

AUDUBON SOCIETY
OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA



FY 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia's annual report!

This report reviews ANSV's major activities during July 2015-June 2016 (FY 2016), highlighting each of our program areas. It begins, though, with a look at our program strategy.

What We Do

In the fall of 2015, the ASNV Board of Directors began a strategic planning process to help us identify our priorities and purpose as an organization, and to help us plan for the future within that context.

The strategic planning process let us take a look at a number of questions. What are our most important programs? What do we need to do to improve? Are there important areas we are not addressing? Are there programs we should discontinue? By re-assessing, we hope to channel our energies and attention to our highest priority activities.

Our first step was to consolidate our programs into six strategic areas, each under its own committee:

- Audubon at Home
- Adult Education
- Citizen Science
- Youth Education
- Conservation
- Advocacy

Each committee, in turn, has formulated its own goals and objectives for the next several years and is in the process of pursuing them.

It also became evident that we have a number of organizational needs, including Fundraising, Programs, Membership, Communications and Outreach.

In the pages that follow, you will see what we accomplished during FY 2016 in the six strategic areas, as well as a look at membership and financial information. We continue to work on the strategic areas now and into the future.



Song Sparrow—Marilyn Gaizband



Audubon at Home

FY 2016 saw Audubon at Home's outreach grow through local events and work by our partners: Prince William Master Gardeners, Arlington Regional Master Naturalists, Fairfax Master Naturalists, and the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. We were introduced to conservation-minded people through 5 events and a sponsorship from MOM's Organic Markets. We added more than 150 new clients and made more than 100 in-person site visits to advise clients on their specific habitat needs.

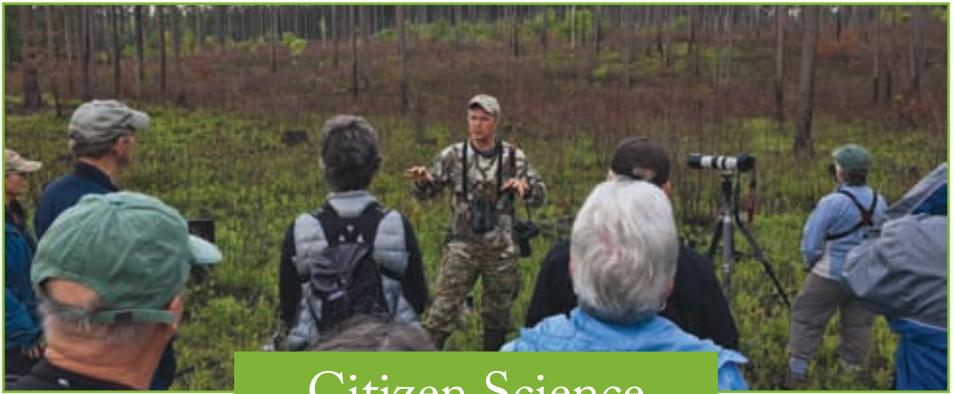
Audubon at Home celebrated 73 clients who qualified a total of 425 acres as wildlife habitat. They did this by adopting habitat practices, adding habitat features and then observing at least 10 priority Sanctuary Species using the safe and supporting wildlife habitat they had created.

We also watered our own garden with an update to the Audubon at Home web pages, improving information access to our clients and those just learning about the connections between plants and wildlife. We also contributed information to the National Audubon Society's Plants for Birds to take the message to a national level.

With our local partners, we offered advanced training to Audubon at Home Ambassadors, added social media to assist with volunteer collaboration and began implementing a cloud application to improve record keeping and help us stay in touch with our clients.

Audubon at Home continues to expand our message into communities and families through presentations and Ambassador support for schools, faith communities and homeowners' associations.

*We celebrated 73 clients who qualified
425 acres of wildlife habitat!*



Citizen Science

ASNV conducted a variety of projects under our Citizen Science strategic goal, collecting new data about Northern Virginia birds and other fauna and building experience among participants in bird identification.

Northern Virginia Bird Survey. 2016 marked the 22nd annual survey of breeding birds in our area, providing a time series on how these species are faring. While trends for some species are up, such as Bald Eagles and Blue Jays, the overall trend is one of decline. You can see the results at <http://audubonva.org/northern-virginia-bird-survey>.

