

COME FLY WITH US...

When I was in graduate school, which seems like just a few years ago but is actually a quarter century ago (how?!), the university's museum of natural history held a book sale. The books covered all sorts of cool scientific topics, and I purchased a healthy stack. Among my favorites was a book all about avian flight. How did bird flight evolve? What does the alula feather do? How do different bird's wing aspect ratios play into their life histories? It's a real page-turner.

The book also described the physics of flight, the principles that make birds able to conquer the seemingly impossible. One of the four forces of flight is something called lift. Basically, air flowing over a bird's brilliantly-shaped wing moves faster above the wing than below. The result is reduced air pressure over the top of the wing which creates lift. Of course, there is a LOT more going on among these various forces (take a deep dive sometime—it's fascinating!). But for a bird to fly, it must have lift.

Fair warning, here I go again looking for life lessons in the bird world. But, I can't help but think that Madison Audubon is like a bird wing. We work diligently and thoughtfully to craft the organizational structure that can make positive changes for birds, kids, habitat, and community.

But, without the lift that you—our members and supporters—provide, we just wouldn't be able to make that work fly.



In this annual report, we are proud to share just some of the ways you lifted us up this past year. I hope you'll enjoy reading about our shared efforts to protect birds, expand citizen science projects, conserve habitats, share the joys of nature with kids, and deepen our commitment to making our work (and our name) more equitable, inclusive, and accessible for all.

Indeed, what we've accomplished together over the past year is creating a better future for birds, habitats, and the people who enjoy them. And because of the lift you provide, our future work is filled with both ambition and joyful optimism: more adventures, more learning, more smiles. I am so excited to see how high and how far we will fly together this year and beyond.

With gratitude,

Matt Reetz, executive director

P.S. And now I have the song "Wind Beneath My Wings" stuck in my head!

LOOKING AHEAD: THE NAME QUEST

In February, our members received a letter about the Madison Audubon board of director's decision to seek a name change due to the troubling history of John James Audubon. Ultimately, Audubon's racist history creates a painful legacy for many in our community and also severely limits our ability to carry out our work inclusively, meaningfully, and sustainably. This decision was made with the full care and due diligence it deserved and we invite you to learn more about the issue and our process on our website.

We are watching National Audubon's own name review process closely, and can remain a chapter with a changed name. We want to hear from you, especially as we determine a new name that moves us forward together. Most importantly...

Our mission remains the same.

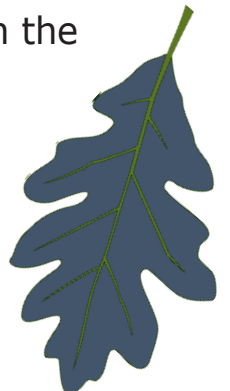
Birds are at the heart of the important work we do together, and you—our members—make that soar.

Join our annual meeting on Monday, March 6 at 7 PM, either in person at the Lussier Family Heritage Center (3101 Lake Farm Rd, Madison) or online via Zoom— registration is required. You are also invited to share your thoughts at feedback@madisonaudubon.org.

For more information, or to register to attend the event, visit madisonaudubon.org/audubon-name.

2022 IN REVIEW

- **2,135+ acres of land** are currently managed by Madison Audubon, including the permanent protection of critical habitat at Faville Grove and Goose Pond sanctuaries.
- **1,000+ volunteers** helped us collect data for citizen science programs like Bald Eagle Nest Watch, Bird Collision Corps, Christmas Bird Count, and nest box monitoring.
- **650+ community members** joined us to explore on a bird outing or field trip.
- **152 bird lovers** learned how to identify different avian species, prevent window collisions, or draw wildlife in one of our adult education courses.
- **26 different classrooms** adventured outdoors and discovered nature with our education team (11 classrooms in the spring, 15 classrooms in the Fall).
- **11 interns** experienced the rewarding, hands-on work involved in habitat restoration at our sanctuaries.



- And we moved to a new office! Be sure to update your address book to:
Madison Audubon
211 S. Paterson Street, Suite 340
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

KEEPING THE NEST IN ORDER

by John Minnich, financial manager

2022 brought good growth and change to our organization. We added new staff to increase our educational and communications capacity. Coupled with the staff we added since 2020, this made it necessary to move into a new and larger office space, which we did in November.

