



# ANNUAL REPORT

Two Years of Milestones and Successes

# 2023 - 2024



# Letter from the President

02

Dear Friends,

We are especially thankful for our members' thoughtful engagement in 2023 & 2024 that ranged from sold-out birding field trips to the North Carolina Coast, to an overwhelming vote in favor of a name change to signal our commitment to inclusion. Energetic volunteers provided hours of their time to create a positive impact for birds and people in our local communities. Our activities are centered on growing and sustaining native habitats and landscapes, building bird friendly communities, and creating STEM curriculum educational toolboxes, while ensuring that everyone feels welcome across our region.

Our donor investments, the passion of our volunteers, and collaboration with like-minded community partners helped us accomplish many of our goals. I hope you enjoy learning more about our work and get inspired to join us. Working in tandem with our partners and allies, we are creating a brighter tomorrow for birds, wildlife and people in our local communities.

Sincerely,

Carol Hamilton, MD  
President 2023-4, New Hope Bird Alliance

# About Us

Founded in 1970, the New Hope Bird Alliance (formerly New Hope Audubon Society) aims to promote the conservation and enjoyment of birds, other wildlife, and ecosystems. Our work focuses on Chatham, Durham, Orange and parts of surrounding counties. Our vision is to inspire and support people and organizations in our local communities to value and appreciate nature and to protect and conserve habitats for wildlife.



# Mission & Vision

The mission of the 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.



## Achievements

- **Advocacy Day with NC Audubon:** 20 volunteers participated in meeting on conservation issues (Heirs Property, Wetland Protections, general habitat conservation) with State Legislators
- **Successfully advocated against rezone request to develop rural section of Orange County and Durham along Mt. Moriah Road**
  - Met with Durham Council members and Mayor
  - Encouraged members to email Council
- **Advocated to protect Wood Thrushes at Blackwood Farms**
  - Created surveys to demonstrate impact of proposed disc golf course
  - Convinced Park Management to redesign course around areas of special concern for Wood Thrush



# CONSERVATION ACTIONS

- Reviewed and submitted comments on Chatham Unified Development Ordinance**
  - Successfully included 100% native canopy trees and 75% native shrubs and perennials
  - Promoted incorporation of biodiversity in plantings
  
- Lights Out Program protecting birds during migration expanded to Durham**
  
- Awarded first Land and Conservation Grant to Eno River Association** to help restore habitat at Confluence Property
  
- Installed new Purple Martin houses**
  - Patterson Place in Durham in 2022 to support and promote Purple Martins in the local community.
  - Installed new Purple Martin house at Sandy Creek in the Fall of 2023.
  
- Booked a regional expert to train volunteers to monitor Purple Martin nests starting in early spring 2024**
  
- Chimney Swift Night Out and counts**
  - NHBA continues to promote education and conservation for chimney swifts, with Swift Night Out programs at rooftop restaurants to view roosting swifts; counting roosting swifts during migration; and encouraging uncapped chimneys and no insect spraying.

- Supported Lauren Pharr's talk on Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at NCBG**
  
- Supported new boardwalk at Mason Farm Reserve**
  
- Raney Property, North Carolina Botanical Gardens**
  - New Hope Audubon Society (NHAS) is one of the many supporters to purchase and protect this property. This purchase will add 24.7 acres of pristine forest to the NCBGF's Stillhouse Bottom Nature Preserve, protecting 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.



# CONSERVATION ACTIONS

- Resolutions passed by Durham City Council and County Commissioners proclaiming 2024 Year of the Aerial Insectivores
- Installed 2 new Purple Martin Gourd Towers – Held a Ribbon-cutting event to honor donors for the towers
- Created and trained 4 Purple Martin monitoring teams to cover 3 locations
- Banded 50 Purple Martin chicks at Witherspoon locations
- Created t-shirt campaign promoting protecting aerial insectivores
- Chimney Swifts – 5 Swift Night Out events with 3 in Durham and 2 in Chapel Hill – Engaged and educated over 600 people
- Promoted the only Chimney Swift roost in a tree in NC – the Davie Poplar on UNC campus – Partnered with the local university chapter – UNC Avian Society on 2 campus events
- Promoted Chimney Swifts in newspaper stories, radio, tv: News & Observer, INDY, WRAL (Tarheel Traveler), WCHL radio, Audubon NC story
- Continued Chimney Swift counts at numerous locations in Durham, Chapel Hill and Pittsboro



