NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON AUDUBON SOCIETY



Annual Report Edition | February 2019



Madison Audubon is your <u>local</u> Audubon chapter

Together with our members, we work to protect and improve habitat for birds and other wildlife through land acquisition and management, education and advocacy.

WATCH FOR OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

We'll send you an email with a link to read through our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. You know, for a little light reading.

COVER: Slide tracks on a frozen, snow-covered pond at Faville Grove are proof that the otters are having fun this winter! *Photo by Roger Packard* | ABOVE: Sandhill cranes carefully prepare their nest for future success. *Photo by Arlene Koziol*

Success takes preparation

And we did a lot of it in 2018



For nesting sandhill cranes, success takes a lot of preparation. Our success at Madison Audubon is equally dependent on good preparation, so we've been doing a lot of it too.

In 2018, Madison Audubon was awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission—well-earned recognition of years of preparation reviewing, developing and improving our organizational policies and practices. Accreditation itself can be seen as important preparation for future success in acquiring and managing land, securing necessary grant and gift funding, and sustaining organizational performance generally.

Also in 2018, we overhauled our **organizational strategic plan** for the next five years, preparing for lots of great things to come in all areas of our mission—habitat protection, environmental education, and advocacy.

Acquisition of land itself often entails years of preparation by building relationships with sanctuary neighbors and others interested in preserving land for conservation. I won't jinx any ongoing acquisition projects by presenting details here, but I will say that we have some exciting projects in the works, at least a couple of which we hope to hatch in 2019.

Of course, preparation, or ground-work, is literally what we do every day at our sanctuaries, working on the ground to **expand and improve habitat** for plants, animals, insects, and birds. In 2018, we planted new prairies on former cropland at both sanctuaries, inter-seeded savanna and wetland habitats to increase diversity, continued to integrate the life-giving force of fire back into the natural communities we manage, and controlled invasive brush and trees.

continued on pg. 5...

That which defines us

2018 was a big, busy year. The stories in this newsletter give you a glimpse of some of the things we achieved together in just 365 days of hard work and dedication.

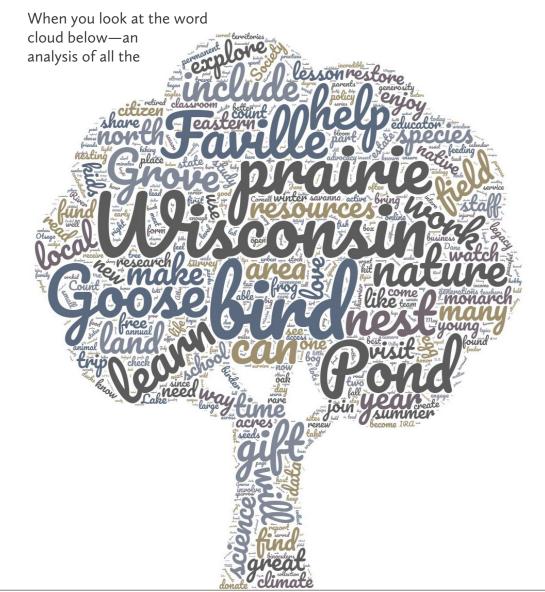
But really, the "list of accomplishments" doesn't reflect what actually invigorates our organization, and that's community. The folks who brave the frigid December temperatures to scatter prairie seed in a barren field. The joy in the faces of people of holding a kestrel chick or releasing a monarch butterfly. We share a common love for Wisconsin's landscapes and critters, and that really puts some pep in our step!

vibrant words from our website, all clustered together, and with the most commonly used words the largest—you get a wonderful overview of how you've made this organization special. Learn. Include. Help. Nature. What a great reminder of the fantastic things we are working for together.

Thank you for making this an inspiring and rewarding community!

