



## Vote for Birds

Growing up, my parents would take me with them when they voted. Although the reason may have been that they did not have a babysitter to stay home with me and my sister, my dad always made a point of explaining to me the importance of voting and taking me with him into the booth to show me how to move the machine levers and cast a ballot. Today, although the heavy machine has been replaced with a touchscreen, I still feel a sense of awe and gratitude when I am in a voting booth (or dropping my ballot in the mail, as I did this year). To me, voting is the most important duty that I have as a United States citizen.

This year, Audubon sponsored a series of I Bird/I Vote activities across the country (those of you in Maryland should be proud that the annual Maryland I Bird/I Vote meeting spawned a national program). In the Mid-Atlantic, Audubon staff and



chapters have sponsored nonpartisan, issue-focused events this fall. It's been wonderful to see people come together to learn about policy issues that will impact the future of birds and the environment. Thank you to those who helped organize these programs and those who attended.

It's certainly been an exciting election cycle, full of so many twists and turns. Now, with Election Day upon us, I hope each of you will join me in voting.

Thank you for all you do for birds and for Audubon,

Suzanne

---

Barn owls sitting on window. Photo: Pamela Dimeler



## Philadelphia Birding Weekend

Philadelphia Birding Weekend 2024 was a resounding success, attracting over 200 participants. Attendees had the opportunity to join birding experts as they explored some of Philadelphia's iconic green spaces—including the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Laurel Hill Cemetery and Houston Meadow—and identified local and migratory birds in the heart of the city as well as in urban and suburban areas.

This event would not have been possible without the support of our



sponsors and partners:

- [Unique Photo](#)
- [Delaware Valley Ornithological Club](#)
- [Valley Forge Audubon](#)
- [Wyncote Audubon](#)
- [In-Color Birding](#)
- [Delaware Audubon](#)
- Jim Rapp

For a comprehensive overview of all species observed during the outings, please visit the [EBird trip report, here](#).

---

A group of participants at Philadelphia Birding Weekend.





## Discovery Day Fall Festival

On Saturday, October 5, Audubon and the Philadelphia Outward Bound School hosted the Discovery Day Fall Festival at the Discovery Center in Philadelphia, attracting over 400 attendees. Participants engaged in a variety of activities, including canoeing on the reservoir, crafting bird feeders, participating in scavenger hunts, and enjoying guided birding tours. The event drew many visitors from the surrounding neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, highlighting the community-focused nature of the event. This successful celebration was made possible through the dedicated efforts of members of the Center's Community Engagement Committee, Philadelphia Outward Bound School, the Discovery Center, and Audubon Mid-Atlantic.

---

Canoeing at Discovery Day

---



## New Bird Habitat in Baltimore!

In collaboration with Pigtown Food for Thought community garden stewards and neighborhood residents, Audubon's Baltimore team planted another bird-friendly habitat in October! Neighbors came together to plant a layered



native tapestry – flowering trees, berry-producing shrubs, and perennials in southwest Baltimore, adding to the patchwork habitat that provides food and nesting materials to local and migratory birds. This unique site sits beside a basketball court and a community vegetable garden. With the new native plants to soften the adjacent hardscape, we invite pollinators closer to the community’s vegetables and herbs and create a peaceful space for neighbors to visit, all while expanding foraging opportunities for Baltimore’s birds. This installation was the culmination of several months of Audubon’s outreach and conversation to integrate community feedback into plant species and site selection to create a space that benefits birds and people. Thank you to volunteers who helped to inspire, prepare, and plant the new habitat and to the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership for funding this project.

---

Bird-friendly habitat planting in Baltimore.

---



## Whitby Meadow Planting

On Saturday, October 19th, Audubon hosted a planting event at Whitby Meadow, made possible through the collaborative efforts of the Clean Air Council, John Heinz National Wildlife Center, Philadelphia Mycology Club,



Cobbs Creek Trail Ambassadors, and several other partners. More than 100 native trees and shrubs were planted by a dedicated group that included Audubon volunteers, staff, and members of the John Heinz Student Conservation Association. The volunteers also installed deer fencing to protect the new plantings, ensured proper watering of the new plants, and assessed the health of existing plants at the site. Notable native species planted included Pawpaw trees, American Persimmon trees, Redbud, and Flowering Dogwood.