Media Releases

### New Hope Bird Alliance to Kick-off Year of the Aerial Insectivore

*A ribbon cutting is scheduled for May 11 to celebrate these high-flying, insect eating birds, and highlight the threats they face.*

By Audubon North Carolina  
May 09, 2024

Popular Stories

Three Things You Should Do for Your Trees (and Birds) this Spring, According to Experts  
2025 Advocacy Day Schedule



Purple Martin flying with an insect in its beak. Photo: Michael Cohen/Audubon Photography Awards

# BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT PROGRAM

- ✓ 86 Yard Certification visits with over 181 acres evaluated
- ✓ Bird Friendly Newsletter sent out quarterly to all homeowners visited through life of program
- ✓ Native plant swap for homeowners with 80 participants
- ✓ 1/2 day workshop on how to create a bird friendly certification program at Audubon Summit – to promote this to Audubon Chapters
- ✓ Grant from Village and Wilderness allowed us to create a Toolkit on Developing a Certification Program for other Chapters
- ✓ Mentored Forsyth and Cape Fear chapters in creating their own certification programs
- ✓ Continued our program of evaluating local nurseries who sell native plants
- ✓ Multiple presentations on creating bird friendly habitat to over 200 people



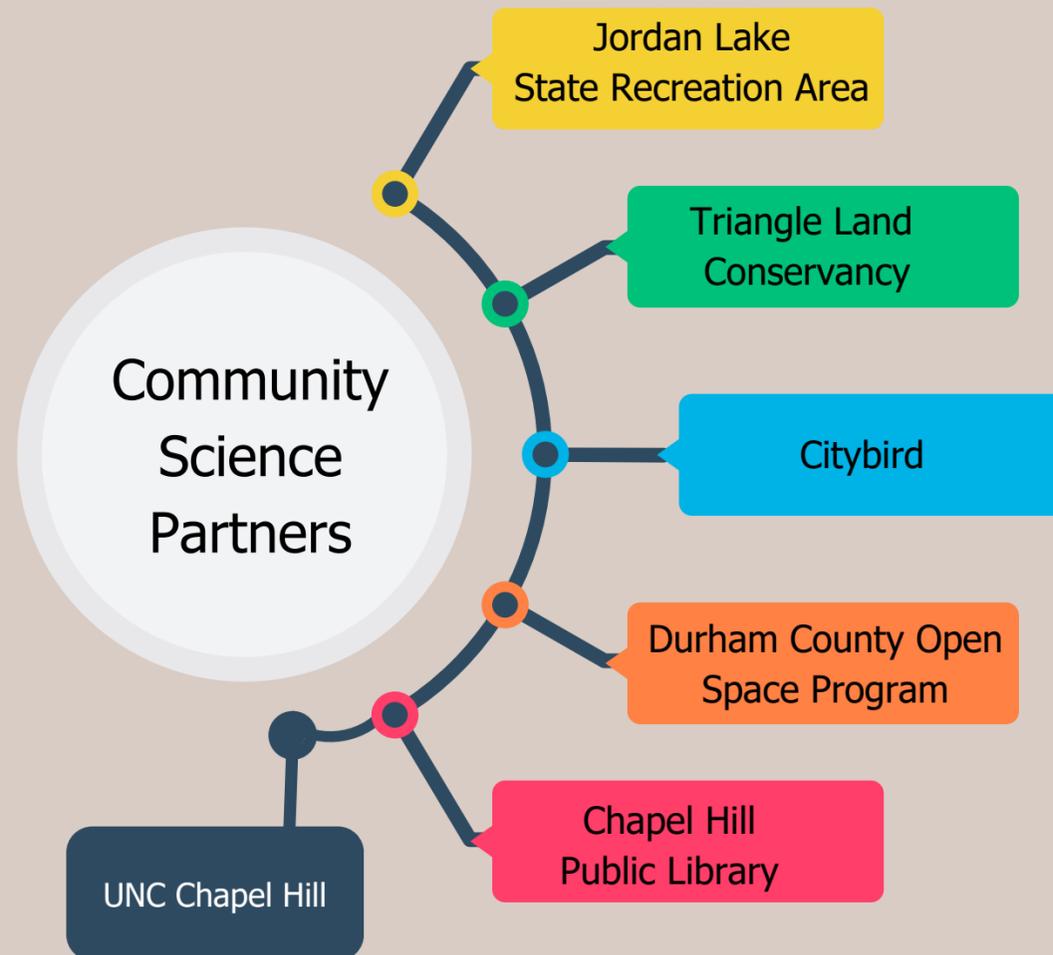
## Activities

- Leave Your Leaves program expanded to Carrboro and Orange County – 300 + pledges in 2024
- Put the habitat in Habitat for Humanity – worked with Orange County Habitat to replace invasive plants with native plantings
- Promoted Elizabeth Hilborn talk on Restoring Eden and the dangers of using neonicotinoids
- Partnered on a Native Plant Forum with 140 attendees at the NCBG
- Partnered with NCBG on 6 months of bird friendly habitat landscaping programs – going into 2025
- Partnered with NCBG on Native People, Native Plants Symposium



# Community Science Data Snapshot

- number of events: **18**
- total number of adult volunteers engaged: **299**
- total number of youth (under 18) volunteers engaged: **50**
- total number of brand new volunteers engaged: **187**



**COMMUNITY  
SCIENCE**

## Project Descriptions

- **Jordan Lake Spring Bird Count**

The Jordan Lake Spring Bird Count was on May 5, 2024. Volunteers claimed areas of the count circle and counted bird species and the number of individuals.

- **Jordan Lake Christmas Bird Count**

The Jordan Lake Christmas Bird Count for the 2023-2024 season was on Dec 31, 2023. Volunteers claimed areas of the count circle and counted bird species and the number of individuals.

- **Quarterly Eagle Count**

The Quarterly Eagle Count was on the second Sunday of January, April, July, and October. Volunteers counted the number of immature and adult Bald Eagles at various locations at Jordan Lake.

- **Climate Watch**