Christmas Bird Count. Our 34th Manassas-Bull Run Christmas Bird Count saw a record high number of participants, with 129 people counting just over 20,000 birds among 78 species. While the bird numbers and species were within past 15 year averages, we counted

all-time highs for one-fifth of the species seen. Details are at <http://audubonva.org/christmas-bird-count>

Other surveys and counts. ASNV sponsors the Occoquan and Meadowood Wildlife Surveys, the International Migratory Bird Count, the Winter Waterfowl Count, and the Butterfly and Dragonfly Surveys. We encourage participation in the Virginia Society of Ornithology Breeding Bird Atlas project. See <http://audubonva.org/bird-and-wildlife-counts/>

Digitizing survey data. ANSV aims to digitize data from all surveys and bird walks to make the data more readily available to the public and researchers. We established an eBird account for our bird walks, and have progressed in capturing the Meadowood and Occoquan data.

The Christmas Bird Count saw a record high number of participants, with 129 people counting just over 20,000 birds among 78 species!

Nature walks. ASNV sponsored 12 bird walks in FY2016 in parks across Fairfax County, with a few forays into Loudoun, Prince William, Warren and Arlington counties. We also held walks for pollinators and spring ephemeral wildflowers. Our Blue Ridge walk combined birding with lunch at a local winery.

To alert birders of additional opportunities, we co-listed walks sponsored by the Reston Association, The Bird Feeder of Reston, and the Northern Virginia Bird Club. Overall, 350 participants joined these walks, despite our having some very soggy or windy dates.

Highlights included Sandhill Cranes and Horned Grebes at Algonkian, warblers at Lake Fairfax and Meadowlark Botanical Garden, and sparrow species at Manassas Battlefield. It's always great to find a posing hawk or Barred Owl, as we did near the W&OD trail in June.

We are enjoying walks in FY 2017 including in Reston, Buttermilk Creek, Meadowlark, Manassas Battlefield and Mason Neck State Park. This spring we returned to some favorite places like Algonkian and Bles Parks.

Members are encouraged to join the walks, suggest places to visit, and volunteer to lead or co-lead.

Regional Field Trips. In FY 2016, ASNV conducted 2 field trips with 42 participants. We had multi-day trips to Virginia's Northern Neck for winter waterfowl and sparrows, and to Great Dismal Swamp/Piney Grove for spring warblers and the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. A trip to Virginia Beach was canceled because of a storm.

International Field Trip. For the first time, ASNV sponsored an international field trip, with 12 birders visiting Costa Rica in March 2016. From sea level on the Gulf of Nicoyo to 11,300 feet in the Talamanca Mountains, our group enjoyed a week exploring this lovely country, tallying over 200 species.



Great Blue Heron – Marilyn Gaizband



Conservation

Recognition for ASNV Conservation Leaders. ASNV recognized Carol and Jay Hadlock for their years of support and encouragement of conservation.

We also worked with the Bureau of Land Management to install a bench at Meadowood honoring Jim Waggener for his epic work on surveying birds, butterflies, dragonflies, other fauna and plants in the Occoquan region.

Important Bird Area (IBA) project. Using funds provided by the Stockwell-Frase Fund, ASNV began a project to work with other stakeholders in the Lower Potomac Important Bird Area. We are focusing on the stretch of the Potomac from Dyke Marsh to Fredericksburg. We are looking for opportunities to improve and protect habitat and conduct citizen science projects in the IBA.

Education

Adult Education. Over the year, ASNV conducted 10 classes or workshops attended by 161 adults. Workshops included Little Brown Jobs, Spring Warblers, Birding by Ear, and Butterflies, all including time in the field. A Christmas Bird Count workshop was held before our December count, and we had a session on the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas project.

We also offered Mammals 102, Eco-landscaping, Ethnobotany of Flowers, and a session to answer the important question “What is Audubon at Home, Anyway?”

Youth Education. Our major education effort aimed at young people was to

send a teacher to the Educator’s Week at National Audubon Society’s Hog Island camp in Maine. Kate Sydney, fifth grade teacher at Glebe Elementary School in Arlington County, traveled to Maine in July 2015. Kate was inspired by the Hog Island experience to transform the area outside her classroom windows into an attractive environment for bluebirds and other native species.

