



Audubon Community Nature Center

The connection begins with you.

March – April, 2026
Volume 70, Issue 2

The bi-monthly newsletter of ACNC
featuring upcoming programs and events.



Mission

Audubon Community Nature Center builds and nurtures connections between people and nature by providing positive outdoor experiences, opportunities to learn about and understand the natural world, and knowledge to act in environmentally responsible ways.



Nature Center Newsletter

The free, bi-monthly publication of Audubon Community Nature Center, Inc.

Jessica Piskor, *Newsletter Editor*
Cover: Canada Geese and Goslings

1600 Riverside Road, Jamestown, NY 14701
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info@auduboncnc.org • auduboncnc.org

Hosting a chapter of National Audubon Society serving Chautauqua and Warren Counties

Nature Center Hours

10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Saturday
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., Sunday

Trails are open from dawn to dusk.

Building Admission

\$6 Adults • \$2 Children • \$15 Max per family

Free admission for Nature Center Members and SNAP/EBT and Arts Access cardholders.

Free admission for non-members on Sundays.



Visit auduboncnc.org by scanning this code.



Follow Audubon on these platforms:



From the Executive Director’s Desk

Dear Nature Center Members and Friends,

When I joined Audubon in October, I knew volunteers were important—but I didn’t yet understand just how central they are to everything we do.

Sure, I’d heard the impressive numbers: since our founding in 1957, more than 900 people have dedicated over 160,000 hours of their time, and more than 20 individuals have volunteered for over 2,000 hours. Collectively, these volunteer hours add roughly \$215,000 in value to ACNC each year.

However, you cannot truly understand the impact of our volunteers until you spend a week at ACNC. Most days start with coffee and donuts in the maintenance shop with our buildings and grounds volunteers, who show up—rain, snow, or shine—to maintain our building and trails. Once a week, a volunteer receptionist staffs our front desk. Each day, you’ll run into a volunteer caring for our animals, helping with mailings, supporting our membership program—even cleaning out salt and pepper shakers!

Volunteers are an integral part of our community. They are friends and family—or will be soon enough. In many cases, our volunteers have been involved at Audubon longer than staff. They are our organization’s living memory.

Thank you to all who volunteer with Audubon. You are an invaluable part of everything we do, and we simply could not do this work without you.

For those looking to volunteer or visit at ACNC, our calendar is chock full of great events, including our delicious Pie Auction, magical Audubon Lights, and week-long Birdathon fundraiser. We hope to see you at the Nature Center soon!

Warmly,

Aaron Sidder
Executive Director



ACNC Through the Years

ACNC’s mission is rooted deeply in conservation and education. See how Audubon members and supporters have supported education and conservation efforts throughout the years.

1966

“Thirty-one observers took part in the bird count on April 17. They sighted 93 species and a total of 13,290 birds, including 2,609 Red-winged Blackbirds and 1,205 American Robins.”

1976

“The eagerly awaited plans for the Nature Interpretive Building were presented at the latest meeting. Jack Gordon has been contracted to construct the building.”

1986

“The Arboretum of native trees at the sanctuary is in its fourth year, and we now have 52 trees of 38 species in the field.”

1996

“Help Needed. The volunteer staff of the Ripley Picket Line seeks new eyes, minds, and bodies. The Ripley Picket Line is a spring raptor watch that attempts to create a census of raptors as they return along the south shore of Lake Erie to their spring and summer territories.”

2006

“The Spotted Salamanders have become a yearly tradition at Audubon. They emerge each spring on the first warm rainy night and migrate to our vernal pool... to mate. It’s a sight you can only see for a week or two each year.”

Board Officers

Board Chairperson	Tina Downey, CFRE
First Vice Chair.....	Dr. Erin Pender
Second Vice Chair.....	Dr. Eugenie Poignard
Secretary.....	Antoinetta Lindell
Treasurer	Peter Stark

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Jennifer Bliss, Loren Chase, Pat Evans, Carey Lee, Steve Riczker, Lynn Schaffer, Linda Sobina, Nadine Westover

