



COMMUNITY REPORT

AUDUBON SOCIETY

of Rhode Island

COVENTRY, EAST GREENWICH, AND WEST GREENWICH

MAXWELL MAYS WILDLIFE REFUGE, COVENTRY



Audubon Society of Rhode Island

NATURE IS NOW MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

Through land conservation, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island will always protect critical habitat for birds and wildlife in Coventry, East Greenwich, and West Greenwich. We advocate locally and at the state-level on environmental issues impacting your community, our educators bring nature-related programs to school children and the public in your area, and we look to connect you and people of all ages with nature. With your support, our work will continue to have a lasting impact.

This year, our advocacy efforts resulted in a series of legislative victories. Most significantly, the use of deadly neonicotinoid pesticides in our neighborhoods and parks has been restricted. These toxic chemicals not only kill birds, bees, and other pollinating species, they also seep into our ground water. This legislation is only the beginning. We will continue the fight to ban these and other toxic chemicals that harm our ecosystems.

Audubon's award-winning environmental education programs reach thousands of Rhode Islanders of all ages each year in schools, libraries, community centers, and on our wildlife refuges. Our educators bring hands-on science and nature programs to school children across the state, providing experiences that support classroom learning and foster a connection with the natural world.

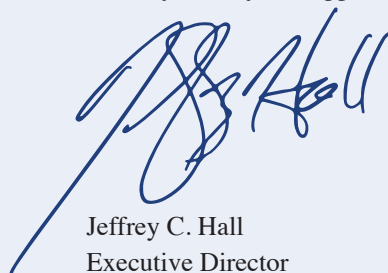
A \$100,000 federal grant was recently awarded to Audubon to ensure that children in city communities have access to experiential learning opportunities in schoolyards, classrooms, local parks, and on Audubon wildlife refuges.

We protect nearly 9,500 acres of conservation land in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts, including fourteen wildlife refuges that are open to the public for hiking and wildlife observation. Through a new avian research initiative, Audubon properties have been identified as being significant habitats for threatened bird species as well as important resting areas for migrating birds. Additional details about this new initiative are included in this community report.

Your support of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island directly impacts environmental education and conservation initiatives in Coventry, East Greenwich, and West Greenwich, and provides nature with a voice at the State House. With your help, along with our members and other supporters, we will continue our work to protect our state's natural heritage – resulting in greener, healthier communities for all.

Please give as if nature depends on you... because it does. Donate to Audubon today at asri.org/donate.

Thank you for your support!



Jeffrey C. Hall
Executive Director

Connecting People With Nature

CONSERVATION

- Protects approximately 9,500 acres of habitat in Rhode Island, including 17 acres in East Greenwich, 75 acres in West Greenwich, and 1,978 acres in Coventry.
- Coordinates the state-wide Osprey monitoring program, including three sites in East Greenwich, two sites in West Greenwich, one site in Coventry.
- Protects large areas of forest and coastal habitats that are critical in the face of climate change and sea-level rise.
- Advised owners and helped manage over 600 acres of forest habitat across the state in a "Forestry for the Birds" program, including 21 acres in Coventry and 21 acres in West Greenwich.



AVIAN RESEARCH

The Audubon Avian Research Initiative has engaged numerous volunteers to monitor the current abundance and distribution of birds in Rhode Island. This research will guide habitat management plans to enhance long-term biodiversity and minimize the impacts of climate change on birds utilizing Audubon wildlife refuges and properties throughout New England.

- First comprehensive baseline data survey was conducted on breeding, nonbreeding and migratory birds on 14 Audubon wildlife refuges to understand the needs of birds over their full annual cycle.
- Surveys were completed at Audubon wildlife refuges in Coventry and West Greenwich.
- Over 400 volunteer hours were spent collecting data.
- Audubon partnered with an analytical chemistry lab at URI to process soil and water samples from our properties to determine the presence of dangerous neonicotinoid (neonics) pesticides. Presence of neonics in soil or water will prompt the collection and analysis of bird feathers to determine the extent to which these chemicals may be impacting our local bird communities.
- A final "State of Our Birds" report will be released in early 2023 summarizing the results from the year-long baseline data collection and the first-round of neonicotinoid analysis.
- Partnering with an international effort to track migratory species using the MOTUS Wildlife Tracking System to aid researchers throughout North America in tracking birds, insects and bats. This will allow Audubon to perform in-house research on the movement dynamics of birds using our refuges for breeding, wintering or as migration stopover habitat.