We also selected the teacher for the 2016 Hog Island week. Our recipient was Morgan Occhuzzo, at the time an academic resource teacher in grades K-6 in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Advocacy

ASNV worked on several issues, including legislation in the Virginia General Assembly related to feral cats, providing comments on the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's implementation of the federal Clean Power Plan, and a letter urging the Secretary of the Interior to strengthen the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

We persuaded Fairfax County to reduce spraying insecticides for fall cankerworms, a practice that kills native insects and eliminates an important food source for birds. We asked Dominion Power to stop the "dewatering" of coal ash ponds into the Potomac River at Possum Point.

ASNV goes birding! – Ellen Jacobson



Our Membership & Finances

Membership

ASNV is one of the largest chapters of the National Audubon Society, with about 4,400 members.

Our Funding

ASNV's main source of support is people like you! In FY 2016, we received \$37,700 from 339 individual donors, with the largest share coming during the winter Annual Appeal and the spring Birdathon. Your support makes a huge difference!

We also received generous support from businesses and organizations, including these donors:

- MOM's Organic Markets
- Town of Clifton Haunted Trail
- Stockwell Frase Fund
- Whole Foods

ASNV earned nearly \$8,500 in program income, most coming from Audubon at Home, adult education and field trips. We received significant support from the National Audubon Society, and smaller amounts from interest, memberships, and miscellaneous sources. In FY 2016, the Board put \$5,000 from cash reserves toward ASNV activities.

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Our Membership & Finances (cont.)

What we spent

During FY 2016, the largest areas of expense were Programs and Advocacy (\$27,000) and Administration (\$25,700). These expenditures made it possible for us to deliver the array of classes, field trips, bird and other nature walks, Audubon at Home consultations, the Important Bird Area project, and the variety of other activities we do to protect and support birds.

We spent about \$1,200 on communications and outreach, and \$4,200 on development. We ended the fiscal year well in the black compared to our budget and with about \$220,000 in cash reserves.

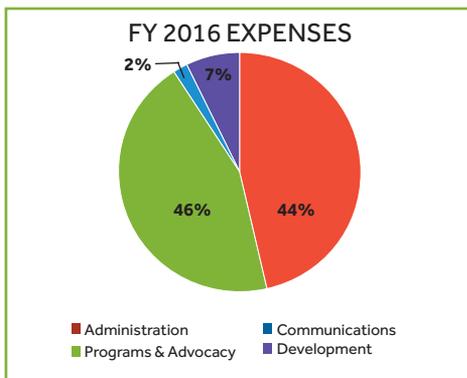
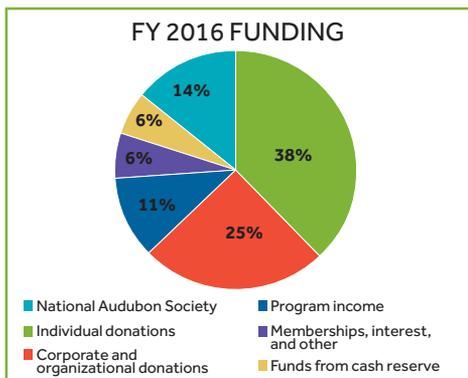
These expenses do not include the value of volunteer time that make our programs possible. Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers who lead bird walks, plan and lead field trips, serve on the Board and

committees, and perform a myriad of additional tasks. We estimate that, all together, you provided 8,030 volunteer hours that are valued at \$181,100!

Financial plan for FY 2017

The ASNV Board planned expenditures of \$81,300 in FY 2017, an increase of \$27,100 from the prior year. Significantly higher spending is planned in Programs and Advocacy, especially in the strategic goals of Citizen Science, Conservation, and Audubon at Home. Administration expenses are expected to be similar to the prior year, but will account for a smaller share of total expenses at 31 percent.

To cover the planned expenditures, the Board expects revenue of \$65,700 and allocated \$13,100 from our cash reserves. The largest single source of revenue is the Annual Appeal.



Your support makes ASNV possible! Thank You!

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