



Taking in the view

Last month, as we were putting the finishing touches on our new Baltimore plan, my mind wandered back to my older daughter's May 2021 college graduation. It was still a Covid-dominated world and she had endured a pretty miserable senior year. Graduation was not the joyful, mass-crowd event that we dreamed about for her and her classmates (nor for ourselves), but at least we could be there as she crossed this threshold.

Anais Mitchell, an alumna and writer of the award-winning musical, *Hadestown*, was the graduation speaker. Her theme was watersheds—a metaphor for the year that the Class of 2021 endured and for the journeys that we all take in life. Most of our lives, she reflected, are spent down in the valleys walking easily on paths adjacent to the rivers and streams. On some occasions, we might encounter a hill or mountain that we must climb. Those hills challenge us, yet when we get to the top, they reveal incredible vistas that open our eyes and minds to great possibility. We can linger only so long, however, before we must continue on.

I know that for many of you the idea of comparing strategic planning work to a hike through a watershed is bonkers. And yet, this analogy works for me. During the time that AMAers spent thinking about our regional conservation and climate goals and during the time that the Baltimore team spent imagining a greener and more climate resilient Charm City this year, we stood on that mountain top. So too is all of Audubon now standing above the watershed as it dreams about making Flight Plan a reality.

I invite all of you to stand with us and take in the wide, long view. What is it that we want for our natural world? What will truly help birds survive? What might we see on top of the mountain that eluded us down in the valley? And then, let's move down off the mountain and get to work.

“Nobody gives you a map of the ridge,
You climb one mountain and you find the next...
The tallest summit you look up to
Someday it's gonna look small to you
There's a new one coming into view
And you'll climb that too but before you do
You get time to stand looking of the ledge
Where the rivers branch to the east and the west...”

--*Watershed*, Anais Mitchell

May you all have a joyful Thanksgiving.

--Suzanne

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

Gray catbird at the John James Audubon Center. Photo: Lori Lighton



Patterson Park Audubon Center: New Name and New Strategies!

We are pleased to announce that Patterson Park Audubon Center is expanding its reach across Baltimore, and we encourage you to learn more about [our new strategies](#) to increase bird habitat and climate resilience in Baltimore.

Patterson Park Audubon Center has a rich history delivering education and greening programs in southeast and southwest Baltimore neighborhoods. Our new strategies will build on our experience, strong partnerships, and community connections. With a citywide lens, the Baltimore team intends to help more neighborhoods become greener for birds and people through habitat restoration projects and advancing natural climate solutions as the preferred method to reduce ambient temperatures and improve air and water quality.

Our name will also change—to the “Baltimore Program” and our work will continue to be nested within Audubon Mid-Atlantic.

The Baltimore program will continue to host events in the coming months. To see the most updated list of events, please visit md.audubon.org/events. The office remains in the same location, and all of our current Baltimore-based staff will remain part of our team.

Patterson Park Audubon Center’s social media pages will remain publicly available but new postings about our work will come from Audubon Mid-Atlantic's channels. Please give us a like or follow if you haven't already. You

can find Audubon Mid-Atlantic on social media at [facebook.com/AudubonMidAtl](https://www.facebook.com/AudubonMidAtl), or on Instagram at @audubonmidatl.



Philadelphia Birding Weekend 2023

Thank you so much to those who joined us for the annual *Audubon's Philadelphia Birding Weekend*, which took place from October 13 through October 15th in the Philadelphia area. Participants joined from several different states as we searched for birds in sunny, ideal conditions and rainy, not-so-ideal conditions. Every participant contributed to our final tally of 81 species of bird observed (which is extra impressive due to the weather!). You can read more about [Philadelphia Birding Weekend here](#), and we hope that you can join us in 2024!

Bird watching tour in Philadelphia



Audubon Mid-Atlantic's statement on RGGI in Pennsylvania

Audubon Mid-Atlantic strongly urges Pennsylvania's Governor Josh Shapiro to appeal the Commonwealth Court's ruling on Pennsylvania's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). The court ruled that the prospective fees that Pennsylvania would collect from carbon-producing energy companies through participation in RGGI amounted to unconstitutional taxes. The ruling effectively prevents Pennsylvania from joining RGGI, which acts as a cap and trade program. RGGI raises tens of millions of dollars for participating states' environmental protection and habitat restoration programs each year.

