



Exploring our connections with local birds

Last month, robins built a nest on our front porch and successfully hatched four eggs. In the days that followed, I found myself profoundly obsessed with the progress of these babies (perhaps because the event coincided with the graduation of my youngest child from college). I would sit quietly at a safe distance and observe their feedings through binoculars. I worried about many things: were the parents ignoring the smallest chick, was there enough room in the nest as the fledglings grew and would they all withstand the hard surfaces of our porch when they first left their safe home? I watched as their feathers came in and looked in awe when they began to stretch their bodies and spread their wings. When they left, I felt pride, joy and, yes, a touch of sorrow (did I mention my daughter's graduation?).

It's easy to understand how personally invested people can become in the birds that they see every day. But what about those species that we might never encounter?

One of our jobs at Audubon is help bird lovers find connections to birds that they may never see and places that they may never visit. One way we do this is through Audubon's [Migratory Bird Explorer](#), which helps us easily understand the journeys

that our local birds take every year and then grasp why our conservation and policy work must focus on protecting the key habitats that birds need along those migratory paths.

It's encouraging to Audubon Mid-Atlantic staff when those connections are made—when center staff hear a child explain to her mom why clean watersheds matter to birds and people and when that mom joins more than 600 other Audubon supporters to reach out to ask PA state legislators to increase funding for water quality efforts.

Thank you for all you do to support birds and the places they need, in this region and beyond,

Suzanne
Suzanne Biemiller
Executive Director, Audubon Mid-Atlantic
Vice President, National Audubon Society

