



Meadowlark

The Newsletter of Genesee Valley Audubon Society

Summer 2023

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President's Column

By June Summers

Flight Plan – National Audubon Society's New Strategic Plan

When Birds thrive—People thrive. We are all in a race to save our planet. Birds are telling us it is time to act. This new Strategic Plan positions Audubon to achieve meaningful and lasting impact—protecting birds, people, and our planet.

Audubon is responding to the greatest challenges facing birds, including those that threaten people and the planet too. We remain focused on birds because we know their collective health reflects the health of our planet. What's good for birds is good for the Earth.

Mission

Audubon protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

Guiding Star

A future where birds thrive across the Americas because Audubon is a powerful, diverse, and ever-growing force for conservation.

Purpose

When we create conditions for birds to thrive, we create conditions for people and the planet to thrive, too.

Bending the Bird Curve

The Strategic Plan orients all of Audubon toward achieving a singular Guiding Star: halting, and ultimately reversing, the precipitous decline of birds across the Americas.

What Drives Us

Audubon is elevating three strategic drivers—forces that impact their strategy—throughout all aspects of this plan.

A HEMISPHERIC APPROACH TO BIRD

CONSERVATION directs Audubon's work to the places where birds need them the most. It recognizes that the majority of bird species in the Americas migrate annually between Canada, the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Audubon's programs will be like the birds—unencumbered by political boundaries and seamlessly integrated across the Western Hemisphere.

CLIMATE CHANGE poses fundamental challenges to traditional conservation approaches. The impacts of climate change directly threaten two-thirds of bird species and exacerbate other key threats. We will consider how climate change will continue to impact everything we do—business as usual will not suffice.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND

BELONGING (EDIB) is fundamental to our organizational culture and how we partner. We will build a more equitable future where engaging across differences is embraced and celebrated. Audubon can be a leader in this space, forging a community that looks like the Americas—with the collective strength to change things for the better.

Audubon has grown and evolved throughout its long and storied history. Today, we are launching a **new Strategic Plan**—and once again responding to

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the question: "How can Audubon best meet this urgent moment for birds and the planet?"

The answer can only be derived from a deep understanding of the challenges we face, our existing and historic strengths, opportunities for growth, and our unique position within the conservation field.

Recent strategic plans have oriented the organization around flyways; expanded our reach into Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean; and built capacity and expertise in key areas like climate, coasts, water, and working lands. They have laid the groundwork for our current plan, which will enable Audubon to scale our work like never before.

We will use five 2028 Conservation Milestones to assess progress towards our **Guiding Star**. First, Habitat Conservation - a connected network of climate resilient lands and water across the Americas. Second, Climate – Swift and responsible deployment of renewable energy. Third, Climate Action – Natural climate solutions as a win-win for birds and climate. Fourth, Policy – Government action and funding for birds and the planet. Fifth and finally, Community Building – Bird lovers working together to advance our shared vision.

Audubon has new values: Drive for lasting, positive Impact; Build trust by acting with Integrity; Foster innovation and learning; Recognize Collaboration is key to accomplishing our mission; Demonstrate CARE for each other, our partners, and our communities. Mission first, People always.

Birds are telling us—in their behavior, in their dwindling numbers, in their silence—that we must take action now, and that we must take action across the full length of the Americas. It's time to rise to the occasion.

Merlin, the best Bird ID App for Beginners

Merlin was developed by the Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University. It will help you identify a bird by size, shape, color, photo, sound, or just go explore the field guide. If you see a bird it gives you a selection of bird sizes and shapes to choose, then colors and habitats. After that it gives you a list of possible bird species.

Sound identification is simple. Open the App, touch the Sound ID icon, and a green microphone button comes up. Press that. A list of the birds that are singing with their pictures will come up.

You can also take a picture and if it is large enough Merlin will identify the bird.

GVAS GREEN INITIATIVE

The Meadowlark newsletter will be undergoing changes over the next few months. In an effort to conserve production and transportation resources that it currently takes to print five issues of the Meadowlark per year the GVAS board is looking at going digital some time in the early part of 2024. We understand that everyone doesn't have easy computer access. If you would still like to receive a hard copy of the news letter, please send a note stating your name and address using the PO return address on this newsletter, or email Loretta Morrell at

loretta.morrell.gvas@gmail.com. Note: depending on demand we may elect to charge a fee just large enough to cover our costs. The cost of printing the newsletter has increased exponentially over the past few years. Freeing up this expenditure will allow GVAS to offer more opportunities to offer outreach for conservation, education, and advocacy.

Braddock Bay Cleanup Volunteers Needed

Join GVAS at Braddock Bay for the annual International Coastal Cleanup on Sept. 16 at 9:00 am at Westpoint Marina, 105 E. Manitou Rd. in Greece. We will meet in the public parking loop before the Marina.

