

New Hope Audubon Society

2022 Annual Report



**NEW HOPE
AUDUBON**

The mission of New Hope Audubon Society is to promote the conservation and enjoyment of birds, other wildlife, and ecosystems, focusing on Chatham, Durham, Orange and parts of surrounding counties.

Dear Friends,

We are thankful for our generous volunteers that continue to provide their time and effort to create a positive impact in our local communities. Our 2022 contributions were centered on growing and sustaining native habits and landscapes, building bird friendly communities, creating STEM curriculum educational toolboxes, while promoting equity and inclusion on multiple levels across our region.

We continued to promote and engage all people to participate in our bird outings often focusing on flora and fauna, while enjoying what might be called a slow hike. Our nest box building educational programming was in high demand in 2022 which engages the next generation of new “birders or environmentally friendly advocates”. We strengthened our endeavors centered on equity, diversity and inclusion and know this is a long-term goal as we seek to attain inclusion for all.

Our donor investments, the passion of our volunteers, and collaboration with likeminded community partners helps us accomplish our goals. I hope you enjoy learning more about our committees and their impacts in our communities. We can only make all of this happen with the support of our donors, partners, and volunteers. Working in tandem with many others, we are creating a brighter tomorrow in our local communities.

Sincerely,

Barbara Driscoll

President 2022, New Hope Audubon Society



Barred Owls are local residents.

Advocacy

*We need your voice advocating with us!
Contact [NHAS](#) to join our Advocacy Committee.*

Our Advocacy Committee volunteers are educating NHAS members, local citizens, city and county government staff and elected officials on issues impacting our environment and equality. We are sharing our best practices broadly across our region.

- Conversations with state legislators on Advocacy Day on June 8, 2022
- Supported Heirs Property Act, House Bill H367 which protects family landowners by helping them keep their land and wildlife habitat intact
- Advocated against a Durham County, Trap, Neuter and Release Program (however, the program was passed)
- Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA)
- Native Plants Bill, SB 628
- "Birds and Brews" collaboration with Audubon NC to show support for clean energy messaging
- Multiple action alerts sent to NHAS members via email

Wilson's Snipe are common in our region, but often are unseen due to their well-camouflaged plumage.



Bird Friendly Habitats

Bird Friendly Certification

Our volunteer certification team evaluated 330 acres in 2022, a record and each year we evaluate more residences. Homeowners request assessments of their “yard” to meet our bird friendly certification. The program builds awareness of how native plants support wildlife, especially birds, and the negative affects of non-native invasive plants. Our yard signage engages homeowners and builds local conversations which helps spread the word about creating bird friendly habitats.

Leave Your Leaves

Our public education campaign funded by Triangle Community Foundation’s Sustainable Communities: Environmental Resilience 2021 \$15,000 grant was closed in 2022. However, Leave Your Leaves will continue to be part of our signature programs. Our online educational toolkits are free for teachers and the public to download, yard signs are available, and we continue to advocate for this small effort that has a tremendous impact for wildlife, healthy yards and local communities.

Climate resiliency is happening in our region, and we will continue this work – one yard at a time.



Bird Friendly Habitats

*Artist Calvin Ulrich created
Booker Creek Bird Friendly Murals*

New Hope Audubon Society supported “Bird Friendly Murals” with other partners for some unique signage at Booker Creek. NHAS provided funding to support murals on four OWASA pipes along the lower Booker Creek Trail. Calvin Ulrich was chosen as the artist, based on his natural renderings of birds. The murals provide a nature theme as people walk along the pathway between Franklin Street and Booker Creek in Chapel Hill.

Bird Friendly Habitats

Pee Wee Homes, Native Garden Initiates

NHAS generously offered to help support a native garden initiative at each Pee Wee Homes residence. Pee Wee Homes is a nonprofit helping disadvantaged residents. Our conservation efforts to build bird friendly habitats works in collaboration with their investing in their resident's outdoor space to positively impact not only the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of their residents but also their surrounding community. Beautiful outdoor spaces, filled with native plants, is encouraging residents to spend more time outside, taking ownership and pride over their space, and it has also allowed residents to connect with neighbors who stop by and ask about the gardens.

Chapel Hill Library, Bird Friendly Shrubs

NHAS donated funds to purchase bird friendly trees and shrubs to be planted around the bird blind built in 2021.



