



Audubon Community Nature Center

The connection begins with you.

May – June, 2026
Volume 70, Issue 3

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: Summer Mushrooms

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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, Memorial Day (May 25), and Juneteenth (June 19).



Visit auduboncnc.org by scanning this code.



Follow Audubon on these platforms:



From the Executive Director’s Desk

Just as April showers bring May flowers, our hard work over the winter will fully bloom this spring.

Starting in May, Discovery Walks, led by our amazing volunteers and staff, offer kids a chance to wander the trails, explore the ponds, and connect directly with native habitats—with full permission to dirty themselves as they please. (Parents and walk leaders may quibble.)

Each year, ACNC partners with schools from across Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Warren counties to provide these opportunities for exploration and hands-on learning. We believe it is essential for kids—and adults—to frolic, wander, and wonder, and Discovery Walks are just one area of programming that we offer each year to this end.

In fact, we offer over 1,000 programs annually. From presentations about bird adaptations and behaviors geared toward curious adults to First Sunday Story Time for our youngest explorers, we strive to give everyone a chance to learn something new about the world around them. That these events can happen on the same weekend, or even concurrently, is part of what makes Audubon such a special place.

Really, though, it’s not our programming that makes ACNC a special place. It’s you, our members, friends, volunteers, and visitors that bring this place to life. And your support makes it all possible.

We have two major fundraising events coming up: **Warren Gives on Wednesday, May 13, and Give Big CHQ on Thursday, June 11.** These events directly support programs like Discovery Walks and the hundreds of classroom visits each year.

Warren Gives, hosted by the Community Foundation of Warren County, brings community members together in support of the nonprofit organizations that serve Warren County. Individual donations are generously matched by sponsors up to \$85,000, giving your donation dollars an added boost.

Give Big CHQ, hosted by the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation and the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, is a day dedicated to supporting the more than 100 nonprofits that make Chautauqua County a vibrant place to live.

Your donations, big or small, help ensure that nonprofits like ours continue to thrive in the community we love. Please consider supporting ACNC and other local nonprofits on these days of giving.

Now get outside and get inspired!

Warmly,

Aaron Sidder,
Executive Director



ACNC Through the Years

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

1966

“Bird Notes- Now is the time to visit the Lakeview Cemetery, to see the hummingbirds at the horse chestnut tree, which Claude Parker called “the fairy tree”. It is just north of the Galloway monument and is beautiful now.”

1976

“As soon as the ground was opened up by excavation for the Roger Tory Peterson Nature Interpretive Building, Rough-winged Swallows moved in. Jack Gordon measured one hole made by the swallows; it was 64 inches deep!”

1986

“Sanctuary personnel hope that a 20-foot-tall nesting platform located near Big Pond will entice Osprey to take up residence and grace Chautauqua County as the only breeding Osprey.”

1996

“Last year over 4,000 children visited Audubon. Our hard working staff cannot handle all these curious young ones without the help of dedicated volunteers. A love of kids and the outdoors, enthusiasm, plus a few hours, are all that is required for the reward of sparking that inborn sense of wonder.”

2006

“Have you seen those strange hoops out in Big Pond? We are contracted with the NY DEC to study and conduct research on Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtles.”

Board Officers

Board Chairperson	Tina Downey, CFRE
First Vice Chair.....	Dr. Erin Pender
Second Vice Chair.....	Dr. Eugenie Poignard
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Nature Educator.....	Taylor Spontaneo
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Membership.....	Jan Coleson
Publicity	Pat Brininger

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!



Young visitors enjoyed exploring Audubon’s trails during a Discovery Walk in 2025.

Volunteer Corner

ACNC's Volunteer Program provides opportunities to make a difference in the community. Visit auduboncnc.org/volunteer for the full Volunteer E-Newsletter.

Upcoming volunteer opportunities:

- Discovery Walk Trail Guide Training**
 Tuesday and Wednesday, April 28 – 29
 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
 Share your love of the natural world with others.
- Plant Sale**
 Saturday, May 16, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
 Help set up and sell plants at this spring event.
- Dragons and Fairies Festival**
 Saturday, June 13, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 Volunteer at admissions, craft stations, or as a friendly fairy, elf, or gnome, and more.
- Mailing Committee**
 Monday, June 15, 9:00 a.m.
 Help prepare the next newsletter for bulk mailing.

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

Volunteer Recognition Picnic

Monday, June 29, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Free for all current ACNC Volunteers

Non-volunteers: \$8 per person, \$6 Members

Celebrate a year of ACNC's volunteers and their accomplishments and show your support. Enjoy a picnic dinner, chat with like-minded individuals, and meet volunteers from other areas of the organization.

