



# Upland Informer

Volume 44 Issue 1

Official Newsletter of the Bartramian Audubon Society

Fall 2025

Editor- Nancy Baker

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[www.facebook.com/Bartramian](https://www.facebook.com/Bartramian)



## Upcoming BAS Membership Meetings

*Our membership meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Jennings Environmental Education Center, 2961 Prospect Road, Slippery Rock, PA. The Education Center is located on Rt. 528 just west of its junction with Rt. 8- about five miles south of Slippery Rock. The meetings are free and open to the public.*

### **September 8, 2025-Monday-Fran Bires**

Fran Bires will be presenting the program at our September meeting, which will also be our annual meeting for the year. Fran worked in the Environmental Education field his entire professional career – first at Raccoon Creek and McConnell's Mill State Parks and then the McKeever Environmental Learning Center. Since his retirement, Fran spends a great deal of time photographing wildlife throughout Pennsylvania and in our National Parks.

His presentation is a display of the photographs he has taken over the years which include Birds of Prey, Waterfowl, Water Birds and Songbirds.

### **October 13, 2025-Monday-Using Sustainable Forestry to Increase Bird Diversity for Conservation**

It is well established that clearcuts provide important habitat for a suite of early successional bird species. Surprising recent work has shown that very large clearcuts (>40 acre) may also benefit some birds that we normally think of as requiring extensive, mature forests. This research has shown that recent fledglings of these species use clearcuts because they provide lots of food and cover for a short, but vitally important, time in the life cycle of the bird. Yet clearcuts are also detrimental to lots of other wildlife because they create even-aged habitat that persists throughout the life of the forest. In our study, we are testing a different model of sustainable forest management that uses multiple entries into the forest for very light timber harvests. We hypothesize that by creating very small, 1-5 acre gaps in the forest through group selection cuts, we can provide habitat opportunities for important early-successional species,

as well as habitat for dispersing fledglings of mature forest species. If successful, this approach will have the added benefit of restoring forests to an uneven-aged condition that is beneficial to many more species that require structurally diverse forests. This forest management style also supports families and landowners with small forest plots, and the economic viability of rural communities through the restoration of working forests.

Dr. Steven Latta, an ornithologist, and Dr. Annie Maloney, a forest ecologist, will present preliminary results from four years of fieldwork testing this sustainable forestry model. We will talk about forest management options, what types of birds are using these managed forests, and what resources the birds are pursuing in the gaps. We will discuss how these results apply to the management of public and private forests in Pennsylvania and beyond.

### **November 10, 2025-Monday-Counting Birds, Connecting People: How Your Observations Help Citizen Science**

You don't need to be a scientist—or even a tech expert—to make a difference for birds! Join Jennings Staff to explore a variety of easy to use citizen science projects, from well-known events like the Christmas Bird Count and the Great Backyard Bird Count to longer programs like Project FeederWatch and eBird. Whether you enjoy watching birds at your feeder, strolling through the park, or simply jotting down what you see, your observations can help researchers understand and protect bird populations.

### **December 8, 2025-Monday-Annual Holiday Potluck and Hog Island Presentations**

Enjoy good food and good company at our annual holiday potluck; bring a dish to share, place setting, and holiday spirit. Our scholarship winners will tell us about their experiences at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine.



## Upcoming Activities

### **2025 Christmas Bird Counts**

Butler CBC Dec. 20, contact Brandi Miller-

Parrish, [bmillerparrish@gmail.com](mailto:bmillerparrish@gmail.com), 724-787-9438

Pleasantville CBC Dec.28, contact Russ States, [pelagics202@gmail.com](mailto:pelagics202@gmail.com), 814-676-6320



## Scholarships

### **Hog Island Audubon Camp for Educators**

**Katie Olive:** Katie Olive is a teacher in the Sharon City School District. She is the Elementary Gifted Teacher for Grades K-6 and is also the English as a Second Language Teacher. As the Teacher of the Gifted, Katie works cooperatively with several other school districts in Mercer County. Each year the students participate in four-day coastal ecology program at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station in Wallops Island, VA. Additional workshops and field experiences offered to students from neighboring districts focus on environmental awareness and current ecological challenges. Katie strives to keep each student engaged in scientific inquiry; lessons are multidisciplinary with an emphasis on the environment. Katie looks forward to attending the Hog Island Educator's workshop to deepen her understanding of ecological systems and conservation efforts. By immersing herself in hands-on learning experiences with environmental experts, she hopes to gain valuable insights and resources to bring back to her classroom. She believes this experience will help her develop lessons that further enrich student learning with real-world applications giving her students a sense of environmental respect and responsibility. The experiences and lessons gained will be shared with teachers from several local school districts.

