



Memory songs

Last week, I woke up before the first rays of sunlight. As I sat with my ritualistic coffee, I heard a cardinal singing to the rising mid-winter sun. The song transported me back to a time when my younger daughter was an infant.

Born in May, Jane arrived with spring in its full glory. The world was alive with floral fragrance, vibrant color and the sounds of birds. Each day, she and I would find ourselves together in a rocking chair at 4 am. We were the only ones seemingly awake in the neighborhood, forging a new relationship as we fumbled in the dark. And every morning, after a few minutes together had passed, like clockwork, a cardinal would start to sing, heralding the sun as it peeked over the horizon and brought its warm light to both of us.

I loved those mornings now decades past. I loved being sung awake with my newborn daughter. I loved the joy that the cardinal's voice spread throughout our small corner of the world. I loved feeling less alone.

I suspect that many of us our own bird memories—songs heard, species encountered, the smell of the meadow on a particular morning. Birds have a magical way of connecting people to each other and to our own histories.

At Audubon, our stated mission is to protect birds and the places they need. I would argue that our mission is to also to protect birds so that new memories may be made by future generations.

Thank you for your support of Audubon and the birds that help spark joy in all of us.

Suzanne

Northern cardinal sitting on branch. Photo: Nelda Faulkner



Marshes for Tomorrow Community Meetings

Marshes for Tomorrow is a landscape-scale restoration plan, with the goal of saving 25,000 acres of Maryland's saltmarshes. Marsh restoration at this scale has the power to save an entire ecosystem—as well as the imperiled Saltmarsh Sparrow— and will bring economic benefits to fisheries, tourism, and local communities. The Marshes for Tomorrow campaign is being

spearheaded by Audubon Mid-Atlantic, and executed through the Delmarva Restoration and Conservation Network (DRCN).

In order to save these critical marshes at the scale necessary, we have embarked on a series of public events to talk with local residents. In January, we held three meetings in Princess Anne, Berlin and Church Creek. The conversations focused on understanding the role of marsh habitat and adjacent infrastructure within each community and marsh prioritization to achieve our restoration goal in Maryland. Community input is incredibly important for the success of this project and helps us to identify the best locations for concentrating our conservation and restoration efforts for birds and people.

If you weren't able to attend the community meetings in January, [please visit our website](#) and keep an eye out for additional meetings on the lower eastern shore of Maryland this spring. Dates will be announced in the coming months.

Community meeting on the Eastern Shore.



Audubon Mid-Atlantic's 2024 Policy Priorities and Legislative Tracking

As the legislative seasons get underway in both Pennsylvania and Maryland, Audubon Mid-Atlantic has created a new on-line tool that tracks our legislative priorities. The tool is already on the Pennsylvania website at [Legislative Tracking](#) and will be added to the Maryland website as soon as bills receive tracking information. The table identifies priority legislation that Audubon is involved with this legislative session, tracks the status of these bills throughout their cycle, and more. We hope it will help all of you keep tabs on our legislative priorities.

Ruffed grouse in snow. Photo: Jeff Wind



Cerulean Warbler Habitat Volunteers

This past summer, Audubon Mid-Atlantic hosted local Audubon chapter volunteers to conduct surveys of breeding Cerulean Warblers at a property owned by the Capital Region Water Authority in the greater Harrisburg area. Volunteers documented the breeding birds on the site and established a baseline. These surveys provided critical data to Scott Parkhill, manager of the Healthy Forest program, helping him determine how Audubon might continue to support warblers in the area. The surveys also helped Audubon assess how our habitat management practices impact the species. In Scott's words, "The volunteers' efforts greatly contributed to our ability to document the real-world impact of our habitat management for declining

species. Audubon's chapters form a great network for connecting the public with active forest bird conservation in the region. Many thanks!"

Other opportunities for invaluable community science work exist throughout the year, with [Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count](#) happening this month and [Climate Watch](#) coming up later this spring. Please join us!

