



Audubon NORTH CAROLINA

2013 - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT





Audubon North Carolina is the state office of the National Audubon Society representing 10,000 grassroots members and ten local chapters across the state. With a century of conservation history in North Carolina, Audubon strives to conserve and restore the habitats we share with all wildlife, focusing on the needs of birds. Audubon North Carolina achieves its mission through a blend of science-based research and conservation, education and outreach, and advocacy.

www.ncaudubon.org
www.ncaudubonblog.org







No matter how common or rare, no matter the amount of time spent in North Carolina and no matter the habitat they use, birds matter. The only wildlife we can count on seeing every day, we often take them for granted. But this is a mistake. Birds literally cover our landscapes and because of this they are one of the best barometers for how our environment is doing. Where natural resources abound, so do birds. Where they are compromised, bird health and populations decline. By monitoring birds, we are monitoring the health of the ecosystem we share with them every day.

Audubon is very proud of our unparalleled conservation network. Each one of our ten chapters is involved in bird conservation activities as well as hosting field trips educating citizens about birds. Hundreds of people participate in these conservation projects and field trips. Thousands of citizen-scientists turn in bird data through our Christmas Bird Count, Backyard Bird Count and Hummingbirds at Home projects. That adds up to a lot of people helping us know how birds are doing and a lot of people helping to protect birds.

This year, we introduced a new initiative called Bird-Friendly Communities (BFC). We wanted to reach more people where they live in cities and towns and engage them in activities that would make a difference for birds in urban areas. The first order of business for this initiative was to convene a team of over 25 partner organizations to set priorities and goals. Kim Brand, coordinator of the project says, “Bird-friendly communities across North Carolina give birds the opportunity to succeed by providing connected habitat dominated by native plants, minimizing threats posed by the built environment, and engaging people of all ages and backgrounds in stewardship of nature.” BFC is already proving to be one of our most popular programs.

We also made great strides in conservation planning for our largest sanctuary, the Donal C. O’Brien Jr. Sanctuary and Audubon Center, located in the Outer Banks. These 5,000 acres offer a unique look into the past. The sanctuary, a former private hunt club, hosts a historic hunting lodge, guide and caretaker cottages and two garages. In the years to come, we intend to

revitalize and repurpose these existing buildings for meeting, dining and lodging space for research and programs and construct a research facility and visitors center. With at least seven diverse ecosystems, the sanctuary provides a living laboratory for researchers in a variety of fields. Under the direction of Robbie Fearn, we are convening a group of stakeholders to discuss the improved health and management of both the sanctuary and Currituck Sound.

Engaging people to help protect birds is our highest priority. Without your help, birds won’t do as well. Without you, not as many nests will be built and not as many babies will grow up to make nests of their own. In the following pages, you will read about all that we have been able to accomplish because of our network of engaged citizens. People who take part in bird counts, people who create backyard habitats that benefit birds, people who leash their dogs on beaches so colonies of terns can nest in peace and people who volunteer to manage their private land to help threatened warblers. It is people who protect birds. We thank you for being one of them.

SHARING OUR SEAS AND SHORES



Royal Shoal and Legged Lump Two, tiny islands now washed away, became the first coastal sanctuary islands in North Carolina, ensuring that today we can enjoy the descendants of the birds they hosted. Over a hundred years later, Audubon is still in North Carolina, still on islands, still protecting birds. The modern coastal sanctuary system was born in the 1970s thanks to a new generation of conservationists. Today it encompasses 21 islands and beach sites that protect one in three nesting waterbirds in North Carolina. That means that one third of nesting waterbirds, and their chicks, are under Audubon's protection each and every year.

Why are sanctuaries important?

Our 21 sanctuaries give Audubon a head start in on-the-ground conservation. Audubon sanctuaries are models for protection and

management of coastal birds and their habitats, where we apply the best available science. They are places for scientific research where we advance knowledge of coastal health, climate change impacts, and how breeding, migration, and wintering locations are connected for our coastal birds.