Cape May Warbler visiting a local backyard.

Landscape matters, planting
native plants provides for
complex food webs.

Native plants are host to an
abundance of insects,
preferred by the birds and
other animals.



Conservation

Raney Property, North Carolina Botanical Gardens

One of our largest investments in 2022 was our support to help purchase what is known as the Raney Property, Stillhouse Bottom Nature Preserve, North Carolina Botanical Garden. New Hope Audubon Society (NHAS) is one of the many supporters to purchase and protect this property. The North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation (NCBGF) has worked tirelessly for over two years to purchase this property on Linden Road. This purchase will add 24.7 acres of pristine forest to the NCBGF's Stillhouse Bottom Nature Preserve. This purchase will protect precious green space that is fast becoming scarce in this time of rampant development in Chapel Hill. This conservation effort will protect countless native trees, native plant species, wildlife and a multitude of birds.

Patterson Place, Purple Martin Houses

Installed new Purple Martin house to support and promote Purple Martins in the local community.

Chimney Swift Night Out and Counts

NHAS continues to promote education and conservation for chimney swifts. This year we had two very successful "Swift night out" programs in Durham, one at the Durham Hotel and the other at the Accordian Club. We continue counting roosting swifts at several locations in Durham and Chapel Hill and invite people to count in their community.

New Hope Audubon Society is working to promote conservation – supported by our members and donors. NHAS can do this because of you and your generous donations!

Community Science

Total volunteer hours in 2022 for the community science committee: 738 hours

Community Science is growing and thriving at New Hope Audubon Society. Our volunteers are involved in local regional bird counts, bird-window collision surveys, and breeding bird surveys. Monitoring is needed to help understand bird population trends and what steps are needed for our local communities to become environmentally friendly.

Monitoring bird-window collisions involves surveying buildings for injured birds and bird carcasses during peak migration. Buildings with potential collision risks are monitored every day to record collision evidence. The Spring 2022 Community Bird-window Collision Survey was conducted at the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. Coordination with a EcoStudio Intern at UNC-Chapel Hill four buildings were monitored in the spring. Our data found Wilson Hall to be the highest collision risk for birds on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. The Fall 2022 efforts, in collaboration with City Bird, a new nonprofit in the triangle, six buildings were surveyed for bird-window collisions. The Fall data found Marsico Hall on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus has the highest collision rate for birds.

Bird counts, surveys and *BioBlitz efforts are part of New Hope Audubon Society's history. Volunteer efforts in 2022 included:

- Jordan Lake Christmas Bird Count (Jan 2nd, 2022) - 51 volunteers in 26 parties donated 125 hours to counting birds, and additional volunteer hours for Chapel Hill and Durham Christmas Bird Count.
- Jordan Lake Spring Bird Count (May 1st, 2022) - 49 volunteers in 27 parties donated 136 hours to counting birds, and additional volunteer hours for Chapel Hill and Durham Spring Bird Count.
- Brumley Bird Survey 2022 Fall – In collaboration with Triangle Land Conservancy, 11 volunteers donated 57 hours to counting birds at Brumley Forest Nature Preserve - North Section to help understand how habitat improvements affect bird population.
- Spring 2022 Durham BioBlitz - In collaboration with Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association, our community science committee chair assisted with planning a Spring BioBlitz.
- Fall 2022 Ellerbe Creek BioBlitz - In collaboration with Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association, the community science committee chair assisted with planning a Fall BioBlitz and co-led a bird outing at 17 Acre Wood on Oct 2 for the Fall BioBlitz.
- National Audubon Society's Climate Watch Program – Ten volunteers count in nine squares for the winter count, and in ten squares for the spring count.
- Mini-breeding Bird Survey – Volunteers helped several survey routes in Durham, Orange, and Chatham counties.
- Quarterly Eagle Count – 84 NHAS volunteers helped survey Bald Eagles at Jordan Lake over the year.

* *BioBlitz is an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time.*



Yellow-billed Cuckoo's are loud and usually heard before they are seen. Their call is easy to remember once you hear it.

Some locals, especially farmers, refer to these birds as "Rain Crows". It is believed they call more on cloudy days – calling in a warning that it will rain.