Madison Audubon Sanctuaries employed eleven full-time summer interns, and we continued year-round management of over 2,000 acres of bird and wildlife habitat. Our education program strengthened relationships with local teachers, and got kids outside to experience birds and nature firsthand. Our citizen science programs expanded their reach, bringing in more volunteers than ever.

Our members and friends stepped up to make all this possible—we received gifts from more than 1,500 unique donors. It's gratifying to have such a

broad base of support.

The graphics on the next page summarize our operating income and expenses plus our financial position.

- **Program** expenses include everything you'll read about in upcoming sections of this newsletter—restoration work at Goose Pond and Faville Grove sanctuaries, reaching kids with our education program, Bald Eagle Nest Watch and other volunteer-driven citizen science projects. Our programs are why we're here.
- **Administration** includes finance, human resources, communications, and volunteer support.
- **Fundraising** includes communicating with current donors in addition to connecting with new donors and funding opportunities.

We ended 2022 in a good position to continue our work in 2023. I cannot say it enough, but thank you for your ongoing support and for helping us to fulfill our mission!



2022 INCOME

58.9%	
19.0%	
13.4%	Contributions from Individuals \$559,756
5.9%	Investment Distributions \$180,693
1.1%	Grants & Government Contracts \$127,813
1.0%	Sales, Land Rent & Other \$56,322
0.7%	Events \$10,814
	Community Shares of Wisconsin \$9,676
	National Audubon \$6,968
	TOTAL OPERATING INCOME \$952,042

2022 EXPENSES

43.9%	
19.8%	Sanctuaries \$373,430
15.7%	Education \$168,613
13.4%	Administration \$133,226
7.2%	Fundraising \$113,427
	Advocacy \$61,046
	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$849,742

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

Cash	\$749,568
Accounts receivable	\$5,500
Prepaid expenses	\$9,019
Investments	\$5,635,251
Property & equipment (net)	\$6,851,629
TOTAL ASSETS	\$13,250,967

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$8,327
Accrued expenses	\$8,643
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$16,970

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$7,503,781
Assets w/donor restrictions	\$5,255,445
Board designated	\$474,771
TOTAL NET ASSETS*	\$13,233,997
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$13,250,967

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

THE MAGIC OF TIME

by Drew Harry, Faville Grove Sanctuary land steward

David Musolf & Roger Packard, Faville Grove Sanctuary managers



Prairie restoration sometimes seems like magic, but the restorations at Faville Grove hide years of hard work. Let's trek through time at Faville Grove to examine changes and growth from the past year and beyond.

Buddy's Prairie (28 years old) exhibits the diversity of landscapes and habitats at Faville Grove, which made it an integral part of many field trips, outings, and tours in 2022. Robust with long-lived Silphiums, perennial grasses, and Baptisia, time evens out this ecosystem. Badgers happily burrow throughout, creating colonization opportunities for unique plants like balsam ragwort and wormwood. With a recent gap in burning, sapling bur oaks—from acorns planted decades ago—hint at an intriguing future savanna.

MacKenzie Overlook (25 years old) was dedicated on a warm and sunny November day this past fall in honor of Marcia MacKenzie, a devoted Madison

Audubon member who served on the board as vice president. The spot impresses visitors year-round, but especially around the Fourth of July, when it blooms with natural fireworks displays of butterfly milkweed, pale purple coneflower, and purple prairie clover. Recent botanical conjuring tricks have included white goldenrod and, just this past year, pasqueflower.

Martin Prairie (20 years old) consists of a complex layer of bluejoint grass and sporadic but explosive blooms. Near annual burning, herbicide treatment of reed canary grass, and subsequent reseeding of treated areas have created a strong and functional prairie that Bobolinks heartily endorse. On adjacent Tillotson Prairie, we found the first eastern prairie white-fringed orchid to jump into our restorations from the remnant Faville Prairie. Its discovery commenced jumping and hooting and hollering by the summer 2022 intern crew.

