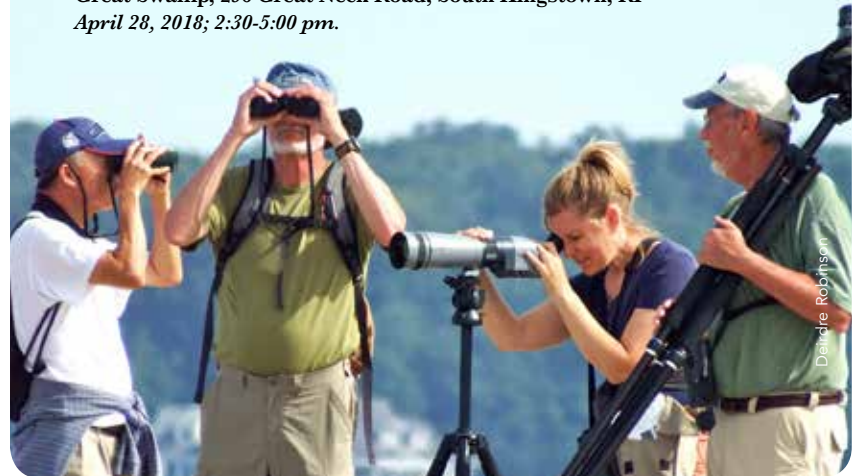
Marion Eppley Wildlife Refuge, Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston, RI

April 26, 2018; 9:30 am-12:00 pm.

GREAT SWAMP WALK

Great Swamp, 296 Great Neck Road, South Kingstown, RI

April 28, 2018; 2:30-5:00 pm.



Deirdre Robinson

APRIL SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

- Audubon Environmental Education Center
- Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge
- Caratunk Wildlife Refuge

Become a nature explorer! Explore local habitats and get up close with cool critters! 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

OWL PROWL AT CARATUNK

March 1, 2018; 7:00-9:00 pm.

MAPLE SUGARING

Step back in time at the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge and experience the history of maple sugaring.

March 10, 2018; 9:00 am-12:00 pm.

SALAMANDER SEARCH AT CARATUNK

April 20, 2018; 2:00-3:30 pm.

FAMILY NIGHT HIKE AT CARATUNK

April 28, 2018; 7:00-9:00 pm.



PRUDENCE ISLAND

Narragansett Bay National Estuarine
Research Reserve, Prudence Island, RI

MARCH MADNESS ON PRUDENCE ISLAND

Observe beautiful winter ducks to basking harbor seals and explore wide expanses of salt marshes and protected beaches.

March 3, 2018; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

SEALS AND SEABIRDS

March 22, 2018; 1:30-6:30 pm.

KIDS EXPLORATION DAY ON PRUDENCE ISLAND

April 20, 2018; 9:45 am-4:45 pm.

SPRINGTIME BIRDING

May 10, 2018; 7:30 am-3:00 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 **Tousisset Marsh Wildlife Refuge**
Tousisset 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

AUDUBON MAPLE SUGARING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge
301 Brown Avenue
Seekonk, MA

March 10, 2018; 9:00 am-12:00 pm



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

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
- Citizens Bank
- Dassault Systemes SIMULIA Corp.
- Lyons & Zaremba, Inc.
- New England GreenStart
- Nourishing World
- Perfect Supplements
- Rhode Island PBS