Education

<u>Tabling Events</u>	<u>Nest Box Events</u>
Greater Backyard Bird Count at NC Botanical Garden - Feb 19	SE Durham Public Library UCAN (2 events)
Triangle Land Conservancy, Brumley South - April 24 Museum of Life and Science - May 6	
Leaves Your Leaves Durham Public Schools - Aug 24 Family Funday at NC Botanical Garden - Oct 23	
<u>Community Engagement Presentations</u>	
Durham Garden Club Glenn School Chapel Hill Public Library	
<u>FeederWatch</u>	
Chapel Hill Public Library	
<u>Blogs</u>	
<u>Carol Woods – A Beautiful Green Island</u> <u>New Hope's Newest Committee Advocates for the Birds</u>	Building bird nest boxes has become a major part of our activities, it's replaced the family bird walk as our most popular and frequent event.

Education

Membership Meetings Presentations

Loren Hintz shared “Birds, Birding and Conservation in El Salvador and Honduras”

Olivia Munzer presented “Bats...Friends not Foes”

Lauren Pharr highlighted “Population Biology of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker”

Madison Ohmen presented “The Butterfly Highway Program and Pollinator Habitat”

Ron Sutherland shared “Could red wolves help boost declining Bobwhite Quail populations in the Southeast?

September Annual Potluck and Member Slide Show

Gregory Basco highlighted “Conservation Photography—Telling a Story through the Lens”

Norm Budnitz shared “Birds and Evolution—Natural Selection, Sexual Selection, Kin Selection and Altruism”

Seema Sheth, PhD presented “Species Ranges in a Changing World”

Baltimore Orioles are infrequently seen in our region during the winter.

However, if one arrives and you provide the appropriate resources, it will thrive and possibly return next winter.



Educational Toolboxes

NHAS educational toolboxes came to life in 2022 on our website. Toolboxes provide lesson plans for Teachers to provide STEM coursework for their students. The toolboxes are designed by science curriculum specialists with grade appropriate information, set by NC Science Standards. This project was made possible as part of the Leave Your Leaves grant project.

[Educational Toolboxes](#) can be downloaded on the website.



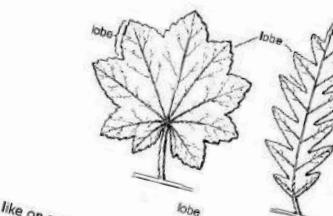
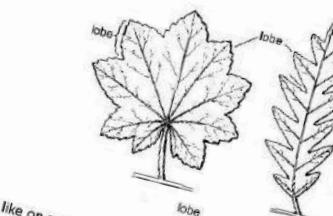
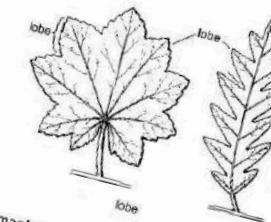
Elementary Leave Your Leaves Lesson 1

Elementary Lessons designed and created by Katie Henson
Comparing Leaves of Broad-Leaved Trees

Introduction: Unless you were to look more closely, it's natural to assume that all trees are pretty much the same when it comes to how their leaves change in the fall. Broad-leaved (deciduous) trees are ones whose leaves change colors and fall to the ground. One thing that students may not realize is that there's a rich diversity of trees around them, and that leaves look and behave very different as a result of this diversity. The purpose of this activity is to give students the chance to look at diverse leaves more closely and learn what exactly makes trees in their backyard so different from each other.

Procedure: Have students go outside and collect 3-5 leaves that have different shapes. Have them draw or trace the leaves in a leaf journal. Next to each drawing they will put the following information: primary color of each leaf, number of leaf lobes*, length (inches), width (inches). For younger students, have each student choose their favorite leaf. They will share with the class why they like this leaf and what they wrote about it in their journal.

Optional for older students: Have students turn in their journals and pool the class data. If students are learning descriptive statistics, you can show them the class data and ask them to calculate the range of lobe number, the mode leaf color, the median length, etc. You can also go into Excel and create a graph based on the pooled data. For example, plotting lobe number on the y axis and leaf length on the x axis will reveal if long leaves are more likely to be highly lobed.