Uplands South (18 years old) has a stable and dependable foundation that allows little experiments to showcase big results. Recently, this has included heavy seedings of rare and important species like bastard toadflax and twoflowered cynthia. In 2022, we introduced dodder, a strange, parasitic orange plant that sucks nutrients from host plants—typically aggressive invaders like Canada goldenrod. The Operation Fresh Start crew was wowed by the weirdness of this plant while helping us collect 20 buckets of spiderwort seed heads over the summer.

Helga's Addition (6 years old) proves that waiting for the prairie takes patience, a gift only time can give. After years of wondering whether our massive seeding of blue-eyed grass would come to fruition (to buy the amount of seed we collected would have cost over \$20,000), the past two years have revealed bountiful bunches of delicate, attractive spring flowers. This year we collected lots of blue-eyed grass, one of 412 native plant species we collected, cataloged, and spread.

The Sahara (4 years old) is a unique and promising young sand prairie. While searching for weeds always exhort the interns to keep their eyes out for something interesting. It's the only site in the sanctuary with wild lupine, and in the last few years, interns have discovered large-flowered penstemon, marbleseed, downy yellow painted cup, and prickly pear cactus. In 2022, we burned seven acres of this restoration and it showed

tremendous blooms across the board. In fact, just one square meter harbored 29 species, and a site inventory with interns turned up 115 native species.

Fat Goose Prairie (2 years old) reveals that "the terrible twos" aptly describes prairies as well. The second year often requires intensive pulling and digging of biennial weeds. Summer interns cut their teeth wrestling towering bull thistles, wild parsnip, and sweet clover. It was a monumental effort, complete with thistle pricks and parsnip burns. Hopefully, the groundwork we've laid will make invasive weeds a disappearing act.

The Goose Pond (a soon-to-be-purchased area) is not to be confused with another Goose Pond you may know. Rather, it is the historical name given to the open water on the east edge of Faville Marsh. Madison Audubon has begun restoration of the tract and adjacent uplands by cutting invasive brush and trees in the fence rows and marsh edge. Check back frequently to watch as the magic unfolds.

Taking stock of time while wandering is a fun way to reflect on the effectiveness of our management efforts from the past year and even across the decades. It allows us to analyze what we've done well and what needs more work. Thinking back to Aldo Leopold's appeal "to keep every cog and wheel [of the ecosystem]," we re-insert the cogs and tinker with the different levers of management, reviving this magical machine.

To learn more and check out the map, visit madisonaudubon.org/faville-grove.

A BUSTLING YEAR FOR BIRDS & BUGS

by Mark Martin & Susan Foote-Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary resident managers
Graham Steinhauer, Goose Pond Sanctuary land steward
Emma Raasch, Goose Pond Sanctuary ecological restoration technician



2022 was a bustling year at Goose Pond Sanctuary thanks to our wonderful volunteers, interns, and staff!

We hosted 645 visitors on 38 field trips, which included 26 classes, and worked with volunteers for 1,285 hours. Together we tagged 220 monarch butterflies, collected 133 pounds of pure live common milkweed seed that will provide 1,990 acres of monarch breeding habitat, monitored 117 Tree Swallow nesting boxes that fledged 470 young, and burned 227 acres of restored mesic prairie, one of the rarest habitat types in Wisconsin and around the globe.

With the help of citizen scientists, we have also added a number of new species to our Goose Pond species' lists. This includes the American snout butterfly, the lyre-tipped spreadwing damselfly, a Yellow-throated Warbler, and 145 species of moths including five

prairie-obligates. Goose Pond eBirders broke four Columbia County high counts this past year: 19 Northern Flickers, 75 Savannah Sparrows, 9 Lincoln's Sparrows, and 75 Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Last year, Goose Pond also experienced abnormally low water levels that provided ample habitat for migrating shorebirds. Thanks to eBirders, 25 species of shorebirds were spotted this spring, only ten species away from Goose Pond's cumulative shorebird list. Especially exciting observations and Goose Pond high counts include 13 Stilt Sandpipers, 11 Long-billed Dowitchers, nine Solitary Sandpipers, 75 Lesser Yellowlegs, and five Red-necked Phalaropes.

Our conservation efforts reached far beyond Goose Pond Sanctuary thanks to our raptors fitted with transmitters.