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: Ernie Agresti

From: Henry Adams

In Honor of: R. Keith Blackwell

From: Bruce A. Blackwell

In Honor of: Anne-Marie Bora

From: Andrea Bora

In Honor of: Sara DiNardo

From: Jullian Mattioni

In Honor of: Deborah DiQuinzio and Wendell Clough

From: Bethany Smith

In Honor of: Peter Dorsey

From: Jennifer Dorsey

In Honor of: Barbara Gray

From: Chris and Alesia DiSano

In Honor of: Al Hawkes

From: Mrs. Margaret (Johnny) Stone

In Honor of: Laura S. Julier

From: Vivian Julier

In Honor of: Roe and Dan Mooney

From: Debra S. Firth

In Honor of: Arlene Nunn

From: Roy Nunn

In Honor of: Steven E. Reinert

From: Robert and Nancy Obenarf

In Honor of: Michelle Solis

From: Carolyn Greeley

In Honor of: Alexandra Terrien's Birthday

From: anonymous donor

Aivah Harris

Kennith & Sharon Forziati

In Honor of: Nola Watson

From: Charles Watson

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: Romilda Anargiro

From: Carol Brabant

In Memory of: Lloyd E. Broomhead

From: John and Barbara Clancy

In Memory of: Rachel Carson

From: Diane & Eric Darling

Carol Dixon & Jeff Hutton

Drew Dunaief

First Universalist Parish

Elizabeth Hastings

Megan Langford

Mark Pearson

Jennifer Preston

Wild Birds Unlimited

In Memory of: Deborah E. (DeSantis-Hannuksela) Chipman

From: Sharon J. Lefebvre

In Memory of: Arthur Cote

From: Anthony and Joyce Fallon

In Memory of: Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Davis (BB & Spink)

From: Edward J. Bertozzi

In Memory of: Jack Doherty

From: Michael and Margaret Alexander

In Memory of: Dan Elkins

From: Karen Elkins

In Memory of: Sona Kalfaian-Ahlijian

From: Dennis and Adrienne Cady

Eugenia Marks

Edward and Zilda Medici

Cynthia and James Patterson

Bruce Pitts

Catherine Simone

Shanna Treveloni

Joyce Yeremian

In Memory of: Christine Kelleher

From: Her Pool Pals

In Memory of: Maxwell Mays

From: William and Claire Chatto

In Memory of: William Ritter

From: Tom Barclay

In Memory of: Lorrie Schumacher

From: Catherine Sabo

In Memory of: Joseph A. Voccio

From: Mary E. Costello

In Memory of: Ruth Wilbur

From: John and Betty Chakuroff

Nathalie Gould

Barbara M. O'Connell

Robert and Joann Verlik

Bet Zimmerman Smith

Partners in Philanthropy Chris and Candy Powell

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island honored Chris and Candy as this year's Partners in Philanthropy. A breakfast hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals of RI, was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in November, 2017 to honor philanthropists from across the State.

The Powells were honored for their shared passion for the environment. Birding is what originally brought Candy and Chris Powell to Audubon, but their involvement over the years has extended far beyond. Candy's active role on the Audubon Board of Directors led to her election as president in 2011. Chris, a former biologist for the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, was key in implementing the Conanicut Island Osprey nesting platform and camera on Audubon's Marsh Meadows property in Jamestown. To share their enthusiasm and knowledge for birding with others, Chris and Candy have organized the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts for the past 31 years. They are active, supportive members of Audubon and their hands-on involvement has made a marked difference in the organization.



Seated from left: Barbara Keeley, Betsy Gooding, Chris and Candy Powell. Standing from left, Audubon Board Chairperson Cindy Warren, Audubon Donor Relations Manager Sharon Cresci, Audubon Executive Director Larry Taft and Audubon Board Member Deb Linnell.

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PEOPLE'S
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Audubon Society
of Rhode Island

YEAR OF THE

BIRD

2018 marks the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the most powerful and important bird-protection law ever passed. In honor of this milestone, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island joins National Geographic, the National Audubon Society, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, BirdLife International and more than 100 other organizations and millions of people around the world to celebrate 2018 as the “Year of the Bird.”

This effort aims to heighten public awareness of birds because of their wonder and beauty—and because they symbolize nature’s interconnectedness and the importance of caring for our shared planet. We are working to raise the visibility of birds and awareness about the challenges that birds are facing and what people can do to help.

CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF THE BIRD WITH AUDUBON!

Sign up for our free birding walks in May and start your Big Year bird count. Watch for special birding programs, lectures and join Audubon as we celebrate the “Year of the Bird.” Visit www.asri.org and scroll down to the Birding in Rhode Island box.



Their First Brush With Nature Continued from page 8

“We want to hook as many different people into learning about nature as we can, and different programs do that in different ways,” Parmelee said. “If you’re interested in art and we can help you learn to paint birds, then you’ll become interested in birds. What makes Audubon unique is the wide-ranging expertise our staff has, which allows us to offer so many great programs.”

But why bother? Why is it so important to commit so many resources to educating Rhode Islanders about the environment? Parmelee said the reason, in part, is to overcome the sense that humans are separate from nature and ecosystems.

“I’ve always felt that we are connected to and a part of nature, and yet so much of our culture teaches us that we are separate, or above, or more important than the ecosystem,” she said. “I believe that this lack of connection to the natural world has created so many of the environmental challenges we face today. And now we’re standing at a crossroads,” Parmelee added, “as climate change is impacting the world around us.”