*Reference for what a lobe looks like on a maple and oak leaf. Note that lobes do not include the tiny, serrated tips that may be at the end of each leaf, but rather the sections that make up the overall shape of the leaf. Here, the maple leaf has 9 lobes and the oak has 13. Credit: UC Davis Plant Sciences lab manual

Questions for the class:

- 1) In what aspects were leaves similar or different?
- 2) Why aren't all leaves the same color at the same time? For example, why are some leaves yellow while others are still green?
- 3) Some trees have long, thin leaves and others have short, wide leaves. How might different leaf shapes help different kinds of trees?
- 4) Is it possible for one tree to have different leaf shapes? When you see leaves with different shapes on the ground, do you think they came from the same tree, or different trees?

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is building awareness and facilitating the use of an equity lens for decision-making. While direct efforts and building trust are part of creating change, it's our work in all communities in our region where we are focused. We are committed to creating inclusion and EDI volunteers are building bridges:

- Created and managed a summer STEM program focusing on birds and conservation for ten, 10–15-year-old students at Red Maple Park in Braggtown. This program was successful due to the partnerships with Durham Parks and Recreation (DPR), Urban Community Agronomics (UCAN) and the Braggtown community organizer. Program ran June 28 – July 1 for 2 hours/day and included guest presenters from the Museum of Life and Science, UCAN, NCSU research lab, and Piedmont Wildlife Center.
- Our efforts included providing signage for UCAN's Catawba Trail Farm and conducting a Great Backyard Bird Count event.
- A nest box building community event near Red Maple Park helped build relationships to advertise the June 28 – July 1 Birding 101 program.
- Our partners like Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association (ECWA) helped expand our reach by joining to organize a visit to the heron rookery at Glennstone Preserve including DPR and ECWA staff. We also led a bird outing for the ECWA's Annual Meeting and conducted a nest box building event at Catawba Trail Farm for the Durham BioBlitz.
- Led outing for DPR in partnership with ECWA at Beaver Marsh Nature Preserve for NCCU Environmental Biology class, and Sandy Creek Park as a follow-up to our Red Maple Park Birding 101 program.
- Participated in Merrick-Moore Community's National Night Out event.
- Collaborated with three community partners to develop a 3-part workshop for environmental organizations interested in exploring race and power in their organizations and building trust with BIPOC-led partners.
- Participated in Audubon NC EDI activities with Counterpart Consulting and EDI Learning Community.
- Participated in Feminist Bird Club – Durham outings and facilitated connection with ECWA.
- Facilitated connection between Durham Master Gardeners and Braggtown community organizer for park beautification project.
- Provided leadership for Durham Environmental Coalition.

Bird Outings



Our local field trips are educational and entertaining. Everyone is welcome to join our bird outings, and we are grateful for the seventeen leaders volunteering their time to educate attendees. If you are interested in learning more about the local birding hotspots in our regional join us for a bird outing.

Bi-weekly bird outings are possible due to the commitment of our volunteer trip leaders.

Field Trips

Our Field Trip Committee consists of 17 volunteer field trip leaders. Trips are planned locally within our chapter region, usually twice-weekly. In addition to the local outings two additional fields trips were completed during 2022. The trip leaders assist the Education Department with events, and other committees as requested. Volunteers are also very involved assisting our partner organizations including TLC, UCAN, Eno River Association, ECWA, and Chapel Hill Library with outings, talks or events. Field trip leaders hosted 88 local outing during 2023 including three family outings, one for seniors, and several Birdability outings.

- Hawk Watch in the Blue Ridge Mountains was successful with 11 participants and recording 52 bird species. This three-day, two-night trip provides excellent views of raptors and warblers.
- Thrush Program at the Pendergraft estate by Falls Lake included 14 participants and great views of Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Media and Communications

Media and Communications – growing our reach!

- Facebook has over 1332 followers
- Facebook Group has 1345 members
- We updated our NHAS brochure

Join our Flock, we need more volunteers and members!



*Decals provided by a
4imprint One by One grant!*

2022 Financials

New Hope Audubon Society members work with many local partners on a variety of environmentally focused endeavors, and educational programs. Grants, donations, memberships fees and sales provide the funds needed to support our annual activities.

NHAS fiscal year is May – April, for more information visit our website at [Donations and Fundraising](#)

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New Hope Audubon Society (NHAS)
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**NEW HOPE
AUDUBON**

*The work of New Hope Audubon Society is
reflected in our vision:*

**We inspire and support people and
organizations in our local communities to
value and appreciate nature and to
protect and conserve habitats for wildlife.**

*Photographs submitted by NHAS Members