The Climate Watch project was conducted twice last year. One winter survey was during Jan 15-Feb 15 and one summer survey was during May 15-Jun 15. Volunteers claimed squares and conducted bird surveys for the target species of Brown-headed Nuthatch.

- **Brumley N Bird Survey**

The Brumley N Bird Survey was conducted twice last year. One spring survey was during Mar-Jun and one fall survey was during Aug-Nov. Volunteers counted birds on the property and the data is used to evaluate the effect of habitat improvements on bird communities.

- **Bird-window collision survey**

The bird-window collision monitoring at UNC-CH project was carried out by City Bird in the fall last year. The survey was during Sep 16-Oct 15. volunteers documented bird-window collision evidence from bird carcasses and injured birds near windows on UNC-CH campus.

- **New Hope Bottomlands Breeding Bird Survey**

The New Hope Bottomlands Breeding Bird Survey takes place within a stand of mature hardwood forest that is partially owned by Durham County and managed as a nature preserve by the Durham County Open Space Program.

- **Blackwood Farm Park Wood Thrush and Ovenbird Breeding Activity Survey**

Blackwood Farm Park Wood Thrush and Ovenbird Breeding Activity Survey is designed to map the locations of confirmed breeding activities of Wood Thrush and Ovenbird to recommend planners to not build disc golf in some areas of Blackwood Farm Par

- **Project FeederWatch**

Participants collect data monthly as part of Citizen Science Project

## Audience Metrics

- Facebook page followers: **1,813**
- Facebook account engagement: **392**
- Private Facebook group follower: **1,600**
- Instagram follower growth: **+960 in under 2 years**
- email newsletter audience: **3,852**
- Avg. email open rate: **54.3%**
- email click-through rate: **2.7%**



Motion	Approval	Paper ballot	Zoom poll	Total votes	Approval status
Motion 1: The Board proposes to change the name from New Hope Audubon Society to New Hope Bird Alliance and amend the Constitution and Bylaws to reflect the change.	Approve	49	48	97	Approval
	Disapprove	6	10	16	
Motion 2: The Board proposes to amend the Bylaws to make membership automatic with a donation equivalent to annual dues.	Approve	55	55	110	Approval
	Disapprove	0	2	2	
Motion 3: The Board proposes to amend the Bylaws to allow member notification via website, newsletters, and social media for changes to the Constitution or Bylaws rather than by US Postal mail.	Approve	55	54	109	Approval
	Disapprove	0	0	0	

## Rebrand

2024 was a landmark year as we changed our name and underwent a full rebranding process from New Hope Audubon Society to New Hope Bird Alliance. The Media and Communications team led a full rebranding effort to design a new logo, and update our branding across the website and our entire digital footprint.