Reservations required by June 24. Volunteers, please call (716) 569-2345 to register. Non-volunteers can call or register online at auduboncnc.org/events.



Anyone Can Be a Birder

Are you interested in learning how to identify birds? Here are just a few favorite guide books you can find at ACNC's Blue Heron Gift Shop:

- Stokes Beginner's Guide to Birds** by Donald & Lillian Stokes utilizes real photographs and is organized by color, making it easy to search for the birds you see.
- Bird Talk** by Becca Rowland takes a humorous approach that compares bird calls to common words, phrases, or sounds, creating mnemonic associations to help you identify which birds you are hearing.
- Birdie's Field Guide of North American Birds** by Mark Ludy is light hearted and artistic, depicting the journey of a young naturalist. This book is filled with labeled illustrations of birds she finds and where she finds them. Each book also comes signed by the author with a unique, hand drawn bird!
- Sibley Birds East**, written and illustrated by David Allen Sibley, features multiple illustrations of each bird, showcasing their different life stages and how they look both stationary and in flight.

Programs and Events

May

Bird Banding (All)

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

No reservation required.

First Friday (Adult+)

Prize-winning Plumage, Bird Behaviors with Jan Bowman

Friday, May 1

11:00 a.m. – Noon

\$8 Adults

\$6 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Audubon Photography Club (Adult+)

Saturday, May 2

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

\$4 Adults

\$3 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

First Sunday Story Time

(Children 2 – 8 with an adult)

Sunday, May 3

12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Free for children and adults

Reservations requested by May 2.

Limited enrollment. Walk-ins accepted if room.

Little Explorers (Ages 3 – 8 with an adult)

Down in the Dirt

Saturday, May 9

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

\$12 Adults

\$9 Members and children 3 – 8

Paid reservations required by May 7.

Limited enrollment.

Warren Gives (Adult)

An Online Day of Giving and
Chloe's Creamery Get Together!

Give online at

auduboncnc.org/warregives

Wednesday, May 13

Online Giving: 6:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Get Together: 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

WARRENGIVES

May & June

Plant Sale (All)

Saturday, May 16

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Allegany Nature Pilgrimage (All)

Allegany State Park's Camp Allegany

Friday – Sunday, May 29 – 31

alleganynaturepilgrimage.com

Blue Heron Legacy Society

Spring Get-together (Adult)

Sunday, May 31

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Free for all current and potential

BHLS Members

Reservations requested by May 25.

Audubon Photography Club (Adult+)

Saturday, June 6

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

\$4 Adults

\$3 Members and children 9 – 15

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

First Sunday Story Time

(Children 2 – 8 with an adult)

Sunday, June 7

12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Free for children and adults

Reservations requested by June 6.

Limited enrollment. Walk-ins accepted if room.

Give Big CHQ (Adult)

An Online Day of Giving and
Pine Cone Creamery Get Together!

givebigchq.org

Thursday, June 11

Online Giving: 7:16 a.m. – 7:16 p.m.

Get Together: 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Dragons and Fairies Festival (All)

Saturday, June 13

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

\$12 Adults

\$9 Members and children 3 – 15

Free 2 and under

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

June

Volunteer Recognition Picnic (Adult)

Reflecting on the past and looking towards
the future

Monday, June 29

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Free for current ACNC Volunteers

Non-volunteers: \$8 per person

\$6 Nature Center Members

Reservations requested by June 24.

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

Refund Policy

- If Audubon Community Nature Center
cancels the program, participants receive
full refunds.
- If a participant cancels before the
deadline, a refund, less an \$8 processing
fee, will be made.
- If the registration is less than \$8, a
processing fee will be 25% of the cost of
the registration.
- If a participant cancels after the deadline,
no refund will be made, but please still
notify ACNC of your cancellation.
- No refunds after 30 days from purchase

Please Note:

For the most accurate information about
ACNC programs and events, 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: Bird Banding

By Taylor Spontaneo, Nature Educator

Audubon is a place of exploration, education, and conservation. This effort includes banding birds, which ACNC does each spring during the early morning hours. Bird banding is much more than catching a bird and placing a bracelet around its ankle.

Ornithologists set up mist nets, which safely catch birds. Made of soft material, these are posted in fields or forests where birds are known to frequent. When a bird is caught, it's placed in a dark bag. Birds are more comfortable when they cannot see, as the lack of visual stimuli minimizes stress. They are then brought over to the banding station, a short walk away, where birds are checked to see if they have already been banded. If so, this information is logged and compared with previous data on the bird.