Black skimmer in water. Trudy Walden/Audubon Photography Awards

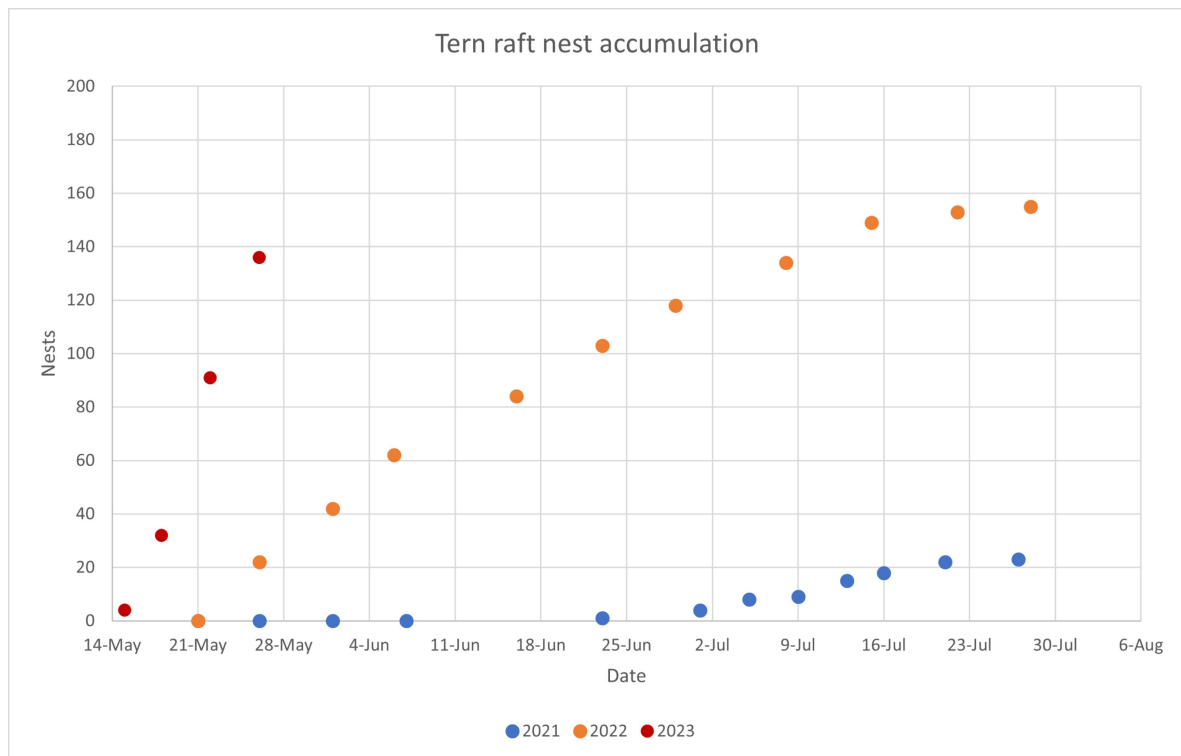


Common Tern Nesting Platform

For three nesting seasons, Audubon Mid-Atlantic has worked with the Maryland Coastal Bays Program and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to create artificial nesting platforms in Maryland’s coastal bays for endangered colonial waterbirds. At this point in the nesting season last year, there were 19 nests on the island. Incredibly, this number has increased to 136 nests at the end of May for the 2023 season! We anticipate this number will continue to increase over the next month. View the graph below for a comparison of the past three years of the tern raft, and see how the number of nests has grown exponentially as nesting birds return to the platform year after year.

We hope this means that the numbers will continue to grow, and help to restore populations of Common Tern in Maryland which have declined by a staggering 90-95% since the mid-1980s due to sea level rise and the erosion of their natural barren sand nesting islands in the coastal bays. Follow our social media channels for summer updates on the tern raft.

Common terns on nesting platform / Kim Abplanalp





Pennsylvania Policy Roundup

Thank you to everyone who took part in our action alert advocating for increased Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Protection budgets in Pennsylvania. To date, there have been over 600 submissions to our action alert. There is [still time to raise your voice on this issue!](#)

In Pennsylvania, Audubon Mid-Atlantic is continuing to track legislation such as the [Schools for Solar Act \(HB1032\)](#), which will not only increase the availability of renewable energy for schools throughout the state, but will also protect birds and advance the future of Pennsylvania's renewable energy landscape. We're also watching the Balloon Release Litter Bill (HB1051), which would require that any balloons released cannot be made of nonbiodegradable material or inflated with a substance lighter than air, and that any violation will result in fines. We're also advocating that Pennsylvania remains a member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). This would allow Pennsylvania to continue investing RGGI proceeds into renewable energy, habitat conservation, and green infrastructure throughout the state. This legislation directly impacts birds and the habitat they need to survive in Pennsylvania, and also helps us to advance our mission of reversing regional bird population declines across the Mid-Atlantic.



Baltimore Birding Weekend Was a Success!

The Baltimore Birding Weekend was a hit! Another nearly sold-out event took place in May, with guided tours taking place in and around Baltimore. Birders explored woods and streams, coastal landscapes, restoration sites, historical sites, and a paddle in the Patapsco River. Many saw their first Baltimore oriole in Baltimore! This year's event had the greatest number of tickets sold and the highest bird diversity counted in seven years of hosting this event – 149 species! Thanks again to our sponsors and participants for supporting Audubon's conservation efforts in Baltimore.