RGGI is good for Pennsylvania and good for birds. Implementing RGGI in Pennsylvania will aid the transition to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, slowing the negative impacts of climate change on bird habitat throughout the region. And it will create sources of revenue for investing in habitat protection and restoration while investing natural climate solutions across the state.

"RGGI offers critical tools for taking on the climate crisis here in Pennsylvania, and would aid in the protection of sensitive bird populations and their habitats. We strongly urge the Governor to defend RGGI in the courts. He must act to protect the land and water that so many people and birds rely on," said Jim Brown, Director of Policy at Audubon Mid-Atlantic.

American Robins in snow. Photo: Mike Gindling



Cove Mountain Fall 2023 Update

This fall, Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Healthy Forests program staff conducted surveys at Cove Mountain Preserve to determine whether recent healthy forest restoration efforts resulted in an increase in bird activity. Those surveys revealed dramatic positive results in only the first year of this project.

The survey showed a greater diversity of migrant and winter resident birds utilizing the Preserve. Large numbers of Wood Thrush foraged on spicebush and dogwood berries before leaving the mountain, and Winter Wrens occupied the dense understory of those forests areas that were treated to increase stopover habitat. Mixed-foraging flocks were also spotted throughout the area, and the preserve offered resources to migrating Black-throated Blue Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, and Bay-breasted Warblers.

By cutting forest openings and planting fruit-bearing shrubs, Audubon's Cove Mountain work has increased tree age diversity and species diversity. The increase in migrating bird diversity in Audubon-managed areas compared to the surrounding forest have shown the importance of this habitat creation on the migration highway that is the Kittatinny Ridge. We

are excited to extend our footprint at the site with a four-acre canopy opening and experimental seeding in the coming year.

Winter wren at Cove Mountain. Photo: Julian Avery



Marshes for Tomorrow

Marshes for Tomorrow is a new initiative led by Audubon Mid-Atlantic to create an implementation plan for tidal marsh restoration on a landscape scale in Maryland and then to spur the plan's actual implementation. Through this work, a coalition of environmental organizations and agencies organized through the Delmarva Restoration and Conservation Network (DRCN) seek to accelerate marsh restoration and save this endangered ecosystem from climate-driven sea level rise. The plan will identify 25,000 acres of the most resilient and best quality marsh on Maryland's Eastern Shore and determine which specific restoration actions will be needed to prevent marsh loss.

This work will support the Saltmarsh Sparrow, a rapidly declining bird that breeds only in the high salt marsh and could go extinct within 30 years if no action is taken. Audubon has set up working groups to prioritize the specific marshes for restoration and to engage local communities in the process. The Marshes for Tomorrow plan is expected to be complete by December 2024,

but the implementation of marsh restoration in Maryland's cherished tidal marshes will continue for decades to come.



Saltmarsh sparrow. Photo: Frank Lehman



Bird Tales

A Lifetime Pursuit



Meet the Author: George C. Wood

Join us on Thursday, November 9th from 5:30 to 7:30pm for a fun and informative presentation from author George C. Wood about his lifetime quest to see 800 bird species in America. *Bird Tales: A Lifetime Pursuit* is Mr.

Wood's recently published book. It is a story of perseverance and adventure punctuated with humor and photographs as he describes chasing his lifetime dream. The lecture will be followed by a Q&A and an opportunity to purchase a signed copy of the book. [More information and registration are available on our website.](#)

George C. Wood's book, Bird Tales



Painting @ the Reservoir

Join Audubon Mid-Atlantic on Friday, November 10th from 10:00am until 12:00pm for this family- friendly event! We'll be taking an artistic look at the reservoir at the Discovery Center. You'll use watercolors to accent the natural beauty of the Strawberry Mansion Reservoir, while observing wildlife and the abiotic and biotic factors that call the Reservoir home. No experience necessary. All materials will be provided, [more information here!](#)

The Discovery Center

Check out Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Upcoming Events

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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