Dorothy, a Rough-legged Hawk equipped with a transmitter in December 2021, returned to the area surrounding Goose Pond in November after her summer in the arctic and has been seen supervising staff as they worked in the Lapinski-Kitze Prairie. One of Madison Audubon's Birdathon teams, The Reckless Wrens,

helped fund a transmitter for another Rough-legged Hawk named Jeffrey. This was also the fourth winter we've tracked Columbia, a Snowy Owl captured near Goose Pond in January 2020. We'd like to thank The Rough-legged Hawk Project, Project SNOWstorm, and the donors who made these efforts possible.

MARK & SUSAN INDUCTED INTO THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION HALL OF FAME

We are proud to share that Mark Martin and Susan Foote-Martin will be inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame this year. The award is the highest honor given to conservationists in Wisconsin who have contributed to the state's environmental legacy.

Mark and Susan have been managing Madison Audubon's Goose Pond Sanctuary for 45 years. They have helped restore wildlife habitat on Madison Audubon lands along with public and private lands, have helped secure millions of dollars in funding for conservation, and have coordinated numerous citizen science projects.

Since 1968, Madison Audubon has protected 4,054 acres and the Martins have been involved with protection of 3,016 acres at 10 locations.

The Martins also had professional careers as conservation biologists with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Mark worked there for over four decades. Many of those were with the State Natural Areas program, where



he worked on land acquisitions, habitat management, facility development projects, and grant writing.

Susan worked for the WDNR for 30 years, where she developed the Great Wisconsin Birding and Nature Trail, helped secure millions of dollars for State Wildlife Grants, and assisted with the listing of Wisconsin's cave bats as state threatened.

The Martins will be inducted in Madison on April 25 in a gathering with friends that will also be streamed virtually. Learn more at wchf.org/2023-induction-events

by Brenna Marsicek, director of communications and outreach



A few weeks ago, my 5-year-old asked me why her legs hurt. I told her maybe they were growing pains, and she was absolutely tickled by the idea that she could grow so fast that she could feel it. What an unbelievable thought! While great medical minds might not agree that one can feel themselves growing quickly, I am happy to say that our citizen science programs have been growing so fast we can feel it—in the best way.

Our Kestrel Nest Box Monitoring program, spearheaded by volunteer Brand Smith, provides sites for, stewardship of, and development data from American Kestrel nest boxes. Starting with 34 boxes in 2012, Brand and his merry band of volunteers have grown this program to 221 nest boxes in 2022, making it the second-largest program of its kind reporting to the American Kestrel Partnership by box

quantity, and the largest by number of volunteers with 106! The kestrels are benefitting from this hard work, too. At least 1,612 birds have taken to the skies after being raised in one of our boxes.

The Bird Collision Corps (BCC) program grew by leaps and bounds last year, mirroring the tremendous interest from the public in reducing the number of birds that fatally crash into windows. BCC volunteers spend spring and fall migration season documenting where and when window collisions happen. The program has grown from working on just the UW-Madison campus in 2018, to working with 2 additional site hosts in 2020, to partnering with 10 businesses and campuses in the greater Madison area in 2022. All the while, we have advised multiple corporate mitigation projects, supported the city in fighting a lawsuit challenging Madison's bird-safe glass ordinance, and encouraged

homeowners to reduce collisions at home with window treatments. It's rewarding, life-saving work.