Group photo at Baltimore Birding Weekend 2023



Black Birders Week 2023

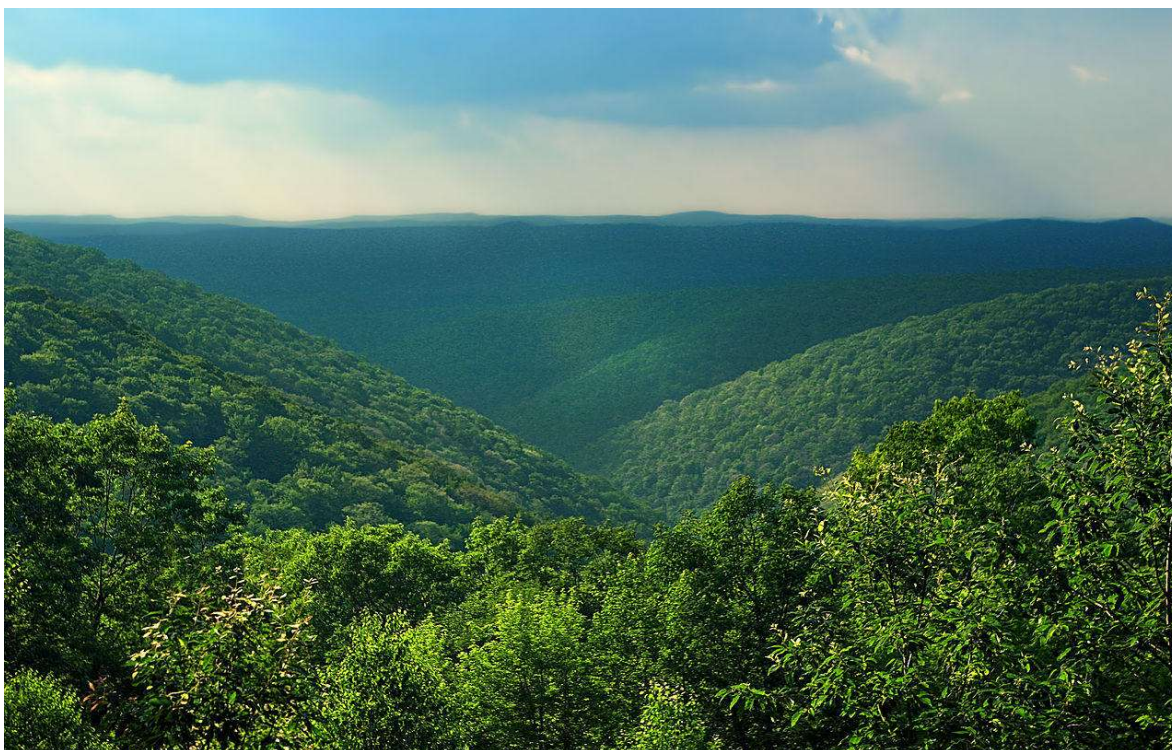
Last week, across the country, many organizations and individuals celebrated Black Birders Week. Audubon Mid-Atlantic highlighted several individuals in the Mid-Atlantic Region – check out our recent posts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to read their profiles!

An excerpt from our highlight of Kojo Baidoo:

In your opinion what are the best ways to inspire or introduce others in the Black community to birding?

“Growing up as a Black birder, I learned that there is a preconceived notion about the types of activities Black people are allowed to enjoy. I would encourage Black people who are interested in birding and the outdoors not to be afraid to carve their own place in a space that may not historically have existed for them, because nature deserves to be appreciated by all and we all deserve to appreciate nature.”

Kojo Baidoo, featured for Black Birders Week



Pennsylvania Chapter Gathering

This weekend, Audubon Mid-Atlantic will host a Pennsylvania Chapter Gathering in Harrisburg, PA. Join us on Sunday, June 11th from 11am until 4pm E.T. at the Olewine Nature Center. We are eager to learn from chapter leaders what supports they need from us to advance their work on behalf of birds at the local level. There will also be time for chapters to share what they're working on and learn more about the work others are doing in the

region. [Registration includes lunch and refreshments. Reserve your spot today!](#)

Check out Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Upcoming Events

Are you looking to hone your skills as a nature photographer? Consider joining us for “Discovering and Photographing Pollinators at the John James Audubon Center” on Friday, June 23rd from 6pm until 8pm. Naturalist and macro photographer Karen Campbell will help us discover and photograph the wildlife that pollinates our native plants. Bring your camera/phone, preferably with a macro lens or close focus setting. Supplemental lighting will be useful (flash and/or continuous light for photography or even a small flashlight).

Any Skill Level: Some experience with manual settings preferred.

[More info and registration here.](#)

DISCOVERY CENTER EVENTS

Visit our Centers, explore our trails, and join us for some winter birding and other exciting activities happening across the Mid-Atlantic region!

• [Pennsylvania Events](#), including the John James Audubon Center and The Discovery Center

• [Patterson Park Audubon Center Events](#)

CONNECT WITH US



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