Brens

Brenna Marsicek, director of communications bmarsicek@madisonaudubon.org





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Rural remembrance

Assessing changes in the Faville Grove landscape

Looking back on 2018, I'm reminded of all the changes within the sanctuary and in the surrounding landscape. With four years of reference and the veil of the present lifted, I can start to see wholesale changes, both loss and growth, both good and bad. Things lost will take decades to recover, if they ever do. Meanwhile, looking toward the new year at Faville Grove Sanctuary, recovery is ongoing and began anew with seven acres of prairie planted this past fall, and it will continue with more prairie plantings and restoration in the new year. Here's a remembrance to those things lost, and those gained.

My stroll down memory lane begins with a few big charismatic trees. To the sprawling bur oak down Highway G, senselessly cut, whose acorns we collected and planted into the welcoming soil of sanctuary lands. When I counted its rings, I found it to be over 150 years old—just hitting the prime years in the life of an oak.

While 150 is quite old, my mind races to "The General," that old bur oak, whose ancient arm, long struggling

to stand the test of time, finally buckled. There were over 100 rings on *just this limb* of the ancient behemoth.

To the native flowering spurge patch in the right-of-way that once provided gobs of explosive seed (popping open with low humidity), now mowed annually with seed production greatly diminished—victim of a mower craving more.

To the woodlots, near and far, logged and paved, for a housing development, where that house will sit—a dead zone—with non-native blue spruce replacing oak, mowed lawn (the bigger the better) replacing leaf litter, and a few wanting exotic shrubs (easy to maintain) where once stood maple-leaved viburnum, nannyberry, blackberry, raspberry, elderberry, hawthorn, and hazelnut.

To appreciate the southern Wisconsin landscape, one must celebrate certain losses, the vanquishing of foes. Buckthorn and honeysuckle, once gripping woodlands and savannas but now pushed back considerably, make way for a rich sampling of open woodland plants, animals, insects, and fungi.

To see these losses all around us, one must also recognize where new life breathes. Looking to the west, fresh prairies west of Buddy's will create over 100 acres of contiguous grassland, providing refuge for northern harriers, short-eared owls, dickcissels, and meadowlarks.

To create habitat for the birds, one must also learn to think like a bird, to see the land as a free-flowing mosaic of prairie grasses, wildflowers, sedge meadows, scattered oaks, and rolling drumlins, moraines, eskers, and kettles; to see an uninterrupted view, free from parcels, lot lines, fencerows, and ditches. I think of the northern harriers which I've been watching down Prairie Lane this winter, whose mating ritual sky dance is a free expression of open space, a bird that knows only sky and grass. To the future, the harrier tips its wing.

Drew Harry
Faville Grove Sanctuary land steward
faville@madisonaudubon.org

Go team!

How you can advocate for Knowles-Nelson Stewardship

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is one of the most important and successful conservation initiatives in Wisconsin's history, providing crucial funding for land and water protection. It is set to expire soon unless the state legislature and the governor work together to reauthorize and strengthen the program. Madison Audubon's Goose Pond and Faville Grove Sanctuaries have both directly benefited from the program, and our future land protection projects rely on this amazing program's support.

Here are some ways to help:

- 1. Learn more about Knowles-Nelson and the importance of reauthorization: gatheringwaters.org/blog
- 2. Contact your legislators on behalf of the program. Get more information on who they are and talking points here: gatheringwaters.org/take-action
- Share with your friends the benefits Knowles-Nelson provides to Wisconsin's landscapes and critters on social media. Use the hashtag #knowlesnelson in your posts to connect with fellow Team Knowles-Nelson members.

Thank you for protecting land and water in Wisconsin!



Preparation, continued...

And don't forget weed-control—those darned weeds! Garlic mustard, canary grass, sweet-clover, burdock, Canada thistle, and all the other non-native invasives that degrade habitat and limit native diversity. Thanks especially to our hardworking summer interns and land stewards for their extensive weed-control efforts.