**Josh Beuschlein:** Josh is an Environmental Education Specialist at Jennings Environmental Center. He works primarily with secondary school aged students. He engages students through in class visits and on-site field trips at Jennings. He also works with young children through seniors for community programs and homeschool groups. Josh had the opportunity to view the presentations about Hog Island shared by former participants last December and was very inspired. We received his scholarship application the next day. Josh is looking forward to attending the Hog Island Educator's workshop to continue to gain information and grow as a professional in his field. He is constantly seeking new ways to engage his students and foster a relationship between his students and the natural world. In addition to finding new ways to enhance his offerings and techniques as an environmental educator, he looks forward to having the chance to be a student again, to connect with nature in profound ways, and steep in the salty waters and knowledge that surrounds Hog Island. He hopes to learn the best techniques for encouraging student investigation, wonder, & curiosity.



## Sanctuaries

The Julie and James Witmer Family of Grove City are our newest Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary members. They have transformed a house surrounded by lawn into a beautiful garden attractive to birds, butterflies and humans.



## 2024 Donors

Bartramian Audubon Society deeply appreciates the contributions made in response to our year-end letter of appeal. We would like to recognize the people whose generous gifts have helped us help the environment of our area and help people of all ages understand and appreciate nature. *THANK YOU!*

*Mike and Nancy Baker  
 Fran and Nancy Bires  
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*In memory of John P. Mall given by Mary L. Mall  
 In memory of Jessie G. Andres given by John and Evelyn  
 Kolojechick*

*In memory of Jay E. Hewitt given by Renee Hewitt  
 In memory of Patricia Lanich given by Laura Lanich Mihalik  
 In memory of our parents given by Paula and Chip Haehnel  
 In memory of Shirley McCarl given by her friends  
 In memory of Mark Kemper given by Bill and Patty Kemper*



### **HOW DO YOU GET YOUR NEWSLETTER?**

If you would like to receive your Upland Informer by email instead of a paper copy, please e-mail our membership chair Mike Conlon at [mpconlon@zoominternet.net](mailto:mpconlon@zoominternet.net).



### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

If you like and support the activities and scholarship work Bartramian Audubon does, then consider becoming a volunteer. We need people to chair committees and to serve on those committees.

If you have an interest and a little time contact Kathie at 814-428-9258 or [larkwren@hotmail.com](mailto:larkwren@hotmail.com).



### **Education Update**

Bartramian Audubon offers several educational opportunities for schools within our chapter, including Audubon Adventures classroom kits, Adopt-a-Classroom, Citizen Science Projects such as Project Feederwatch with Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Counts, Scholarships to Audubon's Hog Island Educator's Workshop and Teen Coastal Birding in Maine during the summer.

**Audubon Adventures** is an environmental education curriculum created by the National Audubon Society for grades 3 - 5. We purchase classroom kits for schools each year and for after school programs and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. Audubon Adventures includes a print publication for each student in the classroom, a teacher's guide and a website, [audubonadventures.org](http://audubonadventures.org), that includes interactive games, puzzles, quizzes and topic-related resources for both teachers and students. Bartramian Audubon purchases approximately 40 classroom kits each year, serving 12 school districts. If you are a teacher or know of a teacher or school district that might be interested in participating in Audubon Adventures, contact [Nancy.bires1106@gmail.com](mailto:Nancy.bires1106@gmail.com), the education coordinator for Bartramian.

#### **Scholarships for Hog Island Audubon Camp, Maine**

Bartramian Audubon offers scholarships for two different programs at the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine. **The Coastal Birding for Teens** is for students who have an interest in birding and want to further develop skills, travel to birding hot spots in coastal Maine, learn about coastal ecology and conservation, while making new friends who share a passion for birding. **Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week** is for traditional classroom teachers and non-traditional educators. During this action-packed week educators learn approaches, methods, and activities for engaging both children and adults with nature. If you would like to apply for one of these scholarships, please contact our education coordinator, Nancy Bires, [Nancy.bires1106@gmail.com](mailto:Nancy.bires1106@gmail.com)

This year we offered two scholarships for the Educator's Week since we didn't receive any applications for the Coastal Birding for Teens camp.