Audubon reaches children as young as 18 months in the Li'l Peeps class.

“In order for us, as a human population, to make the right decisions we have to understand the ecosystem and how we are connected to it,” she continued. “The decisions we make on a daily basis matter to the planet. Today’s children will be affected by environmental challenges more than any previous generation. We all need to become more environmentally aware and connected to nature.”

That’s also why Audubon focuses some of its environmental education programs on urban youth who have little experience with nature. Many urban children are frightened of wildlife and wild places, and they think of it as something far away from where they live. So Audubon has partnered with the Providence After-School Alliance to offer middle school students field trips and other activities so they can learn to enjoy and appreciate the natural world. A similar after-school program for elementary and middle school students in Woonsocket, in partnership with the non-profit Connecting Children and Families, includes visits to a nearby vulture roost and a bridge over the Blackstone River where swallows and swifts congregate.

After one Providence middle school field trip to Audubon’s Powder Mill Ledges Wildlife Refuge, several students said how appreciative they were for the opportunity to explore nature.

“I was shocked,” she said. “You don’t hear that from middle schoolers. It made me so happy.”

As Audubon’s education programs continue to evolve, the staff is constantly thinking about new topics to feature and new opportunities

to engage audiences of all ages. Zachariah the Raven is a newcomer to Audubon, and he will likely be featured prominently in future programs.

“We’re looking forward to building a program around bird intelligence and the problem-solving abilities of birds like Zachariah,” Parmelee said. “That could be translated on both a family level and an adult level. He’s an amazing bird, and people are already fascinated with him.”

Climate change is another topic that Audubon seeks to incorporate into its programs. But it’s a difficult subject to introduce to children, so Audubon educators are still talking about the appropriate age level and the most effective messaging.


“That’s one of our goals – and one of our challenges – going forward,” Parmelee concluded. “We’ve always taught children to appreciate nature, to recycle, not to litter, to plant a tree, ride bikes, and given them action steps they can take to help the planet. But how do you create messages about climate change that aren’t frightening or overwhelming? We want kids to be inspired, to become knowledgeable, to become our future environmental leaders. We don’t want them shutting down because the topic of climate change is too complicated. We’re still working on that.”

Audubon educators have their hands full. They see more children connected to mobile devices with less and less time spent outside. They work with urban middle school students who have little to no understanding of the natural world. With climate change and other environmental challenges on the rise, limited funding stretches their capacity daily.

“Some people think of us simply as Audubon staff who bring those cool owls and other critters into classrooms,” said Parmelee. “Although animals are important, and we often connect to students through them, it’s the message we leave behind that’s critical. We are all part of nature, and we need to respect and protect it. That starts with education.”

Those interested in learning more about Audubon’s environmental education programs can visit www.asri.org/learn.

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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1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI**

**Bird Feeders and Accessories
Field Guides and Binoculars
Children’s Books, Educational
Games, Toys and More!**

**Check for Monthly Bird Buys!
20% off for Members
10% off for Non-members**

Burch Lombardi

Student Spotlight **Brittany Amaral**

Brittany Amaral first started working with Audubon in 2016 as an enthusiastic member of the Youth Conservation League (YCL). YCL brings young conservationists together to gain experience working in habitats across the region. It is often hard work in heat and humidity, and Brittany completed the program with a smile and came back for more. In 2017, she became an assistant crew leader and positive role model for other league members.

Now a University of Rhode Island student, Brittany enrolled in a wildlife course and was loaned cameras from a professor to census wildlife around the state. Since there had been older reports of bobcat and other animals around Audubon’s Kingston Wildlife Research Station, Audubon Senior Director of Conservation Scott Ruhren suggested this refuge as an option. Photos of deer, coyotes, and fishers soon filled his inbox, giving Audubon an updated record of wildlife that roamed the property. “Scott Ruhren, Kyle Hess, and other Audubon staff members are always kind, encouraging, and eager to answer any questions I have about wildlife and conservation,” said Amaral. “I have grown my social network, gained land stewardship skills, learned how to identify a variety of invasive and native plant species, and improved my photography skills.”



Brittany Amaral installs a camera at the Kingston Wildlife Research Station.

Brittany has also become a volunteer refuge monitor. “I am very thankful for the opportunities I have had working with Audubon,” Amaral continued. “I hope to learn even more from Audubon as I pursue a career in the conservation and wildlife biology field.” She brings a quick smile and plenty of enthusiasm to her work - we look forward to partnering with Brittany for years to come.