Nature Center Staff

Executive Director.....	Aaron Sidder
Visitor Experience Director.....	Katie Finch
Education Director.....	Chelsea Jandreau
Marketing and Design Director.....	Jessica Piskor
Animal Care Intern.....	Robbie Bellardo
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Receptionist.....	Claire Certo
Buildings and Grounds Manager.....	Terris Monroe
Seasonal Nature Educator.....	Emma Pryll
Nature Educator, Animal Care Specialist.....	Emma Roth
Nature Educator, Animal Care Specialist.....	Charlotte Schmaltz
Nature Educator.....	Taylor Spontaneo
Office Manager, Volunteer Coordinator	Sharon Tefft

Volunteer Chairs

Fundraising.....	Dr. Eugenie Poignard
IDEA Committee	Willow Fodor
Land Use Management	Steve Riczker
Membership.....	Karen Sanders
Membership.....	Jan Coleson
Publicity	Pat Bringer

Audubon Community Nature Center’s Board of Directors, Chairs, and Committee Members are volunteers. **Thank you** to those who contribute time, thought, and energy to help ACNC run smoothly and effectively!



Volunteers helping at Audubon Lights 2025.

Volunteer Corner

ACNC's Volunteer Program provides opportunities to people looking to put special skills to use, make a difference in the local community, or learn something new. Check out auduboncnc.org/volunteer for the Volunteer E-Newsletter.

Upcoming volunteer opportunities:

- Audubon Lights**
 Weekend evenings from March 20 through April 4. Volunteers are needed for set-up, admission booth, fire tending, and trail monitoring.
- Mailing Committee**
 Thursdays, March 12 and April 9, 9:00 a.m. Enjoy good company while you prepare the spring appeal or newsletter for bulk mailing.
- Volunteer Day**
 Saturday, April 18, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Celebrate Earth Day by giving back to the environment. Indoor and outdoor volunteer jobs are available for all ages.

Interested in volunteering? Please contact Sharon Tefft at stefft@auduboncnc.org or (716) 569-2345.

Volunteer Day

Celebrate Earth Day by joining Audubon staff and volunteers on Saturday, April 18 for spring Volunteer Day! It's a great way for the whole family to get outside and help spruce up the gardens and trails.

There are projects for all ages and abilities taking place from 9:00 a.m. – noon, followed by a delicious lunch to celebrate everyone's hard work. This free event happens rain or shine.

Sign up today at auduboncnc.org/volunteer-day.



Birdseed

Conewango Blend is a specially-mixed seed that was created by a team of local birders to attract many different birds. It is rich with black oil sunflower seeds and also includes canary seed, millet, corn, safflower seed, and sunflower hearts. Pick up your seed today at the Blue Heron Gift Shop at ACNC.



You can also find Conewango Blend at:

- Allegheny Outfitters, Warren, PA
- Ashville General Store, Ashville, NY
- Lighthouse Point Grocery, Mayville, NY
- Wegmans, Jamestown, NY

If you own a local business and would like to sell Conewango Blend, contact Lyntana at lbrougham@auduboncnc.org or (716) 569-2345.

Flutter into Spring with Hummingbird Gifts

With spring's arrival, several migratory bird species will soon be returning to the Chautauqua County area. Join Audubon in welcoming back the tiniest among them: the hummingbird. If you are a fan of these remarkable creatures, visit the Blue Heron Gift Shop. ACNC's gift shop is stocked with a variety of hummingbird themed items, including colorful puzzles, engaging children's books, unique earrings, and adorable plush toys.



Programs and Events

March

First Sunday Story Time

(Children 2 – 8 with an adult)

Sunday, March 1, 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.
Free for children and adults

Reservations requested by February 28.

First Friday (Adult+)

Jambo, Tanzania! With Scott Stoleson

Friday, March 6, 11:00 a.m. – Noon
\$8 Adults
\$6 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Pie Auction (Adult)

Friday, March 6 –
Wednesday, March 11
auduboncnc.org/pie-auction

Pick-up: March 14, Noon to 4:30 p.m.

Audubon Photography Club (Adult+)

Saturday, March 7, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
\$4 Adults
\$3 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Little Explorers (Ages 3 – 8 with an adult)

Camouflage and Coloration

Saturday, March 14
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
\$12 Adults
\$9 Members and children 3 – 8

Paid reservations required by March 12.

Audubon Lights (All)

Friday – Saturday, March 20 – 21
8:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Friday – Saturday, March 27 – 28
8:15 – 10:00 p.m.

