



Seasonal Shifts

I heard a formation of geese honking overhead and flying north this morning. The daffodils are coming up along my sidewalk. Buds are getting larger on my neighborhood trees. And it is only early March.

This winter in the Mid-Atlantic was one of the mildest on record and the trend lines indicate that it was not an anomaly. And while we might like keeping our snow shovels in storage, we also know that the impact of climate change on birds is already being felt. Breeding and migration patterns in the region are changing and many species have experienced significant population losses.

All of us have a lot of work to do on behalf of the birds that depend upon this region. As you will read in our [2022 Impact Report](#), we spent the year focusing our conservation, policy and education work, aiming to create a region of healthy ecosystems where birds and people can thrive.

It's been exciting to see our work attract new investments and know that these donations will help Audubon deepen its impact across the region. Staff has been

just as encouraged by your willingness to step up and take actions to help birds through policy work.

I am excited about what we will accomplish together in the coming years.

As always, thank you for your support,

Suzanne

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



Baltimore oriole perched on tree. Photo: Shari McCollough/Audubon Photography Awards





Welcome to Christine Proctor!

Audubon Mid-Atlantic would like to extend a warm welcome to Christine Proctor, who joined us last week as our new regional Conservation Director. Christine will lead our forests, coastal and Baltimore-based environmental conservation and restoration programs. She has a background in landscape ecology where she studied how changes in land use influence the

movement patterns of wildlife. Christine has worked with both state and local conservation agencies and most recently started an urban-focused environmental science program at Harrisburg University. In her free time, she enjoys working in her garden and going on road trips with her husband and two dogs.

Christine Proctor standing in a stream in waders. Photo Credit: Christine Proctor



2023 Mid-Atlantic Network Update

In mid-February, more than 60 Audubon supporters attended the eighth annual I Bird I Vote Maryland Conservation Summit. Maryland's new Secretary of Natural Resources, Josh Kurtz, who is an avid birder, spoke about the new Governor's environmental priorities and took audience questions. The assembled group also heard presentations from leaders at Safe Skies Maryland and the Maryland League of Conservation Voters, as well as Senators Cardin and Van Hollen. National Audubon Society staff offered their expertise on actionable ways to advocate, including how to engage with the Migratory Bird Explorer. Thank you all who attended!

And this month, we are excited to host the first ever I Bird I Vote

Pennsylvania Conservation Summit! This summit, being created in partnership with the Appalachian Audubon Society, will be held in-person on March 25, 2023, at the [Olewine Nature Center in Harrisburg, PA](#). The day will focus on issues facing Pennsylvania's birds and the habitats they need to survive, with sessions exploring Audubon's state, regional, and national conservation and policy priorities. [Please join us for this special day \(and for the 8:00AM bird walk that morning\).](#)

Another exciting event took place last month with the first of many educational webinars that we hope to offer our network. This one focused on Pennsylvania environmental policy priorities and accessing the incentives included in the Inflation Reduction Act. Our colleagues Ezra Thrush (PennFuture) and Flora Cardoni (PennEnvironment) joined us to examine these pressing topics, and Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Policy Director Jim Brown offered an invaluable Audubon perspective. [You can watch the recording here](#). Keep an eye on your inbox for more of these webinars, and please let us know if there are topics or speakers you'd like to see on the schedule.

Group photo of the 2023 I Bird I Vote Maryland Conservation Summit. Photo Credit: Bernard Devlin



2023 Mid-Atlantic Policy Update

In Pennsylvania as the House and Senate begin the session this week following February's special elections, we look forward to advancing a robust statewide policy platform which will advance funding and programming for natural climate solutions, habitat conservation, renewable energy, and equitable access to nature. We know this spring in Harrisburg will have us working to ensure Pennsylvania stays a member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), AND develops strong Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS). The two programs are vital to protecting Pennsylvania's varied bird habitats from the threats of climate change.