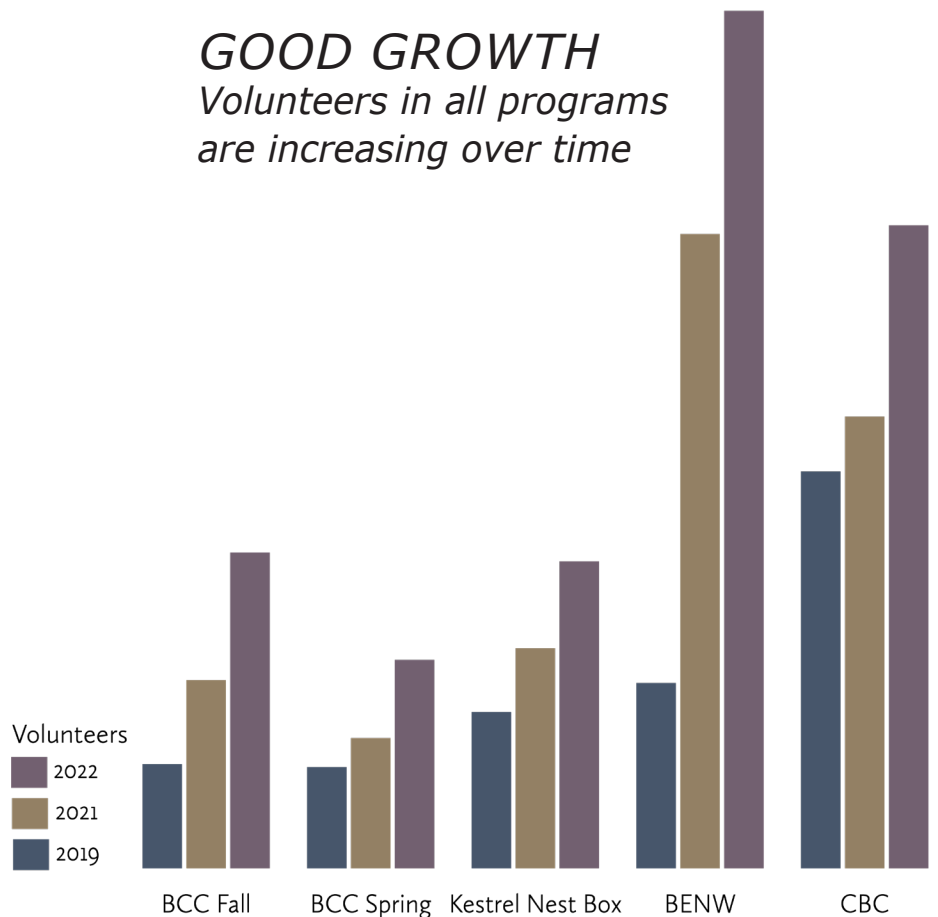
Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is an annual event that has been held nationwide for the past 123 years, and the Madison-area has participated in 94 of them! Madison Audubon has coordinated the local count since 2002. I recently learned that the first record of a Madison-area CBC was in 1907. Just one person participated and documented 1 Herring Gull, 4 Blue Jays, 2 chickadees, 2 Brown Creepers, and 7 Golden-crowned Kinglets. Amazing. Compare that to December 2022: 222 volunteers documented 98 species and nearly 44,000 individual birds. Mark Martin and Susan Foote-Martin from Goose Pond have coordinated the Poynette CBC as far back as 1991 (the first count there was in 1956). Results from all of the counts within our chapter boundaries are summarized at madisonaudubon.org/cbc-2022.

Finally, Bald Eagle Nest Watch (BENW) has grown faster than a baby eaglet. This program, with leadership from volunteer Drew Cashman, pairs trained volunteers with eagle nests for weekly monitoring sessions. They document nest activity from egg laying to chicks to fledging. In 2018, the program began with 15 nests and 41 volunteers. We partnered with 1000 Islands Environmental Center in 2021 to start a Fox Valley program, and last year worked with an additional coordinator in central

Wisconsin to expand the program further. In 2022, we monitored a total of 110 nests with the help of 296 volunteers! The data gathered over the past years coincidentally and importantly helped researchers consider the impact of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza on eagle populations, which likely contributed to a higher than usual nest failure rate of 65%, up from the annual average of 15%.

We are so thrilled to work with all of these folks again in 2023, as well as new partners at Beaver Creek Reserve, The Ridges Sanctuary, and Woodland Dunes Nature Center. We are extremely grateful to each of the hundreds of volunteers who help us study these important questions. We couldn't have the joy of growing together without you, so thank you!

GOOD GROWTH
Volunteers in all programs are increasing over time



by Carolyn Byers, director of education
Mickenzee Okon, educator

2022 was a wonderful year for the education crew; we were busier than ever. We reached a lot of kids: 237 in the spring, 32 in the summer, and 280 in the fall. That's a lot of adventuring, learning, and laughing!

