

CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY



2012 Annual Report

May 1, 2011 through April 30, 2012



MISSION

Connecticut Audubon Society
conserves Connecticut's environment through science-based education and advocacy
focused on the state's bird populations and habitats.

Founded in 1898, Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) operates nature facilities
in Fairfield, Milford, Glastonbury and Pomfret,
an EcoTravel office in Essex and an Environmental Advocacy program in Hartford.

Connecticut Audubon Society manages 19 wildlife sanctuaries around the state,
preserves over 2,600 acres of open space in Connecticut
and educates thousands of children and adults annually.

Working exclusively in the state of Connecticut for over 100 years,

CAS is an independent organization,
not affiliated with any national or governmental group.



On the cover:

*Connecticut Audubon Society has been working with the
Audubon Alliance to protect the few remaining nests in Connecticut
of the federally threatened Piping Plover. Photo by Melissa Groo.*

Dear friends,

As members and supporters of Connecticut Audubon Society, you're well aware that your organization's mission is to focus steadily on conserving Connecticut's birds and their habitats. That's what's different about Connecticut Audubon Society. One hundred percent of our work is in Connecticut. Everything we do benefits conservation in our home state.

And that means all of your generous support stays here in Connecticut.

In 2012, that support allowed us to delve into the problem of our children's increasingly tenuous connection to the natural world and what it means for the future of conservation. Our Connecticut State of the Birds 2012 report, *Where Is the Next Generation of Conservationists Coming From?*, concluded that because our young people spend less time outdoors, Connecticut faces a crisis that puts the future of conservation at risk. Well-received and widely discussed, it has set the agenda for the state's conservationists and education community, and will be our guide to action for years to come.

In 2012 we increased our efforts in our core programs of education, advocacy and conservation science. We hired a new statewide education director and launched a new, unique Science in Nature curriculum, to help address the problem identified in *Where Is the Next Generation of Conservationists Coming From?* We worked in Hartford to help pass a major open space law, the provisions of which began as recommendations in previous Connecticut State of the Birds reports.

We made considerable progress on conservation projects throughout the state, helping threatened Piping Plovers and Least Terns nest successfully on local beaches, restoring a coastal habitat on Long Island Sound in Stratford, and creating new scrub-shrub habitat for rare New England Cottontail rabbits in the deep woods of Goshen, among many other projects.

These core areas, along with the work we do at our five centers and the enriching experiences we offer through our EcoTravel program, are what make us the leading independent conservation organization in the state focused on birds and their habitats.

Your generous support makes it all possible. We are grateful for that support and we mean it sincerely when we say that everything we accomplish depends on it. The details are in this 2012 Annual Report. Thank you, and we hope you enjoy it.



Stephen B. Oresman, Chairman



Robert Martinez, President

Conservation Science

Conservation is our mission, and the foundation of our conservation work is sound science. We manage 19 sanctuaries and 2,600 acres, work to restore and improve critical habitats, help stabilize and increase the populations of declining bird species, and collaborate with partner organizations to plan for the effective management of their lands.

All of it is based on sound conservation science.

One innovative example is the coastal restoration project we designed and are carrying out at Stratford Point. Natural habitat on Long Island Sound is rare and diminishing. Working with the DuPont Corp., scientists from Sacred Heart University, the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and others, we are transforming Stratford Point from a degraded area to a coastal jewel, with new man-made dunes, a restored grassland and a commitment to document every species of bird, insect and plant we observe.

The result is that Stratford Point's 40 acres of upland and tidal area is again an important piece of the rich ecosystem at the mouth of the Housatonic River.

Further north, we've been managing and expanding a section of scrub-shrub thicket in our 800-acre Richard G. Croft Memorial Preserve, in Goshen, to create habitat for the rare and elusive New England Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*).

In early 2012 we heard the good news: scientists who studied the DNA from rabbit droppings found at the preserve confirmed that New England Cottontails indeed live there. It was a great find, and we are working to expand the habitat to about 15 acres.

On Connecticut's beaches, including at our Milford Point Coastal Center, we are working with other organizations and agencies to protect the nesting sites of rare and threatened birds such as Piping Plovers, Least Terns and American Oystercatchers. Our goal is to increase these birds' chances of survival, using the conservation science expertise of Connecticut Audubon Society and our partners.