Restoring native communities also prepares the ground to remove carbon from the atmosphere in the future. Native ecosystems of all sorts—not just woodlands, but wetlands, grasslands, and shrublands as well—sequester carbon and contribute to a more habitable planet. We even installed solar electric panels at the Faville

Grove land steward's residence in 2018, and we plan to do the same at Goose Pond Sanctuary in 2019 as we move toward **carbon-negative operations** for the organization.

Educating summer interns in the practice of ecological restoration and raising their awareness of the wonders of our southern Wisconsin ecosystems is itself a sort of preparation for the future. The same is true of our outreach and citizen science efforts. And it's true in spades of our educational programming in local grade schools and community centers where, with our focus on ongoing contact with groups of underserved kids, we are working to build the diverse and engaged constituency needed to

care for the natural world for many years to come.

The dogged pursuit of environmental progress at the local level is what has sustained us in the face of recent state and federal backsliding on environmental issues, and it will set the stage for more rapid progress as science and reason are brought once again to bear in the larger political arena. Thanks for helping prepare to make 2019 and the years to come Madison Audubon's most productive ones yet.



Roger Packard, president rpackard@uwalumni.com



ABOVE: Black-necked stilts doing the dance at Goose Pond this spring. Photo by Richard Armstrong | BELOW: A seated tour of the prairie showcases 50 years of hard work and dedication. Photo by Jim Hess | OPPOSITE TOP: Nothing puts smiles on kids' faces like the good ol' outdoors. Photo by MAS | OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Young naturalists learn how to identify birds on the fly during a MAS lesson. Photo by MAS

Change is the only constant

Each year brings new adventures and milestones at Goose Pond

Goose Pond Sanctuary has now seen 50 winters, each one offering a stillness to reflect on the year gone by. No two years are alike out here, a fact that keeps us on our toes! Between rare bird sightings and celebrating major milestones at the sanctuary, 2018 was a rewarding year.

The nesting season included the notable presence of black-necked stilts and eared grebes at Goose Pond. The stilts were observed copulating in the shallow wetland north of the pond. They disappeared in late May, but a family group maybe the same pair with young was spotted west of the sanctuary in September. There is only one nesting record of a brood of eared grebes in Wisconsin from 50 years ago. Our eared grebes built nesting platforms and were seen copulating. Shortly after, arrowhead vegetation obscured the nesting area and we couldn't document nesting, though we hope they successfully raised young there.

We also celebrated the 50th anniversary of Goose Pond in 2018, joined by many friends that have been crucial to growing and restoring the sanctuary. We are so thankful to everyone that has supported and

continues to support the sanctuary.

Another highlight of 2018 was trapping two snowy owls and placing a high-tech Project SNOWstorm (projectsnowstorm.org) transmitter on a beautiful male owl named "Arlington." Thanks to Madison Audubon donors who supplied the transmitter funds, we were able to follow Arlington as he moved around the landscape—and he was quite the meanderer! Arlington provided us with four months of rich, fascinating winter movement data until sadly he was struck and killed by a vehicle in northern Minnesota in April. (Side note: the transmitter was recovered and refurbished, and on Jan. 4, 2019 was placed on another snowy owl, Coddington. Learn more at madisonaudubon.org/coddington.)

In 2019, we plan to update management plans for Goose Pond, Erstad Prairie, and Otsego Marsh—no small task. We're hoping to install a web-cam that overlooks the pond to allow anyone with a computer to view thousands of waterfowl visiting Goose Pond from their home. We are also making plans to erect a Motus tower to record birds tagged by scientists and efficiently gather migration data as part of a bird tracking system in Canada and the US (motus.org).

We hope you'll join us for another year of adventures and change at Goose Pond. The sanctuary is open to the public 365 days out of the year during daylight hours. See you soon!

Mark Martin and Susan Foote-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary resident managers goosep@madisonaudubon.org





These kids acknowledge their differences without defining each other by them.