EDUCATION

SCHOOLYARD HABITAT RESOURCE GUIDE

Audubon encourages schools to create natural spaces on their grounds for outdoor learning and nature exploration. The Schoolyard Habitat Resource Guide, produced in 2020, provides age-appropriate activities linked to core subjects with tips for outdoor teaching and safety. It complements the national Schoolyard Habitat Program led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

COVENTRY

- Partnered with the Coventry Public Library to lead a bird walk for adults at the Audubon Maxwell Mays Wildlife Refuge.
- Presented a Raptor Encounter program to local families at the Coventry Public Library.
- Giggle and Grow Daycare invited Audubon to their facility for a nature story program about dinosaurs.
- Lead numerous birding walks and nature programs at both the Audubon Maxwell Mays and Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuges in Coventry.

EAST GREENWICH

- Partnership with East Greenwich Parks and Recreation brought two Audubon programs for children this summer. In addition, Audubon provides a series of nature programs for young children in the fall.
- Stork's Nest Child Academy invited Audubon to bring a nature story program about owls.
- Second grade students at Our Lady of Mercy School participated in a virtual Audubon program on Life Cycles.
- Presented several nature programs with live owls, hawks, and turtles at Anchor Bay Assisted Living.
- Brought vernal pool, backyard birds, and hawk programs to residents of Atria Harborhill.

WEST GREENWICH

- Environmental education collaboration with The Greene School in West Greenwich continues to expand. Students participate in guided field explorations at the Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge, meet Audubon raptors at school, and participate in bird banding programs at the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge in Seekonk.



Hope Foley



ADVOCACY

- Audubon co-led efforts to once again position Rhode Island as a national leader in its response to the climate change crisis. Climate change is the biggest threat to birds, wildlife, and people as it brings flooding, hurricanes, and fires. With the passage of 100% renewable electricity by 2033 and up to 1,000 megawatts of additional offshore wind, there is a path for the State to meet the mandatory carbon emission reduction goals set by the Act on Climate law. Audubon partners with fellow environmental organizations, labor coalitions and policymakers in this critical work.
- Continues to co-lead advocacy for legislation and state and local policies to prioritize the protection of forests and drive the siting of renewable energy on already disturbed land.
- Serves on the Forest Conservation Commission, advising the RI Department of Environmental Management on how to promote forest values and pursue strategies to preserve private forestland. Also serves on the House Commission on Land Use, studying land use and zoning issues from preservation to housing.
- After years of leading legislative campaigns to protect pollinators that support our ecosystem and food supply chain, a critical step in managing the impacts of harmful pesticides was achieved in 2022 with the passage of the bill to regulate neonicotinoids.
- Working with partners, Audubon supported significant victories on long-time environmental issues with toxics and plastics: banning of PFAS known as "toxic forever chemicals" in food packaging and capping them in drinking water, and a statewide single-use plastic bag ban.
- Played a key role in preventing the advancement proposals for a toxic plastics incineration plant to be built, which would have bypassed state oversight.
- Provided leadership in advocating for the \$50 million Green Bond—Question No. 3 on the referendum ballot that passed with 66.9% voter approval in November 2022. This Green Bond will support investments in open space, outdoor recreation, land revitalization, green energy, climate resilience, forestland, habitat, wildlife conservation, water quality, and new facilities at Roger Williams Park and Zoo.
- As a member of the Green Infrastructure Coalition, Audubon advocates for sustainable funding for nature-based stormwater management. Stormwater pollution affects water quality throughout the state—especially with more extreme storms and flooding. Treating stormwater with green strategies like rain gardens and swales provides climate resilience and enhances wildlife habitats.
- Provides leadership for the Providence Stormwater Innovation Center, which showcases nature-based stormwater practices, engages communities in solutions to improve water quality, provides training on green infrastructure, and tests innovative treatment technologies.
- With the Rhode Island Land Trust Council, organizes and hosts the annual Land & Water Conservation Summit, Rhode Island's premier gathering of over 300 conservation volunteers and professionals.