Birding with Children

A child's sense of wonder is endless. Has your child or grandchild impressed you with the name of every dinosaur discovered? Do they know every African animal that roams the Safari? What about the wildlife in your own backyard? So many children learn to identify creatures from far away places, but don't know the animals that thrive here in New England.

There is no easier way to connect kids with nature than birding. Pull out some binoculars and get the whole family interested in the world outside your window. Birds can be found year round, in any habitat, and the learning possibilities are virtually endless. All you need are a few simple tools.



The easiest way to see and attract birds is with a feeder. This can be store bought, which come in a variety of shapes and sizes, or consider creating one at home. Making a feeder can encourage your child's sense of stewardship. Children take great pride in watching birds come to a feeder they have made. It can be as simple as spreading peanut butter on a pinecone and rolling it into seed or as complex as building one out of wood.

This brings us to our next tool - a field guide. Start out simple. *Stoke's Beginners Guide to Birds Eastern Region* is a great place to begin. You don't need a field guide that has all North American birds, it can be quite overwhelming. Observing birds and looking at a field guide will help your child learn the different shapes and sizes of birds, in what habitats the bird is likely to be found, and distinguishing features.

Another helpful tool for birding is a pair of binoculars. Your child's age and ability will determine what binoculars to start with. If you have a toddler you may want to start with a set of children's binoculars. These let your child get a sense of how to use binoculars without the worry of damaging them. As children mature, they can graduate to a pair of compact binoculars that tend to be a bit lighter in weight than full size optics.

When teaching your child to use their binoculars, start at the feeder. Teach your child to look at the bird without the binoculars. Keep their eyes on the bird as they bring the binoculars up to eye view. Can they see the bird? Show them how to focus. Hours can be spent practicing this from a window or backyard deck. Once you move to the field, birding will become much harder and frustrating if they haven't mastered this skill. If the kids are having trouble once you've headed out on the trails, try a pond where ducks or larger birds can be found. Larger, slower moving birds are good for practice. Just be patient, and enjoy watching the birds. As children get more skilled, try to use your field guide and identify what species you are observing.

Birding with your family can be a hobby that grows with your child. As they become more curious, take trips to different habitats to see a wide variety of birds. In turn, they are learning about nature and the wildlife found here in Rhode Island. Interested in heading out with an expert? Audubon hosts many walks throughout the year that can introduce the whole family to the world of birding. And the tools mentioned above to get kids started are available at the Audubon Nature Shop in Bristol. Grab those binoculars and go!

LET'S GET SOCIAL!

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LIKE/SHARE/FOLLOW

The most followed Audubon Facebook page in New England!



AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND 1897 SOCIETY



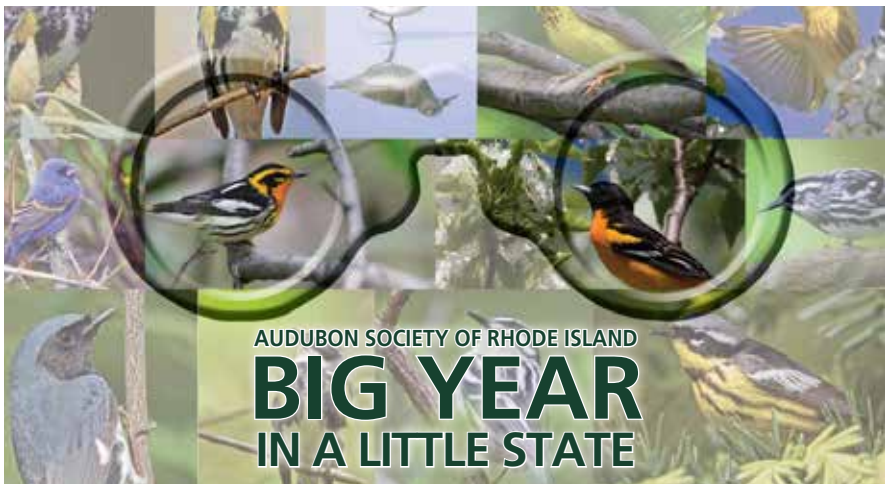
Named for the year of the Audubon's founding, the 1897 Society honors those whose leadership gifts enable the Audubon Society of Rhode Island to advance its mission of protecting birds, other wildlife and their habitats through conservation, education and advocacy. Our donors can take satisfaction that 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:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>Leader</i> — \$1,000 to \$2,499 | <i>Benefactor</i> — \$7,500 to \$9,999 |
| <i>Advocate</i> — \$2,500 to \$4,999 | <i>Visionary</i> — \$10,000+ |
| <i>Conservator</i> — \$5,000 to \$7,499 | |

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. 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.



AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND
**BIG YEAR
IN A LITTLE STATE**

In the spirit of the famous competition, Audubon is hosting
BIG YEAR IN A LITTLE STATE
For details and registration visit www.bigyearri.org



Save the Date!

2018 RHODE ISLAND LAND & WATER SUMMIT
Saturday, March 10, 2018
7:30 am – 4:30 pm
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2018 Policy Priorities at the State House

Editorial by Meg Kerr, Senior Director of Policy

It is easy to think that advocacy ends when a good bill passes. But many times, passage of bills means that our work is just beginning.

Not all bills are implemented. And some that are implemented may not achieve the original goals that the advocates had in mind. So watching and advocating for good state policies, those that protect birds and wildlife and people, is a key part of my job. Another important part of my job is working with you, keeping you informed of what's happening at the statehouse, and asking for your help with issues.

The legislature session is back in session. During 2018, we will be working on a range of important issues, including the following:

Pollinator Health and Habitat

Legislation was introduced last year (H 6264) to add \$500,000 to RI DEM's budget (Department of Environmental Management) for pollinator health, habitat and integrated pest management. It did not move. The Senate (S 0982) created a special legislative commission to study pesticide control regulations. That commission has not yet been formed. At the legislature, Audubon will continue to advocate for funding, the continuation of the Pollinator Working Group, and for the important work of the legislative study commission.

We have also been advocating for state agencies to take steps to enhance pollinator habitat. The Department of Environmental Management's Division of Fish and Wildlife has on-going projects restoring fallow fields with new native plantings that provide dual benefits for birds and mammals as well as for pollinators and other beneficial insects. The RI Department of Transportation is exploring opportunities for enhancing pollinator habitat as part of the Department's stormwater program and as part of other highway initiatives. Identified challenges include modifying maintenance strategies that satisfy the public while enhancing pollinators and using cost-effective pollinator friendly seed mixes.



Renewable Energy Siting

Audubon is advocating for smart siting of renewable energy, maximizing the use of developed landscapes to protect farm and forest land as much as possible. We are participating in a stakeholder process organized by the Office of Energy Resources. We will be advocating for policies that thoughtfully and strategically meet the state's ambitious and essential renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals, while promoting equity and minimizing detrimental environmental impacts. The stakeholders are working on placeholder legislation which will be introduced soon.

Green Buildings Act Implementation

Last year, the legislature passed amendments to the Green Buildings Act requiring the state to pilot test sustainability metrics for the property surrounding new or rehabilitated state buildings. We will be working with the Department of Administration, Department of Environmental Management and the state's Green Buildings Advisory Committee to ensure that projects with maximal environmental benefits are selected and implemented.

2018 Green Economy and Clean Water Bond

We support Governor Raimondo's \$48.5 million environmental bond included in her 2018 budget. The bond has funding for many essential grant programs – local recreation, bikeways, farmland and open space, state parks, brownfields, coastal resiliency and public access, clean water and drinking water, wastewater treatment facility resilience and dam safety. If passed by the general assembly, the bond will be on the November ballot for voters to decide.

Stay abreast of our advocacy work by signing up for our e-blasts. Visit www.asri.org, click on "Lead" and scroll down to "Take Action."



AUDUBON SOCIETY OF RHODE ISLAND REPORT

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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.

Spot the Beetle, Stop the Beetle

Help prevent the spread of Asian Longhorned Beetle. When hiking the trails, look for signs of the beetle.

For more information on how to detect this destructive invasive insect, visit www.asri.org and click on "conservation."



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JOIN OUR LEAGUE OF SUPERHEROES

Audubon is in need of superheroes – people who go above and beyond. Our current endowment provides only one-third of the necessary funds to keep our organization impactful and dynamic. The Invincible Audubon Campaign will provide needed funding to permanently advocate for nature, to educate children on the importance of our environment, and to protect and defend our nearly 9,500 acres of wildlife habitat. In short... to make Audubon INVINCIBLE.

The Invincible Audubon campaign is different than our annual fundraising. Invincible Audubon is meant to provide permanent funding that we can rely and plan on for decades to come.



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