What keeps me awake at night

And why kids bring hope

When I think about the future, there is a lot that worries me. As a species, we humans still have a lot of growing to do. We could be kinder, more compassionate, and more generous—both to other humans and to the wildlife that share this Earth. We could think more about how our daily actions will impact future generations and think less about instant gratification. We could all raise our voices when we see wrongs that need righting.

I actually do lose sleep over these things.

In spite of all of this, I am still brimming with hope for our future. Each day I interact with kids who are growing into wonderful human beings. They're a riot of excitement and questions—creative and thoughtful little people learning about their world. Most kids aspire to be scientists, teachers, or doctors—all helpers! In one classroom I visit weekly, there are 12 languages spoken and children who hail from almost as many countries. These kids acknowledge their differences without defining each other by them. Sure, they sometimes need help remembering how to behave (they're seven years old!) but generally, I'm impressed with the community they and their teachers have created.

Madison Audubon's education department has a lot planned for 2019. We're building new partnerships with other local environmental

organizations. Our educators regularly visit four community centers and make one-time visits to many more. We enjoy weekly outdoor education classes with two schools, and have built wonderful relationships with these kids.

Each time a curious kid grabs my hand and pulls me over to newly discovered coyote scat or tells me a story about a bird they saw, I'm hopeful. Hopeful that we're helping to shape a new generation of humans who care for each other

and our Earth.
Hopeful that more adults will look at the kids in their lives, and resolve to be advocates for their futures.
Hopeful that we'll all pull together to do the hard work that needs to be done.

Hopeful.



Carolyn Byers, education director carolyn.byers@madisonaudubon.org





Madison Audubon is a proud member of the following organizations:







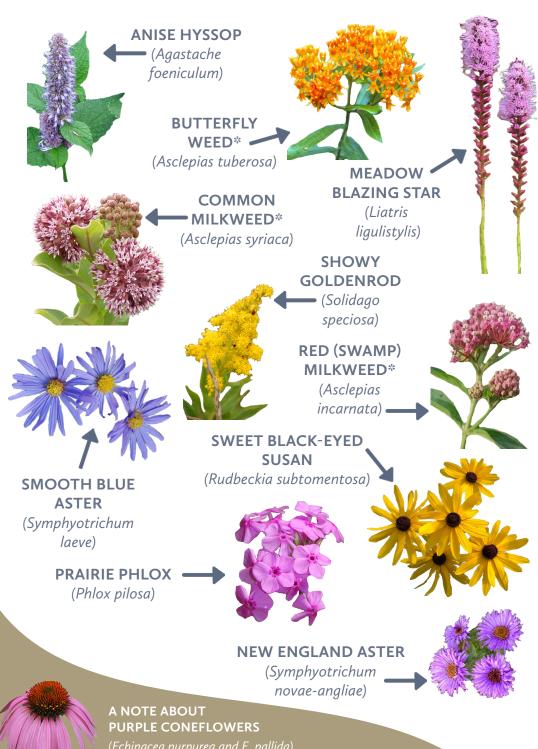




Supporting the monarchy

The top 10 best Wisconsin-native plants for monarchs

Turn your yard into a monarch oasis! These 10 Wisconsin-native plants are some of monarchs' absolute favorites. Three species of milkweed (genus *Asclepias*, denoted by *), which monarch caterpillars entirely rely on for feeding, are included. Learn how you can help monarchs at wimonarchs.org.



E. purpurea and its Wisconsin-native cousin, the pale purple coneflower (E. pallida) are

SPRING OFFERINGS



PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Monitoring American kestrel nestboxes

Pat Ready, Tues., Feb. 26, 7 PM Capitol Lakes (333 W. Main St.)

Citizen science and pollinators: What you can do

John Shillinglaw, Tues., Mar. 19, 7 PM Lussier Community Education Center (55 N. Gammon Rd.)

Climate change: Then and today

Jeremiah Marsicek, Tues., Apr. 16, 7 PM VFW Post 1318 (133 E. Lakeside St.)