GVAS has picked up over a ton of trash at

Braddock Bay over the years and we need your help this year to keep the bay clean. Trash entangles wildlife and plastic bags cover the bottom of the bay, preventing plants from growing. We have now learned that plastic trash that enters the lake can be ground down into small plastic pieces called micro plastics. Micro plastics get into the food chain from the bottom then into the fish and into people who eat them. Help us stop this process. Thank you to the event sponsor, the Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation. So join us on Sept. 16. Register with June by Sept. 15 at summers@frontiernet.net, or call (585) 355-1824 to let me know you are coming. We will provide trash bags and data sheets. Please bring work gloves.



Field Trips

Secret Sidewalk/Charlotte Pier, August 5, 2023, 10:00am-12:00pm

Participants will meet up at the parking lot across from the Roger Robach Community Center, 180 Beach Avenue, just west of the Ontario Beach end of Lake Avenue. From there we will walk down to the neighborhood along Beach Avenue and explore the beautifully maintained gardens along the secret sidewalk. After a rest stop at the community center, those who are interested in a longer walk will proceed down to the river and walk out to end of the pier and back. The walkway consists of sidewalks, boardwalk, and pavement, and is flat. For questions or to register contact June Summers at summers@frontiernet.net. Register by August 2.

Falcon Watchers Needed

Falcon Watchers are needed to help watch over the young falcons as they take their first flights. Have you ever wondered what is involved in falcon watching? Join someone with over 20 years of experience watching young falcons take their first flight. On Tuesday, June 13 and June 20, from 5:00-7:00 PM Lisa McKeown will be stationed at the corner of Exchange and Broad St to introduce anyone who is interested to the joys of falcon watching. Stop down and say hello. If these dates and times are not convenient for you, please contact Lisa at 585-899-9616 to set up an alternative time.

Water Chestnut Pulls

Volunteer Opportunity

For years Genesee Valley Audubon has been working with the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Finger Lakes PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) to remove European Water Chestnut from Braddock Bay. Our work removing European Water Chestnut has kept it from covering the bay and cutting the light and the oxygen from the water, keeping the bay healthy for the fish and other wildlife. The work that GVAS does is very important, and we need your help. If you have a kayak or canoe, please join us on July 22 and August 12. We will meet at the Braddock Bay Tavern at 372 Manitou Rd in Hilton at 9:00 am. Please register by July 20 or August 10. To register contact June Summers, summers@frontiernet.net or (585) 355-1824.



Peregrine Falcons

This year is the silver jubilee of Rfalconcam. It was in 1998, 25 years ago, that a pair of falcons started nesting in a box placed on top of the Kodak office building. Soon we were all watching the pair on the internet. The first 11 years, from 1998 to 2008, were the Mariah years. She was the matriarch during this period. She successfully hatched 43 young falcons with two different mates. First was Cabot-Sirocco from 1998 to 2001, followed by Kaver in 2002 to 2008. While we were sad to see the Mariah years come to an end, we rejoiced when a new female, named Beauty, arrived in town, and ushered in the Beauty era. Like her predecessor Beauty also had two mates during her 13-year reign. Beauty and her mates, Archer and Dot.ca, graced us with 29 offspring during those 13 years. Last year, 2022 brought us a new falcon pair, Nova and Neander, and three more young falcons in 2022 plus three in 2023. That's a total of 78 falcons hatched in Rochester in 25 years! Through Rfalconcam we watched courtship rituals, eggs being laid, incubation, and the miracle of seeing an eyas hatching from an egg. We watched as the small fluffy eyases grew bigger, and feathers soon replaced their fluffy white down. Rfalconcam showed the eyasses hopping from ledge to ledge, exercising their wings, before finally taking flight. And through Rfalconcam we celebrate every time we hear of a falcon that hatched in Rochester being seen in the US or Canada. Join us in celebrating 25 years of watching falcons on rfalconcam.com.



Genesee Valley Audubon Society

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P.O. Box 15512, Rochester, NY 14615-0512

GVAS: A chapter of the National Audubon Society

The vision of Genesee Valley Audubon Society (GVAS) is to promote environmental conservation. Our mission is to educate and advocate for protection of the environment, focusing on birds, wildlife and habitat.

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The Meadowlark is published the first week of March, June, September, and December. Articles for the Meadowlark should be submitted four weeks prior to the date of publication. Send articles to Joanne Mitchell, 169 Black Walnut Dr., Rochester, NY 14615, or at jwmitchell@rochester.rr.com.

Meadowlark staff: *Editor & Layout*, Joanne Mitchell; *Business Editor*, vacant; *Printing*, Minuteman Press; *Distribution*, vacant.