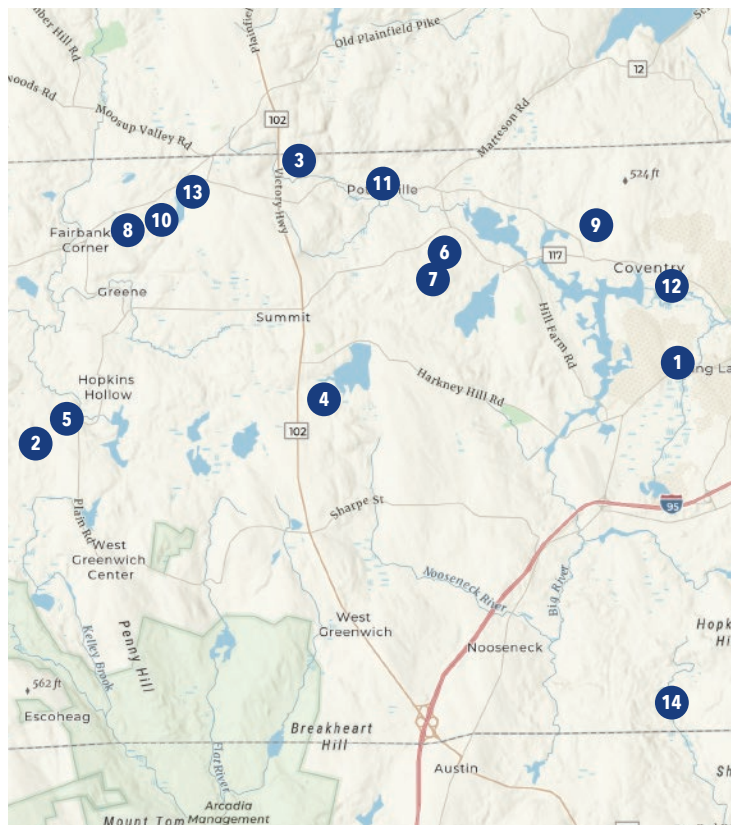


Glenn Osmundson

AUDUBON PROTECTED LAND

COVENTRY 1,978 acres

- 1. EARL FORRESTER WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1992; Approximately 4 acres
- 2. EDWARD & PHOEBE MCPALPINE MEMORIAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1980; Approximately 198 acres
Large tract of forest contains vital vernal pools and abundant wildlife.
- 3. GEORGE B. PARKER WOODLAND WILDLIFE REFUGE ***
Protected since 1941; Approximately 880 acres, part in Foster
One of the largest and most rugged of Audubon's properties, it boasts the longest trails on an Audubon refuge.
- 4. MAXWELL MAYS WILDLIFE REFUGE ***
Protected since 2010; Approximately 295 acres
Dry upland forest, a pond, streams, and historic buildings are highlights of this popular destination on Victory Highway.
- 5. HENRY J. LARKIN WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1984; Approximately 420 acres
Large forested tract in a landscape of protected land.
- 6. HERRERA WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1993; Approximately 5 acres
Contains mixed forest that is home to diverse wildlife.
- 7. JAMES BEATON MEMORIAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1995; Approximately 30 acres
Upland forest along the Washington Trail Bike Path.
- 8. JANINE A. PETRARCA WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1997; Approximately 20 acres
Mixed forest is mostly dry but also contains some wetland habitat.
- 9. MANZO MEMORIAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1996; Approximately 38 acres
Located on Flat River Road, this forested land is named in honor of a fallen serviceman.
- 10. PERCHED BOULDER WOODS WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1981; Approximately 52 acres
This rugged and rolling forest is near Rice City Road and Warwick Brook.
- 11. POTTERVILLE WETLAND WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1990; Approximately 5 acres
This small forest is on Maple Valley Road south of Parker Woodland Wildlife Refuge.
- 12. SOUTH BRANCH WILDLIFE REFUGE**
Protected since 1986; Approximately 2 acres
Part of a larger landscape of reservoir protection, this wildlife refuge supports waterfowl and other birds.
- 13. WATERMAN POND WILDLIFE REFUGE ***
Protected since 1993; Approximately 29 acres
Deep shade and a pleasant walk to the pond are highlights of this wildlife refuge.



* Wildlife refuge with trails open to the public. Visit asri.org/hike for details.



WEST GREENWICH 75 acres

- 14. FISHERVILLE BROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE ***
Protected since 1988; Approximately 75 acres in West Greenwich (plus 934 acres in Exeter.) This large wildlife refuge with public access in Exeter also crosses the border into West Greenwich.

EAST GREENWICH 17 acres

- HUNT RIVER SWAMP WILDLIFE REFUGE** (Not shown on map)
Protected since 1965; Approximately 17 acres
This dense forest and swamp along the quiet Hunt River crosses the North Kingstown border.



SUPPORT NATURE IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND DONATE TO AUDUBON TODAY.
VISIT WWW.ASRI.ORG/DONATE OR CALL (401) 949-5454 EXT. 3017.