Kids are naturally just so curious, it's awesome when they get the space and time to explore. One memory stands out brightly: the day the Vera Court Neighborhood Center kids joined us at Goose Pond Sanctuary to band baby kestrels. There's just something magical about kids bursting with excitement but also calmly holding a fluffy ball of talons.

Participants in our summer Conservation Academy, in partnership with Operation Fresh Start, met with professionals in the field to explore career pathways. We learned about urban forestry, and electrofishing with Wisconsin DNR biologists, visited Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, and discussed habitat restoration at our sanctuaries. The program ended with a s'mores-filled retreat at the Mackenzie Center.

In late summer, we were thrilled to onboard our new educator, Mickenzee, and increase the number of classes we could visit: we taught at Vera Court in addition to 15 classrooms in the fall.

We often bring a lot of "awesgusting" (awesome + disgusting) stuff to programming—like cicada exoskeletons—and we love watching how the kids react to what we pull out of our wagon. Usually their eyes get huge and we get a million guesses shouted at us.



Our educators met weekly with three 4th-grade classrooms between September and December. Each class experiences so much! For example: kids engaged in 11 unique lessons and got to spend about 24 hours learning outdoors. We played ten different games, had eight sessions with specimens (like fur, feathers, or preserved insects), took two neighborhood walks with binoculars, made two outings to a local park, and went on one field trip to hike part of the Ice Age Trail. Together, we told approximately 154 nature stories and wrote 396 new nature journal entries. And that's just one class.

Truly, it's the "whoa!" moments that we look forward to most. Sometimes it's while we're walking through the woods looking under logs and they find a bug. Sometimes it's when kids are checking out our skulls or feathers with magnifying glasses. Sometimes it's while dipping for water creatures. 2023 promises to be another wow-filled year!

SPRING 2023 FIELD TRIPS

12

Below are our upcoming field trips and programs. Each opens for registration 6 weeks prior to the event. Madison Audubon's field trip program is made possible, in part, through funding from the Henry A. Anderson III Fund.

Please register so we can share trip information, weather adjustments, and more by visiting madisonaudubon.org/field-trips

Walk & Explore: for Kids!

Date: Sat., Mar. 11, 9–11 AM

Location: Cherokee Marsh (Madison)

Led by: Carolyn Byers & Mickenzee Okon

Beginning Birders

Date: Mon., Mar. 20, 5:30–7 PM

Location: Nine Springs (Madison)

Led by: Kaitlin Svabek

Prescribed Fire Workshop

Date: Sat., Mar. 25, 4:30–7:30 PM

Location: Goose Pond (Arlington)

Led by: Graham Steinhauer & Emma Raasch

Woodcock and Snipe Walk

Date: Tue., Apr. 11, 6:30–8:30 PM

Location: Faville Grove (Lake Mills)

Led by: Drew Harry, David Musolf, & Roger Packard

Birding by Ear: Cherokee Marsh

Date: Wed., Apr. 12, 6:30–8:30 PM

Location: Cherokee Marsh (Madison)

Led by: Kerry Wilcox & Becky Abel

Beyond Backyard Birding

Date: Sun., Apr. 16, 7:30–9:30 AM

Location: UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve (Madison)

Led by: Ashley Olah & Jenn Schneidermann

Spring Birding at Lakeshore

Date: Tue., Apr. 25, 7:30–9:30 AM

Location: UW-Madison Lakeshore Nature Preserve (Madison)

Led by: Becky Abel & Roma Lenehan

Birding at Wyalusing State Park

Date: Sat., May 6, 5 AM–2 PM

Location: Wyalusing SP (Bagley)

Led by: Quentin Yoerger

Habitat Diversity at Faville Grove West

Date: Sun., May 8, 7:30–10:30 AM

Location: Faville Grove (Waterloo)

Led by: Drew Harry, David Musolf, & Roger Packard

Birding Madison School Forest

Date: Sun., May 14, 7–9 AM

Location: Madison School Forest (Verona)

Led by: Chuck Henrikson & Wade Mapes

Birding by Boat

Date: Wed., May 17, 7–8:30 PM

Location: Cherokee Marsh (Madison)

Led by: Becky Abel, Brenna Marsicek, & Jeff Galligan

Exploring Rocky Run Oak Savanna SNA

Date: Fri., May 19, 9 AM–12 PM

Location: Goose Pond (Arlington)