**MAIN LOGO**



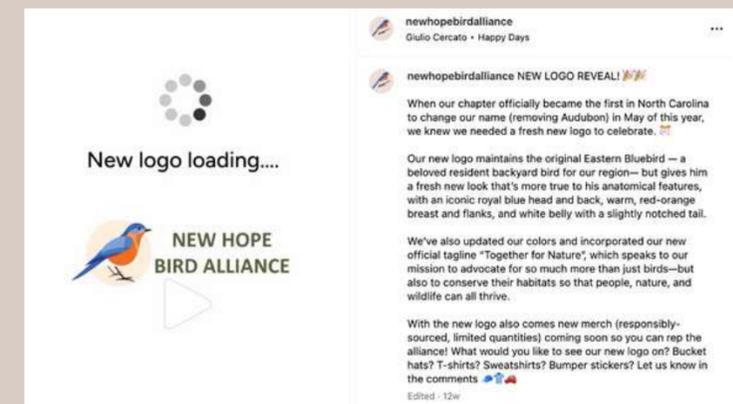
**COLORS**

					
#5A6140	#D9CCC4	#C937D	#A9482D	#304393	#496A9D

**FONTS**

**Bitter: headlines**  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 1234567890!@£\$%^&

**Montserrat: body copy**  
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 1234567890!@£\$%^&



## Activities

- Nest Box Building, Breakaway Café, Carrboro, contact Tom Driscoll at [spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com](mailto:spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com)
- Fall NatureFest at the NC Botanical Garden, contact Gail Boyarsky at [gail.boyarsky@gmail.com](mailto:gail.boyarsky@gmail.com)
- Pittsboro Street Fair
- Project Feederwatch, Chapel Hill Library
- Developing bird identifications signs in local reserves and parks

## Membership Meeting Presentations

- Bill Steiner, John James Audubon, the artist
- Debbie Roos, NC State Extensions Agent for Ag – Pollinators and pollinator gardens
- 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"



## Educational Toolboxes

NHBA 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.



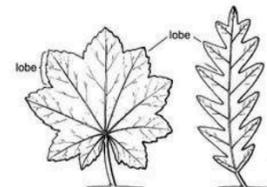
Elementary Leave Your Leaves Lesson 2  
Elementary Lessons designed and created by Katie Henson

### 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 goal of this activity is to give students the chance to look at diverse leaves more closely and learn what 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 photograph the leaves in a leaf journal. Next to each drawing they will put the following information: primary color, secondary color, 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.

**For older students:** Have students turn in their journals and pool the class data. If students are comfortable with descriptive statistics, you can show them the class data and ask them to calculate the range of lobe numbers, 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 longer leaves are more likely to be highly lobed.