Friday – Saturday, April 3 – 4
8:30 – 10:00 p.m.

\$12 Adults
\$9 Members and children 3 – 15
Free for children 2 and under

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

April

First Friday (Adult+)

*Raptor Migration at the Ripley Hawk Watch
with Devin Banning*

Friday, April 3, 11:00 a.m. – Noon
\$8 Adults
\$6 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Audubon Photography Club (Adult+)

Saturday, April 4, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
\$4 Adults
\$3 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Mud Camp (Children 4 – 12)

Sign up for one or both days. Prices are per day.

Monday, April 6
Wednesday, April 8
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

\$48 Children
\$36 Nature Center members
\$5 sibling discount

Paid reservations required by April 2/6.

Little Explorers (Ages 3 – 8 with an adult)

Beavers, Muskrats, and More!

Saturday, April 11, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
\$12 Adults
\$9 Members and children 3 – 8

Paid reservations required by April 9.

Audubon Spring Yard Sale (All)

Saturday, April 11
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 12
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Volunteer Day at Audubon (All)

Saturday, April 18
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Free

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Birdathon (Adult+)

auduboncnc.org/birdathon-2026

Saturday, April 25 – Sunday, May 3
Form a birding team or donate.

April (continued)

Breakfast with the Birds (All)

Saturday, April 25, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
\$14 Adults
\$10 Members and children 3 – 15
Free for children 2 and under

Paid reservations required by April 20.

Bird Banding (All)

Pavilion on west side of ACNC property

Saturdays
April 25, May 2, May 9, May 16
7:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Trail Guide Training (Adult Volunteers)

Tuesday – Wednesday, April 28 – 29
9:00 – 11:30 a.m., Free

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.



Intended Audience Key

Adult = designed for adults

Adult+ = designed for adults, mature, and interested children 9 and up when accompanied by an adult.

All = Something for everyone, but children must be accompanied by an adult.

Children/Ages = designed for children: drop them off and pick them up later.

Program Registration

- Online at auduboncnc.org/events
- Phone: (716) 569-2345
- By mail with credit card information or a check payable to ACNC

Audubon Community Nature Center
1600 Riverside Road,
Jamestown, NY, 14701

Please Note:

For the most accurate information, please visit auduboncnc.org or call (716) 569-2345.

Registration is required for most programs. Programs may be cancelled if there are not enough registrations. Register early to ensure the program runs. Some programs have limited enrollment.

Nature Notes: Raptor Migration

By Chelsea Jandreau, Education Director

Migration is a common spring theme for birds, but the timing differs depending on species. Hawks are one of the early migrators and make their move throughout March and April. While many songbirds actually migrate at night, hawks migrate almost exclusively during the daylight hours and prefer to fly over land masses. Thermals and updrafts that form over the changing topography of land allow them to save energy by soaring as they travel thousands of miles between their winter homes and their summer breeding grounds. These preferences make hawks easier to spot in large numbers, especially on their typical flyways.

Broad-winged, Sharp-shinned, and Cooper's Hawks are all common sights migrating to or through western NY in the spring. While many Red-tailed Hawks are year-round residents here, there are also a significant number that head even further north into Canada for the summer breeding season.

Other raptors like Turkey Vultures, Ospreys, and American Kestrels also return north in early spring. Vultures are easier to spot as they circle the sky in groups, while Ospreys and kestrels travel waterways or fields securing nesting spots.

Fall and spring provide opportunities to join a hawk watch, or simply keep an eye on the sky for those soaring raptors as they migrate.



Within a species, some individual hawks migrate, while others remain as year-round residents.



Wing shape can help with raptor identification, like the long, broad wings of this Turkey Vulture. Photo by Dave Cooney.



Join ACNC for Birdathon!

From Saturday, April 25 – Sunday, May 3, join the fun by forming a birding team, spend some time in nature searching for spring birds, and help ACNC reach its \$2,000 goal. Your efforts fund the Ryan Exline Memorial Scholarship and provide food and care for Audubon's Animal Ambassadors.

Kick off Birdathon at ACNC's Breakfast with the Birds on Saturday, April 25. Learn more about birding with Audubon's staff and volunteers, bird with the experts, and enjoy a delicious meal.