Led by: Mark Martin, Graham Steinhauer, & Emma Raasch

Spring Sit

Date: Sat., May 20, 7–9 AM

Location: Stricker's Pond (Middleton)

Led by: Kaitlin Svabek

Evening Songscape Walk

Date: Wed., May 24, 7:30–9:30 PM

Location: Edna Taylor Conservation Park (Madison)

Led by: Jim Berkelman

SPRING WARBLER WALKS**Cherokee Marsh North**

Date: Wed., May 3, 6–8 AM

Location: Cherokee Marsh (Madison)

Led by: Timothy Baker

UW-Madison ArboretumDates: Thu., May 4, 11, & 18;
6:30–8:30 AM

Location: UW Arboretum (Madison)

Led by: Chuck Henrikson, Shawn Miller, Pat Ready, Paul Banas, Wade Mapes, Bob Honig

Turville Point

Date: Tue., May 9, 6:15–8:30 AM

Location: Turville Point (Madison)

Led by: Marty Evanson

Cherokee Marsh South

Date: Wed., May 10, 6–8 AM

Location: Cherokee Marsh (Madison)

Led by: Timothy Baker



Registration for most courses opens to Madison Audubon members six weeks in advance of the class. Remaining seats will open to the public two weeks later.

Register and find more information at: madisonaudubon.org/naturalists

Learning the ropes of eBird Mobile (2-part series)

Class: March 28, 7–8:30 PM.

Trip: April 1, 9–10:30 AM.

\$20/person

Birding 101 (4-part series)

Classes: April 15, 22, & 29, 8–10 AM.

Trip: May 6, 8–10 AM.

\$20/person

Birding by Ear: Learning to identify birds without using sight (2-part series)

Class: April 27, 6–8 PM

OR April 29, 10 AM–12 PM.

Trip: May 5, 8–10 AM

OR May 11, 6–8 PM

\$20/person

Beginning Bird and Wildlife Action Photography

Class: May 3, 7:30–10 AM.

\$20/person

To find detailed information about upcoming field trips, events, and adult education offerings visit **madisonaudubon.org/events**

LEAVE YOUR MARK

by Becky Abel, director of philanthropy

In October 2022, 33 bird conservation organizations and agencies released the *U.S. State of the Birds Report*, an excellent summary of the status and trends of bird numbers in the U.S. The take-home messages were steep declines and loss, but also included some important and hopeful lessons.

Let's start with the alarming part:

- Over the past 50 years, the U.S. and Canada have lost 3 billion birds. There were four times as many birds singing, flying, migrating, nesting, and inspiring us 50 years ago as there are now.
- 70 bird species have been designated "Tipping Point" species—they have lost 2/3 of their populations over the past 50 years and are on track to lose another 50% over the next 50 years.

- Birds are declining across all but one habitat type. Grassland birds are experiencing the steepest declines, 34% since the 1970s.
- Many grassland birds are Tipping Point species, including two species for which Wisconsin is a high priority area Bobolink and Henslow's Sparrow.

But wait. There's some good news too:

- Wetland restoration has made a difference! This is the one habitat type that showed increases in bird numbers. This is a direct result of four decades of focused conservation, restoration, and critical policy that slowed destruction
- Cleaner water, rebounding waterfowl populations, and increases in other wetland-dependent species are



evidence that conservation works. We can make a difference for declining birds species by continuing to protect and restore land and water, advocate for strong conservation policies, and teach students of all ages about the wonders of birds, biodiversity, and native landscapes.

- Madison Audubon's Faville Grove and Goose Pond Sanctuaries are making a difference for Tipping Point species and many other declining birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians, plants, and mammals. Both areas provide safe nesting habitat for grassland birds, including Henslow's Sparrows and Bobolinks.

And, thanks to the support of Madison Audubon members and volunteers who burn prairies, collect and plant seed, clear invasive species, and more, the

high-quality grassland habitat that these species need to thrive will be protected in perpetuity.