Beach bird stewards

Our beach bird stewards program has over 70 volunteers contributing thousands of hours to educating coastal visitors about nesting colonies of terns, skimmers and other birds. This awareness campaign is directed to understanding that birds nest directly on the sand in areas adjacent to recreation areas during the spring and summer months. Face to face contact is helping hundreds of visitors learn what it means to share our seas and shores with birds.



BIRD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

With the population in North Carolina rising to an estimated 12 million people over the next decade, the pressure on remaining habitats will be unprecedented. Housing, roads, energy, water and other infrastructure needs will all create challenges for birds. Audubon's approach of working within the framework of an implementation team comprised of 25 partner organizations is adding up to big results. We are empowering individuals, businesses, and others who manage our developed spaces to make easy and effective choices in consideration of birds. This is an area of conservation where every citizen can be engaged. In 2013, the program initiated a Lights Out program for commercial buildings in downtown areas of Winston-Salem, Raleigh and Charlotte, involved hundreds of citizens and landscape architects in planting native plants that provide food sources for birds and engaged over 4,000 citizens in putting up nest boxes for the declining Brown-headed Nuthatch.







PUTTING WORKING LANDS TO WORK FOR BIRDS AND PEOPLE

Working with private landowners is a critical piece of the Working Lands initiative as 61% of North Carolina's 18.4 million acres of forest land is privately owned. Ninety percent of that acreage is contained in parcels of less than 50 acres and private lands comprise about twenty percent of the total acreage of North Carolina's Important Bird Areas. Audubon North Carolina has crafted an approach to forest management that protects and restores habitats for birds while simultaneously helping landowners enhance their property in cost-effective ways. This year we targeted landowners who met the criteria for the protection of the Golden-winged Warbler, a species being considered for endangered status. Fifty landowners responded to our outreach and are managing over 3,000 acres for this highly threatened species.


SAVING OUR IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

Audubon North Carolina and partners have identified 96 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in North Carolina comprising 4.9 million acres. These are places that provide essential habitat for one or more species of birds at some time during their annual cycle of breeding, migration or wintering. Virtually every conservation planning entity in the state recognizes that IBAs are priority sites for long-term protection. The ways in which this data is used is diverse: From influencing wind energy siting decisions to providing years of population trend data to the Department of the Interior, to protection of species threatened by coastal engineering to preventing placement of an outlying landing field near a major wintering ground for large waterfowl. All of our state chapters have "adopted" one or more IBAs and

regularly monitor the bird populations and threats to them on about 90% of all IBAs. Their data is entered into a national database that provides critical information on the health of bird populations.

Thirty of North Carolina's IBAs have been approved by BirdLife International as globally significant. This means that the site is important to the protection of the species on a global scale. Protection of these species in North Carolina is critical to preventing the world-wide population from plummeting. These globally important bird areas include the Amphibolite Mountains, which provide habitat for Golden-winged Warblers; the Sandhills, which sustain Red-cockaded Woodpeckers; and Lea-Hutaff Island, which is inhabited by Piping Plovers.



A close-up photograph of two ducks. The duck in the foreground is a male mallard in its winter plumage, featuring a dark brown head, a white breast, and a dark bill. The duck in the background is a female mallard, showing mottled brown and grey feathers. The background is solid black, making the ducks stand out.