A controlled fire was part of our habitat restoration plan at Stratford Point. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo by Twan Leenders.



We're helping protect rare birds at the Milford Point Coastal Center. Photo courtesy of Anthony S. Donofrio.



We pursue our education mission by helping children learn about nature. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo.



Environmental science students from Harding High in Bridgeport visited our Larsen Sanctuary. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo.



Hands-on experience is a key to successful environmental education. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo.

Education

Connecticut Audubon Society solidified its commitment in 2012 to conserving the state's environment by providing high quality, science-based education.

To our already-strong education work – about 60,000 students participated across the state last year – we added a new statewide Director of Education, with a mandate to design and launch an innovative outdoor program and to use it to reach even more school children.

We unveiled that program, Science in Nature, early in 2012. Through Science in Nature, school children visit local woodlands, meadows, ponds and freshwater marshes, where they encounter real-world examples of concepts taught in the classroom, focusing on geology, climate/weather and adaptations.

The curriculum is based on state and national science, math and literacy standards, and it is wholly integrated into the participating schools' existing curricula.

We are inaugurating Science in Nature at our Center at Fairfield, and will be phasing it in at the Center at Pomfret, the Center at Glastonbury and the Milford Point Coastal Center.

Along with improved after-school programs, particularly for teenagers, Science in Nature will help us do our part to help kids make a better connection with nature and thus become the next generation of conservationists.

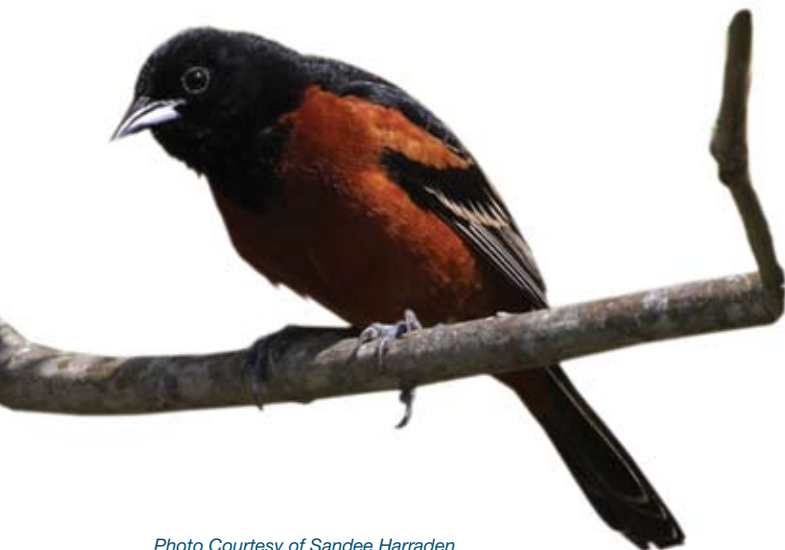


Photo Courtesy of Sandee Harraden

Advocacy:

Connecticut State of the Birds

When we published our first Connecticut State of the Birds report, in 2006, our purpose was to help set the conservation agenda for the state by examining critical issues in detail and recommending specific solutions.

In 2012 we saw a significant achievement, when the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed into law a major new bill that vastly improves the way the state operates its land acquisition program. Many of the law's provisions started as recommendations in Connecticut State of the Birds.

Our Connecticut State of the Birds 2012 report, released in February, looked at the future of conservation and determined that children are spending far too little time outdoors learning about the natural world, formally or informally. We think this has major implications for the future of conservation, and we detailed our findings and concerns in our report, titled *Where Is the Next Generation of Conservationists Coming From?*

We've taken our findings to the public, to our conservation partners around the state, to school districts, and to education advocates. We've already revised our own education programs based on what we learned and what we heard.

Just as our previous reports set the agenda for achievements in Hartford, we're confident our Connecticut State of the Birds 2012 will lead to important changes in our state's education agenda in forthcoming years.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Linda Morgens

Linda has been a member of our Fairfield Regional Board of Governors since 1988. With her husband, Ned, she pursues her passion for birds through their involvement and generous support of Connecticut Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Linda is an active bird-bander at the Birdcraft Sanctuary, and sits on Birdcraft Museum's collections committee and exhibitory committee.





Our Connecticut State of the Birds 2012 report explored the issue of whether children are spending enough time outdoors. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo.



Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette of the state DEEP speaks at the Connecticut State of the Birds 2012 press conference. Connecticut Audubon Society photo by Twan Leenders.



Sanctuary manager Andy Rzeznikiewicz bands a bird at our Center at Pomfret. Photo courtesy of Sandee Harraden.



A boardwalk leads across the dunes to the beach at Milford Point. Photo courtesy of Anthony S. Donofrio.

Our Centers

Connecticut Audubon Society's five centers are gateways to some of our state's most beautiful and ecologically important lands and waters. They draw tens of thousands of visitors a year, are the focal points of our local education and outreach work, and still retain a sense of natural splendor and solitude.

The Grassland Center at Pomfret, newly opened in summer 2011, is the starting point for exploration of the Bafflin Sanctuary, 700 acres of grasslands, meadows and marshes that are of statewide importance for Bobolinks, American Kestrels, Eastern Meadowlarks and other species that rely on those declining habitat types.

The Milford Point Coastal Center and its Smith-Hubbell Wildlife Refuge and Bird Sanctuary provide critical public access to one of the wildest, most biologically productive sections of Long Island Sound shore.

Birdcraft Sanctuary is the first private bird sanctuary in the country, and a National Historic Landmark.

The Center at Fairfield provides access to seven miles of trails that wind through the 155-acre Larsen Sanctuary, crossing and skirting swamps and marshes and traversing the headwaters of Sasco Creek.

The Center at Glastonbury provides a starting point for hikers to wander along the Holland Brook and near the Connecticut River.

We invite you to visit them all!

Center at Pomfret

218 Day Road
Pomfret Center
860-928-4948

Center at Fairfield

2325 Burr Street
Fairfield
203-259-6305

Center at Glastonbury

1361 Main Street
Glastonbury
860-633-8402

Birdcraft Sanctuary

314 Unquowa Road
Fairfield
203-259-0416

Coastal Center at Milford Point

1 Milford Point Road
Milford
203-878-7440

Connecticut Audubon Society's EcoTravel program strives to provide quality natural history experiences with a global perspective on education and conservation, all with a spirit of adventure and fun.

In 2011-2012, more than 2,500 people traveled with us on our Day Trip programs and Overnight Tours.

Perennial favorites include trips to the Galapagos and Tanzania, our unique Cuba Bird Survey, weekend visits to birding hot spots such as Block Island, and day excursions such as the Eagle Boats and Swallow Cruises on the Connecticut River.

We work with talented staff and high quality local guides, and are always searching for new ways to make our offerings even better. We often introduce new destinations – Jamaica and Cape Cod are two recent examples. And we work with guides who we hope will draw a following because of their unique knowledge of and perspective on a fascinating locale – a trip to Machu Picchu, for example, led by David Bingham, the grandson of the explorer Hiram Bingham.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Bob Kuchta

Bob has been leading trips as an EcoTravel volunteer for over 10 years. He has an ability to help our travelers become in tune with their natural surroundings. He helps to build a great respect and understanding of the outdoors, and does a terrific job educating people about their responsibility to protect and maintain healthy habitats.





EcoTravel conducts popular eagle cruises on the Connecticut River. Photo courtesy of Sandee Harraden.



More than 2,500 people took EcoTravel trips in 2011-2012. Connecticut Audubon Society Photo by Andy Griswold.