EDUCATION

 **NEW HOPE  
AUDUBON**

### What's Stomata With You? Leave Your Leaves Lesson 9 Student Worksheet



**Pre-Lab Questions**

1. What are stomata?
2. What is the function of stomata?
3. What causes the guard cells to swell or shrink?

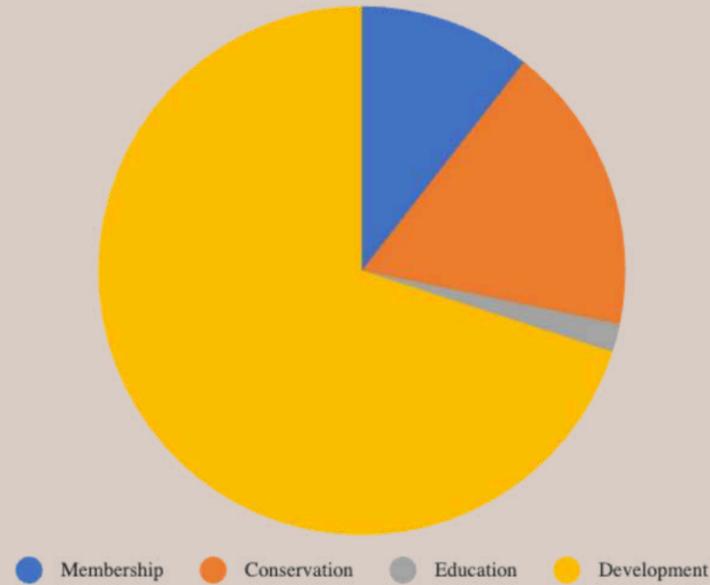
## Bi-weekly bird outings are possible due to the commitment of our volunteer trip leaders.

The New Hope Bird Alliance field trip committee consists of 22 field trip leaders, who lead outings within our chapter region, usually twice weekly. The leaders also assist the education and other committees with events as requested and assist our Alliance organizations, such as TLC, UCAN, Eno River Association, Chapel Hill Library, North Carolina Botanical Garden, and others. Our Media Committee (Theresa Rizzuto and Nancy Beach) publicize the dates on the NHBA website and calendar, and in the bi-weekly in NHBA emailed Newsletter



**FIELD TRIPS**

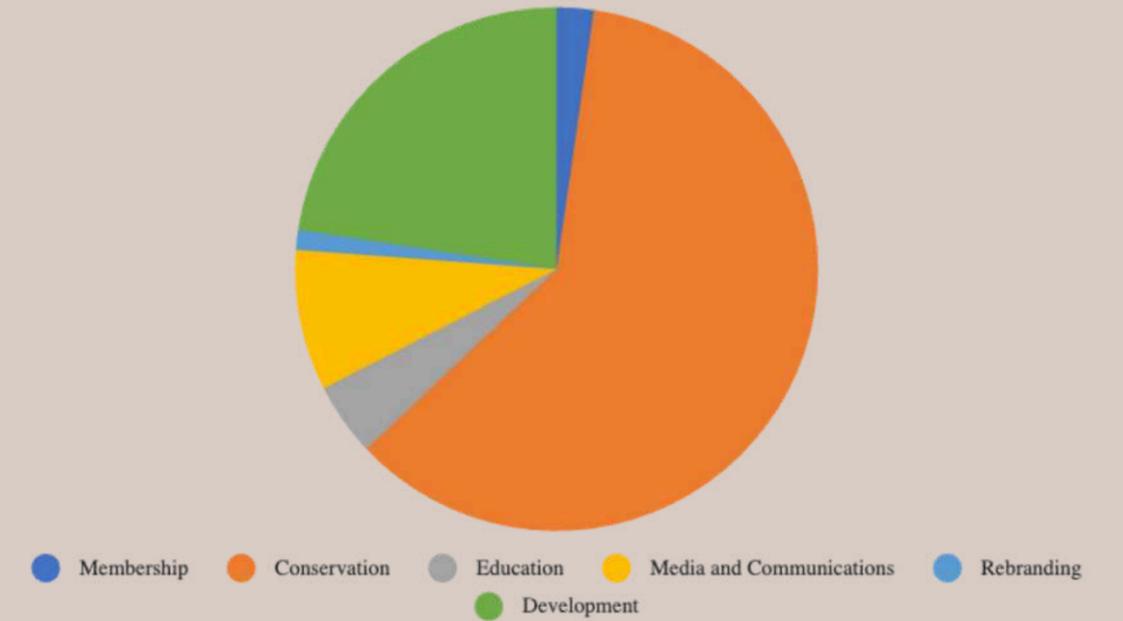
## Revenue



- Membership: \$8,954
- Conservation: \$15,010
- Bird Friendly Habitat: \$12,750
- Education: \$1,465
- Development: \$59,403

**TOTAL:** \$84,832

## Expenses



- Membership: \$1,590
- Conservation: \$42,235
- Education: \$3,159
- Media and Communications: \$6,051
- Special Projects: \$12,403
- Rebranding: \$874
- Development: \$15,720

**TOTAL:** \$69,629



Thank you

New Hope Bird Alliance  
PO Box 2693  
Chapel Hill, NC, 27515.