Not birding? Consider supporting a team with a pledge. Every dollar counts. **Sign up and/or donate today at auduboncnc.org/birdathon.**



Christopher Lulasiak, 2025 Ryan Exline Scholarship recipient.

Ryan Exline Memorial Scholarship

Do you know a current or rising college student with a passion for nature and the environment? Each spring, Audubon awards a \$500 scholarship to a student pursuing a career in an environmental or related field through the Ryan Exline Memorial Scholarship.

Ryan Exline was a dedicated Audubon volunteer, and this scholarship is awarded to a student who demonstrates and shares his passion for nature, environmental education, or conservation.

For more information or to apply, **visit auduboncnc.org/scholarships.**

Fifth Annual ACNC Pie Auction

Auction: Friday, March 6 – Wednesday, March 11

Pick-up: Saturday, March 14, noon – 4:30 p.m.

Celebrate Pi Day (March 14), Audubon’s favorite mathematical holiday, by bidding on a delicious homemade pie baked by an ACNC staff or volunteer baker.

Visit auduboncnc.org/pie-auction for updates on bakers and pies as Pi Day gets closer and to place your bids.

Are you interested in baking to help raise money for Audubon? Contact Aaron at asidder@auduboncnc.org or (716) 569-2345.



Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage

Friday – Sunday, May 29 – 31

Allegheny State Park, Red House Area

Are you passionate about the natural world and crave opportunities to learn and explore alongside fellow nature lovers? Then the Allegheny Nature Pilgrimage (ANP) is for you! Sign up for a weekend of nature-related discoveries at the 68 Annual ANP, where you’ll experience:

- **Hand-picked Adventures:** Pick from dozens of small-group programs led by experienced naturalists and nature enthusiasts—from quick 1-hour talks to all-day hikes.
- **Endless Topics:** Dive into everything from birds and salamanders to geology, astronomy, and even nature yoga!
- **Stunning Scenery:** Explore the incredible forests, fields, and lakes that make Allegheny State Park a local treasure.

Don’t miss this opportunity to deepen your connection with nature. Visit AlleghenyNaturePilgrimage.com to learn more and register today.



Wildflower/botany walk. Photo by Jennifer Schlick.

Calling All “Apprentices” for the Ripley Hawk Watch

Help track thousands of raptors migrating over Lake Erie. From March through May, the Ripley Hawk Watch needs your eyes! No formal application is required—they are just looking for friendly folks to join this 30-year citizen science tradition.

Whether you’re a seasoned birder or can’t tell a Red-tailed Hawk from a Red-shouldered Hawk, you’re welcome here. If you have the patience of a saint, a tolerance for unpredictable weather, and maybe even a “vintage” AOL email address, you’ll fit right in!

Ready to join the crew? Contact Andy Dickson at adickson3@stny.rr.com or (716) 499-6657 to get started.



Northern Harrier by Dave Cooney

Thank You, Nature Center Volunteers!

134 volunteers, including 13 registered with the RSVP program, recorded 2,897 hours of work from June 25 through December 31, 2025. These dedicated individuals give freely of their time and talents to support Audubon's mission of connecting people to nature. Volunteers range from ages 9 to 90-something, and each one brings a unique set of talents to the table. Thank you for your dedication!

Berkley Adams
 Jill Adams
 MaryAnn Alpaugh
 Todd Anderson
 Aspire of Western NY
 Rolland Austin
 Zachary Ayers
 Mardy Backstrom
 John Barone
 Janice Barrelle
 Sally Beckerink
 Andrea Benedett
 Jane Bentley
 Heidi Bird
 Barbara Boone
 Kyler Bosko
 Louise Boutwell
 Reg Boutwell
 Terry Braley
 Pat Brininger
 Alan Brown
 Karen Brown
 David Bull
 Rejeanne Butzer
 Grace Camarata
 Gary Campbell
 Ann Carlson
 Raymond Carlson
 Sue Chandler
 Janette Coleson
 Barb Conklin
 Arlene Connelly
 Elaine Crossley
 Cummins
 Sarah DiDomenico
 Kelly Dill
 Don Dove
 Martha Dove
 Anna Dysinger
 Kate Ebersole
 Christian Eckwahl
 Mel Feather