Earth Day 2019: Forever Muir

Robert Hanna (g-g-grandson of John Muir), Mon., Apr. 22 6:30 PM, Wisconsin Historical Society (816 State St.)

Registration required.

Descriptions and details at madisonaudubon.org/events

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Bald Eagle Nest Watch

Watch a bald eagle family grow with weekly visits to a nearby bald eagle nest until the eaglets fledge. Begins in February.

Contact Brenna, comm@madisonaudubon.org or 608-255-2473

Kestrel Nestbox Monitoring

Track the growth of a kestrel family by making multiple visits to a nestbox in your area. Begins in March.

Contact Brand, brandsmith@charter.net or 608-444-8952

Breeding Bird Atlas in Columbia County

Survey for woodcocks, screech and great-horned owls, ruffed grouse, and more as part of a team effort. Begins in March.

Contact Sue or Mark, goosep@madisonaudubon.org, 608-635-4160

Songbird Nestbox Trails

Help install and make weekly visits to tree swallow nestboxes at Goose Pond Sanctuary. Begins in April.

Contact Graham, qsteinhauer@madisonaudubon.org

Bird Collision Corps

Help determine which buildings on the UW Campus pose the most threat to birds as a result of window collisions. Begins in April. Contact Brenna, comm@madisonaudubon.org or 608-255-2473

Find out more at madisonaudubon.org/citizen-science

MORE OPPORTUNITIES ON PG. 16

JOIN US!

FIELD TRIPS

We are excited to offer 40 free field trips in 2019, each with a different focus and at a different location. Check the centerfold.

Info on rain dates, accessibility, trail, and trip leaders is at madisonaudubon.org/field-trips

WORK PARTIES

Faville Grove and Goose Pond Sanctuaries are always in need of volunteers excited to get their hands dirty.

Get on the volunteer list at madisonaudubon.org/volunteer



MADISON AUDUBON SOCIETY

2018 ANNUAL REPORT





SANCTUARIES



Acres managed: 1,980 Species of seed collected: 340



EDUCATION



Programs: 166 Kids reached: 2,004 Staff hours spent with kids: 242

FIELD TRIPS



Events hosted: 41 Attendees: 647 Unique locations: 26



CITIZEN SCIENCE



Programs: 14 Volunteers: 542 Hours spent: 2,957



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Your love of birds can shape the future!

more at: madisonaudubon.org/ legacy-society

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Barbara Unger

Suzan Van Beaver

Tracy Topalian and

Ann Thering and David Eide

Charles and Carole Thomas

Ravla Temin

Paul Van Ginkel Gail Van Haren Laura Van Slyke Peter Vanderveer Jake Verbeten Jordan Villanueva Keith and Barbara Voelker Sue and Bob Volenec Alison Volk Jennifer Vos Oakley Waisman Gayle Walkowiak Bob and Sue Wallen Gary Wandrey Laura Ward Janet Washbon Rob and Mary Washenko Theresa Weiland Sharon Weisenberger Jenny Wenzel Paul Werth Florence Wetzel Amanda White Lindsey Whitlock Penelope Wick Rick Wicklund Scott Wiener Lucy Wiesbrock Molly Wight Cait Williamson John and Julie Wilz Carly Claire Winner Patricia Wirtz Grant Witynski Carol Witzeling Mary Woodburn Nancy Woods Carla Wright Stella Wu Laura Wyatt Marcia Yahn Rich Yoshida Meagan Yost Amy Bruner Zimmerman Elizabeth Zimmerman Tesha Zimmerman Mary Ellen Zuther Karen Zweizig

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E. Weston, Jane H., and Amy Wood, and Ken Wood by Tom Wolfe and Pat Powers

IN KIND DONATIONS...