Katie Olive, a teacher from the Sharon City School District, was one of our scholarship winners and participated in the

Educator's Week on Hog Island this summer. She just returned from Hog Island and wanted to share highlights of her experience there.

During Educator's Week on Hog Island, Maine, I had the opportunity to deeply immerse myself in learning about the natural world while connecting with fellow educators. Each day was filled with exploration—birding, discovering intertidal flora and fauna, nature journaling, and finding creative ways to weave art, science, and nature together for the classroom. The program emphasized inclusive practices and helped us discuss how to bring these experiences back to our students in meaningful ways. We enjoyed delicious, locally sourced meals and spent time learning about the history of the island, including the Wabanaki people. A highlight of the week was seeing puffins on Eastern Egg Island and learning about Maine's Puffin Project, which left a lasting impression on me. What stood out just as much as the content was the sense of peace and community that developed over the week. The educators were supportive, kind, and encouraging, often pushing us to step outside our comfort zones in ways that led to growth and connection. From a day-long hike around the island to the emotional final night, when we reflected on the bonds we had built, the experience felt transformative. Surrounded by nature and people who shared a passion for learning, I found myself more grounded and inspired than I had ever been. Hog Island truly provided one of the best experiences of my life, and the lessons and memories will continue to shape how I approach both teaching and living.

Joshua Beuschlein, Environmental Education Specialist at Jennings Environmental Education Center was another scholarship winner.

Hello everyone! A quick update from Me, Josh! I just returned home to Pennsylvania from Hog Island in Maine! To truly understand the magic of this place, you have to experience it for yourself. This opportunity provided me with not only professional development and inspiration to bring the joy of our natural world into more students' classrooms and homes, but also the chance to be a student again myself. This opportunity to channel my inner student and childlike curiosity in such a gorgeous setting did wonders for my soul. The Audubon staff on Hog Island are not only genuine and knowledgeable but also incredibly hospitable, celebrating teachers and championing birds through their numerous summer programs. To further extend my trip and its bird focus, I stopped at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca New York on my way home. Again you really need to visit if you have not! The intersection of art, science, human history. And natural life here is truly awesome!

I want to extend a huge thank you to Bartramian Audubon for the scholarship that allowed me to attend the Hog Island camp. I look forward to chatting with you all again in December to further detail just how impactful this experience was.

**BARTRAMIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 315  
SLIPPERY ROCK, PA 16057**

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### **Membership Information**

Both members and non-members are welcome to participate in our meetings, programs, field trips, and other activities. We also appreciate all who support our organization as members and invite others to join us. **To receive a membership form** or for more information, ask at a program or send an e-mail to [bartramianaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:bartramianaudubon@gmail.com). Include "Attn: Membership" in the subject line.

There are two basic membership options.

- **Membership in National Audubon Society:** (includes a one-year subscription to *Audubon* magazine, printed quarterly) **National members automatically become members of a local chapter**, based on location or preference. **They DO NOT need to apply for or renew an additional local membership.** Beginning and renewal dates of national memberships are based on when payment is received by National Audubon. Renewal reminders are sent directly from the national organization, and renewal payments made to them. (An introductory [first year only] membership is available through the local chapter, as part of an incentive program.)
- **Membership in Bartramian Audubon Society, our local chapter:** (includes receiving our seasonal newsletter, *The Upland Informer*, either via postal mail or, to reduce paper and energy use and costs, via e-mail.) Chapter members may receive other benefits, such as participation in "members' events" and a discount on most purchases at The Birdwatchers Store in Slippery Rock. Individuals have the option of simply becoming chapter members to support their local group, without being national members. Our chapter membership year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year.

**(Note:** Our Bartramian Audubon chapter also offers a recognition program for landowners, which requires applying and being approved as either a Wildlife Sanctuary or a Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary. The sanctuary program has no relationship to National Audubon membership. However, sanctuary owners, who are asked to renew their status at the beginning of each year, are automatically considered chapter members. They receive the benefits of local membership. Questions about the sanctuary program should be directed to the chair of that program, Kathie Goodblood, at [larkwren@hotmail.com](mailto:larkwren@hotmail.com).)