In Maryland we are working with other environmental organizations to support legislation focused on sustainable building requirements, land conservation and renewable energy. [Read more about these priority bills on our website.](#)

Red-bellied woodpecker on tree. Mathew Pimm/Audubon Photography Awards



Mid-Atlantic Forest Update

This spring, Audubon Mid-Atlantic staff will again take important steps to protect and restore Pennsylvania's forests for migrating and breeding birds.

- We have hired Resilience Planning and Design to craft a plan that creates migratory stopover sites at key places along the Kittatinny

Ridge.

- We will expand The Nature Conservancy's Cove Mountain migratory stopover site by an additional 4 acres. Staff will use a lower cost technique to create the new supportive bird habitat with an eye toward deploying the method at additional private lands along the Ridge in the years ahead.
- Forest Program Associate Josh Rittenhouse will host a Healthy Forest training webinar for Pennsylvania land trusts. This webinar is linked to work that Audubon is doing to develop a land trust network across the state that is committed to creating and managing bird habitat within their forests.

Black-throated blue warbler on tree. Photo Credit: Jesse Gordon/Audubon Photography Awards



Delaware River Watershed

Audubon's Delaware River Watershed program is helping Schuylkill Highlands residents start or enhance riparian buffers on their properties with free native plants. Riparian buffers are vegetated areas along streams that help to stabilize eroding banks and improve water quality in the

Delaware River. By using native plants, participants can support local wildlife and migratory birds which utilize the plants for shelter and food.

Eligible properties contain streams and are located within one of the priority sub-watersheds within the Schuylkill Highlands: Beaver Run, Hay Creek, Pine Creek, French Creek, Birch Run, Pigeon Run, Pigeon Creek, Pickering Creek or Rock Run.

Registration for the program will open at the beginning of March. For more information, please email birdfriendlypa@audubon.org.

Plants used in the program. Photo: Jeanne Ortiz/Audubon Mid-Atlantic



New Bird Exhibit at Philadelphia's Academy of Natural Sciences

Audubon staffers Keith Russell and Connie Sanchez worked with curators and scientists at the Academy of Natural Sciences to create a new bird-focused exhibit, "Conversations with Birds." The show features information about the risks that buildings pose to birds and highlights Lights Out Philly,

which started two years ago through a collaboration between Audubon Mid-Atlantic, the Academy, Wyncote and Valley Forge Audubon Societies and the Delaware Valley Ornithological Society. Read more about the Academy exhibit [here](#).

Exhibit at Academy of Natural Sciences. Photo Credit: Suzanne Biemiller/Audubon Mid-Atlantic



Lights out Philly

Speaking of Lights Out Philly, evidence is growing that the effort is helping prevent migrating birds from crashing into buildings in Philadelphia's business district. Beginning April 1st, many iconic buildings in Philadelphia will shut off their lights to prevent birds from colliding with them. Read more about the Lights Out Philly program in this article from the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), which features Audubon's Keith Russell.

Skyline of Philadelphia. Photo Credit: Tom Gralish/ Philadelphia Inquirer



Wildlife Gardening Workshops

Join Audubon at one of our on-line Wildlife Gardening Workshops - they're free, virtual, and open to the public! Audubon experts share practical tips and scientific support for gardening with native plants outside your home, school, work, or anywhere else you can share with biodiversity. You'll leave with the resources you need to beautify your outdoor space and attract birds, butterflies, and other beneficial wildlife! Several dates available – [click here for more information and to register](#).



Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Photo Credit: Sharon Dobben

Check out Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Upcoming Events

We invite you to join us for an afternoon of Birding the Harriet Tubman Byway in partnership with [Delmarva Birding Weekends](#) and [Harriet Tubman Tours](#). We will tour some important sites for Harriet Tubman and other freedom seekers and explore their connections to birds on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, including the city of Cambridge and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. [Learn more and register](#).



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](#)

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