If you've never watched a Bobolink flutter above a prairie singing its messy, warbling song and flashing its black and white tuxedo plumage, or if you've never felt the satisfaction of tracking down the quiet, elusive, and inconspicuous

Henslow's Sparrow—then you should plan a summer visit to see one of these Tipping Point species at our sanctuaries. Through careful management of sweeping native prairies, these declining birds have permanent homes there.

See the complete 2022 State of the Birds report at: stateofthebirds.org/2022.

Learn more and visit our sanctuaries at madisonaudubon.org/land

2022 DONORS

Thank you! Your commitment to birds and conservation is incredible. We are grateful to all of our supporters at all levels, but due to space constraints, donors are listed on our website: madisonaudubon.org/2022-donors

Donate on a regular basis without having to lift a finger! The Frequent Flyers Club allows for automated contributions, tailored to your schedule and amount.

Sign up: madisonaudubon.org/give

You can leave a legacy. Members of the Kestrel Legacy Circle have named Madison Audubon in their will or estate, thereby strengthening our organization and mission well beyond their lifetimes. Learn more: madisonaudubon.org/legacy



Featuring: Joanne Jones, Madison Audubon board member, donor



“Madison Audubon is a real leader in land stewardship. As an animal lover, I really appreciate all of the bird and wildlife habitat that the organization protects and manages in south-central Wisconsin.

If you’re reading this newsletter, you likely know all the wonderful things Madison Audubon does, and you probably donate to support their work and mission like I do. But maybe you have never heard of a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), which can be a tax-free way to increase the amount you can donate.

This year, we made our annual donation to Madison Audubon as a tax-free QCD through my husband’s Individual Retirement Account (IRA), and it was so easy to do. If you qualify, I encourage you to look into it too!”

PHOTO CREDITS

P1: Tundra Swans by Monica Hall

P3: Osprey in nest by Arlene Koziol

P5: Blue-eyed grass by Drew Harry/
Madison Audubon

P7: Students collecting seed by
Graham Steinhauer/Madison Audubon

P8: Mark and Sue by Arlene Koziol

P9: Bald Eagles by Mick Thompson

P11: Child with a nature treasure by
Carolyn Byers/Madison Audubon

P13: Tufted Titmouse by Kelly Colgan
Azar

P14: Culver’s root by Drew Harry/
Madison Audubon

P15: American Kestrel by Mick
Thompson

P16: Joanne Jones and her dog,
courtesy of Joanne

P17: Bald Eagle by USFWS Midwest



**Madison Audubon is your local Audubon chapter,
serving 10 counties in southern Wisconsin.**

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

MAKING YOUR QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION (QCD)

In 2022, the IRS declared that individuals who are 70½ or older can make charitable donations of up to \$100,000 from tax-deferred accounts like IRAs. These are exempt from taxation if they come from a qualified account and go to a 501(c)(3) organization like Madison Audubon.

A QCD can have advantages:

- Counts toward satisfying your RMD without you or the recipient charity having to pay income taxes.
- Not included in your AGI, which is used to calculate certain other taxes and benefits.
- Does not matter whether or not you itemize deductions on your return (those using the standard deduction would generally receive no benefit from a regular contribution).
- The regular charitable contribution deduction is typically limited to no more than 50% of AGI. This limit does not apply to a QCD.

A few reminders:

- Right now, only IRAs are eligible for QCDs. If you have money in a 401K or other non-IRA plan, the assets may be rolled to an IRA to be eligible.
- You cannot take active receipt of the charitable distribution. You can mail the check to the charity, but the check must be made out directly to the charity or charities of your choice.
- Recent legislation has updated the age for RMDs and donors 73 years and older must take an RMD. These funds can be used toward a tax-savvy IRA gift!

Acronyms that can support avians

AGI: adjusted gross income

IRA: individual retirement account

RMD: required minimum distribution

Written by Joanne Jones. Talk to your financial and tax advisor about making a QCD. For information about donating to Madison Audubon, contact Becky Abel at 608-255-2473 x5 or babel@madisonaudubon.org

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

Now is the time to officially elect new members to the board and renew the terms of existing board members! Please take a moment to read the candidate statements and vote. To do so, visit the link below. Ballots are due by March 20 at 11:59 PM. Thank you!

madisonaudubon.org/2023-ballot



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