Richard Armstrong **Bob Bennicoff** Hunter Crawford Janet Flynn and Greg Tiedt Monica Hall Dorothy Haines Arlene Koziol Chuck and Linda Pils Rich Ramsden Sandy Quayle Ryan Zagler Heartwood Tree Company LMS Construction Midwest Solar Power Pheasants Forever: Columbia and Dodge County chapters Pleasant Valley Conservancy Stafford Rosenbaum LLP U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service U.W. Arlington Research Farm Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources



GIVE TODAY!

Your generosity funds important conservation and education programs throughout south-central Wisconsin*

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I would like to find out more

If you are a member of both Madison and National Audubon (One Audubon), please renew at audubon. org/take-action or call 1-844-428-3826. Thanks for your additional gift to Madison Audubon!

If you are a member of Madison Audubor only, your gift of \$20 or more above will renew your membership for one year.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS ON PAGE 16, OR GIVE ONLINE AT madisonaudubon.org

*Madison Audubon serves Dane, Columbia, Sauk, Iowa, Richland, Jefferson, Dodge, and Marquette counties.

Madison Audubon Society is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization under Section sou(c)(২) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Givin' it all you've got

Our volunteers are amazing!

You'll read in the following pages about the wonderful financial year we enjoyed as a non-profit supported by hundreds of individual donors and many generous foundations and corporations. What we don't have space for, but value *just as much*, are the hundreds of individuals who donated their time and talents. Whether it's giving a morning to repetitive and wonderfully therapeutic seed collecting at the sanctuaries,

enjoying a day corralling kids at an educational program, spending hours monitoring a nest in all types of weather, or leading a group of curious adults in a field trip, please know we are so grateful to you. Madison Audubon's impact is a measure of your commitment to birds, habitats, and kids.

Thank you!

To learn more about how you can volunteer with Madison Audubon, visit madisonaudubon.org/volunteer

2018's Flynancial Review

Soaring higher than ever

You might know that I love a good (bad?) bird pun, so I couldn't resist including one in the title. On a much less ridiculous topic, thanks to the hard work and generosity of many people just like you, Madison Audubon enjoyed a very strong financial year. We are always humbled by the trust our donors place in us and are committed to making each dollar have the biggest impact possible, whether by supporting dynamic, robust programs or by contributing to our long-term financial health. The opposite page shows a snapshot of our 2018 income, expenses and overall assets. A bit of explanation:

- Programs expenses involve effective education, advocacy, outreach, and land protection services that constitute our shared goals.
- Administration is core mission support that includes finance, HR, communications, systems, and board oversight. Our

programs cannot function without it.

 Fundraising is core mission support that allows us to offer free education programs for underserved kids, maintain and restore wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for the public to enjoy nature.

Madison Audubon has been working diligently to ensure its long-term financial stability so that we can honor our commitment to conservation that lasts forever. If you take a peek at our net assets, you will note that we've been building a healthy fiscal position. These assets include our sanctuary lands, but a growing percentage of them come from strategic and careful treatment of special donations by people like you.

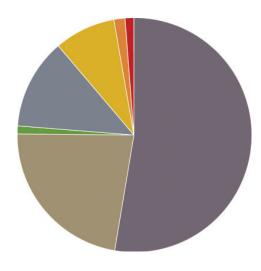
This year, like many others, Madison Audubon was privileged (and very grateful) to receive a number of special additional gifts. These come in all shapes and sizes, with some designated for specific purposes or received through the wills or estates of our supporters. On that note, a special thanks to the members of the Legacy Society who have already made a planned giving commitment to Madison Audubon. The generosity of these and other donors will leave a legacy that will be remembered for generations to come. If you'd like to find out more about joining the Legacy Society or how your love of birds and nature can shape the future through a planned gift, visit our website or drop me a line anytime.

Thanks again for making 2018 fabulous. Together we'll make sure 2019 is one we're raven about!