If you are interested in participating in a planting event with Audubon at Whitby Meadow, please contact Robin Irizarry at [robin.irizarry@audubon.org](mailto:robin.irizarry@audubon.org).

Additionally, Audubon participated in the Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Center Harvest Day on October 26th, where staff led two birdwatching tours. Approximately 40 attendees, including many children, took part in the bird tours along Cobbs Creek. Participants received native seed packets from our newly established native plant seed library at the Discovery Center, which will be opening shortly. Visitors will have the opportunity to collect free seed packets to take home and plant.

---

Whitby Meadow Planting

---





## Rider Park – New Community Space under Healthy Forest Management

Northeast of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, [Rider Park](#) encompasses over 800 acres of forest and meadowland, ideal for hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing. This area is not only a recreational gem but also serves as vital habitat for forest birds, offering dense vegetation for nesting and essential stopover sites for migratory species. Owned by the First Community Foundation Partnership and open to the public, Audubon and partners are set to begin managing the land to enhance forest bird habitat while ensuring continued public access. Additionally, Audubon plans to establish five acres of dedicated habitat for American Woodcock within the park.

As part of [Audubon's Endorsed Forester Program](#), an endorsed forester will conduct an inventory and develop a comprehensive forest management plan for Rider Park. In collaboration with the First Community Foundation Partnership, Audubon will provide a CPA106 Forest Management Plan at no cost to Rider Park.

---

A mountain view in Rider Park.





## Baltimore City Council's vote on gas-powered leaf blowers

Thanks in part to testimony provided by Audubon, the Baltimore City Council voted last month to ban gas-powered leaf blowers within the city. Mayor Brandon Scott has indicated his intention to sign this bill into law once it reaches his desk. Jim Brown, Policy Director, and Erin Reed Miller, Senior Coordinator for Urban Conservation, collaborated to submit testimony supporting the ban, highlighting that one hour of operation of a commercial gas-powered leaf blower produces pollution equivalent to driving a car for 1,100 miles. For more information, you can read the Baltimore Sun article [about the ban here](#).

---



Red-bellied woodpecker. Photo: Mary Pratt

---



Saving America's Estuaries – Audubon's presentation  
at the Coastal and Estuarine Summit

From October 6-10, 2024, Audubon's coastal team participated in the Coastal and Estuarine Summit, hosted by Restore America's Estuaries in Washington, DC. The summit brought together hundreds of coastal stakeholders, including managers, restoration practitioners, scientists, educators, students, government officials, and federal employees, to discuss a wide range of topics related to coastal habitat conservation, restoration practices, policy development, and more.

Dave Curson, Director of Coastal Programs, delivered a presentation on the Marshes for Tomorrow project, while Hen Bellman, Coastal Program Manager, presented a poster on the project's community-oriented programming. The poster was displayed for two days, allowing conference attendees to view the material.

For those in Wicomico County and the surrounding area, Dave will serve as the keynote speaker at the Wicomico Environmental Trust's annual banquet. [More details are available on their website.](#)

---

Focus marsh habitat at sunrise.

---

## Upcoming Events in the Mid-Atlantic

### **Introduction to Birding – Fall Migration**

Join Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Damien Ruffner, Program Manager at The Discovery Center, on Saturday, November 16th and Sunday, November 17th at 9:00am or 1:00pm for an introduction to birding. Birding has been a beloved pastime for centuries, but starting out can feel daunting. This program will address common questions such as where to go, what equipment is needed, and what to look for. We'll explore birding techniques and ethics, with a focus on migratory birds during this fall migration season. After the presentation, a short bird tour will be offered for those wanting to practice their new skills. Please dress for the weather and wear appropriate footwear. More information is [available on our website, here.](#)

### **Mussels Maniacs at the Discovery Center**

On Saturday, November 23rd from 10:00am until 12:00pm at the Discovery Center, Audubon's Bria Wimberly and Stacey Heffernan from Fairmount Water Works will host a freshwater mussel measuring event! Sign up to measure mussels, test the reservoir's water chemistry, and connect with other water conservation enthusiasts. This community science data will be used to help guide our mussel propagation program, which grows freshwater mussels from seed and then places them within the Delaware



River watershed for filtration and cleaner water for all. [More information here.](#)

CONNECT WITH US



**Audubon Mid-Atlantic**

3401 Reservoir Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19121  
(610) 990-3431 | audubon.org

© 2024 National Audubon Society, Inc.

(Unsubscribing is not supported in previews)