



## Supporting our communities and the birds that rely on us

A few weeks ago, I traveled to my college alma mater to attend a memorial service for a beloved English professor. As one might expect given the setting and the man, speakers touched upon his love of literature, passion for learning and for teaching, and his raised eyebrow when students asked for extensions.

Listening in the pews, my thoughts wandered to my time on campus more than thirty years ago. It was the first time that I was in a community of my own choosing—a place that I had sought out and joined. There I encountered people whose backgrounds and upbringings were different from mine. I heard viewpoints that I had never considered. I made friends for life.

There, within this nurturing place, I studied communities, considering how people of shared and common interests are organized or organize themselves, how communities evolve and grow (or conversely remain static or die off), and what can

happen when new ideas and perspectives are introduced.

Here at Audubon, we talk a lot about building and supporting a community of people who want to support birds and the places they need. Much of our work in the Mid-Atlantic is intentionally designed to welcome all as we seek to grow and build on behalf of birds. As you will read below, we are hosting a number of events this fall that we hope will encourage more people to join our flock. Won't you join us?

I'll leave you with this excerpt from Seamus Heaney's poem, *Postscript*, which was read at the aforementioned service:

"...The surface of a slate-grey lake is lit

By the earthed lightning of a flock of swans,

Their feathers roughed and ruffling, white on white,

Their fully grown headstrong-looking heads

Tucked or cresting or busy underwater....

You're neither here nor there,

A hurry through which known and strange things pass

As big soft buffetings come at the car sideways

And catch the heart off guard and blow it open."

Warmly,

Suzanne



Trumpeter swans. Photo: Christopher Elliott



## Riparian Buffer Planting

On September 7th, Audubon and more than 65 Villanova University students, faculty, and staff planted 300 native trees along the Perkiomen Creek as part of Villanova's St. Thomas Day of Service. This planting event is the second phase of Audubon's riparian buffer restoration work at the John James Audubon Center. This area along the creek was decimated by Hurricane Ida flooding in 2021. The new trees will help stabilize the creek shoreline and reduce erosion. They will also provide stopover habitat and shelter for birds, particularly those migrating in the spring and fall. Audubon staff are busy working to plan the next habitat restoration and maintenance projects at the Center. We hope you'll consider becoming a volunteer at the John James Audubon Center for a future planting event! To get more information or to sign up to help, please contact Brian Walsh, [brian.walsh@audubon.org](mailto:brian.walsh@audubon.org).

Funding and support for this project came from TreeVitalize, the Montgomery County Conservation District and the William Penn Foundation.

Villanova University at Audubon's planting event



## Community Day and celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month at the John James Audubon Center

On Sunday, September 29, Audubon Mid-Atlantic hosted our annual Community Day at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove. More than 270 attendees braved the rain to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the opening of the new visitor center and Hispanic Heritage Month. Visitors enjoyed Mexican Folk Dancing, demonstrations of our newly-installed [MOTUS tower](#), and sampled food from local food trucks. Guests participated in bilingual bird tours and several children's activities throughout the day, learning about the birds that migrate between our region and South American countries. Thanks to all of our event planning partners for their promotion and assistance with the event planning and implementation.

Several partners and vendors helped to make the day successful, including

- [Centro de Cultura, Arte, Trabajo y Educación \(CCATE\)](#)
- [ACLAMO](#)
- [SEI Investments](#)

- [Martha's Community Farm](#)
- [Valley Forge Audubon Society](#)

Check out the [John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove website](#) for updates on upcoming events!

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Mexican folk dancing. Photo: Allie Ippolito



## Whitby Meadow Planting

For nearly five years, Audubon conservation staff have worked with partners – including John Heinz Refuge and Cobbs Creek Ambassadors – and volunteers to transform abandoned ball fields in southwest Philadelphia into dynamic meadow habitat that supports birds and people. Our work continues this fall and we invite you to join us on Saturday, October 19th, from 10:30am until 2:00pm for our Whitby Meadow Planting and Cleanup event. We'll be planting native trees along the banks of Cobbs Creek and removing litter. Cobbs Creek is a beautiful community green space and extremely important habitat space for our local birds and other wildlife. For more information, or to register to volunteer, please contact Audubon's

Delaware River Watershed Program Manager, Robin Irizarry, at [robin.irizarry@audubon.org](mailto:robin.irizarry@audubon.org).