Measurements are taken of the bird's weight and wingspan. Researchers also blow on their chest, revealing a bare patch. This patch gives bird banders an idea of how much fat the bird has or if females are ready to lay eggs. Conservationists use this to understand overall populations and determine the bird's health. This data helps them determine how much food is available in comparison to how much a bird travels in a year.

Ornithologists then create conservation plans for certain species or celebrate ones that are doing well. Bird banding provides data that is used to track specific birds and monitor the overall health, behavior, survival rates, and total population for different species.



Mist nets are made of specialized materials that capture birds without harming them.



Photo by Terry LeBaron. Trained researchers handle birds to assess and measure weight, appearance, and health before placing a band around their ankle.



Plant Sale

Saturday, May 16, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

\$3 per 4-inch pot

\$5 per 6 – 8-inch pot

\$10 per 10-inch pot

Stop by this year's plant sale to pick out some new plants for your garden! There will be a large selection of native plants, as well as annuals, perennial plants, trees, and shrubs. Plants are from local greenhouses and Audubon's gardens.

Pick up some gently used garden equipment, décor, tools, and pots at the 'Garden Treasures' tent. Volunteer Master Gardeners will be on hand to give advice at the advice table.

Audubon will not be accepting plants for trade due to the threat of jumping worms, an invasive animal that can decimate local soils. Learn more about them at auduboncnc.org/jumping-worms.

Many local nurseries and garden stores donate to this event in order to provide a wide selection.

Thank You, Annual Fund Donors!

Donations made between August 1, 2025, and January 31, 2026

\$5,000+

Bruce and Juline Battler
Judith M. Lundin Trust

\$1,000 – \$3,000

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Bruce and Juline Battler
Martha Betts
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\$300 – \$500

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Kendall Crolius
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Dana Thelander
Betsy and Griff Vinton
Lynne Weber
Nadine Westover
John Willsie
Rose Anne Woodard and
Craig Thompson

\$5 – \$99

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Kristen Wright
Karen Yeversky
Jennifer Youngblood

Memorial and Honoraria

Donations made between August 1, 2025, and January 31, 2026.

In Honor of:

Ann and Steve Abdella

Cindi and
Gennaro Manocchio

Richard 'Rick' Rupprecht

Julie Tickle

In Memory of:

Carol Ann

Carol San George

Larry Brown

Todd Anderson
Richard and
Nancy Barkstrom
Douglas and Jane Conroe
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Lissa Van Dewark

Dr. and Mrs. Jack Palomaki

Eric Westrom

Robert and Carolyn Naum

Pam Westrom

Robert and Carolyn Naum

Warren Gives

An Online Day of Giving and
Chloe's Creamery Get Together!



Wednesday, May 13

auduboncnc.org/warrengives

Online Giving Day: 6:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Chloe's Creamery: 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Your support during Warren Gives helps Warren County students connect with nature during schoolyard discoveries and classroom programs with Audubon's nature educators. ACNC's goal is to raise \$10,000 through this fundraising event.

A longtime supporter of ACNC is matching donations up to \$3,000. Plus, the Community Foundation will match a percentage of every dollar raised.

Donate online, bring your receipt to Chloe's Creamery in Warren, and receive FREE ice cream!

Give Big CHQ

An Online Day of Giving and
Pine Cone Creamery Get Together!



Thursday, June 11

auduboncnc.org/givebig

Online Giving Day: 7:16 a.m. – 7:16 p.m.

Pine Cone Creamery: 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

This amazing community event supports 127 local nonprofits throughout Chautauqua County. ACNC's goal is to raise \$10,000 through this event to keep its six miles of trails safe, beautiful, and free to the public, year-round.

Donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$3,000 by friends of Audubon.

Join ACNC staff and volunteers at Pine Cone Creamery in Jamestown for a fun basket raffle and FREE ice cream with your donation!

Dragons and Fairies Festival

Saturday, June 13

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

\$12 Adults; \$9 Nature Center members

\$9 Children 3 – 15; Free 2 and under

Reservations appreciated, walk-ins welcome.

Audubon’s trails are full of surprises at the annual Dragons and Fairies Festival! Look for hidden magical creatures, horse-drawn carriage rides, scavenger hunts, live music, great food, and so much more.

Adults and children alike are encouraged to wear their favorite fairy, elf, troll, or fantasy costume. Expect a fun day filled with fairy tale story times, live music, food, obstacle courses, play areas, crafts, and all kinds of fantastic fun!

Register today at auduboncnc.org/dragons-fairies



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.

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Bruce and Juline Battler

Carnahan-Jackson Foundation

**Chautauqua Region
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National Fuel Gas Company

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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

May/June ACNC Newsletter

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Late spring flowers at sunset around pond.