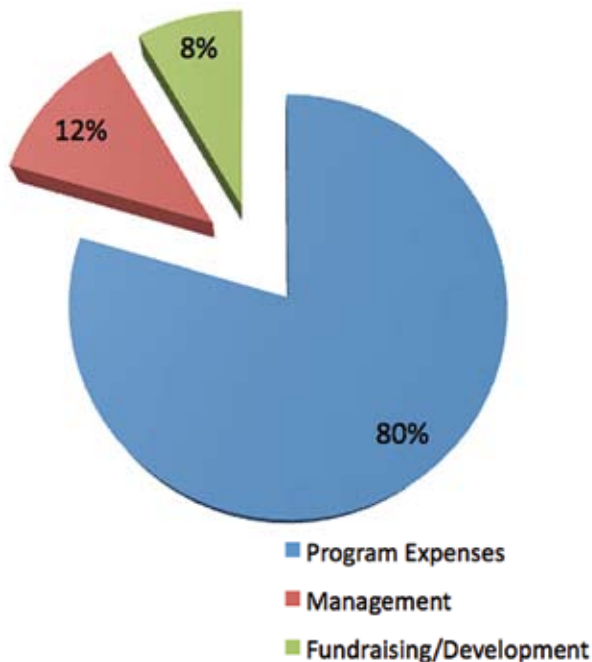
Financial Summary*

May 1, 2011 through April 30, 2012

REVENUE <i>Gains and Other Support</i>	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	TOTAL April 30, 2012	TOTAL April 30, 2011
Contributions and Bequests	\$1,346,564	\$354,383	\$50,000	\$1,750,947	\$1,182,683
Membership Dues	264,196			264,196	227,064
Education Programs	485,418			485,418	493,873
Conservation Programs	171,385			171,385	172,621
EcoTravel Programs	505,298			505,298	341,380
Special Events	210,973			210,973	216,858
Nature Stores Sales	146,614			146,614	164,398
Realized loss on sale of buildings	(92,423)			(92,423)	
Other	42,810			42,810	14,362
Investment Income	27,222	88,938		116,160	130,211
Investment Performance	(105,836)	(107,467)		(213,303)	723,577
Satisfaction of Restrictions – Program	663,224	(663,224)			
Satisfaction of Restrictions – Capital	291,997	(291,997)			
Satisfaction of Restrictions – Endowment	500,000	(500,000)			
Satisfaction of Restrictions – Sales of Assets	362,237	(239,737)	(122,500)		
TOTAL REVENUES <i>Gains and Other Support</i>	\$4,819,679	(\$1,359,104)	(\$72,500)	\$3,388,075	\$3,667,027

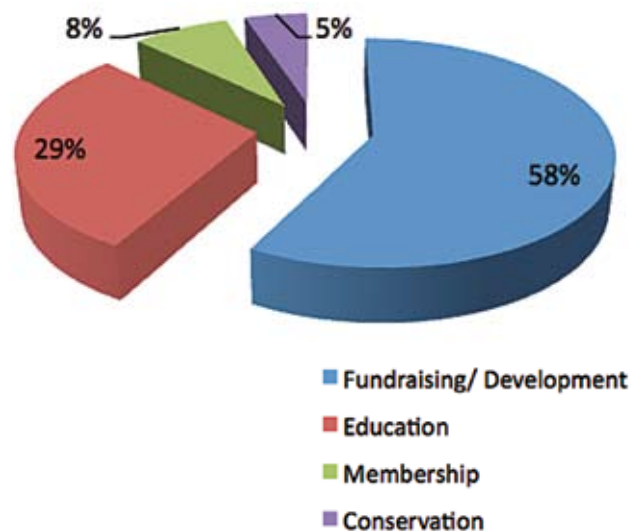
Expense Summary

(Total Expenses: \$2,982,583)