This event will cover some uneven terrain and it may be muddy. Waterproof boots are recommended and we ask that you dress for the weather. See you there!

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Native tree planting with Audubon and volunteers

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## Fall Migration in the Mid-Atlantic

This month, fall migration is in full swing and there are many ways to experience it here in the Mid-Atlantic.

Technologies such as [Bird Cast](#) and [Motus.org](#) bring the wonders of migration to life for bird lovers regardless of scientific expertise. (And make sure to check out the data already collected by the newly-installed MOTUS tower at the [John James Audubon Center](#): the route of one tagged kestrel extends up into Massachusetts and down to Maryland's Blackwater Refuge!)

To view migratory raptors in person, Pennsylvania's Kittatinny Ridge is the place to be! According to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, at least 16 species of raptor utilize the Kittatinny Ridge's helpful thermal air currents to

“surf” through the commonwealth. Prime viewing spots include Waggoner’s Gap and Hawk Mountain. Audubon Mid-Atlantic will also host two birding events this month: Philadelphia Birding Weekend (October 12 and 13, see below for more details) and tours in Baltimore’s Druid Hill Park (October 12) and Patterson Park (October 27).

To help birds along their journeys, be sure to turn your lights off from midnight until 6am, so passing birds won’t be led astray by artificial light sources. For more resources, visit the [Bird Safe Philly website](#).

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American kestrel. Photo: Mick Thompson



## Philadelphia Birding Weekend

Registration is quickly filling up for Audubon’s third annual Philadelphia Birding Weekend! On the weekend of October 12 and 13th, Audubon staff and volunteer guides will lead bird tours in some of Philadelphia's iconic green spaces. [Consider joining us on the Navy Yard tour](#) on Saturday at 1pm. The Navy Yard in Philadelphia has over 20 acres of open space and a mile of waterfront trail! We’ll also host a tour in the historic Woodlands Cemetery –

almost sold out. Every tour is free and family friendly. For more information on Philly Birding Weekend, please [visit our website here](#).

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A tour at Philadelphia Birding Weekend.

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## Intern Graduation at the Discovery Center

On Saturday, September 14th, Audubon and the Philadelphia Outward Bound School celebrated the graduation of our four high school students from our joint 18-week long [Environmental & Outdoor Leadership Program](#). Through this paid experience, students living in Strawberry Mansion and Brewerytown received environmental and team leadership lessons, participated in career building activities, and assisted with public programming such as bird watching tours and canoeing programs as well as private events and other visitor experiences. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in the Environmental & Outdoor Leadership



Program, you can find more information on the Discovery Center website [here](#).

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Environmental & Outdoor Leadership Interns at the graduation ceremony.

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## Upcoming Events in the Mid-Atlantic

### **I Bird I Vote Southeast Pennsylvania**

Join us on Thursday, October 10th from 6:00pm until 8:00pm for I Bird I Vote Southeastern PA, a non-partisan event focused on environmental issues facing Pennsylvania. Speakers will include Ezra Thrush (Senior Advisor, PennFuture), Tess Wilson (Network Engagement Manager, Audubon Mid-Atlantic), and Tim Hayes (Policy Analyst, Conservation Voters of PA). Light refreshments will be available at the event. [Please RSVP for your spot on our website here.](#)

### **Deal Island Volunteer Planting with Marshes for Tomorrow**

Join Audubon and our partners at the Deal Island peninsula on Saturday, October 26th from 10:30am until 4:00pm to learn about the recent marsh restoration project and help replant native marsh vegetation. Learn about how the added sediment has increased the elevation and life span of the marsh, and the important role native plants play in a healthy coastal ecosystem. We will be planting saltmarsh hay, marsh spike grass, and saltmarsh cordgrass - plants well adapted to the high marsh zone. Be sure to wear clothes that you don't mind getting muddy! Additional information and registration is [available here](#).

CONNECT WITH US



#### **Audubon Mid-Atlantic**

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