Jim Fincher
 Patricia Fincher
 Willow Fodor
 Janet Forbes
 Elizabeth Gattman
 Joseph Gaylord
 Michaela Gaylord
 Alexander Gray
 Jackie Haines
 Steve Haines
 Kimmie Hallberg
 Terry Hallock
 Elyse Henshaw
 Gerald Hildom
 John Hyde
 Anna Irgang
 Jamestown Safe House
 & TILP Program
 JCC - SUNY
 Ronald Johnson
 Elizabeth Jones
 Courtney Jung
 Heather Klassen
 Jan Kuppinger
 William Kuppinger
 Margaret Lane
 Terry LeBaron
 Audrina Lent
 Madilyn Lent
 Penny Lester
 Jennifer Lumia
 Ruth Lundin
 Judy Lundmark
 Mark Mason
 Gilbert Mattoon
 Mary Beth Mazzone
 Billy Meahs
 Hailey Melquist
 Kelli Merchant
 Lucy Messina
 Beth Miller
 Carol Miller
 Larry Miller

Mission Meadows, LLC
 Julie Nelson
 Joseph O'Hara
 Sally Patchen
 Kira Pelham
 Helen Peterson
 Midge Peterson
 Deacon Pierce
 Christine Porter
 Johannah Robb
 Charlie Rovegno
 Danger Russ
 Carol Samuelson
 Diane Sandberg
 Karen Sanders
 Chris Sattelberg
 William Schmidt
 Olivia Sechriest
 Olivia Shafer
 Don Sharp
 Christine Skoczylas
 David Skoczylas
 Patricia Spicer
 Stephen Stout
 Katherine H.R. Terra
 Linda Trostle
 Brian Turk
 Max Tyger
 Ella Van Rysdam
 Eric Van Rysdam
 Ann Wallin
 Gwenivere Wallin
 Oliver Wallin
 Nigil Weinman
 Mary Jane Whaley
 Nancy White
 Catherine Willard
 Eva Williams
 Fallon Williams
 Mary Williams
 John Willisie
 Sue Yauchzy



Jim Fincher helping to restock ACNC's birdseed at Wegmans.



Alan Brown helped to clean up after the removal of the old reception desk during January planning.

Audubon Lights

Fridays and Saturdays from March 20 – April 4
8:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Beginning times shift later by 15 minutes each weekend to correspond with sunset.

\$12 Adults; \$9 Nature Center members
 \$9 Children 3 – 15; Free 2 and under
Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

As dusk falls at Audubon, a half-mile trail is transformed into a glowing wonderland. Wander down luminary-lit trails past colorful ponds and shimmering trees, all while the Spring Peepers provide the perfect natural soundtrack. It's a peaceful, mesmerizing way to watch the season shift from winter to spring.

After your walk, cozy up by the fire with hot drinks and snacks, enjoy live entertainment, and explore the indoor Nature Play Area and live animal exhibits.



Blue Heron Legacy Society

ACNC strives to ensure that every child from the local community has a real and healthy connection to nature. You can be a part of this vision, make it stronger, and leave a lasting legacy for the future.

ACNC's vision becomes stronger through long-term commitments made by Nature Center members, donors, and friends; those who wish their legacies to be a part of a thriving, educational, nature-based organization. Commitments can include listing ACNC as a beneficiary in your will, IRA account, retirement plan, or designated fund.



What will your legacy be? How will you leave your mark on the world?

Please contact Aaron Sidder for more information at asidder@auduboncnc.org or (716) 569-2345.

Community Partners

Bruce and Juline Battler
Carnahan-Jackson Foundation
Chautauqua Region
Community Foundation
Donna and Mark Hampton
Holmberg Foundation
Hultquist Foundation
Jessie Smith Darrah Fund
Kinetic Internet Service Provider
The Lenna Foundation
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 National Fuel Gas Company

Southern Chautauqua
 Federal Credit Union
 Weinberg Financial Group
 Curt and Susie Westrom
 Whirley-DrinkWorks!
 Jeanne Wiebenga and Jane Stirniman

Interested in becoming a Community Partner?
Contact Aaron Sidder at (716) 569-2345
or asidder@auduboncnc.org.



Audubon Community Nature Center

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Jamestown, NY
14701
Permit No. 687

Audubon Community Nature Center, Inc.
1600 Riverside Road
Jamestown, NY 14701

Electronic service requested

March/April ACNC Newsletter

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Eastern Bluebird nest in nest box.