Matt

Matt Reetz, eggs-ecutive director mreetz@madisonaudubon.org

INCOME

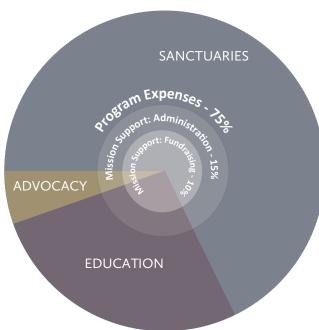


Contributions & Memberships	\$318,296
Grants & Government Contracts	\$129,011
Events	\$6,331
Investment Distributions	\$71,877
Sales & Land Rent	\$48,461
Community Shares of WI	\$8,739
National Audubon Support	\$6,968

TOTAL OPERATIONAL INCOME \$589,683

*Madison Audubon encourages planned gifts and honors donor intent. Bequests are typically placed into long-term investments that protect gift principal, or are used for land or other capital acquisitions.

EXPENSES



Sanctuaries	\$257,558
Education	\$102,092
Advocacy	\$20,308
Administration	
Fundraising	\$49,873

TOTAL EXPENSES \$508,658

Our financial policies are available on our website at madisonaudubon.org/financial-reports. To view the details of our financial health, check out financial tax returns from recent years on our website. A final financial audit will be available by May 1, 2019.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Cusii	Ψ¬¬/,¬/J
Accounts receivable	\$13,893
Prepaid expenses	\$2,244
Investments	\$4,239,177
Property &	
equipment (net)	\$5,518,734
TOTAL ASSETS	\$10,221,521

\$447 473

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$8,900
Accrued expenses	\$22,289
Notes payable	

TOTAL LIABILITIES \$31,189

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted**	\$5,586,797
Assets with donor	
restrictions	\$4,319,851
Board designated	\$283,648

TOTAL NET ASSETS* \$10,190,332

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

\$10,221,521

*A portion of cash assets has been designated as an operating reserve fund.

**Most of Madison Audubon's assets are anctuary lands.

OPPOSITE TOP: A northern harrier sails overhead, benefiting from your donations *Photo by Phil Brown* | LEFT: What's black and orange and cute all over? A Baltimore oriole, of course. *Photo by Kelly Colgan Azar*

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AUDUBON NATURALISTS SERIES

(ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES)

Introduction to identifying birds in Madison. Apr. 20, 27, & May 4, 8-10AM Registration opens to MAS members Mar. 11

Bird & Wildlife Action Photography\$15

Techniques to capture the best wildlife photos. Apr. 22, 9:30AM-12PM Registration opens to MAS members Mar. 11 Birding by Ear (2-part series) . . . \$20

Enrich your birding by focusing on calls.

May 30 or June 1 and June 6 or 8

Registration opens to all Apr. 1

Botanical Illustration\$20

Draw the natural world around you. June 20 or 22, 9AM-12PM Registration opens to MAS members May 8

Details and registration at madisonaudubon.org/naturalists



ABOVE: Did you know you can often tell woodpecker species apart by their distinct drumming patterns? Join our Birding by Ear class to learn more. Photo by Kelly Colgan Azar

JOIN OUR FLOCK! FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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MADISON AUDUBON BOARD BALLOTS

Madison Audubon members, we need your votes! There is quite a bit of shifting with board enrollment this spring, with three members (Arlyne Johnson, Marcia MacKenzie, and Jim Shurts) completing their terms, two current members (Sue Knaack, Topf Wells) up for renewal, and four new candidates (Pat Clark, Matt Fortney, Lisa Lapeak, and Olivia Pietrantoni) on the slate. Read about the new board candidates by visiting the link below.

We count on your votes to make this important aspect of our organization work. Please return this ballot by mail or vote online. Ballots are due by Monday, March 11, 11:59 p.m. Thank you!

Your name:
☐ Vote for all candidates OR
By candidate:
☐ Sue Knaack☐ Topf Wells☐ Pat Clark☐ Matt Fortney
☐ Lisa Lapeak
□ Olivia Pietrantoni

madisonaudubon.org/2019-ballot