THE DONAL C.
O'BRIEN JR.
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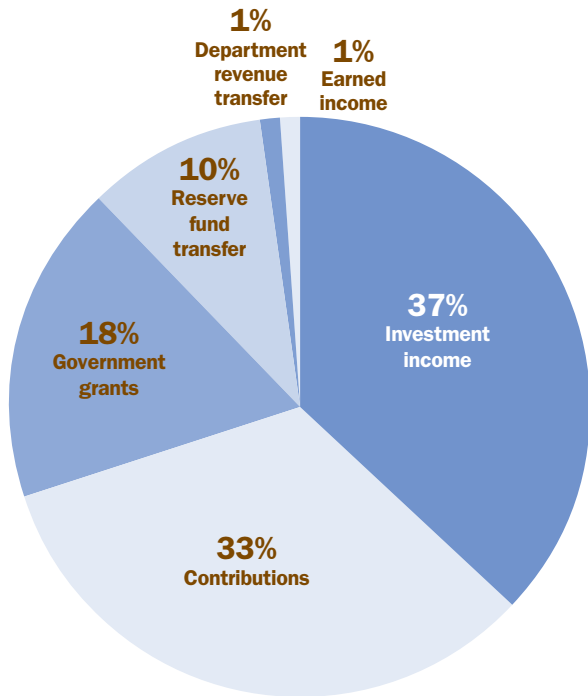
Audubon owns and manages this once private hunting retreat thanks to the farsighted generosity of former owners Earl and Jane Slick and an arrangement made more than 30 years ago between the Slick family and Donal O'Brien, Jr., then chair of National Audubon's board of directors. The Audubon sanctuary is part of the Currituck Marshes-Pine Island Important Bird Area, which is made up of an extensive system of marshes, creeks, channels, and open water. We now manage nearly 5,000 acres of diverse habitat in Corolla. We welcomed Center Director Robbie Fearn this year to lead the conservation plans for this incredible property. Robbie envisions a collaborative working group who will set goals to improve the health of Currituck Sound, improve the waterfowl impoundments on the property, and eventually aid us in establishing a national research institute with residential lodging.

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)

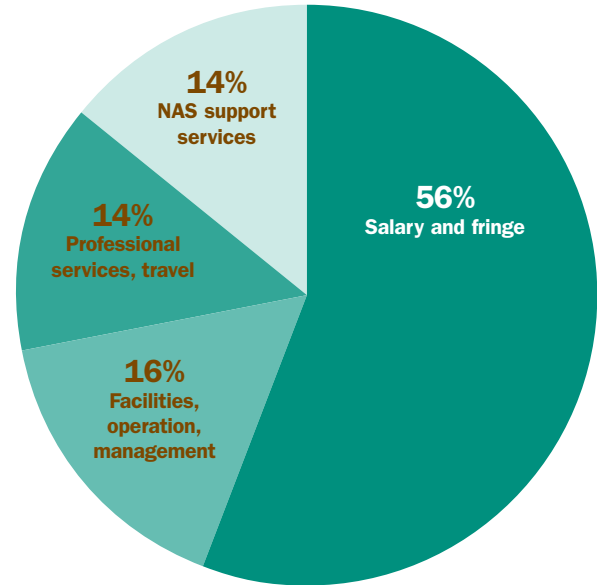
Birds will not be protected without your support! As the voice for birds in North Carolina, Audubon's conservation work extends across the state. This year financial support from individuals, foundations, and government grants totaled \$734,196.





FISCAL YEAR 2014 REVENUE

Investment Income	\$539,145	37%
Contributions	\$480,123	33%
Government Grants	\$254,073	18%
Reserve Fund Transfer	\$142,339	10%
Departmental Revenue Transfers	\$18,106	1%
Earned Income	\$17,907	1%
Total Revenue	\$1,451,693	



FISCAL YEAR 2014 EXPENSES

Salary and fringe	\$817,772	56%
Facilities, operation, management	\$231,682	16%
Professional services, travel	\$198,263	14%
NAS Support Services	\$203,976	14%
Total Expense	\$1,451,693	



WINGS OF SUPPORT

Audubon North Carolina is deeply grateful to all the individuals, agencies, organizations, and foundations that supported our mission this fiscal year, from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. Thank you for helping to protect our beautiful North Carolina birds and the habitats that support them. We truly could not do it without you!

Pearson Society (\$1,000 and up)

We are grateful to our major donors who provide substantial support for the protection of our birds.

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