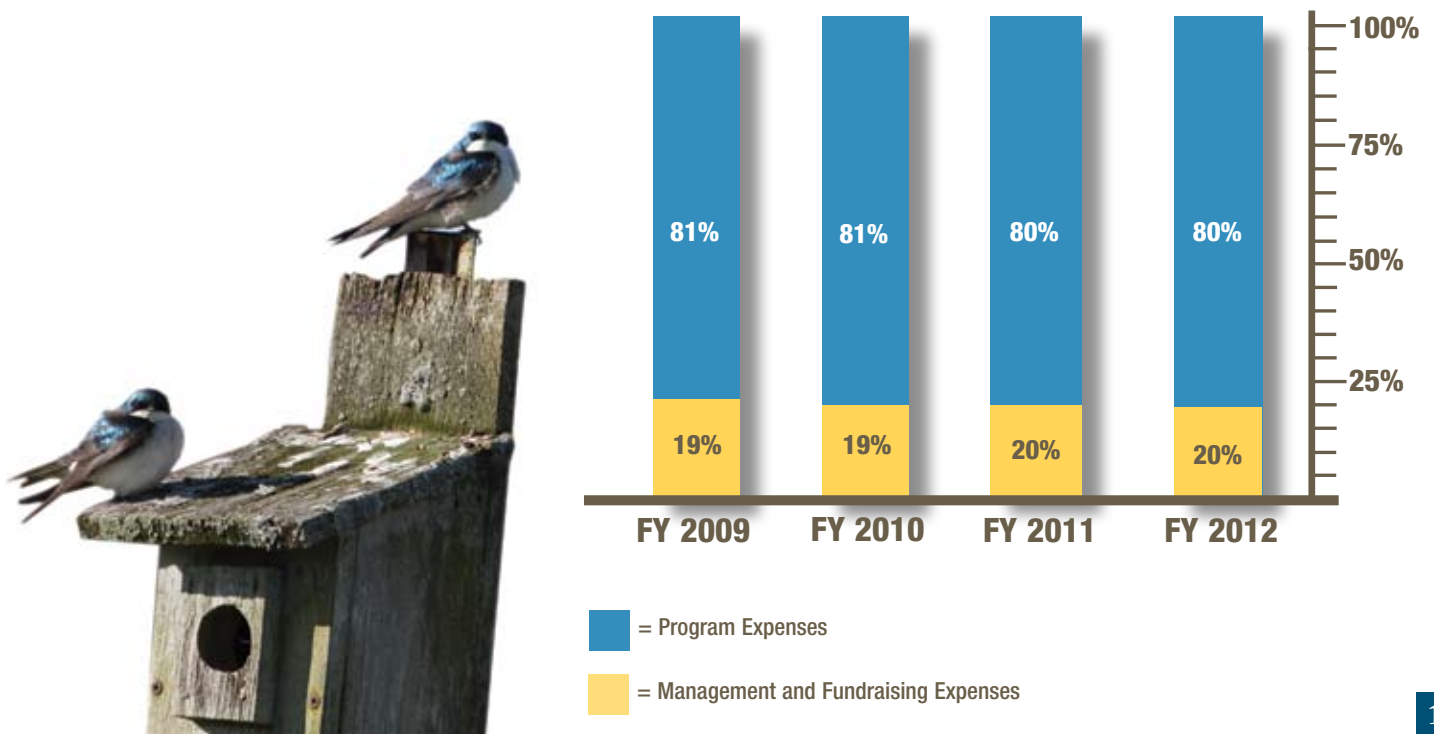


Revenue Summary

(Total Expenses: \$3,388,075)



EXPENSES	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	TOTAL April 30, 2012	TOTAL April 30, 2011
Education Programs	\$1,899,371			\$1,899,371	\$1,698,291
Sanctuary Maintenance	118,423			118,423	99,212
Conservation and Advocacy Programs	239,195			239,195	222,301
Membership	113,945			113,945	111,663
Management and General	362,098			362,098	352,846
Fundraising and Development	249,551			249,551	195,571
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,982,583			\$2,982,583	\$2,679,884
NET ASSETS					
Change from Operations	1,837,096	(1,359,104)	(72,500)	405,492	987,143
Change in value of split - Interest agreements	(440)			(440)	(1,263)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,836,656	(1,359,104)	(72,500)	405,052	985,880
NET ASSETS <i>(Beginning of Year)</i>	\$6,909,994	\$3,712,102	\$13,351,180	23,973,276	\$22,987,396
NET ASSETS <i>(End of Year)</i>	\$8,746,650	\$2,352,998	\$13,278,680	\$24,378,328	\$23,973,276



Benefactors

Connecticut Audubon Society is grateful to all those helping to support our mission through their generous financial support. The following list celebrates these friends, many of whom also donate countless hours of their time as volunteers. We extend our sincere gratitude to the thousands of friends who support our mission but are not listed due to space constraints. This listing reflects giving from May 1, 2011 – April 30, 2012. Please accept our apologies for any omissions, or errors. You may call the Development Office at (203) 259-6305 x 102 with changes or e-mail membership@ctaudubon.org



*A Scarlet Tanager in Pomfret.
Photo courtesy of Sandee Harraden.*

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Injured raptors are part of our education program. Connecticut Audubon Society photo.



A group of naturalists in Pomfret. Connecticut Audubon Society photo.



Field trips are part of the education experience for teens. Connecticut Audubon Society photo.



Frank Gallo, of the Milford Point Coastal Center, teaches a youngster how to use a scope. Connecticut Audubon Society photo.

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*A Black-and-White Warbler in Pomfret.
Photo courtesy of Sandee Harraden.*

*This Annual Report was conceived, written
and edited by Connecticut Audubon Society;
graphic design by Tammy Hines Design.*

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** as of April 30, 2012*

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