Cerulean warbler in tree. Photo: Mathew Malwitz



FAO Schwarz Fellowship Application Open Now!

The application period for our next FAO Schwarz Fellow closes on Monday, February 5th! The FAO Schwarz Fellowship Program selects a few high-impact non-profit organizations in Philadelphia, New York City and Boston as sites for young adults who have just graduated college. Audubon is honored to have been selected for the second time to host a Fellow at the Discovery Center. Fellows deepen their knowledge of relevant social issues, work directly with community members, and lead strategic projects that strengthen the host organizations capacity and impact. The application period closes on Monday, February 5th, so please share with Please share with a college senior whom you think might be interested in this great

opportunity!

[More info and application available here.](#)

Sophie, our current FAO Schwarz Fellow, describes below her experience with Audubon Mid-Atlantic during her two-year fellowship position.

“July through October is spent shadowing (for the first summer) or leading (for the second summer) field trips and public programs at the Discovery Center as well as creating the four-lesson arc and curating relationships with the three to four schools the fellow will serve. October through June is largely spent teaching the lessons, with one to two schools per day, depending on the number of classes per grade. Every day is different, which makes the job exciting every single day. One of the most exciting aspects of this job was that I got to create lessons and tweak them as I saw how they worked (or didn’t work) in a classroom. Most environmental educators at an entry-level are given a curriculum that they have to work with whether they like it or not, but I had the chance to create something that I am truly passionate and excited about, which I believe makes me better at teaching.”

FAO Schwarz Fellow Sophie at an outreach event.



Showing our Love for our Local Birds

Have you been looking for ways to show love to our native birds? Spring migration will begin in just over a month, but there are many birds that overwinter here in the Mid-Atlantic region. For these resident birds, natural food sources aren't as readily available during the winter months (November through April). To attract a variety of birds to your property, it's best to use a mix of feeding supplies, including different types of feeders. It's also important to incorporate native plants into the landscape, to provide additional habitat and food sources for birds. For a list of appropriate feeders and sources of food for our native birds, [check out this resource from the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources](#).

This February, in the season of showing love, show some love for our local birds!

Downy woodpecker on tree. Photo: Nick Shearman



The Spark Feature on Bird Population

This week, The Spark radio station, part of Harrisburg-based WITF, did a feature on the loss of 3 billion birds over the past 50 years in the USA and Canada. The decline of North America's bird population is a sign of broader ecological problems, such as habitat loss, pollution, and global climate change. Listen in as Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Program Manager for Urban Conservation, Keith Russell, speaks with host Scott LaMar on the causes of this great loss, and what can still be done to protect birds in our region. The recording is available on WITF's website, [here](#).

City skyscrapers with birds in flight. Photo: WITF



Bird Feeder Workshops at the Discovery Center and John James Audubon Center

As you're showing your love for our local birds this month, consider attending one of our upcoming Bird Feeder Workshops at the Discovery Center in Philadelphia or the John James Audubon Center (JJAC). The Discovery Center event will take place on Saturday, February 10th from 10am until 12pm, where you will learn how to create a homemade bird feeder that can support birds such as Northern Cardinals, Dark-eyed Juncos, and Song Sparrows that are overwintering in our region! We'll also take a short hike to see some feeders in action. [More info on our website here.](#)

The JJAC event will also be on Saturday, February 10th, from 11am until 1pm. Learn what to expect when putting up a bird feeder in your backyard, patio, or window, then get creative and make your own to take home for you and the birds to enjoy! More info and registration [available on our website here.](#)

Bird feeder. Photo: Audubon New York

Check out Audubon Mid-Atlantic's Upcoming Events

Visit our Centers, explore our trails, and join us for some winter birding and other exciting activities happening across the Mid-Atlantic region!

- [Pennsylvania Events](#), including the John James Audubon Center and The Discovery Center
- [Maryland Events](#)

CONNECT WITH US



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